

# FRISKERS



AND HIS FRIENDS







HE HELD A PAW OUT TO THE STRUGGLING PUSS.

*Frontispiece.*

*See p. 42.*

THE ADVENTURES  
OF  
FRISKERS AND HIS FRIENDS

BY  
MARIAN ISABEL HURRELL

WITH  
SIXTEEN COLOURED ILLUSTRATIONS

BY  
LOUIS WAIN

*London*

ROBERT CULLEY

2 CASTLE STREET, CITY ROAD, AND

26 PATERNOSTER ROW, E.C.

LONDON :  
PRINTED BY WILLIAM CLOWES AND SONS, LIMITED,  
DUKE STREET, STAMFORD STREET, S.R.

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WE are merry kittens all,  
As you soon will understand,  
When you read of all the pranks  
That we have in Pussy-land.



## Chapter I

### How We Punished Cook

**T**ALK about fur-breadth escapes—we've had some, I can tell you! You'd like to hear about them? Well, so you shall. I'll start from the beginning.

My name is Tom Furry Tail, and Friskers and I were introduced to each other when we were nothing but kittens

in arms. My mother was a Tabby, a very high-spirited cat, as I had good reason to know. Friskers' mamma, Mrs. Purrkins, was gentle, and very elegant in manners and appearance. Once, so I have heard, she took a prize at the Crystal Palace; but this has nothing to do with our adventures.

The very afternoon we first met we commenced our larks, babies as we were. The two ladies—our mothers, I mean—had nursed us till they were tired; and then, as it was tea-

time, they sent us up into the nursery while they enjoyed spratty sandwiches and cream cakes. It was rather mean, I thought, to say such a lot of nice things about us before our faces, and then serve us in such a nasty way.

I said to Friskers, as we were going out of the room, 'I don't think much of their butter, do you?'

'Never tasted it,' replied Friskers.

He was a little younger than I was, and apt to be dense at times.

‘Stupid! I mean all that fuss about our looks. Deeds are better than words any day; and if they admire us so much, why not let us have a taste of something good?’

‘Tis rather mean,’ said Friskers: ‘but it isn’t mother’s fault’ (he always stood up for his mother, did Friskers); ‘it’s all cook’s doing. She only sent up a few sandwiches and cakes for afternoon tea. The rest she’s saving for the kitchen supper. I heard her tell nurse so.’

‘Then it’s very wrong of

cook, and she ought to be punished,' said I, in my most decided tone.

'So she ought, but I don't know who'll do it.'

'We will, Friskers,' said I, a bright thought striking me; 'it's our plain duty.'

'How shall we do it?'

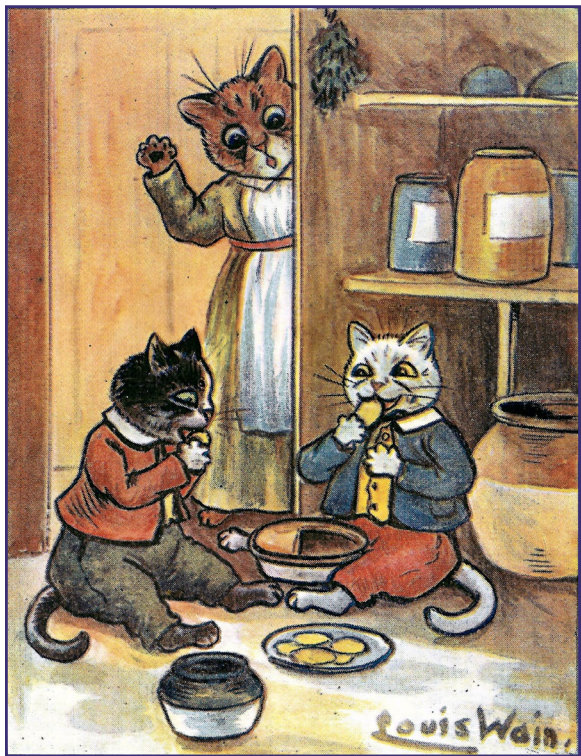
'We'll go into the pantry when nobody is looking, and eat them all up ourselves.'

Friskers looked thoughtful, but presently signified his approval of my plan.

In a few minutes more we were in the pantry, sampling

the cakes and sandwiches; and very good indeed they were, let me tell you. Remember this, our chief thought was to punish cook; it was not that we were greedy—oh, dear no! At last we had finished every one, and were just about to wash our faces ready to return to the drawing-room.

Suddenly we heard footsteps, so heavy were they that we really felt a bit frightened—although, mind you, we had only been doing our duty. Another moment, and cook



SAMPLING THE CAKES AND SANDWICHES.





was in the pantry, and we were out, flying for dear life.

Down the cellar-stairs I scrambled, nearly turning a somersault in my haste. Down came Friskers after me, panting and breathless. By some unlucky chance he managed to slip over the side of the stairs. Another moment, and I heard a splash, and then a most piteous Mia-o-o-w! Poor Friskers had tumbled into a pail of white-wash which some stupid workman had left in the way. I

‘Bang,’ thought I, ‘goes one of Friskers’ nine lives. He’ll only have eight left after this, for certain.’

Cook’s loud cries brought our mammas very soon on the spot, and I can tell you there *was* a scene. My mother, who always looks on the bright side of things, told Mrs. Purrkins not to distress herself, as, after all, Friskers was only trying to improve his personal appearance, and to be as elegant-looking as his mamma. It was only meant for a little joke; but I could

see Mrs. Purrkins was very cross.

She was a long time forgiving my mother for that remark, and longer still in forgiving me for having led her Friskers into mischief. But I didn't care, so long as cookie was punished for her greediness—there is always a sense of joy in duty well done.

Chapter II  
James and his Parcels

**M**RS. PURRKINS of Catkins Villa sent out a whole batch of invitations for a Pussies' Picnic; but, to my surprise, none came for me. She didn't seem to like my friendship with her son Friskers—thought I led him into mischief, or some such nonsense.



MRS. PURKINS WRITING THE INVITATIONS.

*See p. 20.*



Friskers and I found out that it was all the fault of James, his mother's footman, that I was not invited. He had been telling all sorts of tales about me. I needn't tell you, of course, that they were untrue.

One morning I saw Mrs. Purrkins set forth to buy the cakes and patties for the picnic, James following on behind to carry the parcels.

Said a voice in my ear, 'I'm going to teach James a lesson for being so nasty.'

It was Friskers who spoke.

I did not know he was so near.

‘Friskers,’ said I, ‘it’s very wrong of you to get such naughty ideas. You’re no fit companion for *me*.’

Friskers miaowed with laughter, for he knew I was only in fun.

‘I am going to follow them up with a big basket,’ he went on.

