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## Sire of Strays

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## Sire of Strays

I raised my head to roar against the sky  
and was patted away like a kitten.

I raised my tail to lay my scent on new winds  
freshening the land, but no one seemed to care.

A stray without a home, I dared to roam  
the far corners seeking a different destiny.

No one feared me. No one trembled at my presence.  
Scratched and mauled and left for dead, I survived

the solitude, bearing the markings  
of persistence with a certain pride.

And today, my bastard children,  
marked like their father

and too numerous to count,  
roam their own quiet realms

of cunning mediocrity,  
alive to the sky, the wind,

swelling the book of life,  
crowding out the grandeur of kings.

-Rick Rauch  
Lacombe, LA