

Mary Kott



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AND

HER CAT.

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THE
STORY

OF

LITTLE MARY and her CAT.

THERE was once a pret-ty lit-
tle girl, call-ed Ma-ry, who
was ve-ry fond of an old wo-
man, that liv-ed in a small
white cot-tage, just at the end
of her pa-pa's gar-den. This
old wo-man had nurs-ed this
pet-ty lit-tle girl, and ta-ken
great care of her, when she was
but a ba-by, and not a-ble to
wak, or put a-ny thing in-to her
own mouth. Nurse Brown, for



that was her name, was a kind good old wo-man. She lov-ed lit-tle Ma-ry dear-ly, and Ma-ry lov-ed her nurse dear-ly, and she u-sed ve-ry of-ten to go to the cot-tage, where some-times she would read to her nurse, and some-times nurse Brown would tell sto-ries to her, or sing old songs, such as she had learn-

ed from the books that are sold at Mr. Ta-bart's shop, in New Bond Street, where all kinds of books that can a-muse or instruct chil-dren are to be bought. And, af-ter tell-ing these tales, or sing-ing these old songs, nurse Brown u-sed ve-ry of-ten to say, you have a good mam-ma, my sweet Ma-ry, and you say you love her. It is ve-ry ea-sy for a-ny lit-tle girl to say those words, but my Ma-ry must shew that she loves her mam-ma by mind-ing all that her mam-ma says, and ne-ver do-ing those things which her mam-ma tells her it is wrong to do. If a lit-tle girl will tell a lie, or do any thing which she is bid not to do,

she gives her mam-ma great pain. Yes, when lit-tle girls are naughty, mam-ma's have more pain in their hearts than all the lit-tle girls in the world e-ver felt with the tooth-ache, or head-ache, or sore fin-gers. But nurse Brown's dear Ma-ry will ne-ver give her mam-ma such a pain in her heart. Ma-ry's blue eyes, fix-ed up-on her nurse, u-sed to shine brightly, while the good old wo-man talk-ed to her in this way; and she was al-ways rea-dy to jump for joy, when the hour came in which her mam-ma gave her leave to skip through the gar-den, and a-way to nurse Brown's neat clean cot-tage, where nurse, in a plain stuff gown, with a can



and a-pron as white as snow, was al-ways to be found at her spin-ning wheel, with her cat sitting by her side.

The name of this cat was Muff, and Muff was as pret-ty a cat as a-ny in the whole world. His back was stri-ped with black and grey stripes, his face was round, and broad, and his breast and paws were as white as nurse Brown's a-pron. Muff was al-ways ve-ry glad to see Ma-ry. He would some-times watch for her at the win-dow ; and he would of-ten go to the door of the cot-tage, to meet her when she was com-ing a-cross the path. If Ma-ry play-ed with Muff, Muff

ne-ver put out his claws to scratch Ma-ry.

At last poor nurse Brown fell sick, and the Doc-tor thought she would not live. Ma-ry's mam-ma sent wine to the good old wo-man, and pby-sic, and all things that were like-ly to do her ser-vice; and she sent a per-son to take care of her, and at-tend up-on her night and day. Ma-ry pray-ed her mam-ma to let her go and at-tend up-on nurse Brown; but her mam-ma said, no, my dear child, you are not strong e-nough, nor old e-nough, to nurse a sick per-son. You may go to see her, and sit be-side her, and tell her how much you love her, and you



may give her the cup with her
 phy-sic when you are there ; but
 if you were to stay all night, it
 would dis-tress her much, for she
 knows that sit-ting up at night
 would make you ve-ry ill too.
 So Ma-ry went once a day
 to the cot-tage, and tears u-sed
 to fill the eyes of the kind
 heart-ed lit-tle girl to see how

ve-ry bad her poor old friend was, but she turn-ed a-way her head, or went to the o-ther end of the room, to wipe a-way her tears, that she might not grieve her poor nurse with cry-ing.

