

THE CAT IN THE HAT TAKES FLAK

Copyright © Jack J. Berry 2022

Characters: NICK (male, the younger the better)

SALLY (female, Nick's sister, the younger the better)

THE CAT IN THE HAT (TCITH, male or female any age)

BART (male, in 30's-60's, works for Social Services)

Props: 2 shovels, photo of SALLY/NICK's mom, long red & white hat for TCITH, clipboard for BART to take notes for Social Services.

Setting: Just outside NICK/SALLY's house

At rise: NICK, SALLY, TCITH are surveying the situation outside the house, BART is off-stage

NICK (leaning on shovel): It has been a long day.

SALLY (leaning on shovel): With no time to play.

NICK: Yet we have a big task that remains undone.

TCITH: But why the long faces when we've had so much fun?

SALLY (to TCITH): When it comes to cleaning, you do not know thing one.

NICK (to TCITH): So to ease Sally's nervousness, I called Social Services (gestures to BART, who enters from Stage Left).

TCITH: This is something I do not understand. We have the situation well in hand.

BART: I say that I will be the judge of that. I have heard of your mischief, Cat in the Hat. Now you will whine that you are misunderstood. But the fact of the matter is you're up to no good. You, Cat, should never come around. All you do is bring property values down. (To NICK): It was wise to call me and tell me the matter.

SALLY: I told him to do it, though we have limited data.

BART: You both are smart kids, that I can tell. Your mother was wise to give you a cell. My name is Bart, a name you should love because I'm here to help you – I work for the gov.

TCITH: Now, Bart, I say you should hold your horses. I know how you hose us in Human Resources.

BART: I am not in H.R., but I think you know that. You should not start rumors, Cat in the Hat.

TCITH: So, you work for the gov; then, let me guess, Bart. You could not pass math and flunked out of art.

BART: I know, Cat, that you think I'm boring and dumb. But I, sir, am here to solve a conundrum. So, try to avoid any insults or scuffle. Someone tell me how we got in this kerfuffle.

NICK: When mom left for the day, she gave us a job. To shovel the snow -- our neighbor is a snob.

BART: But my records show you should be okay. You are not encumbered by an H.O.A.

SALLY: We started to work, and we did not shirk.

NICK: We spent the morning trying so hard. It is a back-breaking chore to clear up our yard. Then soon along came the Cat in the Hat. I knew he was trouble -- I smelled a rat.

TCITH: It was a most ambitious endeavor. Do you not have tools, not even a lever?

SALLY: He had been here before, about a year and a half. We let him in then and it sure was no laugh.

TCITH: Now, Nick and Sally, you make a great fuss. But please do not throw me under the bus.

NICK: You came in the house without bothering to knock.

TCITH: Have you ever thought of changing your lock?

SALLY (to BART): The first thing Cat did was eat cake in the tub. I told him quite plainly to find his own grub.

TCITH: Not to be picky, but it was pie a-la-mode.

NICK: What does it matter? That's such a pant load!

BART: So, the Cat in that Hat stayed in the tub until?

NICK: He finished the cake and ran up our water bill.

SALLY: When the Cat left the tub, we saw a big ring. And that, to our mom, is a very big thing. A ring is something we did not seek. When our mom gets home, boy, would she freak!

NICK: So, to get rid of the ring, the cat used mom's slit skirt.

TCITH: I thought I was smart – I was being alert. Now, you all make me feel pretty hurt.

BART: Okay, it might be time for some confession. Is your mom working in the oldest profession? Do you have some form of photo ID? I want to be thorough so I really should see.

NICK (hands photo to BART): She gave me this photo and Sally one just the same. After our dad left, she wanted to prove she had game.

BART (impressed with photo): I will have to say that she is a cutie – a pretty face and check out that booty. So, she still looks like that? I want to avoid confusion.

NICK: Some favorable lighting but it is not an illusion.

BART: One more question and I do not want to be rude. Has she ever once identified as a dude?

SALLY: It is great that you like her and find her so pretty. But, she's coming home soon from her trip to the city. So if you want to impress her and show her you care, let us finish the story, as we're getting nowhere.

NICK: So, the skirt was dirt.

SALLY: How could she flirt?

NICK: That Cat has gall. He goes into the hall and beats the skirt on the wall.

TCITH: So, we cleaned up the skirt and cleaned up the wall. If you want my opinion, we were having a ball.

SALLY: You cleaned up the wall at the expense of her shoes. I wouldn't want to tell her that bit of news.

NICK: Then we thought "Is this cat on some drug?" He wiped off the shoes on Dad's old rug.

BART: This is intriguing, and I am glad you called. So, are you telling me that your father is bald? It is surprising he left his toupee. The plot thickens, that I must say.

NICK: No, our father has hair – but why should you care? This was a long floor rug.

SALLY: One our parents both dug.

TCITH: But I cleaned up the rug by using the bed.

SALLY: With the spot on the bed, we'd be better off dead.

BART: Now I can understand all your frustration. But please tell me you did not take her medication. Perhaps we can work out some compensation?

NICK: With the spot on the bed, matters came to a head.