

little diable; see, he has himself caught a fish!"

For close on an hour Stumpy was allowed to revel in the deep blue waters of the bay, and twenty-two more herring, by careful calculation, were slipped into his capacious maw. Then as the freshening land breeze commenced tipping smoke plumes from the breaking rollers, Stumpy was slowly wound in, and again carried amid acclamations to the imprisoning walls of his packing-case. Within a fortnight Stumpy had become quite famous, and the inhabitants of the village vied with one another in their attentions to his welfare, so that at last he was in imminent danger of death through overfeeding.

From the first his appearance at the bay had been resented by Davis's old cat, Dinah, partly no doubt on account of his getting the pick of the fish scraps, which she regarded as her special perquisite. Dinah was old and staid, and her black and white fur shewed signs of thinning in patches here and there. She would sit at a distance as stiff and prim as any old maid, blinking solemnly whilst the whole village lavished attentions on the new arrival. Then, as soon as opportunity offered, she would steal shamefacedly up to the packing-case, hoping a stray herring might have been dropped unawares. At times she relieved her feelings by jumping on to the corner of the case, and displayed her disfavour by bristling her fur and spitting angrily at the solemn-faced Stumpy, whose gravity, however, was in no way disturbed.

"The beggar can't smile," said Davis one day in explanation of his pet's set countenance. "You see it's natural for these fellers to be down in the jaw, cos they're always hungry."

One day Dinah watched her chance, and becoming over-venturesome, reached down into the packing-case for a scrap of herring that Stumpy had somehow missed. He

was busy at the other end of the case on a schnapper's head, and the chances are he would never have seen the old cat at all, had she not unfortunately overbalanced herself and fallen with a clatter, all bristles and claws into the box. In a flash Stumpy drew his little barrel of a body erect, heels together, flappers straight at his side, just for all the world like a soldier on parade. Then, right about turn—snap—grab—and in the twinkling of an eye he had Dinah's tail in an iron grip. What an uproar there was! Not that Stumpy said anything, for his mouth was too full for words; but Dinah used the most shocking language, and her wild cries for help soon brought every man, woman and child in the village rushing to the rescue. Try as they would, however, they could not induce Stumpy to slacken his hold, he simply set his sturdy little legs with their broad webbed feet, squarely against the side of the case and hung on with a determination that was inflexible. As a last resort the old and effective device of throttling was tried, and to this only Stumpy finally succumbed with a half-defiant croak. As for the injured Dinah, she fled up the village street, spitting and squalling blue murder, and never stopped until she had scaled the topmost branches of a tall Ngaio tree that grew half-way up the cliff. Here she spent the rest of the day nursing her offended dignity and sore tail.

One day as Davis and Louie were busily engaged patching their nets on the shingle bank in front of the village, their attention was called by old mother Bartolli to a small erect figure lurching along towards them down the dusty inland road.

"Sacrrre Bleu!" cried Louie in astonishment, "eet ees ze mothere of that infamous Stumpee!"

He was right, for as they hastened to the spot there she was, sure enough. At their approach she set her back against a rock and bravely showed fight. Poor, dust-grimed