

# Perform 'The Duel'

## Inspired by the Ithaca Kitty:

The Ithaca Kitty has inspired poems, songs, books, and other art pieces for over 100 years! Can you memorize and recite this famous poem by American poet Eugene Fields below? Fields wrote this poem only a few years after the toy was first released, and said that the "calico cat" was inspired by his Ithaca Kitty toy made of calico cloth!

**Circle all of the words that rhyme to help you keep track of the rhythm, and use a dictionary to look up any words you don't know.**

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### The Duel - by Eugene Field

*Published between 1892 and 1895.  
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The gingham dog and the calico cat  
Side by side on the table sat;  
'Twas half-past twelve, and (what do you think!)  
Nor one nor t'other had slept a wink!  
    The old Dutch clock and the Chinese plate  
    Appeared to know as sure as fate  
There was going to be a terrible spat.  
*(I wasn't there; I simply state  
What was told to me by the Chinese plate!)*

The gingham dog went "Bow-wow-wow!"  
And the calico cat replied "Mee-ow!"  
The air was littered, an hour or so,  
With bits of gingham and calico,  
While the old Dutch clock in the chimney-place  
Up with its hands before its face,  
For it always dreaded a family row!  
*(Now mind: I'm only telling you  
What the old Dutch clock declares is true!)*

The Chinese plate looked very blue,  
And wailed, "Oh, dear! what shall we do!"  
But the gingham dog and the calico cat  
Wallowed this way and tumbled that,  
    Employing every tooth and claw  
    In the awfullest way you ever saw—  
And, oh! how the gingham and calico flew!  
*(Don't fancy I exaggerate  
I got my news from the Chinese plate!)*

Next morning, where the two had sat  
They found no trace of dog or cat;  
And some folks think unto this day  
That burglars stole that pair away!  
    But the truth about the cat and pup  
    Is this: they ate each other up!  
Now what do you really think of that!  
*(The old Dutch clock it told me so,  
And that is how I came to know.)*