

# ONLY A CAT

Jutta Ash



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*for Monica Hocke  
and Hiawyn Oram*

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Kitten-Cat's mother was dozing so Kitten-Cat  
played with her tail . . .  
and played with her tail . . .





and climbed on to the washing line to try some flying.



“Whoops!” laughed the birds.  
“Hasn’t anyone told you? Cats can’t fly.”



So Kitten-Cat picked herself up, smoothed herself down and went to try some nut-cracking.





“Oh dear, oh dear!” chuckled the squirrels.  
“Haven’t you noticed? Cats can’t crack nuts.”



So Kitten-Cat put her nose in the air and slipped down to the stream to try some hopping.





“Silly billy!” croaked the frogs.  
“Look at yourself! You’re a cat and cats can’t hop.”



So Kitten-Cat shook the mud from her paws and strolled over to the henhouse to try some crowing.





“Nonsense and ridiculous!” said the cockerel.  
“Cockerels crow, not cats. And you, my dear,  
are not a cockerel. You’re only a cat.”



So Kitten-Cat put her tail between her legs and crept back to her mother. “Wake up!” she cried. “Wake up!”  
I can’t do anything. I’m only a cat!”



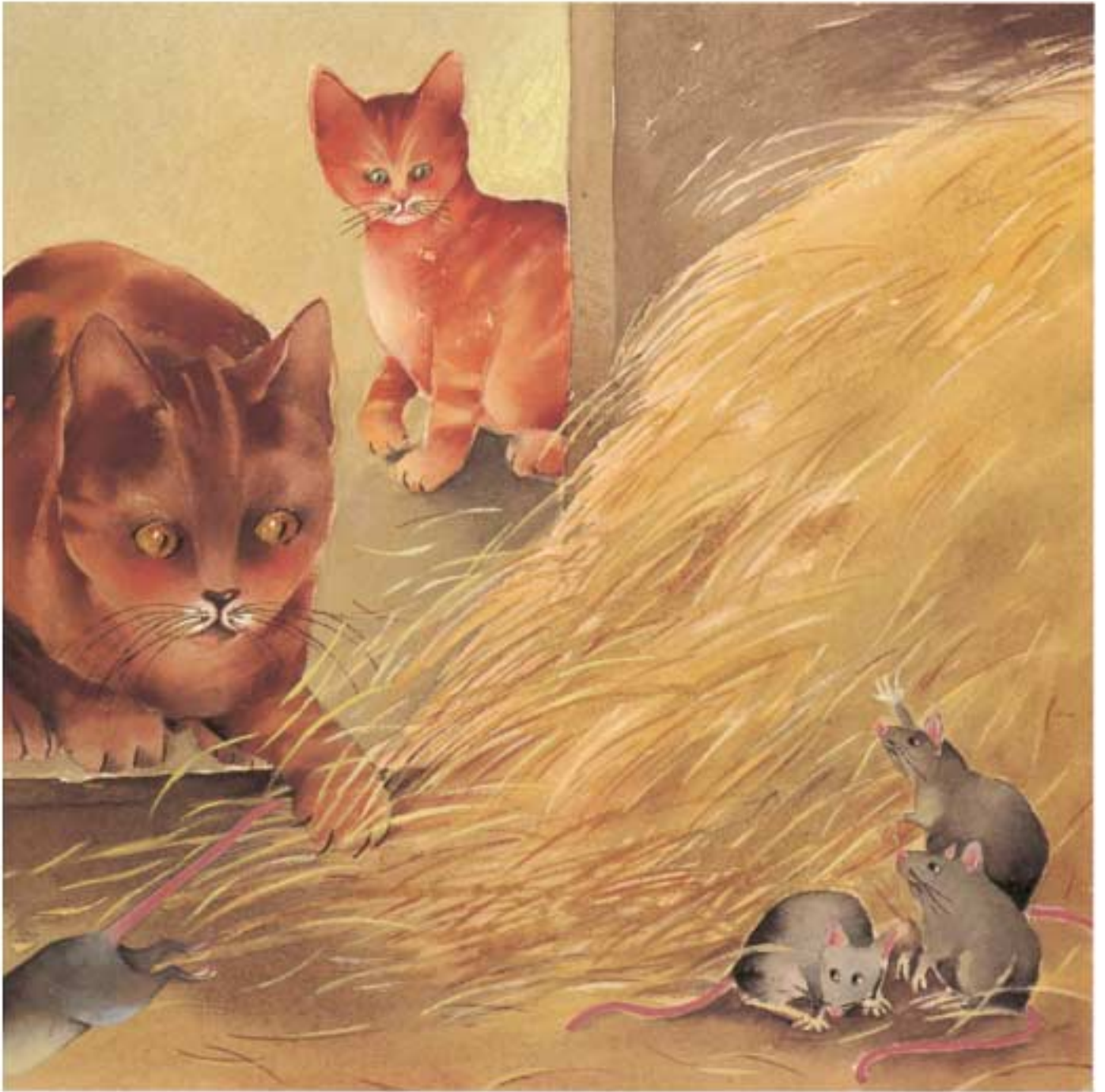


“Only a cat indeed!” Kitten-Cat’s mother sprang to her feet.  
“Then I think the time has come for you to follow me . . .



. . . first we'll climb a tree





. . . catch a mouse or two or three



. . . walk a tightrope and another





. . . move more silently than lizards



. . . get the lazy guard dog guarding





. . . take a nap where he can't reach us



. . . make quite sure no cream is wasted





... see as clear as day in darkness





. . . call a meeting in the clearing and announce  
in purrs like thunder, **ONLY A CAT CAN DO ALL THAT!**"



But Kitten-Cat couldn't stay for the applause. She was already down at the river. "Because," she told the fish, "if a cat can do all that, surely a cat can . . ."





... SWIM?"



