

The Ledger

by Lauren Scharhag

I have dealt with death before.
All my grandparents have passed away.
There was everything leading up to their passing,
Then the mourning, which everyone knows,
Never really ends. It's just something you learn to carry.
Then I watched my parents go through all the practical hassles
Of settling the estate: planning and paying for funerals,
Insurance, probate, managing medical bills,
Selling the houses, hauling furniture out to the curb.
A veritable slog of phone calls and paperwork.
Even now, eleven years after my grandmother died,
A life insurance policy we never knew she had
Has surfaced, a small payout that has to be distributed.
But this is the first time I've had to do something
Even remotely close to this.
The vet gave us a quote.
The appointment has been set.
Now, as I go over the monthly budget,
I realize I need to add a line item,
But I can't bring myself to write it in.
I will wait until afterwards.
I will label it with her name.