Nurse Brown was in great pain all day and all night, but she did not e-ven groan. She pray-ed to God that he would bless her dear Ma-ry, and make her a good girl, and a good wo-man. When she thought she should not live ma-n-y hours long-er, she sent for Ma-ry, to take her last leave of her. My dear Ma-ry, she said, you must ne-ver for-get that I die hap-py, be-cause I have al-ways been a good wo-man: you will be happy if you are good.

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Think of me as you grow old-er. You know I am but a poor wo-man. I ne-ver had a fine house nor a-ny fine clothes, nor a coach, nor ser-vants to wait up-on me, but I have al-ways done that which I knew to be right, and good per-sons have lov-ed me for so do-ing. I have been hap-py in my lit-tle cot-tage and in my stuff gown, be-cause I was good, and be-cause all good per-sons lov-ed me, and spoke well of me. You will see nurse Brown no more, my dear child; but you can al-ways love to think of her, and of all that she has said to you. I have no-thing to give my Ma-ry but my cat. He is as gen-tle, as kind, and as good as a cat can be. Take Muff home with you, take care of



him, and if you should hap-pen at a-ny time to do wrong, when you look at Muff, you will think of me, and be sor-ry for your fault.

Ma-ry and Muff were ta-ken home by the ser-vant, and nurse Brown di-ed that night.

Ma-ry cri-ed sad-ly; and poor Muff, who did not know at all why he was tak-en from the cot-

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tage, and his old mis-tress, would not eat the bread and milk that the ser-vant brought to him, but walk-ed round, and round the room, and scratch-ed at the doors and win-dows, to find some place to get out at. If any one came in-to the room he hid him-self un-der a ta-ble or chair, but he would come out if Ma-ry call-ed him, for he knew her voice ; and the most part of that af-ter-noon she let him lie in her lap, and then he was con-tent and qui-et, but the mo-ment she put him down from her lap, he crept a-bout cry-ing mew, mew, and look-ing up at her, as much as to say, pray take me to my own home a-gain.

But in a ve-ry few days Muff was as hap-py in his new home as he had been in the cot-tage, for Ma-ry was ve-ry kind to him, and cats soon-er for-get their old friends than lit-tle girls do. Ma-ry did not for-get nurse Brown; she strove to be al-ways a good girl, she tri-ed not to be an-gry, or cross, or fret-ful; and when she got rid of any bad temper that was ri-sing in her heart, she u-sed to stroake Muff, while she thought of his old mis-tress. Some-times she would say a-loud, ah! Muff, if nurse Brown were a-live, how hap-py it would make her to see me such a good girl! Then Muff would purr a-bout her, and look up in her face, as if he

too, was made hap-py by Ma-ry's good-ness.

Ma-ry and Muff were the best of friends and play-fel-lows. If Ma-ry play-ed with her ball, he u-sed to watch it; and if it fell to the ground, he would take it up in his mouth, and run a-way with it in-to a cor-ner as if to hide it. If Ma-ry dan-ced, he would run af-ter her feet. If she was in the gar-den, he would frisk a-bout her, and run up and down the trees like a squir-rel, as if he strove to di-vert her. But when Ma-ry took her skip-ping rope, Muff went as far from her as he could, for he once got a hard knock with the rope, and e-ver af-ter he was a-fraid of it.



Ma-ry's mam-ma was ve-ry fond of Muff, both for his own, and for poor nurse Brown's sake, and she gave him a lit-tle stool, with a piece of car-pet o-ver it, and when Ma-ry was learn-ing her les-son or bu-sy with her work, there sat Muff up-on his lit-tle stool, close be-side her, and as grave as a-ny judge.

