

## A CAT IN MY LAP

This beautifully written book could be described as an autobiography punctuated by cats. Jenny Melmoth began her married life in rural Essex, later moving to Cheshire, and her elegant prose and wry observations make this account of her life in both places a joy to read. The author is not just ‘a cat person’ — Jenny’s dogs, children, husband and many other characters play a part in her story — but it is her cats that bring the book to life.

Beginning with Sam, and forming a long and overlapping procession of feline companions, Jenny’s cats are as different in personality and attitudes as any cast of characters. Some were chosen as kittens, but several came to her as strays or survivors — all making their distinct contribution to her life and home.

This first paperback edition has retained the interweaving of narrative and pictures which was much admired in the original. Jo Berriman’s illustrations are a delight, bringing to life the cats who feature in the book: Sam, Moses, Aaron, Daisy May, Nelle and the rest are all here, embellishing the pages with their individual elegance and demeanour.

Also included throughout the book are Jenny Melmoth’s own poems inspired by her cats, ranging from the three-line Haiku *On Being Called* to the flowing magical imagery of *The Cats Ride Out*.

This book makes the perfect gift not just for people who love cats, but for anyone who appreciates the countryside and the gentler things in life. But a word of advice — buy two copies, as you’ll end up keeping one yourself!



*Excerpt from Chapter Two*

**Found**



The door opened to reveal a steep mountain of stairs, with an intrepid little climber about half-way up. Each step looked big enough to require a rope and crampons, but he wasn't panicking. He looked down at us with blue-marble eyes framed in black fluffy velvet, as if to say, "I am sitting up here so that I can look you over properly. I think you might do. Come back in three weeks and I'll give you a month's trial."

## *Haiku (on doors)*

Do not think, because  
there is a cat flap, you are  
excused opening doors.

