

**THE JODY WILSON STORIES**

## MANDY AND COREY

My name is Jody Wilson. I'm a gorgeous, short-haired Tabby. My coat is gray, and my beautiful eyes are hypnotic. I was told that I was born at Camp Puppy Mill, located somewhere in Northeastern Missouri. Camp Puppy Mill was a run-down, sorry excuse for a home. Well, aren't most puppy mills like that?

Now, before you start wondering how a 'cat' happened to be born in a puppy mill, I'll answer your question. Although most inmates in puppy mills are dogs, cats can sometimes be found there. It all depends on how much money the owner of the establishment wants to make.

Good animal shelters fare better than any puppy mill. My mother was born in an animal shelter, somewhere in Northeastern Missouri. She was purchased by Steve and Karen Wilson. They refused to purchase a cat from a pet store. They understood that many pet stores purchase their cats and dogs from unscrupulous animal dealers.

The Wilsons showered my mother with love, good food, toys, clean water, and a mini-play ground. Cats who are companion animals must be treated well. Cat owners should only be thankful that they have an additional member added to their family.

The toys and backyard play area of the Wilson home was the envy of other cats in the neighborhood. On weekends and holidays, cats and kids from the neighborhood would sneak into the Wilson's yard in order to play with my mother. Although the

kids behaved as though they were there to admire her, they just wanted to play with her toys.

My mother was taken to the veterinarian once a year for a routine physical examination. On my mother's first visit, Dr. Fredericks tried to convince the Wilsons to declaw her. Citing warped examples of cat owners who no longer felt the need to cover their furniture after the mutilation it became a nightmare for my mother.

Thankfully, the nightmare was short-lived. The Wilsons had up-to-date knowledge about the possible complications from declawing. Cats need their claws for offense, defense, climbing, leaping, and walking. In simple terms, a cat's not a cat, without his/her claws.

My mother would've preferred to live on the streets, rather than live as a mutilated cat. Most cats would choose likewise. Imagine if someone were to chop off the first digit of each one of your fingers. It wouldn't feel good!

Rick Preston, a neighbor of the Wilsons, agreed with Dr. Fredrick's proposal. My mother never got along with either creep. She suspected that they had inner hatred/envy towards her. After all, she was very beautiful.

"Your cat may decide to tear into your sofas and chairs," Rick once said.

Just for the record, my mother never scratched any of the Wilson's furniture. She was a sweet and gentle cat. She respected the rights and properties of others. She was a good North American cat.

Besides, the Wilsons had two scratching posts inside of their home; eradicating any urges my mother would've had for scratching-up the furniture.

My mother practiced her clawing techniques on the scratching posts; imagining that she was a tigress clawing a tree. As a secondary precaution, the Wilsons kept two pairs of 'soft paws' in their home. Just in case my mother became restless.

Although my mother was fed on a regular schedule, sometimes she got a sudden urge for a snack. She'd call out to the Wilsons, and then roll onto her back. If that didn't work, she'd approach one of the Wilsons and play cutie-pie. That method almost always worked.

When my mother turned two, the Wilsons brought her along on a trip to Hawaii. The Wilsons prepared for the trip well in advance. My mother was told that the family was going to a very nice place.

On the day of the trip the Wilsons made sure all the needed accessories and articles of clothing were in their suitcases and handbags.

The Wilsons were hard-working attorneys. Technically, Mr. Wilson worked for his wife. She was the owner of The McCartney Law Firm. Mrs. Wilson inherited ownership of the firm from her aunt, Francine McCartney

My mother was thankful to be a member of the Wilson family. My mother already had the 'Wilson' name before she was adopted. It was by pure coincidence that a Wilson adopted a Wilson.

The Wilsons were glad that my mother had the same family name as they did. This was one of the reasons they purchased my mother from the animal shelter.

Millions of cats around the world are forced to live on the 'tough streets', fighting for food, territory, and mating privileges. For a cat to make it on the streets, toughness and cunning are mandatory. Cats that are naive have a difficult time surviving.

Cats on the streets that don't want to starve must hold their ground against their own kind, and 'other enemies'. These 'other enemies' include: vermin control officers (VCOs), police officers, dogs, habitat destruction and alteration, vehicles, pollution, most rats, evil humans, raccoons, contaminated foods or water, infections, diseases (contagious and non-contagious), parasites, flies, and fleas.

Amongst dogs and cats, the big 'R' is the most horrifying sickness! The 'R' stands for rabies. No dog or cat wants to end-up with rabies. Any contagion that can't be cured results in a death sentence for the poor animal.

On the morning of the planned trip to Hawaii, my mother pictured beautiful trees, bodies of water, and much sunshine. Also, taking long walks with the Wilsons; not having to worry about snow or cold weather.

After the Wilsons finished packing, Karen called for a cab.

"Hello, is this the Blue Cab Company?" asked Karen.

"Yes madam. This is John, the dispatcher for the Blue Cab Company. May I be of assistance?"

"Please send a cab to 1375 Bryson Street West. We want to go to the airport," said Karen.

"Sure madam. Your cab will be there in fifteen minutes. Is there anything else?" asked the dispatcher.

"No, we'll be waiting for the cab in our living room. Please tell the driver to honk his horn several times as soon as he arrives," said Karen.

Mrs. Wilson turned off her cell phone, and then glanced at the clock on the living room wall. The time was 8:00 A.M. The Wilson's flight was scheduled to leave at 10:00 A.M.

Although my mother was happy about going to Hawaii, she was aware that unexpected problems could occur at any moment. For example, the cab driver could end up going to the wrong address.

Also, car problems could develop on the way to the airport. Being on the alert is an inherent quality of cats; while they're not napping.

At 8:15 A.M., the Wilsons heard five honks emanating from their driveway.

Mrs. Wilson pulled apart two blinds, and then looked outside. She saw a Blue Cab. Then, she looked back at Mr. Wilson, and smiled. It was time to leave.

"Steve, it's the cabby! The driver arrived on time. We've got to leave, now!" exclaimed Karen.

The Wilsons quickly carried their suitcases and handbags out to the cab, forgetting someone very important in the process. For a minute, my mother thought that the Wilsons had decided to leave her behind.

"Please, wait a minute! I need to go back! We forgot Mandy!" exclaimed Karen.

"No problem," answered the cabby.

Karen ran back into her house, and then told my mother to come. As soon as my mother was within arms' reach, Karen hoisted her off of the floor, and then exited her house. She closed the door behind her, and then locked it.

After Steve picked up the animal carrier, Karen put my mother inside it. Then, my mother heard the clang of the door closing.

Many cats are sensitive to being 'incarcerated' inside a small animal carrier. Never mind what the so-called human experts may say. They're not always right, nor are they always honest. Animal carriers should be bigger, and have more 'air openings'. The animal inside the carrier needs to feel comfortable, not claustrophobic!

My mother pleaded with the Wilsons to let her out. She even tried scratching the interior of the animal carrier. Her efforts were to no avail.

"Please, let me out! I don't want to be inside this tiny cell! I'm not an inanimate object!" shouted my mother.

The Wilsons were too preoccupied with their trip to take notice of my mother's pleas. The Wilsons should have placed my mother inside a bigger animal carrier. Even good animal owners make mistakes.

My mother once told me that if she was as strong as Superwoman, she would've smashed her way out of that 'suffocating' animal carrier.

A living being inside an animal carrier should be able to breathe freely, turn around, stand up, lie down, take three steps in every direction, and be able to see the outside world with the least hindrance. Some cats become terrified or apathetic, when they're placed inside an animal carrier. They don't understand why their 'beloved owners' are harming them.

The cabby put the Wilson's luggage in the trunk of his cab. In the process, he grinned at the Wilsons, but glared at my mother. My mother was aware of the extreme hatred that some humans have towards cats. It's a bit confusing. Cats are cute, cuddly, agile, fun to be with (sometimes), and don't gripe as much as human babies do. In fact, humans who own well-behaved cats have a gem in their possession.

