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Puss in Boots junior visits the old woman in the shoe

David Cory

It was around noon; the air was cool and balmy, for the sun hardly shone in the green forest. As Puss trudged along he sang a little song to himself. I think he must have been something of a poet, for unconsciously his words rhymed. A little brown wren, who was hopping along on the green moss that covered the floor of the great forest, heard him, and she told it to some one who afterward told it to me. And this is the way the little song went:

Through the woods, the cool woods,
The green woods, sweet with balm and fir,
To the music of the breeze
Singing softly through the trees
This the song I purr:—
Happy he who travels far,
Travels far and free,
Over valley, over hill,
Over smiling lea;
Never weary of the road,
Happy that he be
Just a jolly traveler
Wandering, like me!

As Puss finished his song he found himself on a big road. "This must be the road that will lead me to my father's home," he said to himself, and joyfully proceeded on his journey.

In the distance he saw what looked like a little house, but as he came nearer he saw it wasn't a house at all, but a big shoe. So many children were playing around, running in and out, that he would have found it difficult to count them, even if he had tried.

"Hello!" he called out to a little boy who was the only one who hadn't run into the shoe to tell mother that a big cat with boots on was coming up the garden walk.

"You have pretty boots," the boy said, looking down at them.

"Yes," answered their owner, "I'm rather proud of them myself; but what are your little brothers and sisters afraid of?" he added, as he noticed them peeking at him out of the window. "I won't hurt them."



Just then the Old Woman Who Lived in the Shoe came out, and, seeing one of her children talking to a strange cat who wore boots, she hurried up to them and asked: "Are you Puss in Boots?"

"No, but I'm his son," was the quick reply. "I'm Puss in Boots, Junior."

"Oh, of course," she said. "I knew your father years ago, and for a moment I forgot how time flies. Yes, we were very good friends in those old days. He was a very fine cat. Won't you come in?" the Old Woman asked, turning toward her shoe house, "though you may find it difficult, as I can hardly find room for all my children" she continued, as they managed to squeeze past the children in the hallway.

"Will you have a bowl of broth?" she asked. "It is about lunch-time, and I'm going to give the children some."

He thanked her, and said he would gladly, as he was hungry and tired. He sat down with the children, who had by this time arranged themselves in a row, each one with an empty bowl in his hands. The broth tasted very good, and Puss, Jr., felt so much better after eating it that he proposed a game of tag. They all ran outside and stood around in a ring while he counted "eeny, meeny, miney, mo," till all were out except himself.

"You're it!" the children cried, gleefully.

He finally caught the biggest boy, making believe for some time to miss the little tots, who screamed with fun as he chased them in and out among the trees.

It was difficult for the kids to catch Puss, Jr. He ran up a tree and out on a limb, from which he dangled his red-topped boots over their heads. When every one gave up, he came down, and, after thanking the Old Woman for her kindness with a bow, he resumed his journey.

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