One day Ma-ry was ve-ry sick ; she had a pain in her sto-mach, and a pain in her head. Her mam-ma held her in her lap, and laid her head up-on her bo-som, think-ing that if she sat qui-et for some time, she would be bet-ter ; but the pain did not go away, she grew worse and worse. Then her mam-ma said, my love, I must go and pre-pare some-thing that will do you good. When Ma-ry's mam-ma came back with a cup of phy-sic, Ma-ry be-gan to cry, and say, I do not like phy-sic. It is so nas-ty. My dear Ma-ry, said her mam-ma, no one likes phy-sic ; I do not like it my-self ; but when I am un-well I take it to do me good. You are

in pain, and you want to be rid of your pain. The taste of the physic will not be in your mouth so much as a mi-nute, but the pain in your stomach may last all day, or ma-ny days. I think my Ma-ry is too wise a lit-tle girl to re-fuse it, on-ly be-cause it has not a plea-sant taste. But Ma-ry was not wise just then. She was in-deed ve-ry fool-ish; for she cri-ed, which made the pain in her head much worse, and she would not take her phy-sic which would have made both her head and her sto-mach bet-ter. Well, said her mam-ma, I did not think you would have been so sil-ly and so naugh-ty a child. But since you would ra-ther be in pain,



than well and hap-py, you must bear it as you can. I am ve-ry sor-ry for you, but I shall not nurse you in my lap a-ny lon-ger. Up-on this Ma-ry went in-to a cor-ner of the par-lour, sat down up-on the ground, and be-gan to cry and sob so loud that Muff heard her, who till then had been sleep-ing on the hearth, be-fore

the fire. Muff start-ed up, look-ed a-bout him, and see-ing his lit-tle mis-tress cry-ing on the ground, he ran to her, and put-ting his fore paws upon her shoul-der, be-gan to rub his head against her face, and sing purr! purr! This made Ma-ry think of nurse Brown, and how of-ten, she had seen her take dose af-ter dose of phy-sic. She stroak-ed Muff, and she was sor-ry for her fault. She kiss-ed her mam-ma, took her phy-sic, eat a piece of o-range peel af-ter it to take a-way the taste; and sat in her mam-ma's lap, who told her a sto-ry. She then fell a-sleep, and when she a-woke a-gain the pain was all gone, and she and Muff went to play.



As Ma-ry was once ta-king a walk, she found a half-starv-ed lit-tle kit-ten. A cru-el boy had thrown it in-to a pond to see how it could swim, and the poor lit-tle crea-ture had crawl-ed out of the wa-ter just as Ma-ry came by. The boy ran a-way, and Ma-ry took the kit-ten home with her, Muff had ne-ver seen

a kit-ten be-fore, and at first could not tell what to make of it, the kit-ten took Muff for its mo-ther, and ran up to him in a great hur-ry, but Muff ran backward half a-fraid, and hid himself un-der a ta-ble. When the kit-ten had been fed, it lay down to sleep be-fore the fire. Muff came and look-ed at it, and af-ter some time he lay down by it, and at last be-gan to clean it, for it was ve-ry dir-ty. From that time Muff was quite fond of the kit-ten; he play-ed with it in the most gen-tle man-ner. It al-ways lay at night in his bas-ket. They eat out of the same plate, and Muff of-ten would sit still, and let the kit-ten eat first, as if he

was a-fraid it would not have enough.

Ma-ry had an un-cle who was go-ing a great way off in a ship. He did not ex-pect to come back for three or four years, and when he said fare-well to Ma-ry, he gave her a ve-ry fine lock-et, with some of his hair in it, and set round with gold and pearls. It was büt a use-less pre-sent for such a lit-tle girl. Ma-ry ti-ed it round her neck, with a black rib-bon, and tak-ing up her rope, she began to skip, but then the lock-et jump-ed up and down on her neck, and once hit her on the mouth. Ma-ry ti-ed it tight-er, and then it made her too warm. What shall I do with it, said Ma-ry? Oh! Muff shall wear the



lock-et, and then I can al-ways see it. So she call-ed Muff, and ti-ed the lock-et round his neck. Muff shook his head a-gain and a-gain, he rub-bed his paw o-ver his ear, he could not think what was the mat-ter with his neck; then as the lock-et hung down be-low his breast, he pat-ted it from side to side, first with one paw, and then with the o-ther,

which made Ma-ry laugh ve-ry much. Ma-ry's Mam-ma was that day go-ing out to din-ner, and while Ma-ry was laugh-ing to see Muff pat a-bout the lock-et, her mam-ma came in to kiss her, be-fore she went out. See-ing Muff with the lock-et on, she told Ma-ry to take it from him, as it would be spoil-ed by Muff, and it was too good a lock-et to be made in-to a play-thing. It would be best, she said, to wrap it in pa-per, and put it a-way in a draw-er, till Ma-ry was old e-nough to wear it her-self. Ma-ry took off the lock-et from Muff's neck, and her mam-ma went a-way to pay her vi-sit.

