

S. Marshak

Pussies Mustn't Fight

Good Manners



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Good manners

A bear aged five or six was taught
What he ought not and what he ought:

“When taken out for tea, my lad,
You mustn’t squeal and roar like mad.
It’s bad to boast and to be rude
And make a noise while chewing food.
Take off your cap to folks you know
And don’t forget to say hullo.



"Try not to walk upon all fours
And don't catch fleas with your teeth,
of course.

"Don't yawn when anyone's around,
But if you must, take care
To cover up your open mouth
With your paw like a decent bear.

"Don't ever squabble, scratch or fight.
Obey your parents, be polite.
Show older folks respect.
For instance, Granny has poor sight,
So always see her home by night.
You'll do so, I expect?"





But though he seemed to get politer,
In fact, he stayed the same young blighter.
He bowed to animals he knew,
Brown bears and even foxes too.
He'd rise and offer them his seat
And on the whole was rather sweet.
And yet with those he didn't know
He wasn't half so good—o no.
He growled and snarled and used bad words,
Disturbed the bees and scared the birds.





And when he went by underground
He snapped his teeth and answered back
And pushed the passengers around
Until they thought their ribs would crack.



It takes a lot of time and care
To civilise a rude young bear,
And yet—our story makes it plain—
All efforts may be spent in vain

Pussies mustn't fight



Tim and Tom
Were pussy-cats.
They wore fine coats
And snowy spats.

One fine day, I don't know how,
Those pussy-cats began a row.

Tim bit Tom and Tom bit Tim.
Long raged the battle, fierce and grim.





They ripped the air with howls and wails.
Now all that's left of them are tails.

So, my friends, as you can see,
A fight may lead to misery!





TRANSLATED FROM THE RUSSIAN
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КАК СЕБЯ ВЕСТИ
СКАЗКА О ДВУХ КОТАХ

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