

JIMMY CROW AND PUSSY CAT

By Etta Squier Seley

This interesting little story was given to this section through the courtesy of Mrs. Etta Squier Seley. It is one of a series of short stories she has written which are being sold to magazines with the book rights reserved, and the entire group will later be brought out in book form. This story appeared in Today's Housewife.

Now listen, my dears, and I will tell you the funniest story about our pussy cat and a big bird we called Jimmy Crow. Jimmy Crow was a very large crow—and oh, so black. He did not belong to us; in fact, we thought him a nuisance; a neighbor had tamed him and he was smart and really cute, but we thought him better off at home. However, he would fly over almost every day and stalk about the barn yard, frightening the chickens away from their grain; and if a biddy or rooster was braver than the rest and tried to chase him, he would just spread out his big black wings and screech "Caw! Caw!" at them until they would run away from him; so you can see why we thought him a bother.

One day grandfather came in laughing and said, "Come on, everybody, there is going to be a show in the back yard."

"What kind of a show?" we demanded. "An animal and bird show," he replied. "Pussy Cat is beginning to educate her kittens; she has them up on the summer kitchen roof, and Jimmy Crow is up there. I guess she thinks she can catch him and make her kittens believe she is a wonderful cat. Hurry! We don't want to miss the fun; step quietly now."

So we all tip-toed out into the back yard where we could see the summer kitchen roof, and there—

sure enough—was Jimmy Crow strutting back and forth and pretending not to see Pussy Cat at all.

She had coaxed Frizz and Fuzz, her two half-grown kittens, up on the roof and now she was crouching and beginning to crawl slowly toward Jimmy Crow. Frizz and Fuzz acted rather frightened and kept well behind her, but tried to go as she did. They crouched low, and put one paw after the other as carefully, and when Pussy Cat would wish her tail a little they would wiggle their short tails too, and oh, it was so funny we just had to laugh, but grandfather said:

"Sh-h-h, you must be still so they won't notice you!"

So after that we kept very still, and all at once Pussy Cat gave a big jump right at Jimmy Crow; and he just flew straight up in the air and cried "Caw! caw!" very loud and landed on the roof again on the other side of Pussy Cat. She was dreadfully surprised, and ran back a way with her kittens and began all over again; and they tried to act as she did, but when she jumped again—over her back flew Jimmy Crow, acting as if he was getting really mad.

Three times Pussy Cat jumped at him, and the third time he was mad; and he spread his big black wings and ran screeching along the roof at her, and poor Pussy Cat had to scurry with her babies to scramble down off the roof.

Then we did laugh hard and Jimmy Crow flew away home. Poor Pussy Cat must have felt very humiliated, and we rather think she probably explained to Frizz and Fuzz that it was just a mistake, and for them not to try to catch that kind of bird. At least we never saw any of them try it again.



MISS PAULINE McCLINTOCK Who Has Worked With the Bureau



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shrieked at them: "The hobby horse!" "Hold your tongue!" cried the crowd together, turning to shake furious fists at the bold fellow, but all they saw was a neat square box. The Jack-in-the-box had had his say and had flown for the shelter of his little square home.

When the noise of their angry gabbling had died down, the Jack-in-the-box sidled stealthily over to the hobby horse. "I know how it is, old fellow," said he, in a voice so kind that the other toys, if they had

came into the toy shop a beautiful woman, who handed the toy shop man a crisp new bill, and in a very short time the handsome hobby was riding along at a terrific pace, or so it seemed to him, and he was carried up some steps and into a big, sunny room in which there was a little girl and a little boy, and a lot of other toys that the hobby had never seen before.

The little girl and boy sprang up when the hobby was brought in. "Oh, oh, oh, oh!" they cried in a breath-

"what a nice, nice horse!" They flew to his side and threw their arms around his neck, hugging and squeezing him, wild with delight. The hobby horse made no sign that he understood, but his wooden heart went ker-thump pitti-pat, ker-thump pitti-pat from sheer joyousness.

His little new master put foot into the stirrups and sprang onto his back. "We are off to war!" he cried, rocking and rocking with might and main. "Forward charge!"

Go steady my steed! Follow on my men for your country's flag!" He rose in the stirrups, and waved his sword over the hobby's head. Tanks fell before them, and the smoke and thunder of war was there. The hobby pranced and careened and plunged. He meant to do what his general wished, it mattered not if he ached and bled!

sometimes the hobby horse and his old friend the Jack-in-the-box took part in splendid adventures and did great and glorious deeds. Came one tomorrow in which the little girl celebrated a birthday, and the hobby horse and the other toys found themselves surrounded by a host of new toys, all from some other place than the old man's toy shop. Then the little girl burst into the room again, with another package. She tore off the wrappings, and the paper was no more than loosened than the cover of a little square box flew back and a head popped out: "Hello folks! I'm here!" It was no other than the hobby's faithful old friend Jack-in-the-box!



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A TOY SHOP TALE

A Story for the Children

By Molly Brunk

THE moment the queer old man turned the key in the lock each night the toys on the shelves of the toy shop dropped their stiffness and rigidity and fell to cutting up, skylarking, jollying one another and having a good time generally. The row of tin soldiers that had stood at attention during the long hours, sprang to their guns and began a mimic battle; the beautiful dolls that had smiled their fixed, scarlet-mouthed smiles at little girls and their pretty mothers, turned their attention to the little boy dolls, flirting and coquetting outrageously. The bisque pigs set up a terrible noise, chasing one another around and around in the center of the toy shop floor, squealing and crying out deafeningly in their wild revelry, and the glass and paper-mache birds did their best to make themselves heard above the din of the noisy animals in the toy zoo.

