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# Tabby McTat

## The Musical Cat



from the creators of *Room on the Broom*

JULIA DONALDSON

AXEL SCHEFFLER

# Tabby McTat



Tabby McTat is a musical cat. He loves his life with Fred, singing songs as people throw coins in their hat.

But one day, Fred has an accident, and the two are separated. How will they ever find each other again?

This *purr*-fect new picture book from the creators of *A Gold Star for Zog* and *Stick Man* is a touching story of friendship, loyalty, singing — and kittens!



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# Tabby McTat

## The Musical Cat



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By Julia Donaldson  
Illustrated by Axel Scheffler



Arthur A. Levine Books  
An Imprint of Scholastic Inc.

Tabby McTat was a busker's cat  
With a meow that was loud and strong.  
The two of them sang of this and that,  
And people threw coins in the old checked hat,  
And this was their favorite song:

*"Me, you, and the old guitar,  
How perfectly, perfectly happy we are.  
MEEE-EW and the old guitar,  
How PURRRR-fectly happy we are."*





One morning, while Fred ate some bacon and bread,  
McTat took a stroll round the block,



Then stopped – for there on a doorstep sat  
A gorgeously glossy and green-eyed cat.  
She was black with one snowy white sock.





Sock and McTat had a cat-to-cat chat  
And that's how their story began,  
For while they were chatting of this and of that . . .



A thief had his eye on the old checked hat.  
He eyed it. He snatched it. He ran!

The busker gave chase but he tripped on a lace  
And crash! In a flash he was down.



He broke his leg and he banged his head



And he ended up in a hospital bed  
In a faraway part of town.