‘Whatever for?’ I asked.

‘You’ll see,’ and Friskers winked a naughty eye.

And this is what happened. After the shopping was done,



Mrs. Purrkins called to see a friend at a little country cottage, telling James to wait outside with the parcels. Friskers knew that this was part of her programme. James soon grew tired of waiting, and went to see a friend of his own, leaving the parcels hidden under a bush in the back garden.

‘Now is our time,’ said Friskers; ‘I’m going to take out all the goodies, and carry them home myself. James shall have some stones instead.’

A few minutes later we had stuffed the parcels with stones, taking away the cakes and patties. When we had quite finished, we hid behind a tree by the wayside to wait the issue of events, as the story-books say.

Presently we saw Mrs. Purrkins coming along the road, with her head in the air, and her paws in her rabbit-skin muff, which she used summer and winter alike. James was following on behind, evidently feeling the weight of his parcels

pretty considerably, and wondering what had happened to them.

When we thought we were quite safe, we came out from our hiding-place. But here a terrible shock awaited us. No sooner had we made our appearance than a policeman came up, and laid a heavy paw on Friskers' shoulder and mine.

'Now then, young sirs, I've been watching you,' he said in a nasty gruff voice.

'That's right,' said I, trying to put a bold face on it;

‘you couldn’t do better. We’re pattern cats, Friskers and I.’

‘H’m! I wonder if the magistrate will think so tomorrow morning,’ was the disagreeable reply.

And before we could say another word he caught hold of us and marched us off to the police-station.

Friskers miaowed enough to bring the roof down; and I felt so sorry for the poor little chap, I quite forgot to feel sorry for myself.

‘Let him go,’ said I; ‘and



HE MARCHED US OFF TO THE POLICE-STATION.

*See p. 28.*



if we've got to be punished, let me have his share.'

'Very good,' said the policeman; 'I've no doubt it was all your fault.'

'It wasn't,' said Friskers; 'it was all mine.'

This just shows you what a nice little chap Friskers was.

However, the policeman took no notice of what he said; but just bundled him off home with his basket, and locked me up in the cell.

Before I had been there an hour, I had a visitor in the

shape of Mrs. Purrkins. To my surprise she flung her arms around my neck and kissed me.

‘My noble Tom!’ she cried, ‘to think that you should wish to bear Friskers’ punishment! He has told me the whole story, how that it was his fault from beginning to end.’

She would not even listen when I said I was to blame as well. The whole matter was soon explained, and I was set free. But I have come to this conclusion, that practical jokes are just the stupidest



things in the world, and that I'll never join in another. One good thing, however, came out of it. I had an invitation to the Pussies' Picnic after all.

Chapter III  
The Pussies' Picnic

**M**Y name is Friskers Purr-kins, and I'm just as lively as a cricket. So is my friend Tom for that matter, which perhaps accounts for us being such close companions.

Cats of a feather  
Flock together.

No, that is not sense.

Cats of a fur  
Fondly Purr.

That's better. Tom may be strong and brave and clever; but he can't beat me for poetry.

I never knew such a chap as Tom; he was positively the life and soul of my mother's picnic. It was all through him it was not as flat as a pancake.

My purr! it was enough to give one a cold to see how icy everybody was when we first started. Talk of company manners! The ladies all sat together as prim as prim; and the Tommies, who were just

aching for a bit of fun, looked as though they couldn't say 'Squeak!' to a mouse.

In the brake Tom set the ball of fun rolling by treading on the Honourable Miss Stiffkin's little white toes, and then tweaking the tail of the Honourable Still-more Stiffkins, her brother.

Both looked quite offended, until Tom made such funny apologies they couldn't help laughing. Then all the pussies laughed, and the ice was thawed.

By the time we had reached

the field, and the cloth was spread, our spirits were so high, that they nearly ran away with us. I don't like telling tales, because I'm not fond of them (except mousies' tails, pickled, which are a dainty), but I must say some of the pussies might have been less greedy. A certain puss, who is better nameless, helped himself to a fine toasted mouse, before anybody could say 'Tom Cattums!'

Some of them would not even wait for the plates to be put on, but commenced their

meal straight away. Greedy, wasn't it? But there, we will change the subject !

We had some fine amusements, cricket, swinging, &c., but not enough to keep us all going. So Tom, in fear lest a chill should again settle on the company, suggested dancing in a ring.

'What sort of ring?' simpered Miss Stiffkins.

'A ring of roses, my dear,' said Tom; 'will you join?'

'Purr-haps,' replied she; 'I'll think about it.'

'No time like the present,'





HE FROLICKED HER AROUND WITH THE REST

*See p. 41.*



said he ; and seizing her paw, he frolicked her around with the rest.

I must tell you of one thing that happened, just to show you what kind of character my friend Tom was.

One of the pussies, Sandy by name, got so jealous of Tom, that he would keep calling him 'Old Stick-in-the-Mud.' A stupid name it was, with no sense in it.

Tom at last grew angry, and said he would pay him out; and this is how he did it.

It so happened that some of us, when we had had enough of games, went for a ramble together. Sandy, who was amongst our number, had the misfortune to tumble into a muddy stream. He *was* a picture, I can tell you!

‘Ha! ha!’ I shouted. ‘Who’s Old Stick-in-the-Mud now?’

Now, whatever do you think Tom was silly enough to do? —though I couldn’t help liking him for it.

He just clambered down the bank, and held out a paw to

the struggling puss. In a few moments both were safe and sound on the bank.

Sandy seemed almost too much ashamed to say 'Thank you' at first.

'I thought you said you were going to pay me out,' he presently spuffled to Tom.

'Well! perhaps *pulling* you out was better than *paying* you out,' laughed Tom in his easy way.

And so the very thing which seemed likely to upset the peace of the picnic ended happily after all.

The day came to an end all too soon; and when the moon was up, we drove off home, singing beautiful songs on the way. The chorus of one ran something like this—

There's nothing like a picnic  
For jollity and fun;  
Three cheers for Mrs. Purrkins,  
And three for every one!

## Chapter IV

### The Pussy-town Excursion

**F**RISKERS and I have nearly had a quarrel as to which of us should give an account of the Pussy-town excstion. However, we have split the difference now—he is going to tell the next story; so we are on good terms again.

Talking of terms, reminds

me that I must inform you of the important fact that Friskers and I are now at Boarding School. The old dame at the Academy in Catland had taught us all she knew, or couldn't manage us, I forget which. Anyway, here we are, and here we shall have to stop till the holidays.

The excursion to Pussytown took place last half-holiday; so you shall hear about it while it is fresh in my mind.

