



Betsy and Max Around Town



By Jacob Grimm

Illustrations by Mernie Gallagher-Cole

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Betsy looked at a stick from her yard.

“It’s a good size.

It has bark to nibble.

It’s perfect!” she said.

As she plopped down to enjoy it,

Max came out.



Max and Betsy were as different
as two friends could be.

Betsy liked simple things,
like her stick.

But Max loved anything fancy.

He liked ribbons and shiny things.

He even wanted a fancy name.



“Hi Max,” said Betsy.

“That’s Maxwell, please,” said Max.

He saw her stick and gasped.

“Betsy! You’re eating tree scraps!”
he said.

“Don’t you know there’s tuna
in the house?”

Betsy laughed.

“Thanks, but I’ll stick to my stick.”



Just then, a truck pulled up.

A man took a box to the front door.

“Ooh!” said Max.

“I wonder what is in there!”

He jumped into the back of the truck.

“Last one in is a stinky sock!”

he said.



Betsy didn't want to be a stinky sock.

She jumped in too.

“We shouldn't be in here,” she said.

“Why not?” Max asked.

He shook a box.

“Don't you want to know
what is in these boxes?”

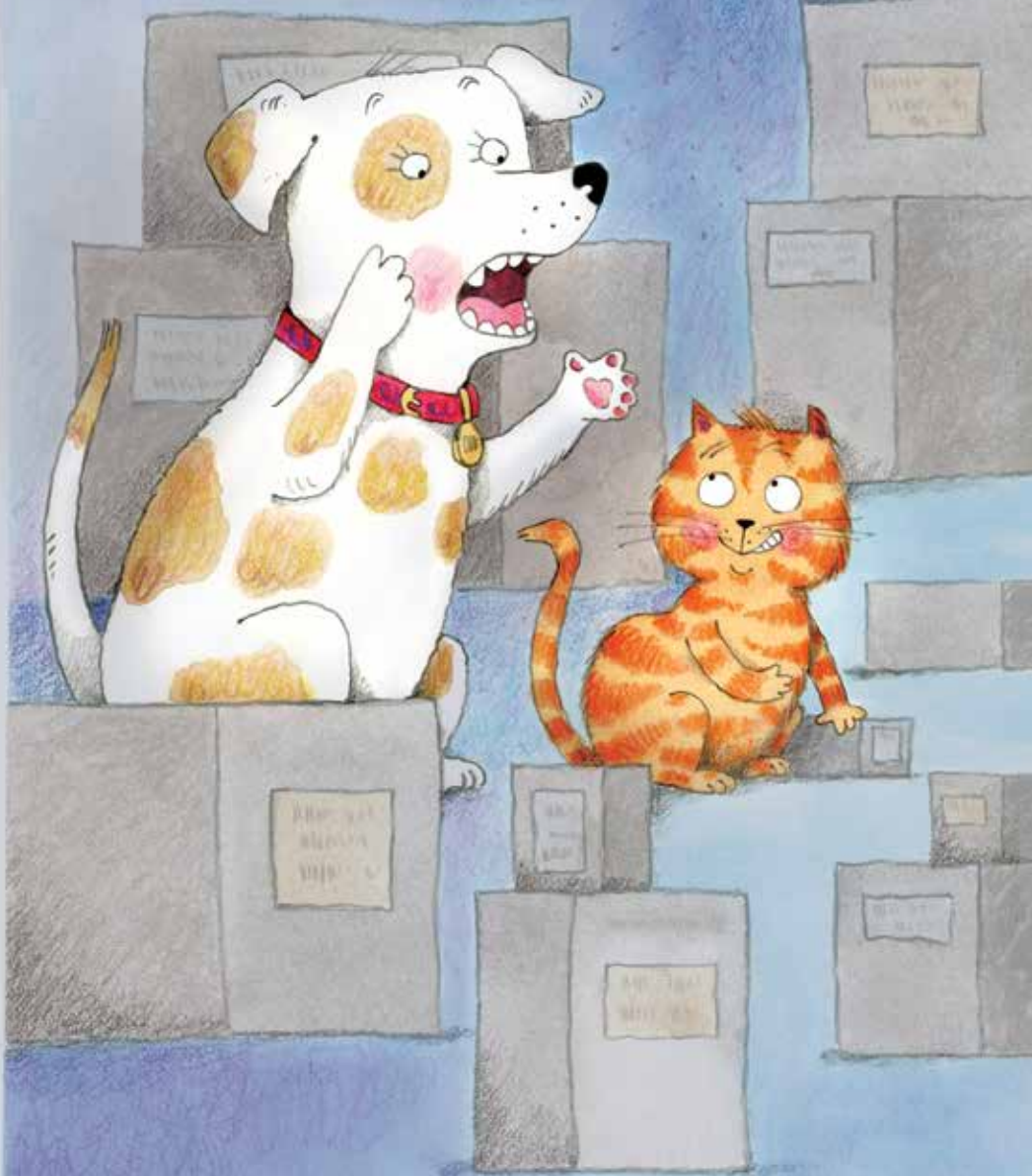
Suddenly, the back door
slammed shut.

