

Peter E. Murphy

Ventnor, NJ

Serenade

Of course, when it's all over, Schrödinger's cat is sacked
and the box shipped to Estonia where it is recast into rebar

to make a concrete bench where Tchaikovsky sits staring
at the sea. He is composing a ballet about a prince

who mistakes one swan's love for another. Don't
be fooled by beauty, he's trying to say, but I disagree.

One fowl embrace is as cold as the next, and a bird
in hand, even on a lark, is worth two on a lake

you can't paddle on. Besides, white swans are as common
as coal, but the black is as rare as carbon compressed

into diamond and will satisfy every desire, perhaps,
even happiness. And the cat? Don't worry about the cat.

It has found a position in another box far, far away.
His whiskers fly.

Peter E. Murphy was born in Wales and grew up in New York City where he operated heavy equipment, managed a nightclub and drove a taxi. He is the author of eleven books and chapbooks of poetry and prose. His poems and essays have appeared in *The Common*, *Diode*, *Guernica*, *Hippocampus*, *The Literary Review*, *The New Welsh Review*, *Rattle* and elsewhere. He is the founder of Murphy Writing of Stockton University.
