

This poem is the result of my overhearing a story told by a fellow teacher about an experience her now older daughter had had when of fourth grade age. I tried to imitate the cadence if not exactly the language of such a young person speaking. I also used the less than serious or serio-tragic approach.

Those of you who love cats to the point of obsession --- please note that I consider myself a cat lover, and that no real animal was hurt in the writing of this poem. I have had a number of felines over the years, as have my daughter and my son. I have never believed the unfair and unfounded (well, maybe a little founded) criticism that cats are selfish, unemotional loners --- although I never had such a relationship with my cats. The cats that I have shared living accommodations with (No one *owns* a cat) were quite friendly and willingly plied me with their feelings via licking my hand or the ever-reliable purring.

Cats don't smile with their mouths; they do so with their attention. A person just has to be perceptive enough to notice. I am.

As I re-read this poem, I noticed subconscious influences of Edgar Allen Poe and Dr. Seuss. That's a weird combination, isn't it? Oh, well.

As a perk, feel free to read the following poem, also written in a child's voice. This one is by Nikki Grimes:

**Waiting**

The orphanage  
put my picture  
on a postcard.  
My smile says  
"Pick me! Pick me!"  
But mostly, people say  
I'm too old to adopt,  
like I'm a run-down clock  
(*tick-tock, tick-tock*)  
and the big hand says  
Julie is half-past loving.