It was a glorious day, and we managed to get the very

carriage we wanted, In fact, we had everything heart could desire, except our master's permission. But then, it doesn't do to expect too much.

We started forth a very jolly party, I can tell you; and we managed to get to Pussy-town all right, which was a wonder, considering the narrow escapes we had.

Here we had some sparrow patties and mouse turnovers, after which we made our way to a field where the Pussy-town fair was being held.

There were the usual swings, and round-about, and shows, some of them very fine. Of course, we had a turn at them all.

‘Friskers,’ said I at last, ‘we shall have to drive like mad to get home in time!’

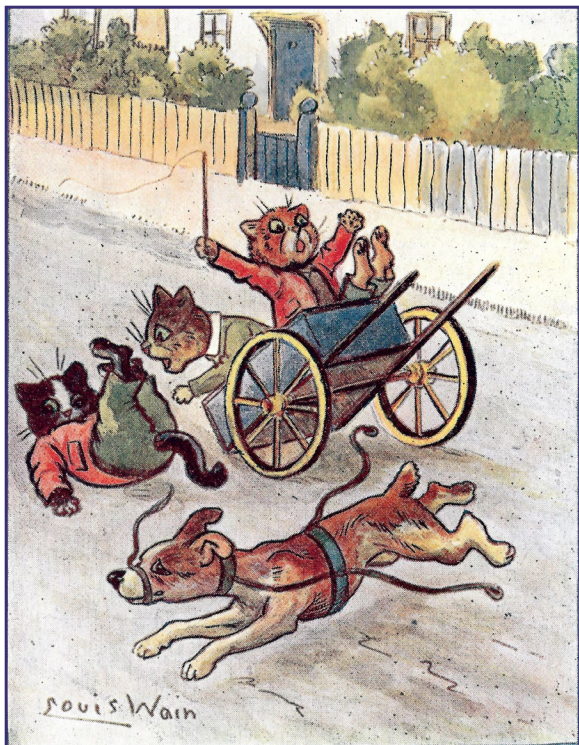
Shall we? ‘he said, looking a bit frightened; ‘let’s start directly, then.’ And so said all the rest.

I was driver on the way back; and didn’t I just whip up our steed!—a terrier, by the way.

We drove for a while with-







AWAY HE BOLTED LIKE MAGIC.

*See p. 51.*

out mishap; then something —I don't know what, unless it was the Tommy in the street shouting 'Mice to sell!' —frightened our terrier.

Away he bolted, slipping out of the shafts like magic. I was off the box in a moment, and tried to dodge the runaway, so as to catch him; but he was one too many for me.

Meanwhile the others in the carriage were having a bad time of it. In their excitement the Pussies rushed to the door to get out. Then

suddenly the carriage tilted up, and there they were, tumbling in all directions.

Their mews of distress brought a couple of cats to their garden palings to see what was going on; and no wonder, for the discord was awful.

To add to the horrors of the moment, we were met by some friends of our master, Dr. Grimalkin, who were driving along the road. Of course we knew then we should have to pay pretty dearly for this excursion of

ours in good hard whacks of the cane, for they would be sure to report us.

We arrived home at last feeling very sorry for ourselves, I can tell you.

‘Look here!’ said I, just as we got to the school gates, ‘you chaps must be a mass of bruises, so it’s only fair I should get the caning.’

‘All right,’ said they, quite cheerfully, except Friskers, who never spoke a word.

Next morning I was called up before the Doctor, in the presence of the whole school

My! wasn't he just in a temper.

'So *you're* the ringleader!' he cried, bringing the cane down on my back. 'I'll teach you, Master Tom, not to take excursions without my knowledge. You shall have a whack for every mile of the way.'

No sooner had he said these words, when up jumped Friskers, and said the excursion was his idea first of all. So it might have been; but as I carried it out, and persuaded the other chaps to



YOU SHALL HAVE A WHACK FOR EVERY MILE.

*See p. 54.*





come, I reckoned myself the worst offender. Friskers is a plucky little puss at heart even if he is a bit 'soft' at times. So we went shares in our punishment, as we do in all our fun.

He hits hard though, does Dr. Grimalkin, and Friskers and I have quite decided never to break the school rules again—at least, that is, if we can help it.

There is one mistake the Doctor made. I'm sure he must have thought Pussy-town was twenty miles away,

by the strokes he laid on  
That's silly, you know; for  
it's only about five. It only  
shows you that he doesn't  
know much about 'jography.'

Chapter V  
**Breaking-up Day**

**O**F all the loveliest bits of fun in the world, give me a breaking-up day

Lessons no doubt are very fine, and it would never do—so they say—for a cat to grow up without knowing how to read or write. For my part, I could do very well with less grinding than Dr. Grimalkin

gives us. However, it's over now for the term.

Oh, what fun! work is done!  
Now we'll frolic, every one.

I believe I should have taken first prize for poetry, only that a stupid little long-haired puss—a Persian—cut me out. However, my friend Tom and I don't care much about prizes. We've worked though, all the same,—I understand all about the first three rules of Arithmetic, Sedition, Distraction, and Multiplivision; so does Tom, only more so. I don't say

this to praise ourselves, mind you, only to show you how hard we worked

We had the schoolroom to ourselves on breaking-up day. Dr. Grimalkin, we were given to understand, was in his library making out school bills, and the other masters were busy packing up.

Tom, who since the excursion incident has been almost too good to live, broke loose on that day.

Seating himself at the Head Master's desk, he held forth to any one who would listen.

‘A little less confusion, please,’ said he, just in the Doctor’s tone of voice ‘Now then, you chaps there round the globe,’ he went on, ‘tell me, What shape is the earth?’

‘Round like a pumpkin, you silly bumpkin!’ shouted one rude youngster.

Whereat Tom promptly gave orders that the offender was to write an imposition every day of the holidays. At which he just roared with laughter.

There was one chap there, named Smiffkins, we none of





THE WHOLE ROOM WAS STARTLED BY A TERRIFIC MEW  
FROM SMIFFKINS

*See p. 14.*



us liked. He was just as selfish as he could be, and he told tales too; not nice moral stories like Tom's and mine, but horrid mean tales about our mis-doings.

'Hi, you fellows!' he cried out in mi-lord fashion, 'come here and help me with my box!'

'Oh, with pleasure,' answered one of the pussies, Tabby by name.

Presently the whole room was startled by a terrific mew from Smiffkins, whose tail had been 'accidentally for the

purpose shut in the box by Tabby.

His cry so startled two kittens who were cording a trunk, that one of them lost his balance altogether.

Smiffkins, his tail being released, forthwith rushed out of the room, to tell the Doctor of our evil deeds.

We were all so excited that we didn't care a jot.