"Sir, madam, I had a cat back when I was a kid. She was cute, but obnoxious," said the cabby.

"Really?" asked Steve.

"Where are you heading to?" asked the cabby.

"We're going to Hawaii," replied Steve.

"My sister moved to Hawaii fifteen years ago. She spent five years of her life there. Afterwards, she moved up to Montana. I'm originally from Portland, Maine. Gosh, whenever it snowed, I dreamed of sunshine, palm trees, grass, and a beautiful ocean.

I moved to Missouri five years ago. Initially, I wanted to stay here for only two years, save some money, and then move out west. All that changed when I met my dear wife. She was the best thing that ever happened to me," said the cabby.

"Okay, I understand how she was the best thing that ever happened to you, but why didn't you try to convince her to move out west with you?" asked Steve.

"Sir, I did try. She told me that I'd have to go alone. Her home was in Missouri, and only Missouri. I had to make up my mind. Live with Laura, or live out west. I decided to do the right thing. We've had an incredible relationship since then.

My wife's a high school teacher. She taught me about the importance of getting a proper education. That's why I'm taking night classes this semester. I like being a cabby, but, I'd prefer to have a 'brainy job'.

Cats are very interesting animals. As a general rule, they don't intimidate or attack humans. But, I don't like all cats! The first impression I have of a cat is what I keep with me forever. I mean, if I don't like him/her the moment we meet, that's the way it'll always be," said the cabby.

"A cat must come into contact with humans early in life. Otherwise, he/she will have a lifelong apprehension of strangers (humans). Apprehensive cats won't allow themselves to get too comfy with strangers. Many stray cats that have never had any contact with humans will shy away, or even flee upon seeing a human. Even if the human were to get down on one knee, and speak softly to the cat. It'd make no difference, whatsoever.

You're absolutely right! To an apprehensive cat, humans appear as giant bipedals," said Karen.

The cabby grinned at the Wilsons, then pulled out of the driveway and headed for the airport.

Things were running smoothly. A cat couldn't have asked for anything more.

My mother's incredible feline senses enabled her to estimate the correct time and distance between each fare increase. Karen had frequently brought my mother along on taxi rides in the past. My mother loved to look out of the window.

Sadly, she saw too many dilapidated strays. Some of them had horrific wounds scattered throughout their bodies. Others were bordering on starvation. Regardless, every stray cat is wanted by the VCOs. Strays are like escapees from a penitentiary.

At any moment in time, a VCO, or any officer of the law, for that matter, may chase them down.

Strays may have signs of extreme stress and apprehension on their faces. Being out on the streets is really tough for cats and dogs. Not to mention raccoons, pigeons, and other desperate animals.

But, it's much tougher for domesticated dogs and cats who've just been 'evicted' from their homes. Feral animals have a long history of living outdoors. However, today's world isn't like that of old. Humans are now the 'conquerors' of the new world. Many humans don't want to see 'creatures' in their towns, cities, or counties. Indeed, it's 'a human-eat-all-other-animals-world'.

After twenty five minutes of driving, the Wilsons were within eye's view of the airport.

The sounds that were emanating from the airplanes were very annoying. Yes, even cats hate noise pollution.

Many cats think that airplanes are giant metallic birds. Not Mandy Wilson. My mother knew better.

Upon entering Kansas City International Airport, the cab driver rolled down his window, then waited patiently for the parking lot attendant to speak.

"You know the rules. Ten minutes, only. If you stay longer, I'll fine you big times. I'm not kidding," said the parking lot attendant.

"No problem," replied the cabby.

After receiving his entrance receipt the cab driver drove to the airline terminals.

"Please drop us off at the Trans West Airlines terminal," said Karen.

"Certainly," replied the cabby.

Upon reaching the Trans West Airlines terminal, the cabby pulled over into the curb, and then turned off the meter.

Steve pulled out two bills from his wallet then handed them to the cabby.

"Please, give me a moment," said the cabby.

"You've been a good cabby. Go ahead. Keep the change," said Steve.

The cabby thanked the Wilsons for being good passengers, and for the generous tip. Afterwards, he exited his cab, opened the passenger doors, and then opened the trunk.

"I'm glad we didn't forget our baby! She's such an important part of our lives! If anything were to happen to our baby, I'd go nuts!" exclaimed Karen.

After all was done, the Wilsons entered the Trans West Airlines terminal, and then headed straight to the baggage check-in area.

The Wilsons encountered a line of frustrated travelers. It took roughly twenty minutes for the Wilsons to check-in their baggage, along with the animal carrier.

As soon as their baggage was placed on the conveyor belt, the Wilsons felt a gush of relief. At the other end of the conveyor belt, a muscular baggage handler took hold of my mother's animal carrier and then placed it in a baggage transporter.

The Wilsons assumed that the animals in the plane's cargo section were going to enjoy the long flight. Not quite so. Some of the animals in the baggage transporter were visibly shaken. The baggage handlers were impersonal and a bit rough in their handling of the animal carriers.

"Where are these strangers taking us?" asked a Golden Retriever.

There was no answer. For the time being, each of the animals was too occupied with his/her own fate to answer the question.

The muscular baggage handler drove the airport cart to the airplane loading section. The terrified animals were removed from their animal carriers. Afterwards, they were promptly placed inside separate cages. After the work was done, the muscular baggage handler called-in to have the airplane's hatch closed.

"I feel like a cheap piece of baggage," said the Golden Retriever.

The animals waited for fifteen terrifying minutes, before hearing a thunderous, rumbling sound. Airplane engines sound like roaring monsters to the cargo animals.

"We'll be taking off soon!" exclaimed my mother.

My mother didn't want to reveal her fear to the other animals. So, she pretended that she was excited about the whole affair.

As soon as the airplane began to back-up, a black cat barfed. Another cat defecated and urinated. There was nobody around to comfort them. While their owners were 'on deck' they were in the 'hole'.

While the captain was driving the airplane on the tarmac, the scene inside the cargo section became chaotic. In other words, the animals went crazy. Apparently, the cargo animals couldn't understand the sudden change in speed.

A Dachshund 'engulfed' her cage in urine, feces, and vomit. Even a tough lion would've 'freaked-out' from the ordeal.

The animals in the cargo section felt like they were entering another dimension. Even the concept of time had changed. Of course, when you're terrified, or in pain, time passes slowly. Things improved a bit as soon as the airplane leveled off at 35,000 feet.

Because cargo animals aren't paying customers, airline executives generally don't think of them when making decisions about plane safety or comfort. In the meantime, cargo animals will have to bite-the-bullet until the situation improves.

It was impossible for the cargo animals to ignore each other. Of course, with nothing to do and hours of waiting, it was evident they'd converse with each other.

My mother eyed the other animals, trying to pick out a good friend to converse with. She spotted a zebra cat (white and black colored), with green eyes and who appeared to have a good temperament. He was in the cage on the left of my mother.

Initially, my mother was hesitant to initiate a conversation. Sometimes, looks can be deceiving. My mother waited for a moment, before initiating a conversation.

"Hi, my name is Mandy Wilson. I'm going to Hawaii! I've heard many good things about Hawaii. I can't wait till I get there."

For some unknown reason, the zebra cat my mother spoke to 'stressed' his left foreleg. He grimaced whenever he shifted his weight. Something was wrong. My mother instinctively knew that the injury was caused by severe trauma, and wasn't a birth defect. Her feline curiosity made her ask him how the problem came about. Animals, including cats, are very good behaviorists. We don't have to read books, articles, or other 'human sources' of literature, in order to sense mental or physical unease in another animal.

My mother wondered if the cat's owner had caused the trauma. Unfortunately, some dog and cat owners think their companion animals have no feelings, like automatons. Descartes, the philosopher, was one of those humans who sustained and expanded this terrible lie!

