Cats on the Clothesline

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Abstract

Who tied together the cats’ tails and threw them Over the clothes line?...
Sketch

The thmall profethor jumpth up. "What about my courth?" he athkth — asks.

"Please!" says the department head severely, "Our students are adults! We must not plan their entire curriculum for them. We must leave them some freedom of choice!"

And the third reason why Iowa State graduates are not educated is Joe Bfsplk himself.

"A-a-a-a-h," he says. "Why should we have to take English 103? What good does it do? It ain't practical!"

Well, possibly you can't educate Joe against his will. No doubt he will inevitably become a first-class manufacturer of plumbing supplies with a third-class mind. He will never read anything more difficult than a Sears Roebuck catalogue or the Reader's Digest, and he will never think about anything except plumbing.

But Professor Shrdlu and Professor Cmfwyp ought to know better.

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Cats on the Clothesline

Who tied together the cats' tails and threw them
Over the clothes line? I did, not knowing if I'm
Sorry or sad. Listening, I hear the howling, hissing,
Biting, scratching, feel the cut of the claw as it
Rips the costly coat that I've kept sprayed
With DDT and brushed now and then.
Must I concentrate on this seventeen-jeweled movement
Despite this awful racket? It does remind me of
The noise they made while making love but fiercer
Still with lessening pain instead of more.
I am humane; I lift them gently off the line
And stitch the clawed-over coats, inject a cat unit
Of tetanus antitoxin and apply iodine where it is needed.
A saucer of warmed milk to hoist the ego of them both
And then return to wheels and cogs and springs.
A calm, a peace at last; this wheel goes here
This cog fits there and then the spring is—
Oops, the springy thing has leapt away—
I search and find a wheel, a cog a spri—
Oops, it goes again; this stilted peace unnerves
My steady hand.
The cats, those blessed blasted cats, I'll tie again
A square knot, lash down the bitter ends and
Lovingly return them to the clothesline. A wheel,
A cog, a spring, a wheel, a jewel, another spring—
The awful howling, hissing, biting, scratching and the
Tick, tick, tick, tick, tick, tick, tick, tick.

*J. E. Swallum*

**Dead by Accident**

White lilies mingle with the white powder.
That clings in scales along the dented skull,
And the rouged lips bent by hairless long fingers
Into a pursed smile are strange.
The crushed forehead and the mangled cheeks
Defy the mortician's hands,
For the head has spun forward through one last window
To meet an unwincing truck—
Crushed by glass when glass is so cheap.
Two seconds, two seconds—
Too early or too late—
In a shudder, an instant,
A life doled out in seconds full
Is transformed to a weary death
Stroked out in eternities.

*Ervin Krause, Sci. Sr.*

*A Long Time* [from page 23]
simply refused to get excited about them. It's too small for
six bridesmaids, mother and me, Sue thought — to say noth­ing of seven full lace dresses — imported chantilly lace in
graduated shades of ivory, she corrected herself mentally.
Oh, I just don't care — Bill's waiting for me — she picked up
her orchids — nice — but even dandelions would look good
today.