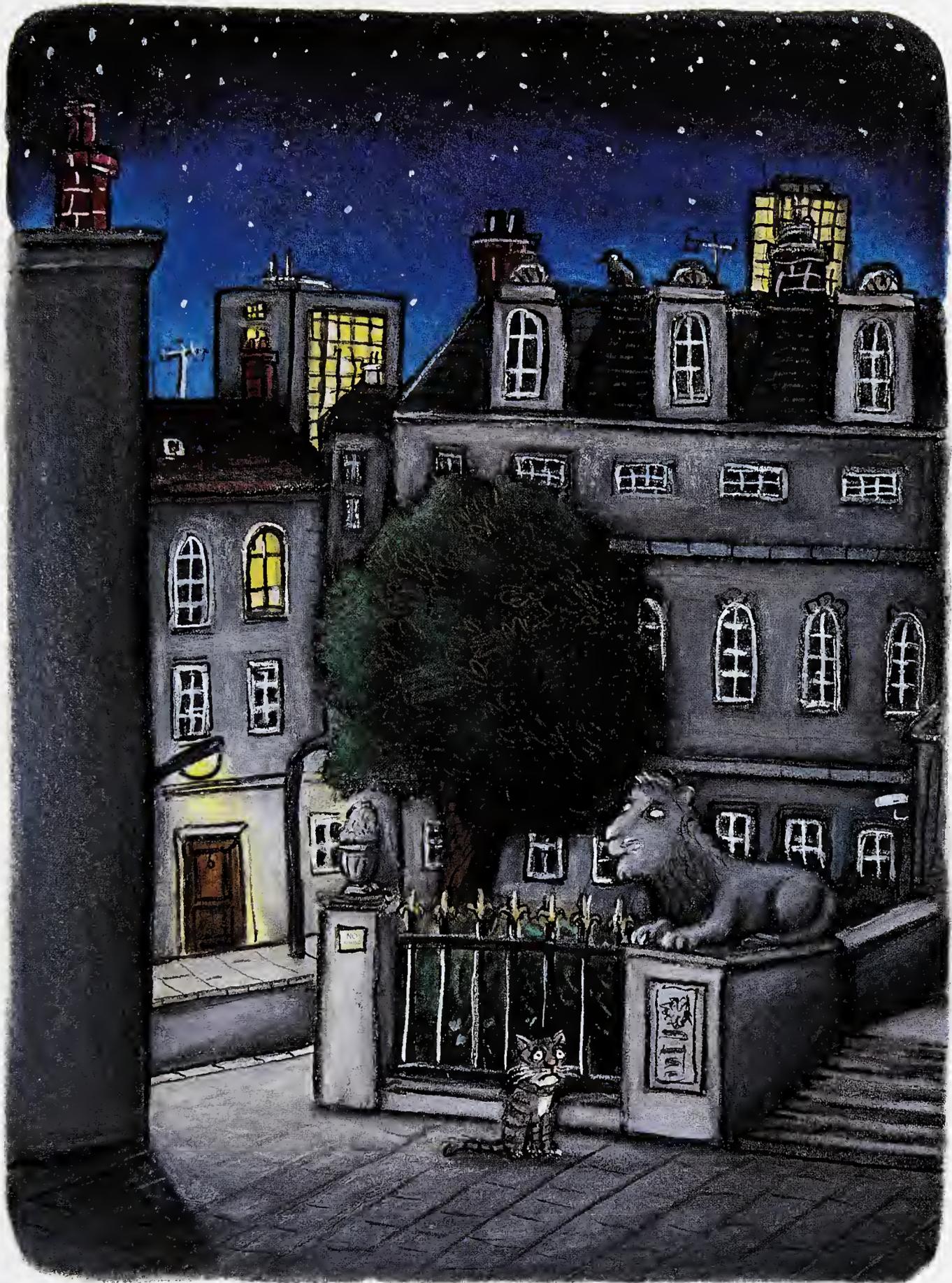




“Good-bye,” McTat said. “I must get back to Fred.”



But where had the busker gone?



The sun went down and the sky grew black.  
The stars came out, but he didn't come back.  
McTat lingered on . . . and on.

A week later, Sock took a stroll round the block  
And found her new friend looking thin.  
“He’s gone off and left me!” said Tabby McTat.



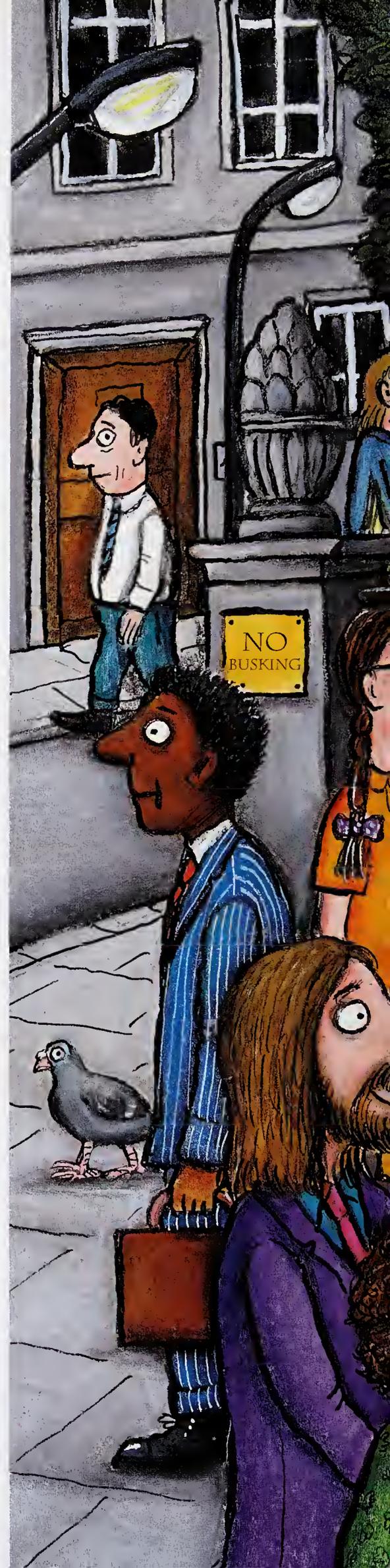
Then Sock said, “My people, Prunella and Pat,  
Would gladly find room for a fine tabby cat.”



She was right, and they took McTat in.



Next morning, old Fred left his hospital bed  
And found his way back to the square,  
But a brass band stood where the pair once sat  
And the band played this and the band played that,  
And Fred looked all round for his loud-meowed cat,  
But Tabby McTat wasn't there!





