

A Poem by Patricia Wellingham-Jones

The Man with 400 Cats

That's how it seems
as he plays unwilling host
to a strange sort of household.
A tape hidden in his yard
would pick up eerie feline music
which must be the draw
to every stray within miles.
Unable to use a gun on them,
reluctant to spend his retirement
on vet fees, he feels shackled
and braceleted to his fence.
Now and again I slide
a bag of kibble through the slats,
he thanks me with homemade jam.

Patricia Wellingham-Jones is a widely published retired RN, former psychology researcher and writer/publisher. She has a special interest in healing writing, with poems recently in *The Widow's Handbook* (Kent State University Press), and led the Enloe Cancer Center 'Telling Our Stories' expressive writing group for years. Chapbooks include *Don't Turn Away: poems about breast cancer*, *End-Cycle: poems about caregiving*, *Apple Blossoms at Eye Level*, *Voices on the Land* and *Hormone Stew*.