

## Jack (Not) in the Box

When Jack came to live with the Pennington–Perth’s  
He arrived in a box shaped quite like a house  
As they opened it up, he shot out like a bullet  
And tore through the flat as though fur were on fire

The family was flabbergasted, frozen at first  
Then like it or not got caught up in the fray  
Chasing this way and that over chairs desks and tables

Jack bolted up stairs and tore down the hallway  
He dove over beds and derailed a toy train  
He clawed at the curtains he frightened the children  
He scattered the laundry both hither and yonder  
Then quite in a dither started over again  
He didn’t settle down for nearly an hour  
Till finally, exhausted he slept in the shower

The Pennington–Perth’s exclaimed, “What have we done?  
This cat is too crazy to live here among us  
Perhaps in the morning we’ll take him away  
Our home is quite small, our children so fragile  
It’s obvious things can’t continue this way  
Jack really belongs in a place with more space  
To accommodate his rather rambunctious style.”

But when the sun rose, the cat appeared normal.  
He stretched and he yawned and he strutted about  
He climbed up on laps and he tickled with whiskers  
And before they could act he had charmed the whole clan

“I suppose we shall keep him.” sighed Mr. P.P.  
“I suppose that we shall, his wife echoed back.”  
So they kept him and loved him, this kitten named Jack

Now ’long about April with spring in the air  
A decision was made to get young Jack spiffed up  
An appointment at “Pretty Pet Parlour” was scheduled  
For a fluffing and dusting and primping of sorts

So into the bedroom the girls went to fetch him  
And into the closet went Mr. P.P.  
He came out with the box that was shaped like a house  
And when Jackie espied it, that cat came unleashed

The scene that unfolded was not for the weak:  
The screeching, the whaling, the running, the grabbing,  
The stuffing of Jack into one tiny space  
All hands were on deck but eight wasn't enough  
The cat was determined beyond all good measure  
And time after time he escaped in a rage

This circus went on well into the morning  
Till finally the family surrendered their quest  
For try as they might they did not prove a match  
For the they called Jack and his fear of the box

So all out of breath and sweaty to boot  
Mr. Pennington-Perth spoke these words of defeat:  
“Jack’s fine as he is; he doesn’t need grooming.”  
“Agreed.” groaned the others flopped flat on their backs.  
Contented, Jack joined them, his victory so sweet.

Then quietly, quite out of sight of the feline  
Old Mr. P.P. tucked the box clean away  
And he said to himself in his practical manner  
“I think I may trash this thing later today.  
Less fuss and less bother, that’s what I always say.”

Soon peace had returned to the small domicile  
And from recent accounts all is peaceful there still  
No hissing or clawing or fur flying frenzies.  
No grand expectations of outings for all  
Just a family and cat living happily after  
With the house-like shaped box, never mentioned,  
Not ever.

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