



# Bad Bad Blackie

No one knew why Bad Bad Blackie came to town. No one knew where Bad Bad Blackie came from. But everyone remembered the day Bad Bad Blackie arrived—especially Miss Martha.

Miss Martha was the neighborhood cat lady. She kept twelve cats fed and happy in her backyard. Whenever the neighborhood children wanted to hold and pet some kittens, they would go to Miss Martha's yard where there was always one or two basking in the sun. The children also liked to visit Miss Martha at feeding time.

Once in the morning and once at night, Miss Martha would feed her cats. Each cat in the family had its own dish. And each dish had its own spot in the backyard. Fluffy, a big white lap cat's dish was beside the back screen door. Boots, a black cat with four white feet, liked his bowl to be placed on the ground beside the porch. Mi-Mi, a timid Siamese cat, waited by the tool shed for her food. A big, yellow



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and white striped cat named Calvin would follow Miss Martha around the yard as she fed each of the other cats until she stopped at his special spot beneath the rambling rose bushes.

On the day Bad Bad Blackie came to town, everything changed for Miss Martha and her twelve cats. Miss Martha grabbed her canvas bag filled with cat food and stepped out of her back door onto her porch, expecting to see her twelve babies lined up and



ready to eat. Instead, a giant, black tomcat sat directly in front of the door.

“Well, well, who do we have here? Is your name Blackie?” She leaned down to pet the new arrival. As Miss Martha’s hand drew close, the cat growled, hissed, and took a swipe at Miss Martha’s hand. The cat’s sharp nails left red marks like railroad tracks in her hand. “Ouch! You’re not very friendly are you, Blackie? If you’re going to act like that I’m going to call you Bad Bad Blackie!”

Calvin, who was cowering beneath the porch, stuck his head out from under the stairs. Bad Bad Blackie whirled about and growled. “It’s all right, Calvin. Blackie just doesn’t know our way of doing things yet.”

Miss Martha glanced around the yard for her other cats. None were in sight. “Fluffy? Fluffy?” she called. From beneath the porch she heard a timid meow.

“Bad Bad Blackie, did you scare away all of my babies?”

Miss Martha filled Calvin’s bowl with cat food. “Don’t worry, I have enough food for all of you, I promise.” She had barely straightened up when Bad Bad Blackie dived into the food.

“Oh, you poor kitty. You must be terribly hungry.” Miss Martha resisted the urge to pat Bad Bad Blackie on the head while he was eating.

“Don’t worry, Calvin, I’ll fill another bowl for you.” She walked down the steps and filled Boots’ bowl. Before she could fill the next cat’s bowl,