'Tom,' shouted I presently, 'I've made up a verse about Dr. Grimalkin. I'll fling you the book over, and then you can read it aloud.'

And this is what Tom read—

Old Doctor Grimalkin is clever and  
wise,

Though no one could call him a  
beauty;

His temper is quick, and he's fond of  
the stick,

To whack us he thinks is his duty.

Just as he had ended, to our horror the Doctor popped his head in the door—he had heard every word.

‘Who composed that ridiculous verse?’ said he, looking very solemn and dignified.

There was dead silence for a moment.

Then said I, 'Please, sir, I did.'

After this he turned to Tom. 'Is it true,' he thundered, 'that you've been mimicking me, your Head Master?'

Tom spoke up like a hero 'Yes, sir,' he said; 'but I didn't mean any harm, and—it's breaking-up day.'

The Master then looked at Smiffkins. Said he, 'If there's one thing I dislike more than another, it's a tale-bearer.'

Smiffkins felt pretty small at this, I guess.

There was almost a twinkle in the Doctor's eye when he next spoke. He turned to Tom and me, and said something really quite nice and kind about our telling the truth. Then with stately steps he walked away.

Before he had gone very far along the passage, we all sung out, at the top of our voices—

For he's a jolly good fellow!

Smiffkins, by the way, didn't join in; perhaps we pitched the tune too high for him.

How we enjoyed ourselves, to be sure! There's no doubt about it, for real good fun and frolic there is nothing in all the world to beat a breaking-up day.

Chapter VI  
**Trespassers**

**S**O far, Tom and Friskers have had all the running ; but you musn't think that they are the only pussies to have adventures, because, if you do, you will be making a great mistake. Talking of running reminds me of an adventure I had when I was staying at Pussboro' Farm.

Perhaps you would like to hear all about it.

To begin with, my name is Jinks—funny name for a cat isn't it? But it's a family name, you see, Father was Jinks, and so was grandfather. What my great-grandfather's name was I really don't know; and as it has nothing to do with my story, it doesn't matter.

Now for my adventures at Pussboro' Farm—that is where my uncle and aunt and cousins live, and where I was invited to spend a whole month of



my summer holidays. My favourite cousin was Frisk (you won't mix him up with Friskers, will you?). He and I were, so to speak, 'hand in glove.'

Said Frisk to me one morning, 'What do you say, Jinks, to a day's outing in the fields?'

'Nothing would please me better,' I answered, 'except a good *innings* at cricket.'

'Don't try to be funny,' said Frisk, with a broad grin, 'cause it only makes you look silly.'

Frisk was very plain-spoken

at times; but as he didn't mean any harm, I never thought it worth while to quarrel with him.

Of course, all the rest of the tribe wanted to come too; and as uncle and aunt were in town, we had nothing to do except to please ourselves.

We started forth in high glee, meaning to have a lark before the day was done. We took our dinners in our pockets, and for dessert—ah, well! there hangs a story.

We had no sooner finished our sparrow patties, than little

Floss (one of my prettiest cousins) said how much she would like to have some dessert.

‘That’s easily managed,’ said I, pointing to a tree of golden apples near by. ‘You have only to say the word, my dear, and I’ll pick you as many as you like.’

‘But I don’t think they belong to father,’ said Floss, looking very prim, but eyeing the apples longingly all the Same.

‘Frisk,’ I shouted, for the young puss was just off bird’s-

nesting, does that apple-tree belong to your father or not?’

‘Who else should it belong to?’ cried Frisk, looking mischievous.

Well, I wasn’t going to waste my time answering silly questions like that, so over the fence I scrambled, Frisk and Wink, his younger brother, soon following my example.

Up the tree we climbed, and as quickly as possible we stuffed our pockets full of lovely ripe apples.

Just as we were thinking of coming down, we heard





THERE WAS A DOG RIGHT UNDER OUR FEET.

*See p. 79.*

a horrid, fierce bark, and, lo and behold, there was a dog right under our feet!

‘Get out,’ said I, trying to be brave (Frisk and Wink were too frightened to speak). ‘Who do you think *you* are?’

‘I’m Sir Whiskerton Grumps’ watch-dog,’ was the answer; ‘and I’ll soon tell you what *you* are.’

‘What is that?’ I asked.

‘A disgraceful set of trespassers,’ he barked; ‘and if you don’t get down from the tree this minute, I’ll go and tell my master.’

‘Go and tell him now,’ I purred impudently; ‘isn’t that Sir Whiskerton the other side of the hedge’

The watch-dog ran to look; and while he was gone, we bolted down from the tree and fled for our lives.

Oh, how excited all the others were when we told them the story; and no wonder, you see, for it really *was* an exciting adventure.

Our next prank didn’t have quite such a happy ending.

Success had made us bold, and we decided to go trespass-



ing again, this time into Sir Whiskerton Grumps' beautiful park. It adjoined Pussboro Farm, and he was uncle's landlord.

One of the first things we saw was old Whiskerton's motor standing in the middle of the drive.

No one was near, so We went up and had a good look at it.

'Oh, what a be-eau-tiful motor!' purred Floss; 'it looks as if it might belong to a king.'

'Rubbish!' said I (these

little country cousins of mine hadn't seen much, you know); 'there are loads better than this in town.'

'Don't believe it,' said Frisk.

'As for speed,' I went on, 'it looks a regular lumbering old thing. I reckon I could run as fast as that could travel.'

Just as I had made this boast, we heard footsteps, So we scuttled off as fast as we could.

'Hi, there! you cats! What are you after?'





HE GAVE CHASE IN HIS MOTOR.

It was Sir Whiskerton himself, and, unfortunately for us, he was in a nasty ugly temper.

‘If I catch you,’ he went on, ‘you shall every one of you spend the night in jail.’

Then he gave chase in his motor. My fur! how frightened we were!

We ran as we had never run before. Out of the park gates we rushed, and down the country road, looking in vain for somewhere to hide.

Presently something went wrong with the car, and Sir Whiskerton had to get out to

set it right. This gave us a chance to get on well in front. But he was soon up again and in his seat, and the awful, panting, puffing motor was after us like a hobgoblin.

Sometimes Sir Whiskerton slackened his speed, playing with us, just as we love to play with a mouse. Then he raced after us again, until at last we came to a blind road (this, you know, means a road with no way out of it), and here we were caught like rats in a trap

‘Now then, youngsters,’

said he, and his voice had an awful sound, 'you are my prisoners. I hope you've enjoyed your run; I have immensely.' (Wicked old cat !)

At this Floss wailed, her cries were really pitiful.

'Oh, please sir,' mewed she, 'we won't do it any more. Let us off this time, please, *please* do.'