Now McTat had a wife and a very full life  
With plenty of Things To Do,



Like washing Prunella



and pouncing on Pat,



And hiding the car keys under the mat,



And keeping the newspapers  
nice and flat,

And giving the pens an occasional bat,



And nibbling this . . .



. . . and nibbling that,

But he dreamed of his friend  
with the old checked hat



And always woke up with a mew.



And often he said, "What's happened to Fred?"  
And his paws took him back to the square.  
But a conjuror stood where the pair once sat,



And he pulled out this . . .



and he pulled out that . . .



And people threw coins in the tall black hat,  
But the busker was never there.



One morning Sock said, "Look under the bed  
And see the three kittens I've had!"



And Soames looked like this,



and Susan like that,



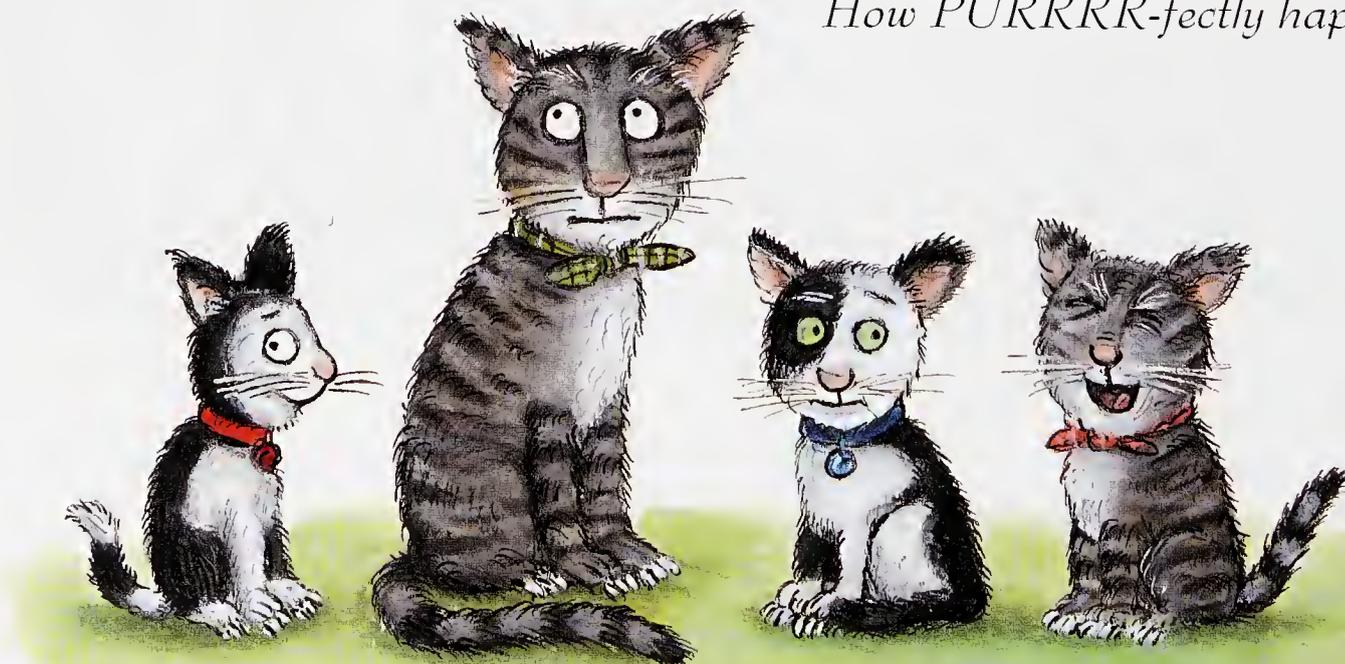
And the littlest kitten, called Samuel Sprat,  
Looked exactly the same as his dad.

The three kittens grew and they learned how to mew,  
And McTat sometimes sang them his song.

