

THE MEAT BOY

---for Buzzy

Why must they make boys out of meat?
Each time when I sit down to eat
They say, "Sit up. Don't swing your feet!
Don't spill that milk! Here, have some meat."

5" I say, "Please pass some birthday cake
And apple pie -- that's what I'll take."
They say, "You know that's much too sweet
For growing boys. Now have some meat!"

I say, "I guess some jelly would
10 Be ~~be~~ fine on pickles -- what good food!"
They say, "Just sit down in that seat
~~And eat~~ those cookies! Eat that meat!"
And drop

I say, "Ice cream with ~~nuts~~ ^{nuts} would do.
I'll wait for candy till I'm through."
15 They all jump up; they stamp their feet:
"No! NO!! You need your meat, Meat, MEAT!!!

"Sweet things will make you weak and fat --
You aren't made of things like that,
For boys are all made out of meat;
20 That's why meat's best for you to eat."

They say I'll never grow up strong,
Without good meat. I say they're wrong --
Already I feel weak and sick
To see my plate piled up so thick

25 With meat, Meat, MEAT. I'd tell them so --
They'd say, "Go up to bed, then", though.
But all the same, I know they're wrong --
Cows don't eat meat -- I guess they're strong!

Some grass -- that's all a young cow needs
30 To make him strong -- just grass and weeds!
Maybe I'll tell them, "Please just pass
Some nice green weeds -- please pass the grass!"

I guess you'd say a horse is fast.
Race with a horse -- you'll come in last.
35 Horses just stand there night and day
Eating up nothing else but hay.

They don't eat meat ~~that~~ and they're not sick;
They grow up mighty strong and quick;
Just hand a horse some meat some day --
40 You'll see how quick he'll....run away!

Or take one look at elephants:
They never eat THEIR meat -- not once!
They only thing I see them chew
Is hay -- maybe some peanuts, too.

45 You say you want me strong and tall?
I guess I wouldn't mind at all
If I got big as they are, so
Please pass the peanuts -- watch me grow!

But eating meat won't make you grow;
50 They tell me that, but that's not so.
Elephants don't -- look how THEY ~~didn't~~ grew.
And look at some of the ones that DO.

Cats eat their mice -- raw mice, at that!
I'm bigger NOW than any cat.
55 Birds eat their worms -- they don't grow tall;
The birds I see look weak and small.

Frogs eat their bugs all summer long;
I never once saw frogs get strong;
I hope I don't grow up THAT size!
60 Our little turtle ate his flies --

He's dead! Besides, what IF I'm meat? --
We don't grow into what we eat.
Why, every cow I've ever seen
Ate grass; not one of them was green!

65 Chickens don't grow like what they're fed;
Ducks in the park aren't like dry bread;
Mice don't look much like cheese; and what's
More, squirrels don't look much like nuts.

A ~~fox~~ fox never grew feathers. All
70 Birds eat worms and birds don't crawl.
Our cat eats birds -- she's got no wings;
Those birds don't help her when she sings.

Of course I'd like to grow up strong
But that's not how. They must be wrong.
75 They tell me that but that's not true;
Our food's not what we turn into.

And if we DID? -- I ask you now
Who wants to grow up like a cow?
Horns on your head; a long tail, too;
80 Hard feet; nothing to say but "Mooooo!"

"Eat meat", they tell me, "and grow big" --
Who wants to grow up like a pig?
Why, you'd be dirty; you'd be fat;
Hair on your ears, a nose that's flat.

85 What if I grew up like a hen?
I guess that they'd be sorry then
I ate that chicken till I grew
Up looking like some farm or zoo.

Still, here's what they should be afraid of:
90 If we must eat just what we're made of
And that's why we all need our meat --
People are what we OUGHT to eat.

Maybe they're right; maybe I'm wrong.
I'll eat my meat and grow up strong
95 Like lions or like tigers do --
They couldn't keep ME in their zoo.

I'd wander up and down the street
Looking for something good to eat.
THEN, eating meat would be some FUN;
100 I'd like my meals then -- every one!

I'd have a great big man-sized steak;
I'd never have a stomach ache;
They'd know if I liked meat or not;
I guess I'd like meat THEN -- a lot!

105 Wouldn't they tell me I was good!
Maybe we DO become our food;
Maybe I ought to try and see;
Think of the things that I could be:

If only I were made of candy
110 I'd grow up quick then -- fine and dandy!
If I were made of peanut brittle
I wouldn't care if I stayed little!

If only I were made of pop
I'd buzz and fizz; I'd never stop;
115 I'd sing a song like bumblebees
Around the flowers up in trees;

I'd fly right up inside their nose;
I'd make them sneeze and make them snooze;
I'd make their mouth feel kind of funny;
120 I'd make them sick and cost them money!

If only I were made of toast
Maybe that's what I'd like the most:
All spread with warm butter and jelly;
I'd sure feel good in someone's stomach!

125 If only I were made of jello
I think that would be simply swell! Oh,
Slipping and skating like a fish,
I'd dance and shake around my dish;

I'd rock around and then I'd roll
130 Across the table to a hole
Between the boards and run in there --
Like snakes, I'd soon be everywhere.

If I were made of mashed potato
Wouldn't that be simply great! Oh,
135 Then I could be just like girls --
All smooth and soft, with fluffy curls.

Or I could be a cloud; I'd blow
Away and turn to rain or snow.
I'd blow so far I'd be nowhere;
140 Or I could be a big white bear

And lie back on a block of ice
Cream; I'd be rocks or mice;
I'd be an apple or plum jam.
I wouldn't be one thing I am.

145 I'd be the things I think are good
For me to have. Maybe I would
Just eat myself -- then I'd grow quick --
Or vanish like a magic trick.

Some day a Magic Man will come.
150 His words will boom like a big drum:
"Let everything around here change!
Let everything be good and strange!"

Kittens will chase big dogs up trees.
Mice will get eaten up by cheese.
155 Fish will parade down every street.
Turtles will dance on their back feet.

Rocks will catch cold and come inside;
Foxes will run from hens and hide;
Mothers will just love lots of noise;
160 Teachers will learn from naughty boys;

Boys will get chased around by girls;
The nuts will carry off the squirrels;
Grandma and Grandpa will grow small;
Nothing will be the same at all.

165 Then, when I sit down to eat
They'll say, "Slide down low in your seat;
Don't sit so tall! Please swing your feet!
And don't just sit there looking sweet!

You finish all that candy! Stop! --
170 Don't eat that meat! Now drink your pop!"

* * * * *