

“A New Friend and an Old One”
by Thornton Burgess

In contrast with Glory, Kitty the Catbird seemed a regular little Quaker, for he was dressed almost wholly in gray, a rather dark, slaty-gray. The top of his head and tail were black, and right at the base of his tail was a patch of chestnut color. He was a little smaller than Welcome Robin. There was no danger of mistaking him for anybody else, for there is no one dressed at all like him.

Peter forgot all about Glory in his pleasure at discovering the returned Kitty and hurried over to welcome him. Kitty had disappeared among the bushes along the old stone wall, but

Peter had no trouble in finding him by the queer cries he was uttering, which were very like the meow of Black the Cat. They were unpleasant and very harsh and Peter understood perfectly why their maker is called the Catbird.

Peter did not hurry in among the bushes but waited expectantly. In a few minutes, the harsh cries ceased and there came from the very same place a song which seemed to be made up of parts of the songs of all the other birds of the Old Orchard. It was not loud, but it was charming. It contained the clear whistle of Glory, and there was even the tinkle of Little Friend the Song Sparrow. The notes of other friends were in that song, and with

them were notes of southern birds whose songs Kitty had learned while spending the winter in the South. Then, there were notes all his own. Peter listened until the song ended, then scampered in among the bushes. At once those harsh cries broke out again. You would have thought that Kitty was scolding Peter for coming to see him instead of being glad. But that was just Kitty's way. He is simply brimming over with fun and mischief, and delights to pretend.