

Andrew Sneddon

GORDON'S CATS

When they counted the carcasses there were over
fifty of them.

Reg and Bill had waited at dusk—

The usual feeding time—

And had shot them all.

(Or so I was told.

It was only years later that I thought of poison

And Reg's poor reputation with a rifle).

It sounded well justified to me.

Gordon was breeding ferals for Christ's sake—

And I'd seen them stalking the shadows,

Baleful,

Mawing and spitting at each other

Over the bloody gristle and milk left out for them.

I don't know how they explained it to Gordon though

When he came home from his cataract operation

And strolled into a quiet, wifeless and childless

home.

Maybe they didn't tell him.

Spared the girlish fussing and let him find out for

himself.

It still hurts to imagine the old man

Laying out the plates on the back verandah,

Silhouetted against the red dusk,

Perplexed by the deep and unremitting silence.

Little wonder that he never forgave them for it.

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