As I have said before, Floss was a pretty little thing and I suppose her beautiful, tearful eyes moved Sir Whiskerton's hard heart, for the next time

he spoke there was mercy in his tones.

‘Well,’ said he, ‘as it’s your first offence, I will; but mind, the next time I catch you trespassing on my estate, I’ll run you in, every one of you.’

As we had had enough running to last us a month, we promised faithfully never to offend again, and so we were let off without further punishment.

But we were not destined to escape scot-free; for he wrote to uncle and told him all about our doings. The consequence



was that for a whole week we never had a single taste of pickled mouse-tail, which was rather hard lines, as it was a special dainty with every one of us.

Chapter VII  
We go a-Fishing

‘WHAT shall we do to-day?’

So said I to Frisk one fine morning at breakfast, about ten days after our last adventure.

‘None of your pranks, you know,’ said uncle, glancing up from *The Catty Times*.

‘Of course not, uncle.’ I

answered, looking as good as gold.

‘Let’s go fishing,’ said Frisk, ‘in old Whiskerton’s stream.’

‘You must ask his agent’s permission first,’ put in auntie; ‘don’t forget that.’

‘All right, mummie,’ replied Frisk; ‘another cup of milk, please—and when you’ve *quite* done with the mouse turnover Wink, my boy, I’ll have a little piece.’

Wink handed him the turnover rather unwillingly. He had evidently set his greedy

affections on having the whole of it.

‘Supposing the agent should say no?’ I asked.

‘Supposing you are a silly!’ retorted Frisk, ‘which wouldn’t be hard to suppose.’

Here he winked his eye.

For answer I put my chair on his tail and made him squeak.

‘He never says no to any of his master’s tenants,’ said auntie; ‘the only thing is, that whoever fishes in Sir Whiskerton’s stream must send him a part of whatever is caught.’

‘Right ho!’ laughed I.

‘We’ll catch a whale,  
And send him the tail.’

‘Very good,’ laughed Wink;  
‘didn’t know you could make  
up poetry, old man.’

After that we got so merry  
auntie had to call us to order

Well, we finally settled to  
go minnow-fishing; and as  
soon as we could we got our  
tackle together, and off we  
started. We called at the  
agent’s house, but he hap-  
pened to be out; and just as  
we were wondering what we  
should do, we suddenly came

across Sir Whiskerton himself.

‘Well, you cats!’ said he in his nastiest tone, ‘and what are you after?’

‘Permission, sir,’ answered I, as all the rest seemed afraid to speak, ‘to fish in your waters.’

‘Then you just won’t get it,’ said the surly old cat.

With this he turned on his heel and marched away. Did you ever hear of anything so disagreeable in all your life?

I looked at Frisk, and Frisk

looked at me, and then we just let fly.

‘Hateful old horror!’ cried Frisk.

‘He’s worse than that,’ said I, ‘he’s the *hatefulest* of the horrors; but there! I vote we don’t let him spoil our fun. Let’s go fishing somewhere else.’

‘There’s not another minnow-stream in the place,’ answered Frisk, looking nearly ready to cry.

‘All right, old chap; cheer up,’ said I. ‘Let’s go fishing without his permission.’

And so, to make a long story short, we did—at least Frisk and I did, the others were afraid.

We chose a lovely little spot under a shady tree, and here we sat waiting—I don't know how long—for a bite.

'Any luck?' said a voice close by.

We didn't know it at the time; but the voice belonged to a chap who was on a visit to Sir Whiskerton Grumps.

'Be quiet, you wooden-head!' I answered; 'you'll frighten the fish.'



I was excited, or else perhaps I shouldn't have spoken so rudely to a stranger; for at last I felt a tugging at my hook.

'Get the landing-net ready,' I whispered to Frisk; 'I've got a beauty here—it feels like a four-pounder!'

Frisk was as excited as I was.

'Shouldn't wonder,' said he 'if it's a pike; play with him just a bit before you land him.'

I tried to do as Frisk said. 'It's coming—it's coming!'

cried I. 'My purr! it feels big enough to feed us for a week.'

Nearer and nearer to the surface came the 'fish.' One two, three, I drew it up with all my might, and there it was out of the water. It was the funniest fish you ever saw, *I* know. No, it wasn't a pike; guess again. Trout? No, it was nothing more nor less than an old boot.

First of all, we were too disgusted for words; then the funny side struck us both, and we miaowed with laughter.



IT WAS NOTHING MORE NOR LESS THAN AN OLD BOOT

*See p. 98.*



Frisk was just about to take it off the hook and fling it back into the stream again, when I stopped him. 'You've forgotten, Frisk,' said I, 'that Sir Whiskerton Grumps expects a part of everything we catch.'

I'd forgotten, too, all about the stranger who was listening near, when I said this.

'So I had,' cried Frisk; 'perhaps he's like to have the whole of our booty!'

This was rather smart of Frisk, and I praised him for his wit before I unfolded my

plans. When I told him what I meant to do, his eyes were nearly as big as a bullock's.

‘You never will!’ said he.

‘Yes, I will; old Whiskerton shall have this boot before the day is out. I wish I could throw it at his head; but perhaps it would be more polite to send it in a fish-basket.’

Frisk miaowed with laughter again, and so did I. He's a real sporting little chap is Frisk!

We smuggled our catch home through the back door

of the farm, and then we fastened it carefully up inside a fish-basket.

In my best handwriting I addressed the label:

‘Sir Whiskerton Grumps, with komplements and many thanks for kind permishon to fish in your streem.’

I wasn't quite sure of the spelling and grammar, but in holiday time I don't trouble about such silly trifles. An errand-cat took the basket to the Park for us, and Frisk and I felt as proud as though we had caught a salmon.

We really didn't think we should be found out, but we were. That nasty tell-tale who was fishing close by when Frisk and I caught the boot, went and told Sir Whiskerton all about it.

The consequence was, that the old Grumps sent for us that same evening. A police-cat came to fetch us—fancy that! Uncle and aunt nearly died of disgrace, and, well—Frisk and I didn't feel very happy.

We were marched into the library, where Sir Whiskerton



—his eyes glaring like motor-lamps in the dark—stood with a stick ready to cane us. He had just begun to ‘show’ his wrath, when a loud shriek was heard through the open window.

‘Help! help! Save me! save me!’ cried a voice.

We all jumped through the window and made our way to where the sound came from.

We soon found out what had happened. Miss Fluffie Snowball Whiskerton Grumps had fallen into the lake

Frisk and I, as it chanced,

were the best runners and swimmers of the lot; and before you could say 'Jack Sprat' we were making our way to Miss Fluffie's assistance. We saved her, too; what do you think of that?