According to Descartes, animals were automatons, machine-like creatures. Animals respond to physical intrusion in an automatic manner. No pain, agony, or fear. Totally bogus!

Animals can't survive in the wild without having nerve receptors. It's a matter of common sense.

Also, we're not automatons! We're sentient beings; we're alive and feel physical and mental pain/discomfort!

Sadists who love to torment animals understand that their targets do feel pain. That's why the sadist gets off by performing the act. Otherwise, hitting an animal would be like hitting a block of cement.

My mother had to find out what had happened to the zebra cat.

"What's your name?" my mother asked.

"I'm Corey Jameson. I'm three years-old, sad, and somewhat apprehensive when it comes to making new 'human' friends. I've had a rough life. As you can see, I have a 'favored' foreleg. The pain used to be much worse."

In the past, my foreleg throbbed even when I didn't apply pressure on it. I thought I was going mad! Some physical wounds do heal over time; other wounds don't."

Apparently, Corey had been purchased by fraternity brothers from Gramson State College (GSC), in California. Corey was more or less a living trinket. His feelings were never taken into consideration. In addition, no plan was formed to care for Corey after the fraternity brothers graduated from GSC. The guys needed a temporary buddy, mascot, and a cutie-pie cat. It was Corey.

At the end of the academic year, or upon graduation, a school cat may be tossed out into the streets, or taken to the local shelter. Once in a blue moon, a 'lucky cat' ends up in the hands of a 'humane' student; but don't count on it.

Corey spent six weeks of his life in a pet store, trying desperately to ignore the countless gawking humans. After a cat has been gawked at several hundred times, it starts to become annoying. Especially when a cat's trying to take a nap while someone's tapping on the glass or cage bars.

It began on a sunny Saturday morning, in the month of July, a pet store worker opened Corey's cage door, then reached in and yanked him. Corey felt that something drastic was going to happen. Although he was hoping for a release, the destination was just as important. It would be worse for him to be sent to a 'vicious' owner.

A pet store worker asked two fraternity brothers from GSC to go to the cashier. A purchase was in the making.

"Please take Corey to the cashier," said the pet store worker.

Trouble was lurking. Corey 'scented' alcohol on the fraternity brothers' breath. This was a bad sign for a soon-to-be companion animal. Party animals don't make good pet owners.

The fraternity brothers walked over to the cashier's counter. The cashier was a young, attractive woman, who wore a short pony tail.

"I'm Lydia Shaw. We're glad you chose Eddie's Pet World for your purchase. You guys look like GSC students. Gramson's a good school."

"I'm Jeff Dawson. This is my buddy, Andy Flynn. We're seniors in the Sociology department at Gramson. A cat in our fraternity house will liven up the atmosphere. We want a 'fleshy toy' to play with when we're down and out."

"I've been working at Eddie's Pet World for over a year now. The pay is low, but I'm still thankful to have a job.

I mean, it beats waitressing. Besides, I've met many people here. Well, not all of them were friendly. One guy who came here a couple of months ago wanted to purchase a lion. After telling him that we don't sell lions, he insisted on speaking to the pet store owner. Luckily, the owner was in the storage room doing inventory work.

I called the owner, but he didn't come. So, the guy decided to go back to the storage room. I braced myself for a terrible argument.

To make a long story short, the guy ended up speaking to the owner for roughly fifteen minutes. Then, I got the shock of my life. Both men exited the storage room together, with smiles on their faces. It was like they'd made a secret deal. As of that moment, I lost all respect for the owner. Please, don't tell anyone that 'I' told you this story. Otherwise, I'll be fired on the spot," whispered Lydia.

"Well, we must return to the fraternity house. Otherwise, we'll miss the big party. We want to surprise our friends with this cute cat. Here's what we owe you," said Jeff.

"Just give me a second, so I can give you back your change. Gosh, it's really nice to see college students around here. I'm returning to school next year. With no promotion prospects, it's the only thing I can do," said Lydia.

As soon as the 'cat sale' went through, Jeff's paled, then reddened. He wanted something else. What was it?

"Please, give me a leash. I don't want this cat to run away or to get lost. Worse yet, I don't want to buy another cat," said Jeff.

Lydia motioned Jeff and Andy to stay. After taking a deep breath, she went to the back of the pet store, and then removed a leash from a peg board.

Afterwards, Lydia returned with the leash in her hand. She handed the leash to Jeff. Then, she hoisted an animal carrier that was located underneath the counter.

Lydia placed the animal carrier on the counter. Afterwards, she gently pulled Corey from Jeff's hands, and then placed him inside the animal carrier.

As soon as Lydia closed the animal carrier door, Corey cringed. He realized that his lifeline had been drastically altered for the worse.

Andy and Jeff were muscular jocks. In fact, they were stars of the GSC football team. With good looks, money, and a cat, it looked like they had it all.

Andy swiped the leash from Jeff's hand and waved it in front of the animal carrier. Corey didn't like that.

Cats don't like to be leashed. They love to roam around, unfettered. Leash-free is the best way. Because Corey was inside an animal carrier, there was nothing he could do but wallow in agony.

The animal carrier stunk. Obviously used many times before, it had three fecal smears and sticky urine inside it. No wonder, Lydia gave the animal carrier away for free.

"I felt sorry for myself, and every single cat that'd ever been placed inside that horrendous animal carrier," said Corey.

Too many cats had done their thing inside that stinking prison hole! Neither Lydia, nor the buyers seemed to give a damn. Corey's best interests weren't part of the 'sales equation'.

Jeff and Andy thanked Lydia for being so kind and helpful. In turn, she thanked them for being good customers.

Jeff and Andy left the pet store with a new 'kitty friend'. Andy held the animal carrier firmly. A drop could be disastrous for Corey. They'd have to purchase another cat.

"Hurry- up!" commanded Jeff.

"Come on, Jeff! Don't ruin our day. We'll get to the fraternity party. Then, we can binge drink all day long. Well, until we puke our brains out, or pass out. Whichever happens one occurs first. We've got plenty of time. Actually, we can continue drinking inside your car. Remember, we've got a giant cooler in the back. We'll invite our new friend to our mini-party," said Andy.

"Please, don't talk about me as though I'm not here! My name is Corey Jameson, and I demand to be spoken to, and about, in person!"

Neither Jeff, nor Andy, took Corey seriously. They glanced at him with contempt, continuing their trek to the fraternity party.

Jeff and Andy walked through the mall, gawking at any female they thought was attractive. A short while later, they exited The Valley Mall, then headed straight to Jeff's car.

"Andy, in what section did I park my car in?" asked Jeff.

"You parked your car in Section D," responded Andy.

Andy stopped walking, scanned the parking lot, and then pulled out a bottle of 80 proof of Vodka. It was only half full. It was bad enough that Corey already scented booze on Andy's breath. Now, Andy was going to drink some more Vodka. What next?

"Jeff, let's have a few swigs from this precious water. Come on, we'll do it really fast. Nobody's going to see us," whispered Andy.

Jeff and Andy each took several quick swigs of Vodka. Corey was worried that they'd try to force him to drink some of the devil water.

Because Jeff and Andy already had booze in their systems, the swigs they took brought them ever so closer to a drunken stupor.

Corey was terrified. Too bad, he was locked inside an animal carrier.

As Jeff and Andy continued their trek to the car, a mall security officer pulled his van in front of their path. Andy was so scared, he let out gas. Although the situation was tense, his fart added a touch of humor.

"I saw you drinking that booze! I've got my 'zoom binoculars' right here in my hands! Listen, I can see a freaking ant poop on the moon.

Now, you better give me that stinking bottle, so I can finish it off for you. Unless, you want me to call the police and have you taken in for public intoxication.

The security guard got 'his bottle', and then drove off. Although it was a shameful incident, Corey was glad the police weren't involved.

Andy finally remembered exactly where Jeff had parked his car.

"Jeff, you parked your car in a residential area! Man, we have to cross Falcon Boulevard!" exclaimed Andy. Corey understood that his 'newfound friends' were now full of booze. At the moment, his friends were too inebriated to listen to good advice.

