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## The Jitterbugs

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# The Jitterbugs . . .

by Susan Darling

Large, frightening red cats with sharp teeth and big eyes are hung on the curtains and tacked to the walls. There is a strange feeling of movement in these cardboard cats; a feeling intensified by the loud jumpy music of the band. The people listen to the music and begin to clap their hands with the rhythm of the big, loud drum. Toes start to tap the floor and a few of the beat-crazed people begin to dance.

"What kind of dance is that?"

"They call it the jitterbug."

"Jitterbug? Hm-m. To me it looks like undecided lovers."

"What do you mean?"

"Well, just look at them. The boy grabs the girl. He pulls her close. With a brief moment of thought he spins her away. The girl shuffles her feet and wiggles her hips, as if to waste a little time while the boy thinks of the mistake he has made. Now both the boy and girl are waving their hands in the air wildly and walking on their heels. They look like penguins. The boy grabs his partner and spins her around again while he gives the idea one last thought. Then, he pulls his girl madly back into his arms. They seem to repeat this routine. Oh, look! They are going faster now. How can they stand it? They cannot possibly go on much longer."

The music reaches a rousing tempo. The dancers and musicians keep on, seeing who has the most stamina. The music finally comes to a screaming halt and the dancers limply walk toward the nearest chairs.