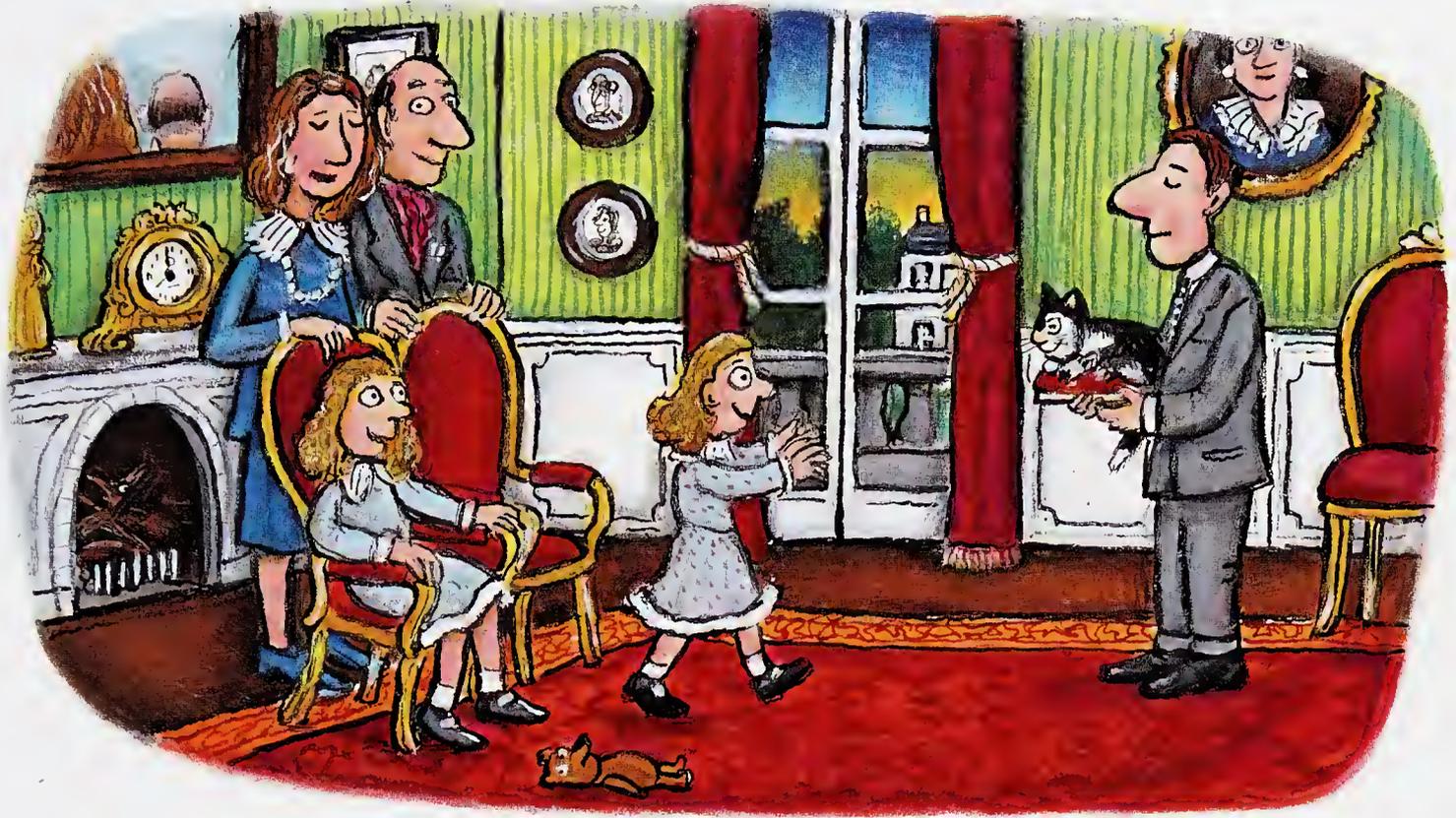


And Samuel Sprat with his tabby-gray fur  
Had a deafening meow and a very loud purr  
And he simply loved singing along:

*“Me, you, and the old guitar,  
How perfectly, perfectly happy we are.  
MEEE-EW and the old guitar,  
How PURRRR-fectly happy we are.”*



When Susan and Soames found very good homes  
Their parents were happy and proud.