Jeff and Andy crossed Falcon Boulevard. Shockingly, while crossing Falcon Boulevard, a driver in a blue Corvette almost ran them over! It wasn't the driver's fault. Jeff and Andy shuffled their feet while crossing Falcon Boulevard.

Further- more, they didn't look left or right before crossing the street. That's totally dangerous!

"Did you see that creep? Why did he try to run us over? This is outrageous! In this day and age, drivers don't respect pedestrians!" shouted Andy.

Indeed, if the blue Corvette had struck them, there would've been serious consequences. Most humans know that drunk driving is dangerous. But, do they know that 'drunk walking' is also dangerous?

Humans who walk around drunk increase their chances of being struck by an automobile. Likewise, felines who are high on catnip face the same problem. However, in the case of cats, they can also be attacked or killed by an enemy.

Inebriated humans look very awkward. Sometimes, they try to behave like they're sober. Their breath is a dead giveaway. Sometimes, booze smells like an unusual brand of cologne. I mean, before the bad breath or puke sets in.

Hangover, or barf breath, stinks like all hell! Cats don't like it when humans with bad breath kiss them, or get too close to them. No wonder, cats often lash out at their human owners.

I often wonder what the stats are for animals killed in alcohol-related accidents. Road kill maims, kills, and orphans, millions of animals throughout the world; every single year. The main causes of road kill are speeding, drunk driving, not paying attention (human or animal), or the moronic driver didn't notice the gigantic grizzly bear crossing the street. Smaller animals are more difficult to notice. They run across the street, like a rodent being chased by a larger predator.

Some drivers defy animal crossing signs. The animals who'd died in road kill were only trying to get from Point A to Point B. That's not the worst of it. A minority of drivers love to strike animals with their automobile. They think it's really funny to see an animal demolished by a moving vehicle. Many 'struck' animals don't die immediately. They have to linger along, enduring pain, agony, and without any defense against the elements.

My mother told me a story about a cruel driver in Montreal. He was driving in a side street then accelerated as soon as he saw a group of pigeons eating. He ended up 'squishing' a half-a-dozen pigeons. Really funny!

Jeff entered his Mustang with pomp and arrogance. Andrew opened the hatch, and then placed my mother's animal carrier inside. After taking a deep breath, he closed the hatch, and then entered the Mustang. As soon as both doors were closed, Corey got the jitters.

"I'm such a handsome guy. No woman or girl could ever resist me. I'm tall, handsome, rich, athletic, intelligent, and very popular. What else can I ask for?" asked Jeff.

Corey noticed that one of the car windows was slightly ajar. Indeed it was a foolish mistake. A professional car thief could've easily snatched the Mustang. Maybe, it would've been better if it had happened.

Jeff turned on the ignition, then the radio. The sound of oldies rock music was a temporarily distraction for Corey. The DJ identified the station as Oldies 105 FM, located in Gramson, California. Although the music was nice, the volume was a bit too high.

Luckily, Jeff and Andy thought likewise. Jeff turned down the volume of the music to a normal level. Then, he began his drive back to the fraternity house. Corey wasn't sure if they were going to make it to the fraternity house alive.

Jeff and Andrew snatched one beer after another, from the cooler. About twenty minutes into the drive, Jeff turned left, into a dirt road. Corey didn't know what to think of it.

The answer arrived in a jiffy. Jeff pulled over near a forested area, and then turned off the ignition.

"Corey, this is your initiation!" exclaimed Jeff.

"What the hell are you guys talking about?" asked Corey.

"You're not leaving this spot until you party with us! We'll give you plenty of time to make up your mind. If you say 'no', we'll dump you here, so the predators can get you. If, however, you say yes, you can become our fiend. In that case, we will conditionally love you."

After an hour of waiting, Corey caved in. He began with beer, then wine, then hard liquor. At first, Corey thought that the taste was horrible. However, after he became tipsy, the horrible taste faded away. Jeff and Andy began to pass Corey little shots of booze. This was a set-up for the real thing; booze and dope.

This was the incident that began Corey's descent into alcohol and drugs. Corey would soon become a regular drinker and smoker of dope. At the moment, he had no idea what his so-called friends were inducing him into.

After the party ended, Jeff, Andy, and Corey, dozed off for a few hours. Upon awakening, Jeff resumed his drive back to the fraternity house. They'd wasted much time near the forest. As such, Jeff drove his Mustang a bit faster than he should have.

"Drinking, women, and playing around are fun activities. This is what college is all about. Little studying, and lots of partying," said Andrew.

While Jeff was driving, he began to converse with Andy about Corey. They spoke about Corey as though he wasn't there. Corey didn't like that! It was a direct insult to his self-esteem. When Jeff noticed that Corey was getting a bit bored, he offered Corey a shot of Whiskey. Corey couldn't drink anymore.

After Jeff drank the shot of Whiskey, he lit-up a joint. Mind you, he was driving. The interior of the Mustang 'smelled' like alcohol and marijuana. Corey began to have breathing difficulties.

Corey wanted to tell Jeff and Andrew to grow up and be considerate of the other passenger in the car. But, Corey was apprehensive. He had no idea of knowing how they'd react to his blunt statement. So, he stayed quiet.

After twenty minutes on the road, Jeff took a right on Maple Street, and then headed due west. Maple Street was aligned with beautiful homes and trees. Indeed, they were driving through an 'uppity neighborhood'. Corey 'fantasized' about living in this kind of neighborhood. If he'd only known what was in store for him.

Now, they were only several blocks away from the fraternity house. That was good news for Corey. Jeff's driving was becoming a bit too awkward for Corey.

It was apparent that Jeff and Andy were going to be terrible pet owners. Corey braced himself for a possible getaway. As they say, the best time to escape is now. Don't wait until you're used to the routine of being a humans' kitty.

Andrew and Jeff suspected that Corey was pondering about an escape attempt. Without any warning, Jeff pulled over into the curb. Then, he reached inside his giant cooler, and pulled out three 'mini-bottles' of Jack Daniels.

In an act of utter brutality, Jeff grabbed Corey by the scruff with his left hand, and twisted the cap off each mini-bottle with his teeth. Then, Jeff shoved the opening of the mini-bottle deep into Corey's mouth.

Corey was forced to drink the contents of the three mini-bottles. By the time he was done, there wasn't a single drop of Jack Daniels in sight.

Expectedly, Corey was now totally wasted. Jeff and Andy told Corey that he was an incredible cat. That no cat in the whole world could ever out drink him. Wow, like that was a consolation.

Sensing more defiance from Corey, Jeff poured Tequila into a shot glass. Afterwards, he handed the shot glass to Andy. Jeff then removed a Tequila worm from the bottle that it was encased in.

Jeff grinned, and then shoved the Tequila worm into Corey's mouth. As if that wasn't enough, he then made Corey drink the Tequila. Corey was now in a zombie-like state. Any more drinks would result in instant death.

Jeff parked his Mustang in front of the fraternity house, then, he turned off the ignition and the radio.

Four powerful speakers were strewn on the front lawn of the fraternity house, causing the sound of 'Rock' music to engulf the entire block.

A handsome fraternity brother approached the Mustang, and grinned at Jeff and Andrew. Meanwhile, Corey was puking his brains out.

"How was the trip?" asked the fraternity brother.

"Well, everything went fine. I'm glad we made it back in time. Now it's time to do some heavy duty partying! Look, Corey's joined us. Maybe, we'll make him an honorary member of our fraternity," said Jeff.

"Look, guys, don't you think you've had enough to drink for now. Your kitty's vomiting big times.

Come on, guys! You shouldn't give booze to a cat! Damn! He's a cat!" shouted the fraternity brother.