The truck's engine roared to life.

They started to move.

“This is why we shouldn't
be in here!” shouted Betsy.

“Oh,” said Max. “Right.”





“We need a plan,” said Betsy.

“I’ve got it!” said Max.

“We’ll put on wigs and costumes.

The driver will just think

we work back here!”



“No. We need a plan that gets us home, Max,” said Betsy.

“That’s Maxwell, please!” said Max.

Betsy rolled her eyes.

She emptied a box
near the back door.

“Quick! Get in here,” she said.



The driver delivered the box
at the next stop.

Betsy and Max peeked out.

“Betsy!” Max said.

“We’re in the pet store!”

“Okay,” said Betsy.

“Let’s find a way out!”



“A way out? No, let’s play!”

said Max.

He raced from shelf to shelf.

“A Cat Scratch Castle!

And look at all these windup mice!”

“Come on, Max,” Betsy said.

“We have to get home.”

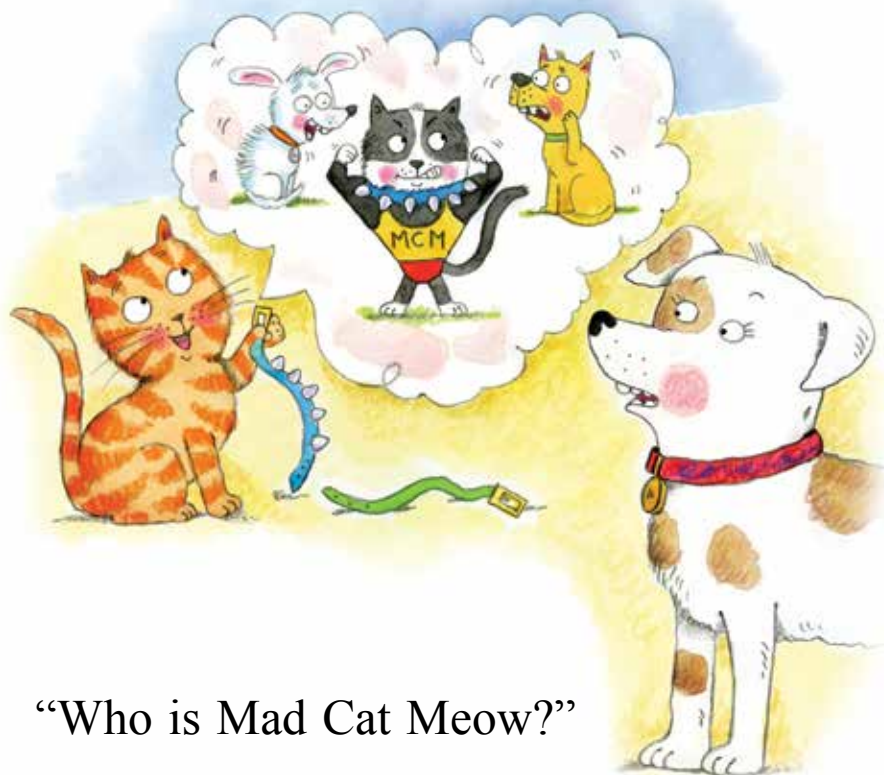


Max found a basket of cat collars.

He held two up.

“This green one is cool,” he said.

“But this one makes me look
like Mad Cat Meow!”



“Who is Mad Cat Meow?”

asked Betsy.

“He’s on TV!” said Max.

“He’s the toughest cat around!

No dog dares to get in his way!

He wears a collar just like this!”

Just then, the owner walked in.

“Hey! You can’t be in here!

Out! Out!” he said.

Betsy ran for the door.

She knocked over some cat treats.