There was one home like this . . .



and another like that . . .



But nobody wanted poor Samuel Sprat.  
They all said, "His voice is too loud."

Now Tabby McTat was a home-loving cat  
But he couldn't stop dreaming of Fred.



And one day he called for his wife and his son  
And he told them,  
“There’s something that has to be done.  
I *must* go and find him,” he said.



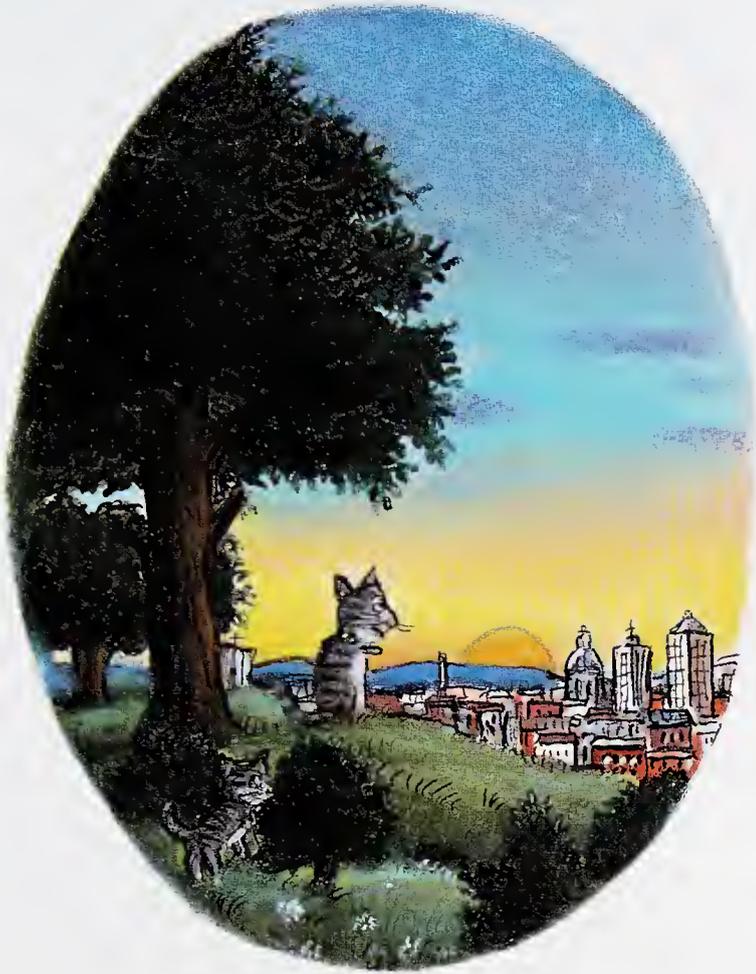
So up and down . . .



and all over town . . .



He wandered a whole week long,



For many a morning and afternoon,  
By the light of the sun, and the light of the moon,



Till he heard a familiar song . . .

*“Just me and the old guitar.  
If I had a cat I’d be happier far.  
Just me and the old guitar.  
With my cat I’d be happier far.”*





“It’s Tabby McTat! It’s my long-lost cat!”  
Old Fred was ecstatically glad.

Then the two of them sang  
of this and that,  
And people threw coins  
in the new checked hat . . .



But why did McTat feel sad?



He was missing his wife and his comfortable life  
And the dozens of Things To Do.

(Like washing Prunella and pouncing on Pat,  
And hiding the car keys under the mat,  
And keeping the newspapers nice and flat,  
And giving the pens an occasional bat.)  
But how could he tell the busker that?



Then out from a shadow sprang Samuel Sprat.  
“Oh please let *ME* be the busker’s cat!”  
He said with his deafening mew.