Trouble began as soon as Jeff and Andrew exited the Mustang. Jeff shouted obscenities at the fraternity brother. Apparently, Jeff thought he owned Corey, inside and out. This young man was a good example of what a fraternity brother should be like. The vast majority of fraternity brother and sorority sisters are good. It's the bad ones like Jeff and Andy who give these organizations a black eye, every-so-often.

The fraternity brother called several of his GSC friends to the scene. It looked like Corey was going to be saved after all. Or, did it?

Unfortunately, the 'friends' were preoccupied with their partying.

"Come on, Jeff. We're on the same team, literally. The GSC ball players are comrades. Please, take it easy on that little kitty. He's not guilty of any crime, or any wrong-doing," said the fraternity brother.

"Hey! Mind your own freaking business! Corey's mine! He belongs to me! Inside and out!" shouted Jeff.

Corey understood that he'd been turned into a slab-of-property. Technically, he was Jeff's property. Any escape attempt by Corey would have to be successful, or else, he'd have to suffer the consequences. No doubt, Jeff would take any escape attempt personally. For the time being, Corey decided to play it safe.

Jeff carried Corey's animal carrier through the lawn, then into the fraternity house. Several individuals gawked at Corey. They were awed. Corey was an incredibly cute cat.

A sorority sister approached Jeff, and then inquired about Corey. She was friendly, inside and out. Cats enjoy the company of friendly humans. As long as they don't bother them while they're napping, daydreaming, or hunting.

"Wow! Your cat's incredibly cute! Is 'she' tame? Can I pet

'her'? Is 'she' tamed trained? Can I be 'her' friend?" asked the sorority sister.

Some humans assume that all cats are females. I really don't blame them. Cats are downright cute and streamlined. We're so pretty, it's often difficult to distinguish between a male and a female. I mean, unless you look 'down there'.

"Listen, Bambi! My cat's a guy! I'd never purchase a female cat! I want a tough cat! I don't want a freaking weakling cat who'll want me to cuddle her so softly and tenderly," answered Jeff.

Jeff chuckled then proceeded to walk to the kitchen. The scent of alcohol, marijuana, semen, sweat, and vomit, were in the air.

Corey couldn't handle the stench anymore. He vomited his brains out, with several gigantic heaves. Now, there was no trace of alcohol in his stomach. But, he had more than enough of it in his digestive system and bloodstream.

Jeff peered inside the animal carrier, because he thought that it was funny seeing a cat puke his brains out. Jeff wanted Corey to become a full-fledged party animal.

As soon as Jeff removed Corey from the animal carrier, a small crowd converged upon Corey. Lucky for Corey, he'd stopped puking.

It's amazing how many people like cats. Woe unto those creeps who hate us. Cats should always be on the alert for sadistic humans. Some humans use deceit and cunning in order to lower a cat's guard. Then, they move in for the attack.

I hate to say this, but, sometimes cats do behave like humans. Catnip sends some cats into a euphoric state, or skid row.

Even large cats, like jaguars, aren't immune to 'jungle drugs'. I'd seriously warn any cat against the use of any psychotropic drug. A cat's brain can be literally destroyed by the recreational and addicting drugs that some humans use. I can't imagine what would happen to a cat that used crack cocaine, cocaine, or LSD.

Euphoria is not to be sought out in the wild. The wild knows no mercy. Be aware, or be killed. That's the saying in the wildlife community.

From within the crowd, a beautiful black-haired, blue/green-eyed, female extended her hand to Corey. Although they were both drunk, the love emanating from each of them was enormous. It appeared as though they were meant to be friends.

"My name is Cynthia Corbett and I really love cats. Especially cute ones like you. It's a great pleasure to meet you. Did you know that having a feline 'friend' can lower a person's pulse and blood pressure? Really!"

Kitty, you're the star of this fraternity party. As a new resident in this fraternity house, you're entitled to good food, living quarters, security, and much love. Why, I already feel better just looking at you!

Don't be afraid. I just want to pet you between your ears."

Cynthia gently pulled Corey from Jeff's hands, and then began to pet him between the ears. Without even waiting a second, Jeff told Cynthia that Corey was his, and absolutely nobody else's. Jeff described Corey as a wild, intelligent cat, who needed to be tamed.

Corey didn't like the use of the word 'tamed'. It made him feel like a big cat in a circus. More and more, it seemed like Jeff was going to be a needle in Corey's life. Corey would have to keep an observant eye on Jeff.

Although Corey liked the attention he was getting from the people in the small crowd, a short while later, he developed stimulus overload. A cat can only withstand a certain level of gawking. Cats, like people and other animals, don't like to be overwhelmed by stimuli. It's worse, when the people are wasted.

In an act of unjustifiable aggression, Jeff yanked Corey out of Cynthia's arms, thereby startling her. But, there was a bit more to it than just being startled. Was Cynthia afraid of Jeff? Corey would soon get his answer.

"You stinking bitch! This is my freaking cat! You can't take him away from me! No way, Cynthia!" shouted Jeff.

Everyone in the immediate vicinity froze in silence. Afterwards, they went back to what they were doing. No one appeared surprised by Jeff's behavior. Even about his aggressiveness towards Cynthia.

Apparently, Jeff had a reputation of being overly possessive with 'his' properties. Corey would soon find out the extent of Jeff's possessiveness.

Cynthia wasn't going to take it lying down. Not for the moment.

"Jeff, you need to control your temper! You don't have the right to speak to me, is lovely cat in that tone! Furthermore, don't you ever call me a bitch! And, don't call him a freaking cat, either! Jeff, I've had it with you and your buddies!" shouted Cynthia.

It was now certain to Corey that the two combatants had locked horns before. Somehow, it appeared as though this conflict was going to escalate.

Later, a small crowd formed around the scene. A few individuals chuckled after Cynthia uttered her last word. The crowd was impressed by Cynthia's defiance and valor. Jeff, on the other hand, wasn't. Corey looked deep into Jeff's eyes. Jeff

had vengeance, anger, and sadism in his heart. Cynthia would have to watch her step thereafter.

"Cynthia, you better not cross me again! Otherwise, you'll be very sorry!" shouted Jeff.

Jeff turned, and then walked away with Corey in his arms. He stopped near a large grandfather clock, took notice of the time, and then continued walking. He ended up flopping onto a reclining chair.

Jeff was still thinking about 'embroiled' about Cynthia. He clinched his fists, and then eyed her intently. From the expression on his face, it appeared as though he was planning a terrible retaliation.

Corey wanted to scratch and bite Jeff. But, he'd need a getaway plan to do that. Corey understood that his new 'friends' were a liability for him, rather than an asset. Unfortunately, he was still inebriated. There would be no escape attempt.

"Jeff, I don't want you to hold me in your arms. I want to go over there. I want to be with Cynthia. I promise to return in a short while," mumbled Corey.

Jeff glared at Corey, and then let him go. He knew that Corey couldn't escape.

Corey approached a group of men and women who were conversing about life and school. Of course, Cynthia was amongst them.

"Cynthia, if you really want to be an attorney, hit the books really hard. There's no way around it. My uncle dropped out of undergrad school because he was a party animal. Now, he's a sanitation engineer (janitor) at a high school in Philadelphia," said a pretty blond.

Thanks for the good advice. I don't plan on boozing it up for the rest of my life. I don't like what it's doing to my body, or my mind. I'm far behind in my studies. Starting from next week, I shall hit the books really hard. At any cost!" exclaimed Cynthia.

The men and women conversed for roughly fifteen minutes. Corey found it challenging to listen intently. The booze and marijuana in his system had to be flushed out.

Corey told Cynthia that he was needed to rest-up on a sofa chair nearby.

A minute later, Corey was sound asleep. He stayed that way for several hours.

Upon awakening, Corey felt a throbbing hangover. So, he went to the kitchen and convinced one of the party animals to give him a bottle of water.

Corey rested the bottle of water onto the kitchen floor, and then he carefully twisted the cap off. Afterwards, he

consumed as much water as his body could possibly accept, without overflowing.