In a little while the spluttering, gasping young kitten was laid on the bank, and—well, to cut the matter short, Frisk and I were treated like heroes. Instead of the caning, we received a gold coin apiece, and departed with the baronet-cat's blessing.

Chapter VIII  
How we Spent our Money

**Y**OU'D like to know how we spent our money—I mean the golden half-sovereigns which Sir Whiskerton gave us for our 'marvellous pluck and courage in saving the precious life of Miss Fluffie Grumps' (extract from *The Catty Times*).

Well, thereby hangs a tale,

and I mean to tell it too, else my name isn't Frisk. Jinks isn't the only one who can tell a good story, as you'll see. We were up with the larks on Monday morning, and up *to* our larks as well.

The adventure at the Park happened on Saturday, and on the Sunday in between we were so good that We didn't even play with our own tails. But you see, goodness like that can't last; 'tisin't natural—at least, not in young kittens.

Mother made us each put the biggest part of our money

in our money-boxes ; the rest she said we could spend as we pleased, and so we did. We divided it up first of all between the six of us, and then we started off to have a good look at the shops.

As we went out of the gate mother said, 'Now, don't be selfish with your money, children. Selfish cats, you know are never happy.'

'All right, mummie,' I answered; 'you may trust us for making ourselves happy.'

We decided, first of all, we would go and see Mrs. Tibs

at the Toy Shop ; for we heard that she had a wonderful show in her window. But on the way Wink and Nappy (his twin brother) took a fancy to some goodies they saw at the confectioner's ; so in they went, and spent every penny they'd got. I wish they were not such greedy chaps ; but I suppose it can't be helped.

Then they sat down under a hedge to have their lunch (fancy ! they had only just finished their breakfast), while the other four of us made our way to Mrs. Tibs'. She had,



SHE HAD A WONDERFUL SHOW IN THE WINDOW.

*See p. 110.*





indeed, a splendid show of toys. There were Noah's arks, dancing - cats, air - balloons skipping-ropes, marbles, and lots of things besides.

Little Floss set her affections on a dancing-cat; you had only to pull the string, and the arms and legs would move, as 'nat'rel as real life,' so Mrs. Tibs said.

'Oh, Jinks!' cried Floss, 'isn't it a beauty? I *should* love to have it.'

She asked Mrs. Tibs the price; so did I, for I wanted it myself.

It was just threepence more than either of us had got.

Floss mewed with disappointment. Said Jinks—he's an awfully good sort, you know, although I *do* sit on him sometimes when he gets too perky—'Don't cry, Floss; you shall have your dancing-cat if you want him.'

Then he slipped into her paw part of his own money, and so Floss had her heart's desire.

Snowie — he's another of my brothers—bought an air-balloon with part of his

money; the rest he spent on marbles.

I bought a whip top; and links a fine knife—cheap, because one of the blades was broken; and then we all went out in the fields to play.

Wink and Nappy were still sitting under the hedge, looking too sleepy to move.

In the next field to us there were some slum kittens at play. They had come down into the country for their holiday.

Presently we began talking to them over the fence.

‘Oh, my!’ cried a poor little thin kitten, eyeing Floss’s dancing-cat, ‘what a *lovely* toy!’

‘Mrs. Tibs has got plenty more,’ said Floss, ‘if you want one.’

‘Haven’t got any money,’ mewed the slum kitten.

‘Dear! dear!’ purred Floss, looking very sorry; ‘why doesn’t your mother give you some?’

‘Haven’t got a mother,’ came the pitiful cry.

Then Floss’s mind was made up. ‘You shall have

my toy,' said she, handing the dancing-cat over the fence.

'Don't be such a silly, Floss!' cried I; 'keep it yourself. Why, it's just what you have been wanting for ever so long.'

But Floss didn't take any notice of what I said.

'Mother says, "Selfish cats are never happy,"' was her only answer; 'and I don't want to be selfish.'

There was one chap amongst the slum kittens who eyed my toy as though he'd like to eat it. He wanted it worse than

I did, because I had other toys at home; so, when I thought no one was looking, I just slipped it into his paw.

But Jinks' sharp eyes caught me in the very act.

'Don't be such a silly,' said he; 'keep it yourself!'

Just what I said to Floss.

I found out afterwards he had given his knife away to a poor little miserable kit who was all in rags and tatters.

'Shan't give away my air-balloon,' said Snowie; 'not if I know it!' So off he went running across the meadow,

his air-balloon flying in the wind.

Poor Snowie! As ill-luck would have it, the string slipped from his fingers, and the balloon rose higher and higher, till it caught in the branches of a tree, and there it stuck.

For a few minutes he looked ready to cry; then he cheered up and said, 'Ah, well! I've still got my marbles!'

But he hadn't! For what do you think had happened? They had all slipped through a hole in his pocket. Then

he *did* cry—he cried as though he would never stop.

We tried to comfort him, but it was of no use. It was just at this time that Wink and Nappy joined us.

‘Now,’ said I, ‘let’s have a game; and for pity’s sake, Snowie, stop miaowing!’

‘Can’t play—feel too ill!’ said Wink.

‘I can’t either,’ cried Nappy; ‘got indigestion.’

‘No wonder,’ I felt inclined to say; but I didn’t want to upset their tempers as well as their digestions.



‘Hullo, you cats!’ shouted a voice close by, ‘what are you up to? I’m always coming across you now.’

It was Sir Whiskerton Grumps who spoke. He looked at Jinks and me very kindly, and then he inquired as to how we had spent the money he had given us.

‘Some of it we put into our money-boxes,’ said I; ‘the rest we divided between us all!’

‘Well! and what did you all buy?’ he asked.

And would you believe it,

he kept on asking questions till he found out exactly what had happened.

‘So you’ve spent yours on cakes and tarts, and have got indigestion,’ he said, turning to Wink and Nappy; ‘whilst you’ (this to Snowie), ‘who were too selfish to give pleasure to others, have lost all you prized!’

Then, looking at Floss, Jinks and me, he added, ‘What do you three say to a ride in my motor?—it’s waiting in the road close by.’

What did we say! Why,

we could hardly speak for joy.

In a few minutes we were seated in the car, and whizzing along the road at tremendous speed.

How we enjoyed ourselves to be sure! Our only sorrow was that Sir Whiskerton Grumps couldn't take us *all*.

There! now I've finished my story. It isn't, perhaps *quite* so interesting as Jinks' tales; but it's just as good for you see it's got a moral to it. I wonder if you will be clever enough to find out what it is

Chapter IX  
Chased by a Bull

**I**F there was one creature at Pussboro' farm I disliked (said Jinks) it was Mr. Porker. I will tell you the reason why.