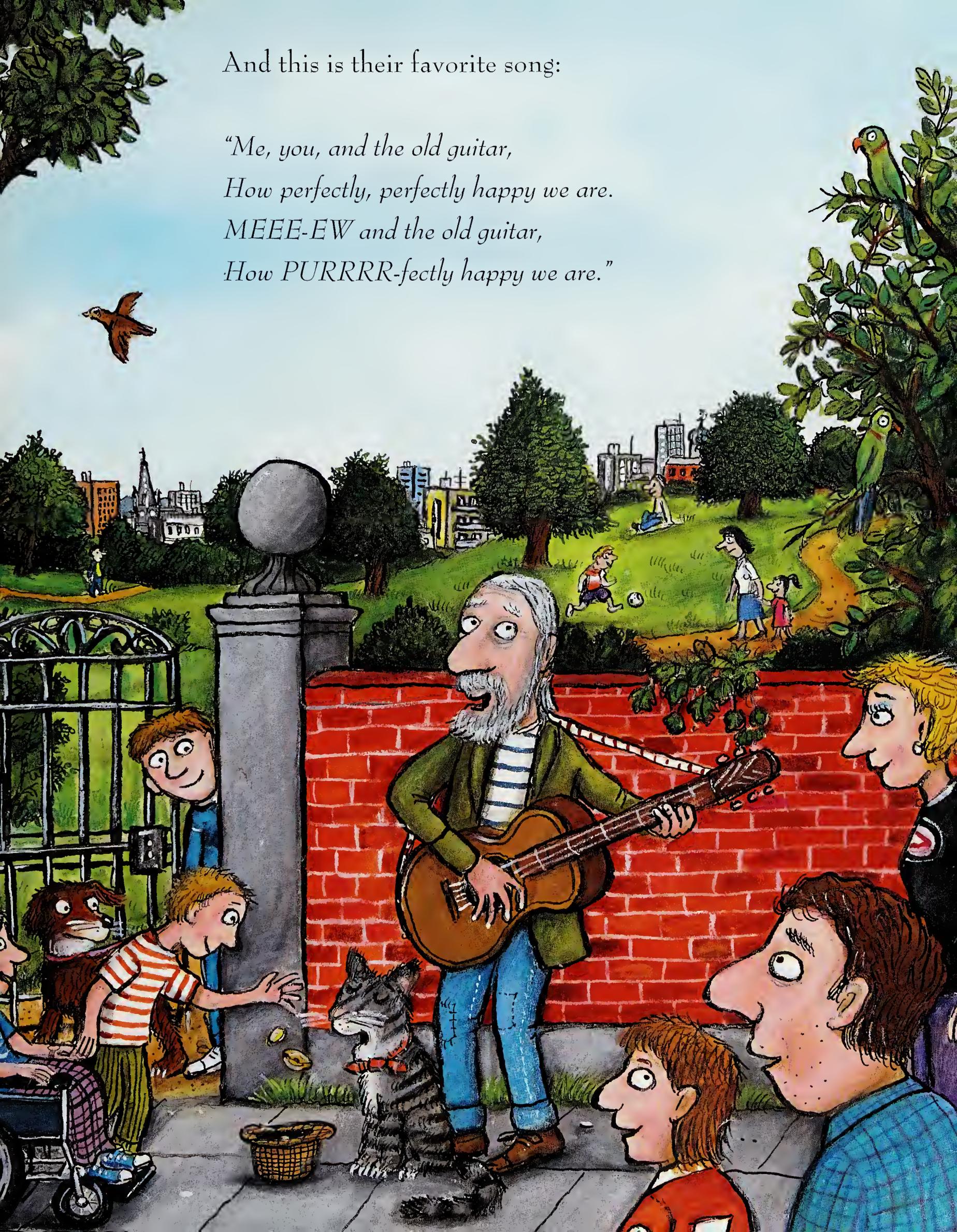


Now Samuel Sprat is the busker's cat  
With a meow that is loud and strong.  
The two of them sing of this and that  
(Though Samuel sings just a little bit flat),  
And people throw coins in the old checked hat,



And this is their favorite song:

*“Me, you, and the old guitar,  
How perfectly, perfectly happy we are.  
MEEE-EW and the old guitar,  
How PURRRR-fectly happy we are.”*





For my sister, Mary – J.D.  
For my brother, Martin – A.S.