After partially re-hydrating himself, Corey began his walk back to the general congregation. On his way there, he saw Jeff snoozing on a sofa.

Although Corey didn't care much for Jeff, he wanted to give him another chance at being a friend. He carefully approached Jeff, and then made four failed attempts at leaping onto his chest. Luckily, the fifth attempt was successful.

Corey rested on Jeff's chest. The inhaling/exhaling rhythm of Jeff's diaphragm made Corey sleepy. He closed his eyes for an hour.

As soon as Jeff awakened, Corey leaped onto the carpet. Then, he took several steps away from the sofa. Jeff grudgingly got up, then walked to the staircase and slowly ascended it, pulling his body up with the hand that was grasping the rail.

Corey followed, but was abruptly stopped by three women. They approached Corey, and then began to pet his back.

Cynthia arrived at the scene in an inebriated state. After grinning at the small crowd, she petted Corey.

"Corey, I had to see you again! I think you and I have a special human-animal connection. Maybe, we're destined to be best friends. You can count on me if you're ever in trouble. You're such an awesome cat. Anyone who has a cat friend like you is very lucky. You're better than most of the 'males' that I've met in my short life," said Cynthia.

Corey thanked Cynthia then he brushed the side of his head against her ankles. Although Corey's words didn't come out right, his mannerisms conveyed his pleasure with Cynthia. In effect, he was telling her that he loved her.

Being the only cat in the fraternity house, Corey needed someone to love. I mean, he didn't want to have a firecracker shoved up his anus by a group of young men.

Corey had heard numerous stories about cats that were tormented by humans.

Witch/cat hunts, Halloween, and the dreaded Cat Wednesday, are only a few problems that cats have had to endure in their history with humanity.

Cynthia's eyes shined like beautiful stars. Corey believed that Cynthia would be an incredible person some day. Humans who have much love for cats are a step above their brethren.

While Cynthia and Corey were together, they received a creepy intruder. It was none other than Jeff.

Cynthia reminded Jeff that part of the money used to purchase Corey came from the sorority treasury. Jeff didn't use any of 'his money' to purchase Corey. So, if push came to shove,

Cynthia could lodge an official complaint with the GSC Student Union.

Cynthia wouldn't tolerate any abuse of Corey. In fact, she had a sudden change of tactics. It appeared as though she too, was becoming obsessed with Corey.

"Jeff, grant me ownership of Corey! He needs someone who'll love him dearly and treat him like a star. I'm the person to do that! Cats have always been a big part of my.

When I was a child, I used to walk around the neighborhood in search of a cat to play with. I did this every single day, even on holidays. Lucky for me, I made many cat friends.

Unfortunately, my lucky streak didn't last too long. My childhood was full of domicile changes.

I loved each and every one of those cats! Male and female! Please, give me ownership of Corey!" shouted Cynthia.

"Come on, Cynthia! If you know what's good for you, you'll relent! I'm telling you, bitch, relent! I own Corey, inside and out. Nothing terrible will happen to him!" shouted Jeff.

Corey didn't believe a single word that came out of Jeff's mouth. Jeff was a Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde character.

Thereafter, Corey had to be on the alert. He felt that someone was planning on doing him wrong. He just didn't exactly know who, or when.

As soon as Cynthia had Corey in her arms she walked over to the recreation room. For the time being, it was the best room in the fraternity house.

Upon entering the recreation room, Cynthia was greeted by five of her friends. Two of them were smoking dope. The other three were drinking wine coolers.

Cynthia allowed her friends to pet Corey, but only for a short while. Corey hadn't completely recovered from the induced drinking/doping incident. He still had some alcohol and dope in his system. Not to mention, a weak, but ever present hangover.

A table nearby was strewn with plastic beer cups and shots of Schnapps, Bacardi, Gin, and Vodka.

The lure of free drinks was too much for Cynthia. After pondering about what to do, Cynthia placed Corey into the hands of a three hundred pound football player. The guy was big, mean-looking, and was as hairy as Bigfoot. Surprisingly, he was very kind and sweet to Corey. He smiled at Corey, and held him gently in his arms. If Corey had thumbs, one of them would've been placed inside his own mouth. I mean, the big guy caused Corey to regress back to 'kitten hood'. It goes to show you even big guys can be kind and sweet to cats.

Cynthia snatched two shot glasses of peppermint Schnapps then gulped them down. Thereafter, she continued to drink- up-a-

storm. It didn't take long for her to become 'extremely intoxicated'.

To make matters worse, Jeff and two of his buddies entered the recreation room. The three young men joined Cynthia in her drinking escapade.

Jeff winked at his friends then put on a fake smile. There was evil in Jeff's eyes. Jeff's fake smile was uglier than sin.

When Cynthia 'slurred' that she'd had enough booze, Jeff and his friends convinced her to have another shot of peppermint Schnapps for good luck. After she drank the shot of peppermint Schnapps, one of Jeff's buddies handed her two more shots, for sorority sake. She gulped both shots, and then waved her hand in the air; indicating that she'd had enough.

Cynthia was out of it. Gradually losing her ability to talk, walk, and compose herself, she needed someone trustworthy to help her. Jeff winked at his buddies again, and then motioned them to go upstairs. They left, immediately.

Afterwards, Jeff told Cynthia that he'd be waiting for her upstairs.

"What? Why do you want me to go upstairs with you? I'm about to pass out. I won't be good company. Anyhow, I just want to crash-out on sofa.

And, maybe I don't want to be with you. Please, just go away," mumbled Cynthia.

The effects of Cynthia's drinking were now very apparent. Soon, she'd behave like a darted animal. But, there was something a bit more sinister about this. Corey smelled something terrifying underneath all of the booze and 'mainstream drugs'. For the time being, he kept quiet. This was the mistake of his life.

"Come on, baby. I'm sorry. I mean ... come on, Cynthia. Look, I'm going up to room number twenty six. You know where it's at. Please, trust me. We're buddies, aren't we?

Before you go, have a shot of Bourbon, for school's sake," requested Jeff.

Incredibly, Cynthia received a quick boost of energy. Although it was short-lived, she conveyed her feelings quite well.

"LISTEN, NO MEANS NO! I don't want any more booze! Leave me alone!" shouted Cynthia.

It certainly was amazing how Cynthia was able to shout, considering her drunken state. I think she was so pissed off at Jeff nothing could've prevented her from shouting at him. Anyway, her shouting was to no avail.

Jeff apologized to Cynthia then persuaded her to have just one last gulp of beer. She obliged him on the condition that he'd no longer pester her about drinking. Jeff agreed. Cynthia's

eyes were glassy, and she began to see double. Not a good sign for a lone woman at a big party.

Cynthia watched Jeff walk away then she fell back onto the sofa. Surprisingly, she tried to grab a shot of Vodka. Luckily, she couldn't grasp it. It fell onto the carpet. The booze in her system had dug-in deeply.

After being out cold for an hour, Cynthia awakened, got up, then staggered to the staircase. Considering there were still many people in the fraternity house, someone should have come to her aid. Instead, what she got were snickers and finger-pointing. One woman called her a little harlot.

Suspecting trouble, Corey leaped off the big football player's chest, and then ran to Cynthia. Now, Corey was heading towards sobriety. He understood that his friend was in need of assistance. As soon as he got to within a foot of Cynthia, he fell on his side. It wasn't that he was still wasted. Corey was in need of nutrition. He'd been drained by all of the partying and meal-missing.

Corey was out cold for a few minutes. As soon as he came to, the desire to protect Cynthia became overwhelming. He was willing to risk life and limb to protect her.

Corey sensed that Cynthia was a few breaths away from barfing. She had a vomit-look on her face.

The big football player tried to call Corey back. Fortunately, his attempts were futile. It was now 2 A.M., and the party animals were starting to leave the fraternity house. Corey heard many goodbyes from the party animals.

Cynthia staggered up the stairs, pulling herself up by grasping the rail with both hands. She fell four times, but got up each time. As soon as she was on the second floor, she turned right, and then headed for the restroom.