First of all, he had such a dreadfully big mouth that he was quite alarming, and then he was so fond of giving advice that we couldn't put up with him anyhow. His airs,

too, were ridiculous; he stalked about as though the whole farm belonged to him.

He came upon Frisk and me one morning just as we were starting out for a game in the fields.

‘Good morning, my young friends,’ grunted he; ‘how is it that you have no lessons to do to-day?’

‘’Cause it’s holiday-time Mr. Porker,’ said Frisk, ‘that’s the reason why.’

‘Holiday-time,’ Mr. Porker’s voice nearly cracked with disapproval; ‘if I had my will

I'd keep you at work the whole year round. Now, I'd just like to give you two young things a word of advice,' he went on; 'it's worth hearing, so you will please stop and listen.

'Sorry, but that's just what we can't do, Mr. Porker,' said I; 'the fact is, we are in a hurry.'

Then old Porker lost his temper, and said that he would make us listen; whereat Frisk and I, to get out of his way, scrambled up into the branches of a tree.

Once out of reach we didn't care a button for Mr. Porker or his precious advice either and we let him know it too.

Frisk started the fun by making up a verse of poetry about him, which he sung out as loudly as ever he could. This was it :

Whene'er I meet old Porker,  
He fairly makes me jump.  
He stalks just like a goblin,  
With his gr-r-rump, gr-r-rump,  
gr-r-rump.

Good, wasn't it?  
As fast as ever I could, I

made up one to match it.  
Mine was :

He thinks he is a beauty,  
But he really is a frump.  
Sure, no one could admire him,  
With his gr-r-rump, gr-r-rump,  
gr-r-rump.

After this Mr. Porker had evidently had enough of us, for he stalked away with his head in the air.

I am afraid that morning Frisk and I were in rather a naughty frame of mind; for, as soon as we got down from the tree, we were planning all sorts of mischief.



‘Let’s take a short cut,’ said I, ‘to Catkins Market, and buy something good to eat before we do anything else.’

But Frisk shook his head.

‘No,’ he said, ‘I think we’d better not; the short cut lies through the pasture.’

‘Well, why shouldn’t we go through the pasture?’ I asked, as sharp as you please.

‘Because,’ said Frisk, ‘there is a bull there, a most dreadful creature, who would kill us if he got the chance.’

‘Who’s afraid of a bull?’ cried I boastingly. ‘I’m not,

if you are. Besides, I don't see one anywhere.

I had a good look round the field as I said this.

'But father said we were not to go.' Frisk looked quite firm as he spoke.

'You are a coward!' said I, 'that's what you are! *I'm* going, if you're not.'

Frisk hated being called a coward, as I well knew, and without another word he followed me into the meadow.

We hadn't gone very far, however, before we wished we'd let well alone. For, lo

and behold, feeding behind a big tree, we suddenly came upon the terrible bull!

Oh, our poor hearts ! They nearly burst with terror. We looked at one another, then turned and simply flew. So did the bull, who at that moment caught sight of us. He snorted, he puffed, he panted—oh, dear! it was an awful moment.

At last, after running our poor little legs nearly off our bodies, we gained the fence, and were over it like a shot. The bull then turned away,

ramping and roaring, to another part of the field.

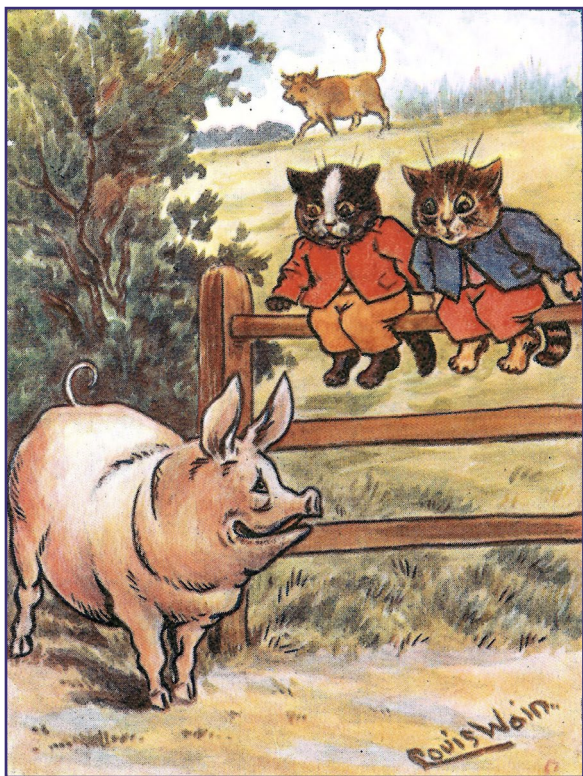
As soon as this shock was over, we had another; for just under the tree close by, his big mouth looking dreadfully hungry, stood Mr. Porker.

We flew back to the fence and sat there to get out of his way, our nerves feeling all to pieces.

‘Ah, ha! my dears,’ grunted he; I hope you enjoyed your run!’

We were too shaky and trembling even to answer.

‘Now, perhaps,’ he went



WE SAT THERE TO GET OUT OF HIS WAY.

*See p. 132.*



on, 'you'll listen to the advice was going to give you a short while ago.'

There was no help for it, we *had* to listen; for we didn't seem to have an ounce of spirit left.

He stood there and grunted out his silly old advice for I don't know how long. Then at last he got tired, and this is how he wound up:

And now that I have seen you,  
I will slowly homeward stump.  
(Pigs can rhyme as well as kittens)  
With a gr-r-rump, gr-r-r-rump,  
gr-r-r-r-rump.

No sooner had he left us, than Bob, the milkman's young kit, made his appearance.

'Hullo, young masters,' said he, 'you look as if you had had a fright. What's the matter?'

We liked Bob; so we told him all our troubles, and how we felt that we should never dare to look a bull or a cow in the face again.

'Oh, that's nonsense,' cried plucky young Bob; if you give way like that, you won't be worth anything. Come



now,' he went on, 'and I'll give you a ride on Mrs. Moo-Cow, that'll soon bring your courage back.'

At first we were far too terrified to *think* of such a thing. but Bob succeeded in persuading us at last.

We followed him into a meadow close at hand, and with his help—for we were still more trembling and frightened than we cared to admit—we managed to climb on Mrs Moo-Cow's back. She was as gentle as a lamb, and kind as could be.

Presently We forgot our fears, and enjoyed ourselves like anything. Bob ran beside us, as we trotted round the meadow, calling out 'Gee-up' or 'Gee-whoa,' whenever we wanted Mrs. Moo-Cow to hurry along or to stop.

But the best of good fun comes to an end, and soon the ringing of the dinner-bell at Pussboro' Farm warned us that it was time to hurry home. This we did, after thanking both Bob and Mrs. Moo-Cow very much for all the pleasure they had given us.



