

ONE SHILLING: OR, MOUNTED ON CLOTH, TWO SHILLINGS.

THE
GAT'S
TEA
PARTY.

GEORGE ROUTLEDGE
AND SONS.

THE CATS' TEA-PARTY.



ONE fine summer evening Miss Minnie sent out her little servant, Muff, with cards of invitation to a Tea-Party.

Among those whom Miss Minnie invited, were Miss and Master Tabbie; Master Cyprus Katte; Miss Turtleshell, and her cousin Miss Kitz; a young gentleman from the East, named Angola; a gentleman from the Isle of Man, who wore a round coat without any tail; and a pretty young French lady named Pouff.

As soon as Muff returned, Miss Minnie began to dress for the party. Muff brushed her hair out and curled it, while Miss Minnie sat learning a new poem by the favourite poet and musician of Katzland.

Minnie was scarcely dressed, when there came a knock at the door; Muff had to scurry away to her room as quickly as she could, to put herself in company trim, before she could open the door; while Minnie hastened down to the drawing-room to be



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ready to receive her friends; but first she ran to her store-closet to put out the best china tea-service, not trusting that to Muff, for fear she should break any of it. Then she skipped back to the drawing-room just as Muff announced Mademoiselle Pouff and Monsieur Angola.

This gentleman, hearing that the French lady was also invited to Minnie's Tea-Party, called at her residence, and in the most polite manner possible offered to escort her thither; he was at the head of the aristocracy, and, although of Eastern extraction, was the leader of all the best society in Katzland. Mademoiselle Pouff felt highly honoured indeed, as she walked by his side along the streets; and she was certainly the envy of all the belles who happened to look out of their windows as she passed.

Next came Miss and Master Tabbie, the children of a respectable and comfortable pair, very different to Mademoiselle Pouff; the rest of the visitors arrived soon after, Mr. Manx last of all, and when he entered, there was no end of giggling and whispering among the young ladies at his disregard of the fashion by appearing at a lady's Tea-Party in a coat without a tail.

Muff brought in the tea, and they all sat down, every one



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noticing the way in which Monsieur Angola and Mademoiselle Pouff handled their teacups, or raised their little bits of cake to their mouths. Minnie talked away merrily to her guests, and asked Mr. Cyprus to sing. After clearing his throat with a cup of tea, he begged one of the ladies to accompany him on the piano.

So Miss Kitz sat down, and first dashed off a prelude while Mr. Cyprus again cleared his throat. Then he began singing in the most delightful strains, which were, as Minnie expressed it, like the sighing of the wind. The applause was great.

Tea over, Minnie proposed a game of Croquet, which was joyfully agreed to. Mr. Manx was most lively, rushing about and fetching the mallets, and sticking the hoops in the ground; then the ladies had to choose their balls; but there were not enough for all to play, so that some of the party amused themselves with swinging under the trees, for you must know that it is not considered at all childish to swing, or play blind man's buff in Katzland, but all the Katzfolk who have gardens, have swings. Meanwhile Mademoiselle played croquet most elegantly, and several times croqueted Mr. Manx's ball; she looked very coquettish indeed, and very handsome too, as Monsieur Angola evidently thought.





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As soon as it began to grow dark, they went in-doors again to a good game of Blind Man's Buff, which all seemed to enjoy very much, excepting Monsieur Angola and Mademoiselle Pouff, who thought it much too romping a game, and beneath their dignity. Mr. Manx was Blind Man; it was a long time before he caught anyone, but when he did, it was Master Tabbie; they made him say, before they took off his bandage, who he thought it was; he guessed Miss Turtleshell; this occasioned a great laugh, and he looked rather foolish when the handkerchief was taken off his eyes, and so did the young lady he had named.

Taking advantage of the game, Minnie slipped out of the room to help Muff to prepare the supper. Muff told her mistress she thought the mice were not so fresh as they ought to be. Minnie determined to give the butcher a good scolding the next morning, but thought that if the mice were fried instead of fricasseed as she had intended, they would be very nice. Then there were the creams to see after. Minnie had whipt them in the morning, and now she poured them into glasses and put jam in with them. Then Muff put some cold sparrows on a dish, and garnished them with parsley, and there was pickled rat's tongue to eat with them. Besides all these there were a great



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many cakes and a few fish, so that altogether, when the supper was set on the table, it looked extremely tempting, and so thought Muff, for her little paw, whether by accident or not I cannot pretend to say, was several times immersed in the creams as she carried them from the pantry to the table.

The supper went off very well indeed, and they all greatly enjoyed themselves. After drinking Minnie's health, and thanking her for the pleasant evening they had spent, each gentleman drank to his partner. Then, as the moon was shining beautifully clear and bright, Monsieur Angola proposed smoking in the garden. Each gentleman took a cigar, and opening the bow window that led on to the lawn, they stepped out to discuss the latest news.

Minnie and her lady friends sat down to gossip about the fashions, and such like things.

Not until the church clock struck twelve did the party break up; then there was a wrapping up, for it was a chilly night. A carriage came for Miss Turtleshell and Miss Kitz, who lived at too great a distance to walk. She kindly offered a seat to Mademoiselle Pouff, who, however, preferred a moonlight walk with Monsieur Angola. The proffered seat was accepted by a Miss Spot, and after many adieus the carriage drove off. Mademoiselle

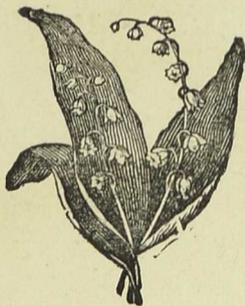


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Pouff had a great many wraps, so that she went up to Minnie's bedroom to dress. "Adieu, ma chère," said she to the hostess, "I hope that it will be to your pleasure to visit me very soon," and she turned to accept Monsieur Angola's arm.

At this moment Master Tabbie was standing contemplating the French belle's beauty, when he was aroused by Mr. Manx saying loudly that he would walk home with him. Master Tabbie started forward, and unfortunately stepped on Mademoiselle Pouff's sweeping skirt. The poor young fellow was thrown hastily to the ground, and lay sprawling at Minnie's feet. There was a contemptuous smile on Monsieur Angola's lip, and great annoyance visible on the beauty's face. Master Tabbie looked rather discomfited as he scrambled up and awkwardly begged pardon.

Mademoiselle Pouff and Monsieur Angola walked off very affectionately, arm in arm. Mr. Manx and Tabby followed, and Minnie was left to repose, and to dream over the events of her little Tea-Party.



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