Upon entering the restroom, Cynthia loosened her pants then slammed the door shut.

Corey was on her trail. He placed his right ear against the restroom door. Corey wasn't spying on Cynthia. He was only being a loving/caring cat. I would've done the same thing. What about you?

Corey heard Cynthia barfing and dry heaving; on and off, for several minutes. In order to comfort her Corey told Cynthia that everything was going to be all right. Understandably, Cynthia was too wasted to have completely understood what Corey had said.

Corey didn't know this at the time, but, when a person's barfing, the last thing he/she needs is a pep talk. If you ever see someone barfing, wait until the 'episode' is over, before opening up a conversation. Actually, look carefully to see if the person's in the mood to converse. If not, don't say a word!

As soon as Cynthia's barfing episode ended, she began to mumble a story about a cat that she'd once befriended as a child.

Corey listened intently to Cynthia's mumblings. By the end of her mini-story, Corey understood why Cynthia would always need a cat friend. Apparently, one of her childhood cat friends was run over by a car. She never got over it.

Corey could hear Cynthia crying and sniffing. It was a sad story. But, there was a more important issue at hand. Cynthia had to sober-up. Then, she had to start hitting the books really hard. Not to mention, get away from those creeps, especially Jeff!

Often times, the death of a childhood animal friend comes back to haunt a person. The right cue can bring back the memory of a long lost animal. In this case, Corey was the cue. No wonder, Cynthia adored him.

Corey tried to fight off the heavy tears that were pouring down his cheeks. Being a male can sometimes be difficult. Even for male felines.

Corey waited patiently for Cynthia to exit the restroom. He didn't know what to expect. Would she walk out, or crawl out?

A short while later, Cynthia slowly opened the restroom door, then staggered out. Corey noticed her bloodshot eyes, wobbly demeanor, and airhead look. Indeed, Corey was very worried about Cynthia.

Thankfully, Corey was beginning to regain his composure. He was intent on never being forced to consume anything that he didn't want to.

"Corey, I love you. You're the most adorable kitty in the whole world," mumbled Cynthia.

In response, Corey leaped onto Cynthia's chest. She almost fell back from the force of the impact. After realizing his mistake, Corey released his grip, turned his head then leaped onto the carpet. Afterwards, Corey rubbed his body against Cynthia's ankles.

Cynthia fell onto the carpet, almost smothering Corey in the process. She was smashed. Most of the party animals had left the fraternity house.

While Cynthia was strewn across the carpet, Jeff exited room number twenty six. As soon as he saw Cynthia, his demeanor 'turned wicked'. I mean, he had a very evil expression on his face, and his mannerisms were hostile-looking. You had to be there to see it.

Corey had a strong urge to attack Jeff, but he held himself back. Corey was a fair cat. He'd have to wait until Jeff tried something wicked against Cynthia. If so, it would call for a swift response.

Jeff had a bottle of booze-pop in his hand. He leaned over then lifted Corey off the carpet with his free hand. Jeff took a swig from his bottle then lowered his arm to his waist. As soon as he began to speak, the scent of alcohol beneath the pop engulfed the air. Believe me, pop won't mask the scent of alcohol.

Jeff burped then grinned. Afterwards, he gently placed his bottle on the carpet. Then, he tugged on Corey's tail, in order to tease him. Tail tugging is outright painful and irritating! Cats don't like it when people 'tug' their tails. A cat's tail is a 'special body-part' that shouldn't be touched, unless for medical reasons. I'll repeat what I said, but in a more direct manner: NEVER TOUCH, OR HOLD A CAT'S TAIL! It pisses them off!

Rightfully, Corey became infuriated. In a knee-jerk response, Corey scratched Jeff's hand.

Jeff, in turn, shouted obscenities at Corey. Then, he tossed Corey onto the carpet. Corey didn't feel like getting into a physical confrontation with anyone because his best friend in the whole world was strewn across a carpet, in a semi-conscious state. Cynthia's well-being was more important than fighting off Jeff.

Animals have a remarkable ability to sense sickness and abnormality. It's a beautiful survival mechanism that's often used in the wild.

Jeff was a rotten apple. For the time being, Corey couldn't have cared less why Jeff was like that. Everyone has problems. If every living creature on this planet suddenly took out their 'frustrations' and 'qualms' on others, we'd face imminent extinction! I'm not kidding!

"Jeff wasn't a child. He was a young man. He had only himself to blame for his cruel attitude and behavior," said Corey.

Aside from alcohol, Corey scented marijuana and cocaine on Jeff's person. Jeff was a burnout, in the literal sense. It was a shame he didn't use his strengths and talents for good.

Jeff was shocked how Corey could even consider scratching him. Well, what did he expect?

Meanwhile, the last major clique left the fraternity house. Now, there were perhaps a few scattered individuals, here and there. Others would be leaving shortly.

Corey glanced up at a beautiful blue clock on the wall. The clock read 3:30 A.M. When he lowered his head, he saw Andrew and another individual approaching. Corey was bared his teeth and claws. Andrew grinned at Jeff, then turned back to face Corey. Something was up.

"Corey, I just want to carry you over my head, to see something. Can I?" asked Andrew.

Corey instinctively felt that something was wrong, but tried to brush it off. He allowed Andrew to hoist him high into the air. Now, Andrew's face was within an inch of Corey's anus. Too close for comfort! A millimeter more and Corey would've 'squirted' and 'pooped' on Andrew's face.

"Yep, he's a male!" He's a real stud! We had to make sure!" exclaimed Andrew.

As soon as Andrew put Corey down, Andrew and his friends burst into a group guffaw. Their laughter could've annoyed the dead. Corey understood that Jeff and his inner circle were trying to behave like lions. Naturally, they needed a 'male' feline to be their buddy and mascot.

Andrew sat down on the carpet then smoked a joint.

Meanwhile, the individual who was with him went downstairs. Andrew waited until he'd had three drags before calling out to another friend. A short while later a fat fraternity brother exited room number twenty two. He had a lit joint in his hand. He approached Andrew, then, whispered something to him.

Andrew grinned then took a long look at Jeff. Afterwards, he told the fat fraternity brother to take a 'rough hold' of Corey. Corey was taken by surprise. Unable to defend himself, he loosened up.

A 'rough hold' on a cat is basically a good scruff hold. The cat is immobilized and defenseless.

As soon as Corey was immobilized, Andrew monitored Corey's breathing. He waited until Corey exhaled before he covered his mouth and nose with the palm of his hand. Corey was gasping for air. Unable to breath, he made a desperate attempt at clawing Andrew's hand. It was to no avail.

As soon as Corey was on the verge of passing out, Andrew placed a joint near Corey's mouth. Afterwards, the fat fraternity brother quickly parted his index finger from his middle finger. This left a tiny opening for Corey to breath. But, before Corey could gasp for air, the fat fraternity brother shoved the lit joint into Corey's mouth.

In effect, Corey inhaled a very large quantity of marijuana smoke. Considering he still had a little bit of booze and marijuana in his system it was no wonder that he fell onto his side.

By the time Corey came to, his 'tormentors' were gone. Now, Corey was on the war path. He followed Andrew's trail using his acute feline senses. Although his senses were partially blunted because of the drugs in his system, Corey was still able to locate Andrew.

Corey wobbled down the stairs then headed to the kitchen. As soon as he saw Andrew, he slowly approached him then leaped onto his chest.

Corey clobbered Andrew across the face, several times. Andrew went down for the long count. Corey couldn't have cared less about Andrew's fate. I didn't blame him.

Corey left the kitchen then proceeded to go upstairs. He didn't want to stay around for too long. He had more important business to attend to. He had to find his best friend, Cynthia Corbett

Although Corey's story was interesting, I convinced him that it was time to sleep. We'd proceed after resting-up. Remember, even incredible cats need to rest.