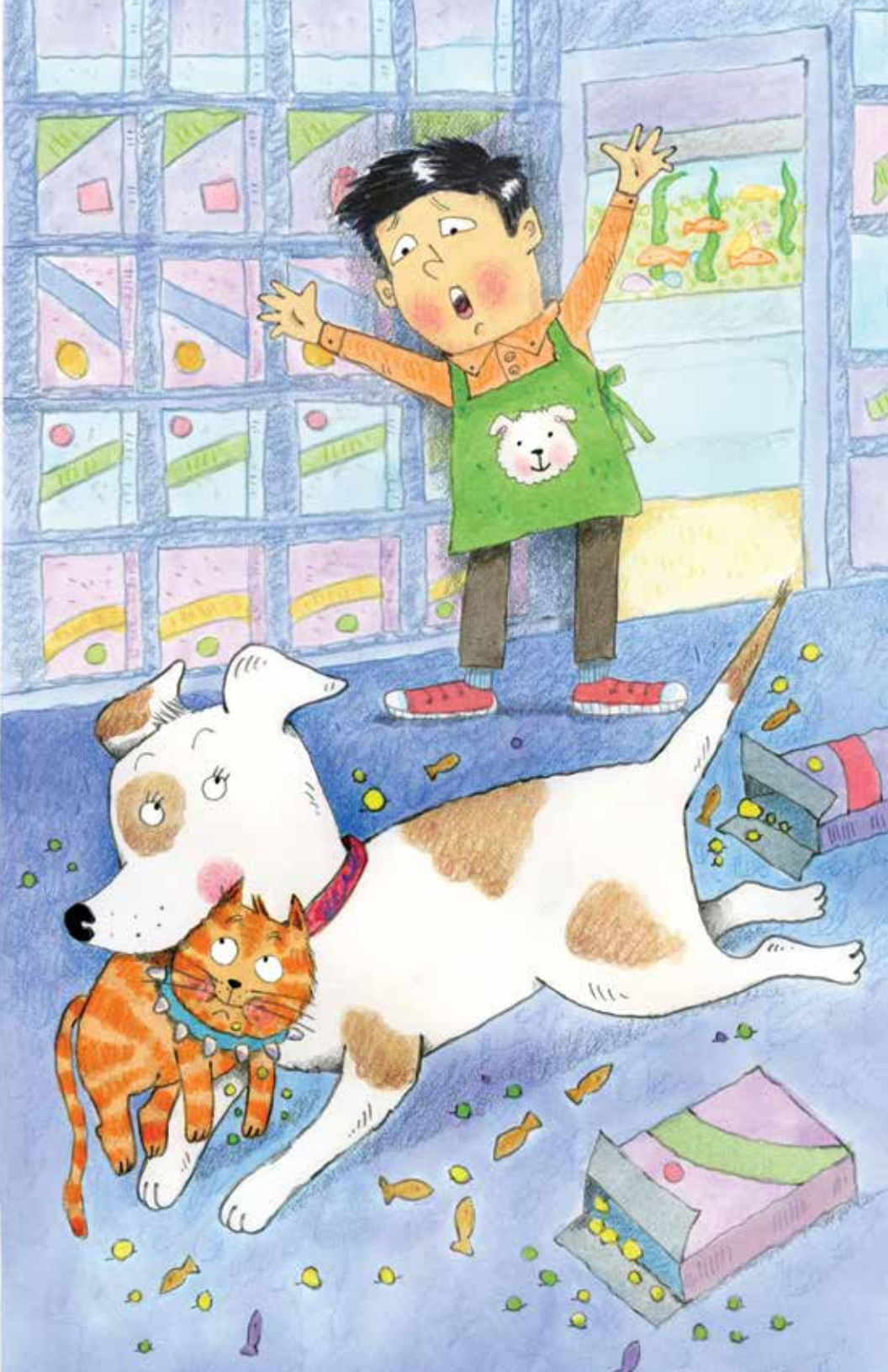
“Good work, Betsy!” said Max.

He stuffed his cheeks with treats.

“Leave them, Max!” said Betsy.

“That’s Maxwell!” he shouted.

Betsy carried Max out.





Betsy sniffed the air.

“I can sniff our way home from here,” she said.

Max cheered.

“Yes! Use that doggy nose!” he said.

Suddenly, he heard a voice behind him.

“Aw! Is kitty lost?”



Max turned.

An old woman scooped him
into her arms.

“Poor little kitty,” she said.

“You need a home!

Auntie Edna can take care of you!

That’s me!”



Edna carried Max toward her house.

“Betsy! Help!” he cried.

“Oh no!” Betsy cried.

“Who is that woman?

Where is she taking Max?”

Betsy ran after her friend.



The door closed in Betsy's face.

She needed another way in.

She ran to the back of the house.

There was a kitty door.

Betsy just barely squeezed through.



Betsy looked around.

She was in a big, fancy room.

She sniffed at a chair.

It was fancy and old.

There was dust
on everything.



Betsy heard Edna in the kitchen.
She talked in a strange baby voice.
“Who’s the cutest? Is it you? It is!
Let’s get the cute kitty a snack.”
Betsy peeked into the room.
“Psst! Max!” she said.



Max turned.

Betsy laughed.

She could not help it.

