

# *Quarrel of the Dogs and Cats*

La Fontaine

French

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*Easy*  
*1 min read*

In mansion deck'd with frieze and column,  
Dwelt dogs and cats in multitudes;  
Decrees, promulged in manner solemn,  
Had pacified their ancient feuds.  
Their lord had so arranged their meals and labours,  
And threaten'd quarrels with the whip,  
That, living in sweet cousinship,  
They edified their wondering neighbours.  
At last, some dainty plate to lick,  
Or profitable bone to pick,  
Bestow'd by some partiality,  
Broke up the smooth equality.  
The side neglected were indignant  
At such a slight malignant.  
From words to blows the altercation  
Soon grew a perfect conflagration.  
In hall and kitchen, dog and cat  
Took sides with zeal for this or that.

New rules upon the cat side falling  
Produced tremendous caterwauling.  
Their advocate, against such rules as these,  
Advised recurrence to the old decrees.  
They search'd in vain, for, hidden in a nook,  
The thievish mice had eaten up the book.  
Another quarrel, in a trice,  
Made many sufferers with the mice;  
For many a veteran whisker'd-face,  
With craft and cunning richly stored,  
And grudges old against the race,  
Now watch'd to put them to the sword;  
Nor mourn'd for this that mansion's lord.  
Look wheresoever we will, we see  
No creature from opponents free.  
'Tis nature's law for earth and sky;  
'Twere vain to ask the reason why:  
God's works are good,—I cannot doubt it,—  
And that is all I know about it.

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