

Thunderpuss by Gary Lark

A tiny shivery little kitten was born in a rumbling tumbling thunder storm. Outside thunder crashed and lightening sparked; inside the fourth and last kitten was licked alive. Her gray stripes wiggled and wriggled in the flashes of light that came through the attic window.

As one day rolled into another the kittens frolicked and grew fat. But everyone in the family could see Thunderpuss was different: she was brave and bold; she could leap higher, run faster and meow louder than all the rest. She was Thunderpuss, cat of destiny.

Even though she was the smallest, nothing could shake gallant Thunderpuss. She learned to walk the fence between two mean dogs. She learned the way of cars and traffic. She could smell dinner a mile away.

One day when the cat family was playing roll-the-walnuts in the attic, Thunderpuss sat back on her haunches and sniffed the air.

"FIRE," she cried. "FIRE. Everyone to the window."

But the window was closed. The door was closed. What to do? Thunderpuss thought fast.

"Jeffery, Elvira, Lydia help me push over the sewing basket," she commanded. They tipped it over and out spilled spools of thread, buttons, needles and thimbles. She fitted two thimbles on her back feet.

"Away from the window everyone," she commanded, as she grabbed the curtain. "Now pull the curtain back—all of you, pull hard." The rest of the cat family pulled the curtain back away from the window.

"Let go," yowled Thunderpuss, and she swung down hard and straight toward the window, her thimble-boots held out in front of her. CRACK went the window. As she bounced off a crack split the pane of glass.

"One more time," she yowled.

They pulled back the curtain and let go. CRASH, the window broke. She landed on the window sill outside and helped her brothers, sister and mother through the hole in the window. She then went back in, crawled up the curtain, knocked it off its hanger and pulled it back through the window, leaving the curtain rod inside. Thunderpuss then slid down to the end of the curtain and swung to the house next door. Following her example, the rest of the family did the same, landing on the porch roof safe and sound.

They gathered close together.

"My oh my, you really are my Thunderpuss," said Mother cat.

And they all agreed.

They waited on the porch roof while the fire trucks came and the fire people put out the fire. Luckily, the fire only burned part of the kitchen and storage room. They were able to go home to their attic that evening. But Thunderpuss had an idea.

"I know a new game," she said, fishing for more thimbles among the sewing. "This is what I'm looking for," she said, as she fit thimbles on all four feet and skated across the floor. And that night they took turns thimble-skating on the attic floor.

In the next days and weeks the news about Thunderpuss saving the family spread. Within a month all the cats in Kitterborough knew the story.

What would Thunderpuss think of next?