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MILK FOR THE CAT HAROLD MONRO

Milk For The Cat by Harold Monro

When the tea is brought at five o'clock,
And all the neat curtains are drawn with
care,
The little black cat with bright green eyes
Is suddenly purring there.

At first she pretends, having nothing to do,
She has come in merely to blink by the
grate,
But, though tea may be late or the milk may be sourdrop,
She is never late.

And presently her agate eyes
Take a soft large milky haze,
And her independent casual glance
Becomes a stiff, hard gaze.

Then she stamps her claws or lifts her ears,
Or twists her tail and begins to stir,
Till suddenly all her lithe body becomes
One breathing, trembling purr.

The children eat and wriggle and laugh;
The two old ladies stroke their silk:
But the cat is grown small and thin with
desire,
Transformed to a creeping lust for milk.

The white saucer like some full moon
descends
At last from the clouds of the table above;
She sighs and dreams and thrills and glows,

Transfigured with love.

She nestles over the shining rim,
Buries her chin in the creamy sea;
Her tail hangs loose; each drowsy paw
Is doubled under each bending knee.
A long, dim ecstasy holds her life;
Her world is an infinite shapeless white,
Till her tongue has curled the last holy
Then she sinks back into the night,

Draws and dips her body to heap
Her sleepy nerves in the great arm-chair,
Lies defeated and buried deep
Three or four hours unconscious there.