Af-ter din-ner Ma-ry wish-ed

she could shew the maids how pret-ty Muff look-ed when dress-ed in the lock-et, so she for-got to mind what her mam-ma had said, and a-gain put the lock-et round the cat's neck. Muff was soon ti-red of play-ing with it, and then he be-gan to bite it with his teeth, so Ma-ry ti-ed it tight un-der his chin, where he could not get at it to bite it, and she and the maids all laugh-ed to see what odd tricks he play-ed, as he tri-ed to get rid of a thing he was not u-sed to, and which teaz-ed him ve-ry much. At last some per-son came in whom Ma-ry was glad to see, and she for-got the cat and the lock-et. That per-son gave her a new book, and she read the book till it was time

to go to bed, and still she never thought of the cat, and her uncle's present.

When Ma-ry got up the next morn-ing, Muff did not come to purr a-bout her feet as he u-sed to do. Ma-ry went down stairs, and there was no Muff in the par-lour. No one had seen Muff that day. Ma-ry went up stairs, in-to the bed-rooms, and in-to the gar-rets, and look-ed in-to all the clo-sets, and then in-to the kitch-en, and the cel-lars, and the wash-house, and brew-house, but Muff was not to be found in a-ny of these pla-ces. Ma-ry went sob-bing in-to the gar-den, and call-ed Muff! Muff! Muff! but Muff was not to be found in sum-mer



house, or green-house, or coach-house, or stable.

When Ma-ry went back to the par-lour, her mam-ma ask-ed her if she had a-gain ti-ed on the lock-et to Muff's neck. Ma-ry blush-ed; but she al-ways told the truth; and she said, yes mam-ma I did. You did ve-ry wrong, said her mam-ma. You see what mis-chiefs hap-pen, when lit-tle

girls will not o-bey their mam-ma's, or those who are wi-ser than them-selves. Some bad peo-ple have found Muff out of doors, and have sto-len him for the sake of the lock-et. The cat you lov-ed so well may be ill u-sed, or e-ven kill-ed, and the lock-et is lost which your un-cle gave you to keep for his sake, when he was go-ing a-way for ma-ny years, and might per-haps ne-ver see you a-gain.

Ma-ry was now rea-dy to break her heart with grief. She had made her mam-ma an-gry, she had lost her un-cle's pre-sent, and she had caus-ed poor Muff, who had been nurse Brown's cat, and who was so fond, so gen-tle, and so good

a cat, to be sto-len, and per-haps star-ved, or beat, or kick-ed, if not kill-ed, for she could not sup-pose that a-ny per-son who was so wick-ed as to steal Muff and the lock-et, would use him well. Ma-ry's mam-ma sent to all the hous-es round a-bout to en-quire for Muff, but no news could be heard of him. One day, two days, three days pass-ed a-way, and Muff was not found. I shall ne-ver, ne-ver see him a-gain, said Ma-ry. Oh that I had mind-ed what my mam-ma said to me! then poor Muff would have been sit-ting on his stool be-side me here, and I should have been good, and hap-py.

At the end of a week, a poor rag-ged boy of the vil-lage, to

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whom Ma-ry had of-ten gi-ven her cakes and her fruit, be-cause she had been told he was ve-ry kind to his sick father, and work-ed hard, to get mo-ney for his mo-ther, to buy bread for his lit-tle bro-thers and sis-ters; this poor boy came with some-thing un-der his coat, and ask-ed to see Miss Ma-ry. Ma-ry's mam-ma told the ser-vant to bring Ro-bert, for

that was the boy's name, in-to the par-lour. He came in, and pull-ing off his hat, and ma-king his best bow, he said, Miss, I have found your cat. Ma-ry jump-ed up, and so did Ma-ry's mam-ma; but they look-ed ve-ry sad, when they saw poor Muff al-most starv-ed to death, and so weak, that when Ro-bert put him on the ground he could scarce-ly stand up-on his legs.