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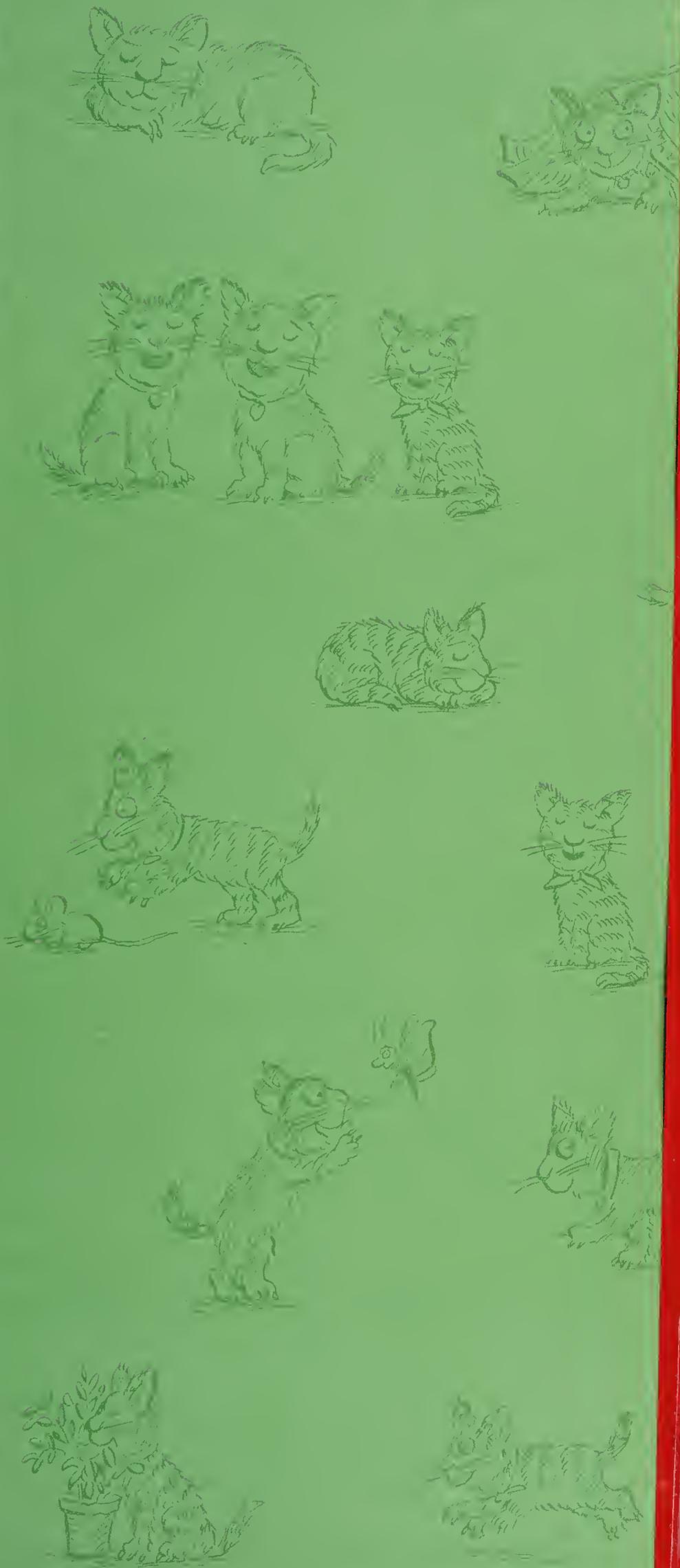
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**JULIA DONALDSON** began her career as a busker, traveling around Europe with her husband, Malcolm. She has since become one of the most successful children's book writers in the world. As well as writing, she still plays the guitar and sings (though her three cats don't yet sing along).

**AXEL SCHEFFLER** has achieved worldwide fame as the artist who brought the Gruffalo to life, as well as a host of other characters including witches, snails, whales, and stick men. Born in Hamburg, Germany, Axel now lives in London with his family.

Jacket art © 2009 by Axel Scheffler



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