The only toy that retained its dignity through these night-time frolics was the handsome hobby horse, who stood with his head held high on his splendidly-arched neck, a haughty, imperturbable expression on his high bred face. When the moonlight filtered into the toy shop through the small-paned window, the hobby horse turned into a burnished charger, with shining silver dapples, and a flowing mane and tail. The other toys in the toy shop did not like the handsome hobby horse. Some of the smaller hobbies were frankly jealous of his beauty and the other toys did not like him because they thought

he was too proud, and disdainful of them and their ways.

Sometimes when they were tired of their boisterous fun, they fell to discussing the hobby horse. They spoke under their breaths, but although the hobby horse heard he gave no sign. In all that throng one handsome hobby had but one friend—the impudent Jack-in-the-box. There was nothing in common between the two unless it was that they were both disliked by the others for the Jack-in-the-box was as cordially hated by the toys as was the hobby horse. He had a rude way of bobbing out of his box, and jabbering his opinion, whenever his opinion was least wanted, that was very irritating.

"I should hate," whispered the milkmaid to the fireman standing next to her, "to be the hobby horse, with such a grand air and stuck-up look."

"Me too," broke in the monkey on the circus cart, turning a handspring just to show how glad he was that he could be ridiculous.

"I shouldn't wonder if his neck had frozen that way," commented the zebras.

"Jealous lot!" screamed the Jack-in-the-box, jumping up in his box and snapping his teeth together so tightly that his chin clicked against his crooked nose. "Who is it that the little boys and girls admire when they come into the toy shop?" he demanded. "Who is it that the grown-ups caress?" Then, not waiting for an answer, he



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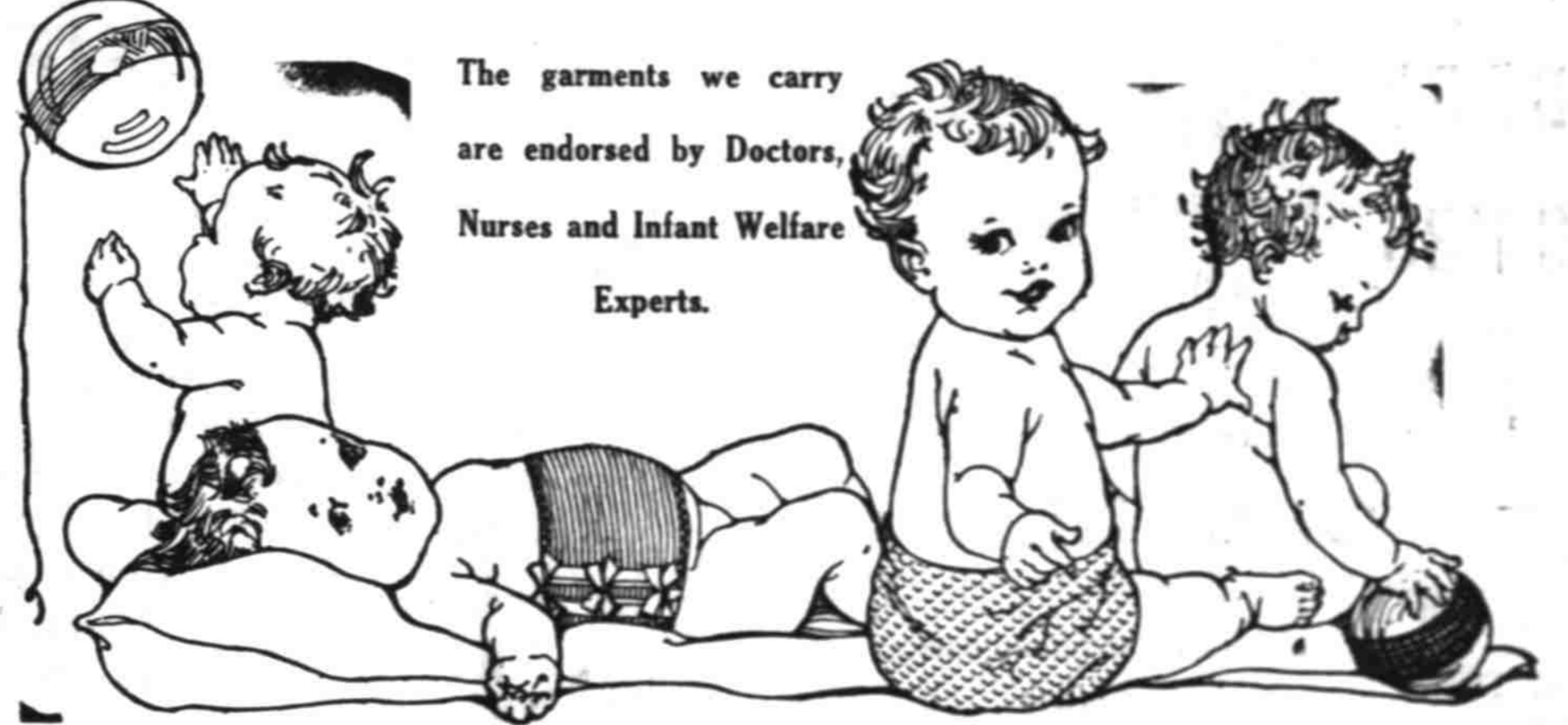
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