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Spring 1965

## The Cat

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"Jo, honey, you don't really want to do this. We can't be selfish. Think of our parents. Think of your grades. If you got pregnant . . ."

"Darling, I beg you. This place is driving me crazy!" He talked to me quietly and we hung up. Despair fell on me. I crawled up onto the green spread and doubling my knees under my stomach, cried. How could he be so cruel? "Larry, Larry, I want to die. Please God, let me die. Life is a succession of nothings." Tina blubbered, "Don't cry, Jo, don't."

The phone rang. Hope! He changed his mind. In the dark, I reached the phone and thrilled to his, "Hi, honey, you were crying, weren't you?" He talked to me in his gentle way for half an hour. He was the only one who could soothe me.

I found refuge in my project again. That pink door laughed grotesquely as I struggled into a second dawn. The door had become a feeling of circumstances and environment molding my underfined goals and directing my life. It seemed to both shut me in, and open to a new life. I mixed water colors and they were an infusion of pink; I cut tiny sofas and lamps and pasted them on a floor plan. I dreamed of a home with Larry. Then, the wind slammed the pink door shut to remind me I had to grow up alone.

## THE CAT

Nancy Dewees

The black cat comes softly and smoothly,  
Curling at my feet when I pause.  
At night it's a panther with luminous eyes.  
I can't see it in the sun --  
But the shadow is there, teasing me.  
Sometimes I forget, and laugh --  
Then I hear the purr,  
And feel a claw.