

Tom and Jerry: 80 years of cat v mouse

A cartoon cat, sick of the annoying mouse living in his home, devises a plot to take him out with a trap loaded with cheese. The mouse, wise to his plan, safely removes the snack and **saunters** away with a full belly.

You can probably guess what happens next. The story ends as it almost always does: with the cat yelling out in pain as yet another plan backfires.

saunter 漫步; 闲逛

emulate 仿真; 模仿

The duo was dreamt up from a place of desperation. MGM's animation department, where creators Bill Hanna and Joe Barbera worked, had struggled to **emulate** the success of other studios who had hit characters like Porky Pig and Mickey Mouse.

Out of boredom, the animators began thinking up their own ideas. Barbera said he loved the simple concept of a cat and mouse cartoon, with conflict and chase, even though it had been done countless times before.

Puss gets the Boot was the first they released, in 1940. The debut was a hit and won the studio an Oscar nomination for best animated short. Jasper and Jinx, as they were first known, became Tom and Jerry.

puss 少女; 猫咪

According to Barbera there was no real discussion about the characters not speaking, but having grown up with silent films starring Charlie Chaplin, the creators knew they could be funny without dialogue.

Tom and Jerry, with its slapstick violence and dark comedy, remains extremely popular around the world today.

In the 80 years since their creation, the cat and mouse have appeared in everything from a "kids" version to a 1992 musical movie where they sang and spoke. Warner Brothers, who now own the rights to Tom and Jerry, will release a new live-action film just before Christmas this year.