



# Don't cut the lawn!



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**M**r Pomeroy went to his seaside cottage for the holidays. The sea was right, the sand was right, the sun was right, the salt was right. But outside his cottage the lawn had grown into a terrible, tussocky tangle. My Pomeroy decided that he would have to cut it.

He got out his lawnmower, Snapping Jack.

“Now for some fun!” said Snapping Jack. “Things have been very quiet lately. I’ve been wanting to get at that cheeky grass for weeks and weeks.”

My Pomeroy began pushing the lawnmower, and the grass flew up and out. However, he had only gone a few steps when out of the tangly, tussocky jungle flew a lark which cried,

*“Don’t cut the lawn, don’t cut the lawn!  
You will cut my little nestlings, which have just been born.”*

Mr Pomeroy went to investigate and there, sure enough, were four baby larks in a nest on the ground.

“No need to worry, Madam!” cried Mr Pomeroy to the anxious mother. “We will go around your nest and cut the lawn further away.”

So they went around the nest and started cutting the lawn further away.

“Now for it!” said Snapping Jack, snapping away cheerfully. But at that moment out jumped a mother hare and cried,

*“Don’t cut the lawn, don’t cut the lawn!  
You will cut my little leveret, which has just  
been born.”*

Mr Pomeroy went to investigate and there, sure enough, was a little brown leveret, safe in his own little tussocky tangle.

“We’ll have to go further away to do our mowing,” Mr Pomeroy said to Snapping Jack. So they went further away and Mr Pomeroy said, “Now we’ll really begin cutting this lawn.”

“Right!” said Snapping Jack. “We’ll have no mercy on it.”

But they had only just begun to have no mercy on the lawn when a tabby cat leaped out of the tussocky tangle and mewed at them,

*“Don’t cut the lawn, don’t cut  
the lawn!  
You will cut my little kittens,  
which have just been born.”*

Mr Pomeroy went to investigate and there, sure enough, were two stripy kittens in a little golden, tussocky, tangly hollow.

“This place is more like a zoo than a lawn,” grumbled Snapping Jack. “We’ll go further away this time, but you must promise





to be hard-hearted or the lawn will get the better of us.”

“All right! If it happens again I’ll be very hard-hearted,” promised Mr Pomeroy.

They began to cut where the lawn was the longest, lankiest, tangliest and most terribly tough and tussocky.

“I’m not going to take any notice of interruptions this time,” he said to himself firmly.

“We’ll really get down to business,” said Snapping Jack, beginning to champ with satisfaction.

Then something moved in the long, lank, tussocky tangle. Something slowly sat up and stared at them with jewelled eyes. It was a big mother dragon, as green as grass, as golden as a tussock. She looked at them and she hissed,

*“Don’t cut the lawn, don’t cut the lawn!  
You will cut my little dragon who has just been born.”*

There, among the leathery scraps of the shell of the dragon’s egg, was a tiny dragon, as golden and glittering as a bejewelled evening bag. It blew out a tiny flame at them, just like a cigarette lighter.

“Isn’t he clever for one so young!” exclaimed his loving mother. “Of course I can blow out a very big flame. I could burn all this lawn in one blast if I wanted to. I could easily scorch off your eyebrows.”

“Fire restrictions are on,” croaked the alarmed Mr Pomeroy.

“Oh, I’m afraid that wouldn’t stop me,” said the dragon. “Not if I were upset about anything. And if you mowed my baby I’d be very upset. I’d probably breathe fire hot enough to melt a lawnmower!”



“What do *you* think?” Mr Pomeroy asked Snapping Jack.

“Let’s leave it until next week,” said Snapping Jack hurriedly. “We don’t want to upset a loving mother, do we? Particularly one that breathes fire!”

So the lawn was left alone and Mr Pomeroy sat on his verandah enjoying the sun, or swam in the sea enjoying the salt water, and day by day he watched the cottage lawn grow more tussocky and more tangly. Then, one day, out of the tussocks and tangles flew four baby larks, which began learning how to soar and sing as larks do. And out of the tussocks and tangles came a little hare, which frolicked and frisked as hares do. And out of the tussocks and tangles came two stripy kittens, which pounced and bounced as kittens do. And *then* out of the tussocks and tangles came a little dragon with golden scales and eyes like stars, and it laid its shining head on Mr Pomeroy’s knee and told him some of the wonderful stories that only dragons know. Even Snapping Jack listened with interest.

“Fancy that!” he was heard to remark. “I’m glad I talked Mr Pomeroy out of mowing the lawn. Who’d believe a tussocky, tangly lawn could be home to so many creatures. There’s more to a lawn than mere grass, you know!”

And Mr Pomeroy, the larks, the leveret, the kittens and the little dragon all agreed with him. ■