“Yes. Ha ha,” Max said.

“Now did you come
to rescue me or giggle?”



As Betsy helped Max down,

Edna walked back in.

“A dog!” Edna gasped.

“Run, Max!” said Betsy.

“That’s Maxwell!” said Max.

They ran toward the living room.



Edna rushed after them.

Betsy had an idea.

She jumped on a chair.

A cloud of dust shot into the air.

“Quick! Jump on the chairs!”

she said.



The room filled with dust.

Edna could not see.

“Kitty! Where are you?” she said.

Betsy and Max snuck
through the kitty door.



Max shook off the baby hat.

“Thank goodness I’m out of those silly clothes,” he said.

Betsy smiled. “You didn’t like them?

But they were so fancy!”

Max gave her a look.



“Let’s go home,” he said.

The streets began to look familiar.

“Hey!” said Max.

“I know where we are!

We can cut through

the alley there!”



Two dogs walked out
of the alley.

“Not so fast!” said the small dog.

“I’m Napoleon. This is Claude.”

“This alley is for important
dog business only,” said Claude.

“And that is a cat,” said Napoleon.



Betsy thought quickly.

She grabbed Max's tail.

"He's not just any cat.

It's Mad Cat Meow!

I've captured him!" she said.

"What dog business is
more important than that?"



“Mad Cat Meow?” asked Napoleon.

“Like, from TV?”

“Who else has this collar?”

asked Betsy.

Claude looked at Max.

“He doesn’t look so mad,” he said.

“Oh, he’s mad, all right!” said Betsy.

Betsy nudged Max.



Max got the hint.

He bared his teeth.

He showed his claws.

“Rrrrawr!” he growled.

“Yikes! That’s a mad, bad cat!”

said Claude.

“Let’s get out of here!”

said Napoleon.

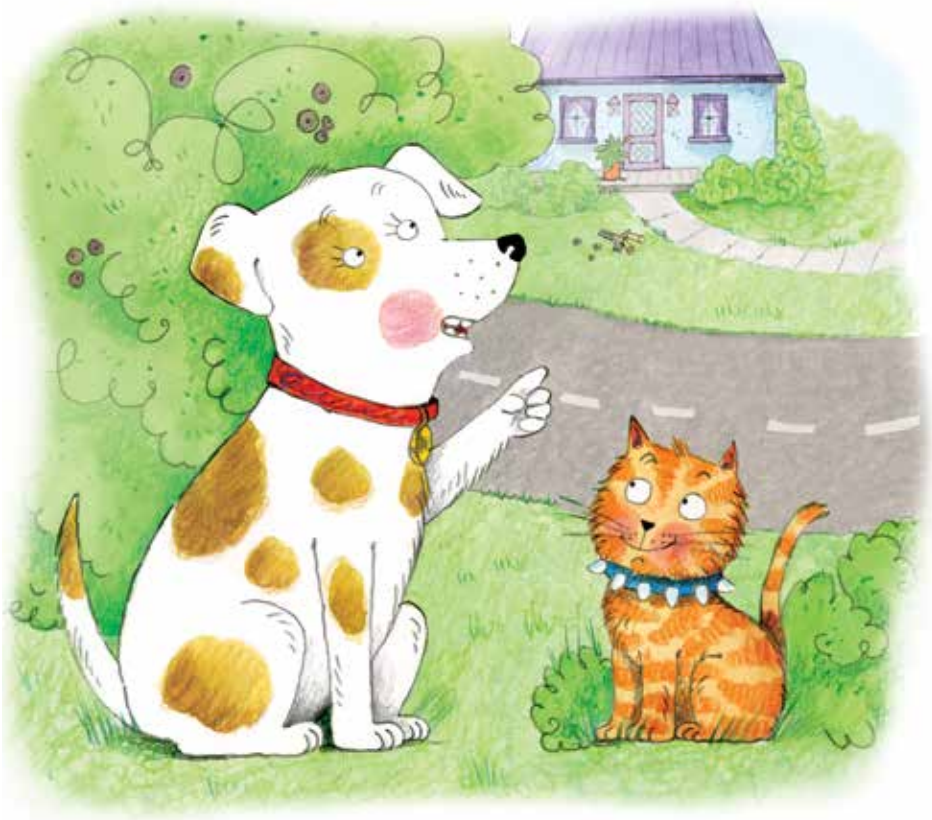
Betsy and Max watched
the dogs run away.

“Fancy acting, Max,” said Betsy.

“That’s Mad Cat Max,” said Max.

“I knew this collar made me
look tough!”





“Well, come on, tough guy,”

Betsy said.

She pointed to their house

a block away.

“Let’s get home.

I have a perfect stick to get back to.”

