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 (London Morning Post, July 16, '08)

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FOR THE CHILDREN



THE TAIL OF A PUSSY CAT

By A. M. C.

MARJORIE'S mother had gone to town, Katie was busy in the kitchen, and the dollies were all cross this morning. At least, that was what Marjorie said, but she had played so long that I really think she was a wee bit tired of them.

It was a quiet house and lonely when mother went away for the day, and when you are only a little girl and have nothing but dolls to play with it is not always so very easy to amuse yourself. But dressing up was always fun, so Marjorie began to look around for some of mother's things. On the dresser stood a satin-lined box with a pearl pin which had come at Christmas, and as Marjorie had never seen it except in the lace at mother's throat she drew a chair over and began to handle it and the other trinkets which lay in the box. Now, none of you little girls and boys will be surprised when I tell you that before many minutes Marjorie had hung a chain around her neck and a new bracelet on her little fat wrist; because all of you know what fun it is to try on grown-up jewellery.

Suddenly she heard the queerest noise outside and from the window she could see perched on the top of the high wall at the end of the garden the very dearest grey pussy cat. Just as soon as Marjorie saw it she knew that a pussy cat was the very thing she wanted to play with, so, without waiting to put back the chain or the bracelet, she flew down the back stairs and out in the garden. It was disappointing to find that the pussy seemed to think it safer to remain on the top of the fence, and all Marjorie's coaxing would not make him leave it.

Pretty soon, however, she remembered that kittens love milk and she went into the kitchen to get some in a saucer. Being a wise little girl she put the saucer where the pussy could see it, and sat down to wait. Before long down came Mister Pussy Cat, and in a few moments Marjorie and he were the best of friends. Such fun as they had together, and Marjorie knew if this dear kitten would only stay she would never be lonely again. After a while they both grew tired, so she gathered him into her lap and sat stroking the soft, furry coat. The sun shone on mother's bracelet, which still hung on Marjorie's arm, and pussy's paw went out to tap it gently. Off it came and over his head it slipped, just large enough to make the most beautiful collar, and then came the thought of what fun it would be to dress him up in doll's clothes.

"Lie down, dear, until I come back," said Marjorie, putting him softly down on the garden seat, while she ran into the house for the clothes.

It took her some minutes to find the proper things and get back into the garden again, and oh! how disappointed she was not to find her kitty waiting for her. She called, and called, and waited a long time, but no kitty came, so she sadly took the doll's clothes back into the nursery.

Now Marjorie had altogether forgotten that when she left the kitten in the garden she had also left her mother's pretty bracelet with the glittering stones, and only remembered it when she saw that the chain still hung around her neck. Then she was frightened, and after putting the chain back where it belonged she once more ran into the garden to see if the kitten had dropped it before he went away. But no bracelet lay on the seat or in the grass, although Marjorie looked a long, long time and nearly cried to think how sorry mother would be when she told her. She was still looking when Katie's voice called her to come in and change her

dress, and at first she thought she would tell Katie about it because Katie never scolded, even when Marjorie's muddy little boots made tracks on her clean kitchen floor. But it was so hard! Marjorie never knew that anything could be so hard to tell. So she was very quiet and after she was dressed she slipped to the drawing-room window to watch for her mother's return. Maybe it would not be so hard to tell her. But when Katie had said what a good little girl she had been and amused herself all afternoon, Marjorie could not think of any way to start, and suddenly it came to her that it would be much better to wait until to-morrow as the kitten *might* come again into the garden and she could put the bracelet back.

She was glad when bed time came, and was very near to telling the whole story when mother stroked back her hair and gave her that last good-night kiss and hug, but it would be easier in the morning, she thought, so the light was turned low and mother went back to the library for the quiet talk she and father had after Marjorie was in bed.

But suddenly she seemed so very lonely that a great big sob got caught in her throat and then a lot of other sobs came quickly, and before she quite knew it she was crying very hard. For a long time no one heard the poor little girl as she lay there weeping in the dark, and after awhile she knew that it could not be harder to tell than it was to lie alone there so very miserable!

So she crept out of bed and stole to the top of the stair to call out. The story was told with her mother sitting on the side of the bed patting her into quiet, and you must not think for a moment that she was pleased to hear of what Marjorie had done. But she said they must tell father as they three could have no secrets from one another, and he sat on the other side of the bed and Marjorie and her mother told it all over again.

Just as they had finished, and the little girl had promised that whatever happened, even when she was a much bigger little girl, she would never be afraid to tell her mother and father anything, the telephone rang, and in a few moments, up the stairs, two at a time, came father, to say that the pussy cat (who belonged to some one



"The very dearest grey pussy cat!"

in the next block) had just arrived home wearing a bracelet around his neck engraved on the inside with Marjorie's mother's name. So you will see it was not so very hard after all, because the bracelet was returned that very night and next day the pussy really did come back and finish that saucer of milk which they had left at the end of the garden for him.

*** * * CUDDLE BABY**

By Charlton Lawrence Edholm.

CUDDLE BABY ran away—
 Old Man Walker's here to stay.

Cuddle Baby's gone; I thought he
 Never would be quite so naughty.
 Old Man Walker's mighty proud,
 Walks three steps and crows out loud;
 If he isn't much more humble
 Old Man Walker's bound to tumble.
 Cuddle Baby isn't so,
 Blinks his peepers, crooning low,
 Glad to let his mama rock her
 Cuddle-Baby-Old-Man-Walker.
 Sleepy-time come soon, for then
 Cuddle Baby's home again.

—New Idea Woman's Magazine.