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Opening extract from  
**Skimblehanks**  
**The Railway Cat**

Written by  
**T. S. Eliot**

Illustrated by  
**Arthur Robins**

Published by  
**Faber Children's Books**

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## Praise for Macavity

'I love MaCATity.' (Me – It's Macavity.)

'Yes that's what I said, MaCATity, because he looks like my cat and he is a very very funny naughty naughty cheat. And my name is on the cover (Arthur Robins).'

Robin, age 4, and mum, Donna

'This was fun to read to my little sister.

I read the story and she shouted "Macavity's not there!" a lot and in her loudest voice.'

Hal, age 11

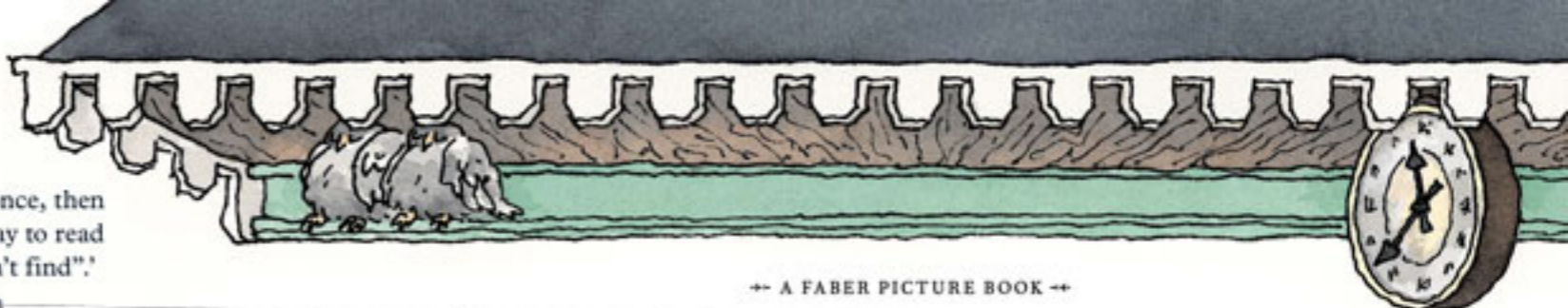
'We loved this book! We read it once, then Hazel asked me again the next day to read the story about the cat "they can't find".'

Hazel, age 4, and mum, Shona

'I like the funny police dog and the naughty cat!' Otto, age 6

'All the cats are naughty, aren't they – but Macavity is the naughtiest.'

Seb, age 4



← A FABER PICTURE BOOK →

# Skimbleshanks

For Chris and Kate  
A. R.

From the original collection, 'respectfully dedicated to those friends who have assisted its composition by their encouragement, criticism and suggestions: and in particular to Mr. T. E. Faber, Miss Alison Tandy, Miss Susan Wolcott, Miss Susanna Morley, and the Man in White Spats. O. P.'



Written by T. S. Eliot

Illustrated by  
Arthur Robins

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FABER & FABER

Illustrations © Arthur Robins, 2015

Design by Matt Wood

A CIP record for this book is available  
from the British Library

ISBN 978-0-571-31481-8  
PB ISBN 978-0-571-31483-5

50 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

First published in 1939 in *Old Possum's Book of Practical Cats*  
by Faber and Faber Ltd,  
Bloomsbury House, 24–25 Great Russell Street, London WC1B 3DA  
This edition first published in 2015

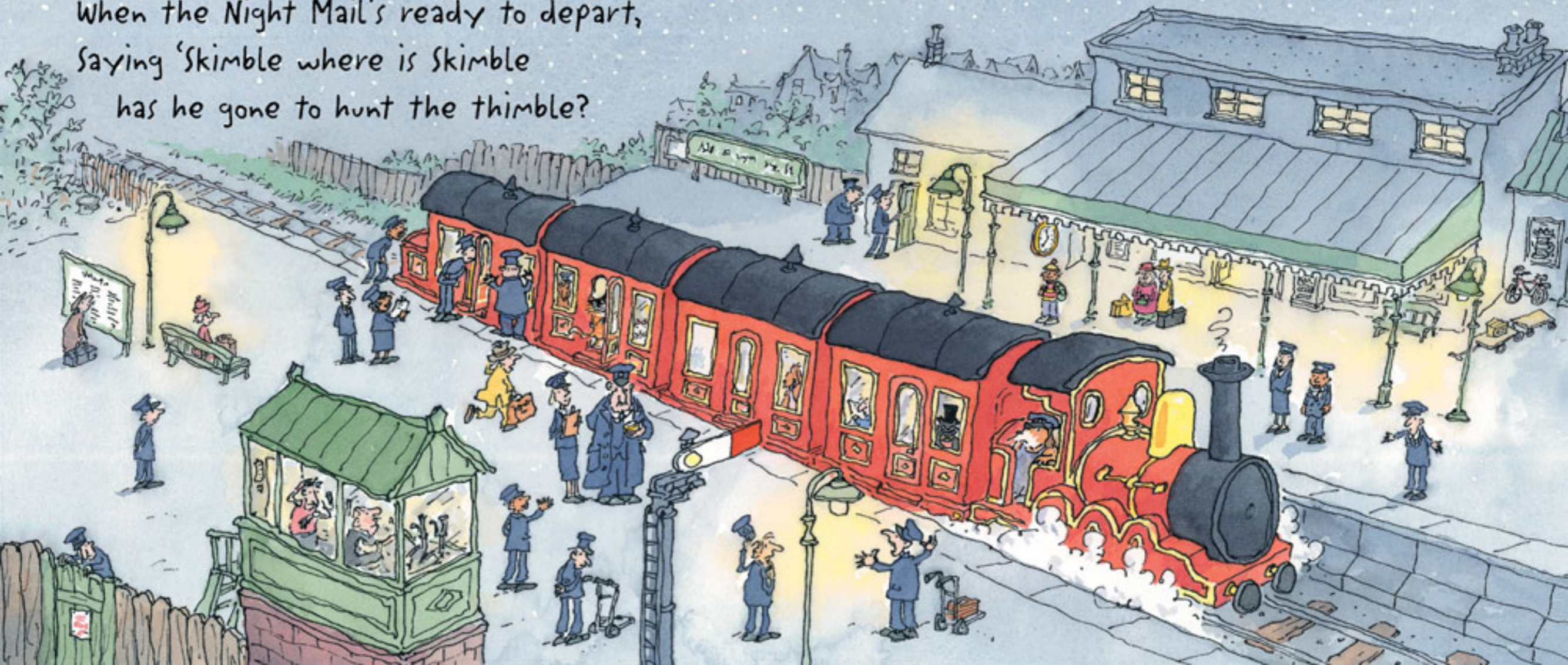
Printed in China

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There's a whisper down the line at 11.39  
When the Night Mail's ready to depart,  
Saying 'Skimble where is Skimble  
has he gone to hunt the thimble?

We must find him or the train can't start.'



All the guards and all the porters and the  
stationmaster's daughters  
They are searching high and low,



Saying 'Skimble where is Skimble  
for unless he's very nimble  
Then the Night Mail just can't go.'



At 11.42 then the signal's nearly due  
And the passengers are frantic to a man—  
Then Skimble will appear and he'll  
saunter to the rear:  
He's been busy in the luggage van!

He gives one flash of his glass-green eyes  
And the signal goes 'All Clear!'



And we're off at last for the northern part  
Of the Northern Hemisphere!



You may say that by and large it is Skimble  
who's in charge  
Of the Sleeping Car Express.  
From the driver and the guards to the  
bagmen playing cards  
He will supervise them all, more or less.