

DREAMLAND ADVENTURES

"CATS IN BIRDLAND"

By DADDY

Peggy hears Thomas, Tiger and Blackie Cat planning a hunting trip to Birdland. She sends General Reckless to warn the birds, and then follows with Billy.

CHAPTER III

Mr. Cat Bird

BLUE JAY was calling loudly in the woods to the north: "Here are the cats! Look out for the cats!"

In the east and south, other birds were shrieking the same alarm. "Here are the cats! Look out for the cats!"

Peggy and Billy were puzzled as to which call they should heed. Finally Billy started for the east. "You go to the south," he shouted to Peggy, waving a club which he meant to use on the cats if he caught them.

Peggy picked up a switch and ran to the south. The shrieks of the birds guided her to a sunny glade where dozens of warblers had their nurseries.

Here mother and father birds were fluttering about excitedly, while scores of baby birds pecked anxiously over the edges of their nests.

It took Peggy's sharp eyes only a moment to see the cause of all the clamor. It was Tiger Cat. He was crawling toward a nest of baby warblers, his eyes sparkling greedily. Just as Peggy caught sight of him he crouched to spring. Another instant the baby birds would be in his jaws.

Then Tiger sprang, but as he leaped into the air, Peggy's switch came crashing down on his back, giving him a stinging surprise. He hadn't seen her coming up behind him.

The smarting pain made Tiger jump so hard he flew right over the nest. Down he came sprawling among the branches of a wild rose bush.

"I'll get even for that," he snarled at Peggy as he tore himself loose and dashed away. "I'll eat all the bird babies I can find, and all the big birds, too."

Peggy ran after Tiger, but he soon lost himself in the underbrush. As she searched for him, she heard a loud whack and a squalling to the east. "How Quee! Oh!" screamed the voice of Thomas Cat.

"There! That will teach you to keep away from the birds!" shouted Billy's voice. There was a scurry among the bushes and Billy came running up.

"Did you see Thomas Cat scoot this way?" he shouted to Peggy. "No, did you see Tiger Cat scoot that way?" answered Peggy.

"If those cats kill any birds, I'll give them a licking when they get home," added Billy, as he and Peggy searched all about.

"That will be too late to save the birds," mourned Peggy. Just then they heard a burst of song in a tree close by, followed at once by a loud mew.

"There's a cat now, and it's after a bird!" whispered Peggy. She and Billy crept to an open place where they could see the bird partly hidden by leaves.

"Mew! Mew!" came the cat call again. "Look out, bird! A cat is after you," warned Peggy.

"Mew! Mew!" answered the bird. "Why, I believe the bird has swallowed a cat," cried Peggy in amazement.

"Ho! Ho!" laughed Billy, who had now caught a good look at the bird. "Why, that is Mr. Cat Bird."

"He! He! Mew! Mew! Did I fool you?" sang Cat Bird, grinning down at them.

"Mew! Mew!" sounded Tiger Cat's voice far away in the woods. He was answering Cat Bird's call.

An idea popped into Peggy's head. If Cat Bird could fool her and Billy, he might fool the cats and lead them on a false chase after the birds.

"Pretend you are a cat out hunting as they are," she explained to Cat Bird. "Lead them far away into the woods."

"But come back when I whistle," added Billy, "for I'm going to make a trap to catch those cats and punish them for hunting the birds."

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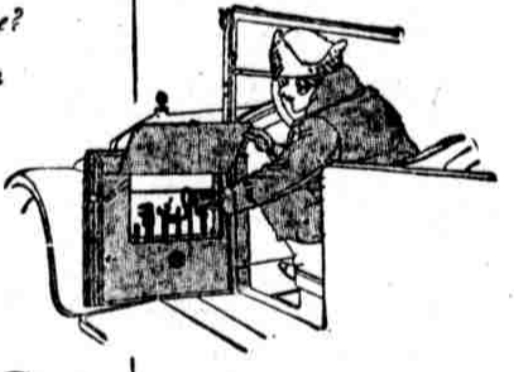
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