



FLUFFY RUFFLES *Drawings by Wallace Morgan*



TWADDLES' LITTLE JOKE.
 One morning Fluffy Ruffles to her breakfast came down late.
 "Good morning," said Aunt Mary. "I decided not to wait, because I've got a meeting that I really must not miss—
 Oh, by the way, can you explain the meaning, dear, of this?"
 She picked the morning paper up and passed it to her niece.
 "The very first advertisement. I think it is a piece
 Of impudent effrontery. Who could have put in that?"
 Then Fluffy Ruffles read out loud:—"For every pretty cat
 'I'll pay each child who brings me one a dollar—maybe more.
 To-day; the Mall in Central Park. From half-past three to four.
 (Signed) Fluffy Ruffles" Fluffy gasped and then at last she spoke:—
 "Now some one put that notice in who thought it was a joke."



"You will not notice it," said Aunt. Said Fluffy, "Yes, I will; I'll be on hand, I'll buy the cats and I will pay the bill.
 Although some wag inserted it there's many a little tot
 Will be quite disappointed if I am not on the spot."
 And so that afternoon the two were early on the scene
 And Fluffy had a roll of bills, all fresh and crisp and green.
 At half-past three the fun began—a sight to frighten rats—
 At least a half a hundred "kids" and full as many cats.
 Plain backyard ones and Persian ones and tabbies, black and gray,
 And Thomas cats, with lordly stride, and kittens, full of play;
 And Maltese cats, and tailless cats, and yellow cats and white,
 And gentle pussies full of purr—and bruisers full of fight.



"Here, puss, puss, puss!" said Fluffy, and at once the cats began
 To scramble from encircling arms and to fair Fluffy ran.
 She seemed to wear a catskin coat, and it became her well.
 And when they saw the pretty sight it made the children yell.
 Then Traddles came up suddenly with bow and sheepish grin.
 "Miss Fluffy, please forgive me." "Did you put that notice in?"
 "I did," said Traddles, "for a joke. But really now, I say"—
 "The joke was good. The cats are yours and for them you must pay."
 Then Traddles showed himself a sport; he took his wallet out
 And paid a dollar for each cat (the while the children shout).
 "Here, children," said Miss Fluffy, "I will now a dollar pay
 If each of you will take his cat and carry it away."
 Each child then took a dollar bill and took his cat as well,
 And hurried homeward down the Mall with merry shout and yell.
 Then Fluffy took Aunt Mary's arm and to her thus she spoke:—
 I think the children liked the point of Mr. Traddles' joke."