BOB RAN BESIDE US AS WE TROTTED ROUND THE MEADOW

*See p. 138.*



## Chapter X

### How we forgot our Shopping

‘**D**ON’T forget the cream cake!’ said mummie one morning to Jinks, Floss, and me, as we went out of the garden gate. ‘Remember Miss Fluffie Grumps is coming to tea, and I want to make the table look pretty.’

‘All right mummie,’ said

I; 'did you ever know me forget anything?'

'Yes,' replied mother, 'lots of times. Who forgot to wash his face before breakfast this morning?'

'Oh, that's a different thing to forgetting a cream cake,' I answered, though I felt just a little ashamed. 'Well remember our shopping all right. Is there anything else you want?'

'Yes, I really want several things if I can only trust you to remember them,' said mother.

‘Of course you can trust us, auntie,’ cried old Jinks.

‘Of course, mummie,’ this from Floss.

Then mother gave us her order, which was as follows :

2 ounces of spratty paste,  
6 pennyworth of sparrow bones for  
soup,

A pint of new milk from Tom Cat-  
tums the Dairyman, and a rich  
cream cake.

‘You shall have them, auntie, said Jinks, ‘without fail!’

So off we started.

We were really very anxious to do our shopping properly,

and so as not to forget we kept on repeating our orders over and over again.

We got them a little mixed at last, something like this :

2 ounces of new milk,  
6 pennyworth of cream bones,  
A pint of sparrow cake, and some  
spratty paste from Tom Cattums  
the Dairyman.

‘I wish we’d got them written down,’ said Floss; ‘it makes one’s head ache so to have to remember.’

‘Let’s make the order into poetry,’ suggested I; ‘that’ll be quite easy then.’



After a good five minutes  
we got a first-rate verse be-  
tween us. Here it is :

Our time we really must not waste,  
We've got to buy some spratty paste.  
Miss Fluffie's coming (dressed in silk)  
To tea, so we must have some milk.  
Then we must ask in gentle tones  
The butcher for some sparrow bones.  
And then, for everybody's sake,  
We won't forget the rich cream cake.

We thought ourselves very  
clever to have made up this  
verse, and were mighty proud  
of it, I can tell you. But  
presently something happened  
which knocked the verse and  
everything else out of our

heads. The cry of 'Mad dog! mad dog!' rang down the street.

We *are* to have adventures, it seems! Of course we were horribly frightened, and raced away for our lives.

But it was of no use. Step by step the awful creature gained on us, until he was so close that we could see the gleam of his angry eyes.

Poor little Floss! she was in a frightful state of terror. She hid herself as best she could behind her sunshade, peering over the top with eyes nearly as big as tea-saucers.





'MAD !—ENOUGH TO MAKE ANYBODY MAD !' BARKED  
THE DOG

*See p. 149.*

‘D-d-d-don’t hurt us,’ stammered I, as the mad dog drew near, ‘p-p-please don’t.’

‘Hurt you, silly!’ came back the answer; ‘why should I? I’m not after *you!*’

‘Oh, cause you’re m-m-mad,’ I stuttered.

‘Mad!—enough to make anybody mad!’ barked the dog, as he paused just a moment for breath, ‘that hateful dog of Sir Whiskerton Grumps has stolen my chop!’

Suddenly we all lost our fears.

‘Stolen your chop, has

he? the mean thief!' cried Jinks.

Now as we owed that dog a grudge for his rudeness to us over the apples, we all felt anxious to see him well punished for his theft.

So we made up our minds to follow our poor 'mad' friend to see what happened next.

On he rushed, and we after him, down the street, up a narrow lane, and into a meadow; here we caught sight of the Grumps dog in the very act of eating his stolen chop.

But his greedy enjoyment soon came to an end. The 'mad dog,' or Vic as he called himself, pounced upon him like a cat on a mouse, and there was a regular tussle.

Vic, however, soon gained a complete victory and the possession of the chop as well, while we looked on and cheered and clapped our paws.

Grumps' dog, like the cowardly bully he was, showed very little fight, and almost before we realized the battle was over he had turned tail and was nearly out of sight.

Vic, thus left master of the field, proceeded to enjoy his chop; and we, thinking that he wouldn't like to be stared at, moved on.

Now, running through the meadow was a deep stream, and upon this very stream our next adventure took place.

'Hullo!' cried Jinks all of a sudden, 'see that kit over there playing with a tub in the water?'

'Yes,' said I, looking in the direction he pointed; 'let's ask her to give us a row!'



‘No, no,’ half screamed Floss, ‘’tisn’t safe!’

Of course we didn’t take any notice of Floss’s foolish fears—she can’t help being timid, any more than we can help being brave.

Marching up to the kitten, Jinks said, in his most impudent tones:

“‘Where are you going to, my pretty maid?’”

The answer came back as pert as you please.

“‘I’m off for a voyage, sir, she said’”

“‘May we come with you,

my pretty maid?"' warbled Jinks.

"Yes, if you like, kind sirs, she said," sang the stranger kit.

With this she made room for us in the tub, and off we went.

Jinks took upon himself to be captain, and he was so reckless and daring that he soon scared us all, including the ducks on the stream, nearly into fits.

The stranger kit was so terrified that she threw her arms right round my neck.





WITH A STICK SHE TRIED TO DRAW US IN

*See p. 157.*

I felt quite shy, as well as being scared.

I think, after all, that Floss was in a worse state of alarm than any of us—not that she was in danger, for she had stayed on the bank.

With a stick she found in the meadow, one which belonged to the stranger kit, she tried to draw us in; but it was of no use, farther and farther we drifted away from her.

Then her loud screams rent the air.

‘Help! help! help!’ she shouted.

It was well she did so, for a minute later we were upset in the middle of the stream and you never heard such a cater-wauling in all your life.

To make a long story short father heard Floss's screams, and rushed from the adjoining meadow to our aid.

Of course we were saved or I should not have been writing this story; and of course we forgot all about our shopping, and so had no cream cake for tea.

We deserved punishment, you know, *really*, but we

didn't get it. Father and mother said that as it was the last week of the holidays they would let us off with only a lecture, which was very kind of them.

Jinks and I have made up our minds to work very hard at school next term. Not that we like reading, 'riting, and 'rithmetic—far from it; but because we are ambitious, and mean to get into the Cats' Parliament one day. The first law we intend to make when we are there is, that Cats' Schools are to be done

away with altogether, and that  
a kitten's life shall be all  
holiday

If it comes about, as we  
hope it will, Jinks and I shall  
be able to amuse ourselves  
and you too, by telling you  
one of these fine days, some  
more stories about Friskers  
and his Friends.



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