Ro-bert work-ed at a farm-house, and had been sent that day, by his mas-ter, to sweep out an old sta-ble which had a hay-loft o-ver it. While Ro-bert was sweep-ing the sta-ble, he thought he heard a cat cry. He look-ed a-bout, and saw no cat, but still he thought he heard it cry. So, at



last he climb-ed up, and push-ed o-pen the door of the hay loft, and there he saw poor Muff, ly-ing on the ground, and faint-ly cry-ing, mew—mew, just as if he was dy-ing. Ro-bert call-ed him by his name, for he knew it was the cat that Nurse Brown had giv-en to Miss Ma-ry, but Muff was so weak he could not get up

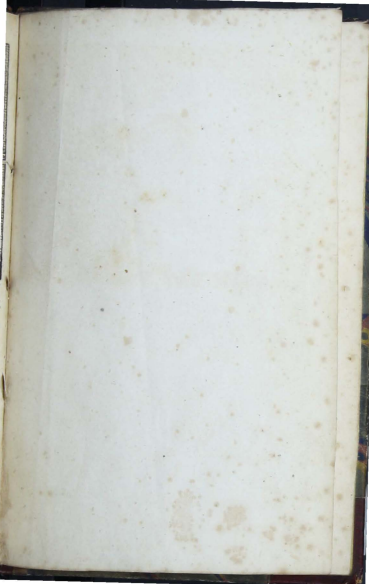
to come to him. Robert had his dinner in his pocket; it was only a small bit of brown bread, and a little bottle of milk and water, for his parents were very poor. But he had a kind heart, and he broke his bread into very small pieces, and wet it with the milk and water, and put them, bit by bit, into Muff's mouth. When Muff had eat the bread, he seemed better; and Robert was so glad, that he took him in his arms, jump-ed down from the hay loft, and ran as fast as he could to carry him home to Mary. The black string was still round Muff's neck, but the lock-et was gone, and the bad man that stole the lock-et must have shut the

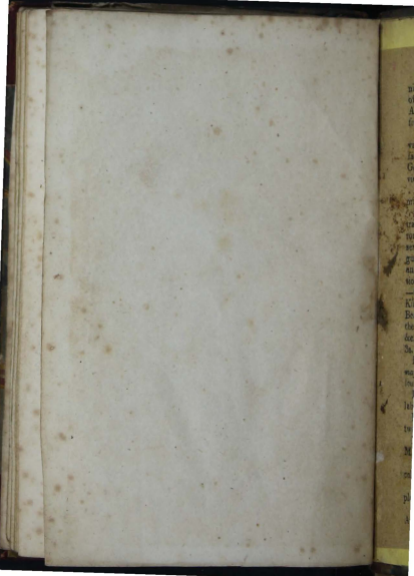
cat up in that emp-ty hay-loft, where, but for Robert, he would have di-ed of hun-ger.

With good care, and good food, Muff grew well, and fat a-gain, and was as hap-py and as mer-ry as e-ver, and Ma-ry's mam-ma was so pleas-ed with Ro-bert's giv-ing up his own din-ner, to feed a starv-ed cat, that she said, she was sure such a kind boy would make a good man, and she sent him to school, that he might learn to read and to write. She gave him new, and warm clothes, and was kind to his fa-ther, mo-ther, bro-thers and sis-ters, for his sake. Ma-ry lent Ro-bert all her books, as soon as he had learnt to read, and she u-sed to di-vide her mo-ney with him, that he might buy o-ther



books, and o-ther play-things for his lit-tlesis-ters. She ne-ver for-got that Ro-bert had sa-ved her dear Muff from death, and that it was the wi-sest and the best thing she could do e-ver af-ter to o-bey her mam-ma, and ne-ver to do a-ny thing which her mam-ma bid her not to do.





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