A few hours later, Corey and I ate the slop that was placed in our cages. Then, it was back to Corey's story.

Corey sniffed Cynthia's trail, finding her in room number twenty six. Cynthia was naked, semi-conscious, and on a bed.

No doubt, the bed that Cynthia was lying on belonged to a jerk.

Corey knew that someone had disrobed Cynthia, without her permission. Although Corey smelled semen and vaginal fluid, he wasn't quite certain what had happened. But, he did remember that Jeff and a friend were sitting in the far end of the room, with big grins on their faces. Corey would have to live with party animals for a longer time to truly understand their behavior.

Strangely, Jeff, Andrew, and another fraternity brother, were naked. Their 'cannons' were erect.

Corey left room number twenty six then headed straight to the restroom. Once inside, he leaped onto the toilet's rim then puked his brains out. Afterwards, he flushed the toilet. The rest is history.

Corey would soon know how evil some humans could become. Their level of evil can never be equaled by any animal; pure and simple.

## THE DREADED ACT

At the start of the fall semester, the STUDLY BOYS FRATERNITY brothers made Corey an 'honorary' member of the fraternity. Corey was flattered to be part of the fraternity, but wondered if there were any strings attached.

The flattery couldn't erase the bigger problems at hand. Corey had now become a willing party animal. He was addicted to alcohol, and was used to smoking marijuana on a regular basis. Corey also experimented with other drugs. He was now using drugs because he had to.

Corey was surrounded by humans, and never by his own kind. In fact, during his stay at the fraternity house, he never saw any animals, whatsoever.

Although Corey was glad to be an honorary fraternity member, his other problems paled any positive feelings caused by his fraternity membership.

Because many of Corey's human friends often behaved like beasts, it was only a matter of time before something terrible went wrong.

The dreaded day finally arrived. It was a cool Saturday evening, in the month of December.

Finals were over. It was Christmas break. Naturally, a 'mega party' was called for. Numerous students, the vast

majority of them not belonging to a fraternity or a sorority, converged on the 'mega party' from all across California. GSC had two graduation ceremonies each year; one in May, the other in December.

The 'mega party' was reserved for individuals who wanted to party, and party some more.

On that dreaded evening, the entire block was engulfed with hundreds of party animals. More and more people continued to arrive throughout the evening. Corey roamed the interior of the fraternity house, desperately searching for a resting place, and a few shots of booze.

"Too many drunkards, burnouts, and hell-raisers, were conversing onto GSC. Although most GSC students were of high moral character, this party was an invitation to the rabble of California.

This was the first time that Corey seriously contemplated escaping. He understood that his booze and drug habits weren't getting any better. Furthermore, he needed a female in his life.

A 'she cat', that is. No human could ever satisfy this special need of his. No matter how many times a human kissed and petted him.

After failing to find a resting place, Corey went upstairs for a breather. As soon as Corey got to the second floor, he heard the faint voices of a small group of young men emanating from room number twenty six. Cats have a good auditory sense, but certainly not as good as the dogs' auditory sense.

Although Corey suspected that something heinous was happening in room number twenty six, he had to get his first 'drinks' of the evening. He decided to descend the staircase then head for the kitchen.

As soon as he entered the kitchen, a young woman named Ellen placed three shots of pure Vodka on the kitchen floor. The shots were big and very potent. Corey licked off all of the Vodka in sight.

Expectedly, Corey felt an incredible buzz. This in turn, made him feel happy and content. In response, he rubbed the side of his head against Ellen's ankles.

Ellen was so pleased with him she knelt down then gave Corey a kiss between his ears.

After saying goodbye, Corey walked back to the staircase, and ascended to the second floor. Then, he went to room number 26.

Now, his vision began to 'fog'. He rested for a short while. The booze in his system was beginning to take its toll. In the olden days, he could easily handle three large shots of straight Vodka. Now, his system was similar to that of an alcoholic's.

Later, Corey partially composed himself then walked over to room number twenty six. Upon reaching the door, he slowly crept inside the room. He ended up hiding under a small table. From here, he had an incredible vantage point.

Inside the room were six young men who were hovering over a young woman. She was on the bed, out cold, naked, and semi-conscious. Suddenly, Corey remembered another incident where naked men hovered over a naked woman. This time, he was going to stay and see what was to happen.

The naked woman reminded Corey of what a darted lioness would look like.

Why were 'they' hovering over her, in secret? Corey wondered.

Upon closer examination, Corey noticed that the six young men were in fact, sexually aroused. Once again, their cannons were erect.

Corey understood that a deviant act relating to sex and/or aggression was about to occur. Mind you, Corey still had a lot to learn about human behavior. For the time being, he stayed put.

Only a moment later, the six men got ready to mate with the young woman. They were ready to go. But, this act was to be performed without the full consent of the young woman. Putting it bluntly, the men wanted to gang-rape her! They were taking advantage of a young woman who was out cold. Would they have had the courage to do so if she were wide awake? Corey wondered.

Although male cats can be quite aggressive during copulation, our females are preprogrammed to be a bit evasive and aggressive. They play hard to get, but aren't teasing. That's the truth, really.

What humans would define as teasing is normal behavior in the feline world. Males in the feline world must keep working at it. Thankfully, even the most aggressive lion will only mate with a fully-conscious lioness. I don't know what the other den members would do if they saw a lion mating with an unconscious lioness.

Lions are used to mating with an aggressive lioness. Every time she's had it, he receives a roar and/or a swap across the face. In reality, it's impossible for one big cat to rape another big cat.

One of the young men closed the door then locked it. Afterwards, he dimmed the lights. Luckily, Corey sneaked into the room in the nick of time.

Corey decided to creep into the closet. In essence, everything that was to happen inside the room would be seen and heard by Corey.

The young men were fixated on their 'prey'. Being in a safe and secure place gave Corey the opportunity to remember the faces of the young men, and the young victim. Deep down inside, he knew who she was. Corey was in a temporary state of denial. Corey concentrated very intently on the faces of the young men. One-by-one, the images stuck in his mind.

"I didn't want to believe my eyes! Jeff was the leader of the pack!" exclaimed Corey.

Corey stretched his neck as far as possible, in order to 'record' the best image of the perpetrators' faces.

No more denial! Corey admitted to himself that the victim on the bed was Cynthia Corbett. Corey had to do something, fast. Jeff had made it clear that he had 'shotgun' on Cynthia.

Like a predator stalking its prey, Corey slowly crept towards the bed, trying not to be noticed.

"I couldn't believe my eyes! My best friend in the whole world was about to be humiliated by six young men who couldn't have cared less about her feelings.

The situation became extremely dangerous. Every second I delayed my response made it that much more difficult to help Cynthia. If they 'entered' Cynthia, she'd be subjected to possible Sexually transmitted diseases, pregnancy, and/or extreme mental trauma. Whether she was awake, or out cold, they were doing her wrong," said Corey.

Corey began to tremble as he was conveying the story to my mother. She didn't say anything because she wanted him to continue the story, unabated. Besides, she didn't want him to feel that he was wasting his breath.

Corey was pissed off, especially at Jeff. The other five men were only 'assistants'. Not quite as evil as Jeff, but evil anyway. This time, Andy wasn't one of them.

Corey began to feel apprehensive. He was a lone cat, facing six 'adrenaline-crazed' young men. How was he going to subdue them? Or just stop them, for that matter?

Corey made an about-face. He chickened out. He closed his eyes then shoved his face into the carpet, like an ostrich. He wanted to wait it out. He assumed that the incident would be over in a moment, or two. Even with his eyes closed, he still felt Cynthia's presence. He tried to think of other things besides her, to no avail.

It didn't take long for Corey to feel guilty. His feline sense of pride gnawed at him. Furthermore, the scent of the dreaded 'capitulation drug' (animal tranquilizer) was in the air. Normally, the capitulation drug is administered to animals before capture, tagging, or surgery.

This crime was premeditated. The drug of choice is called the 'rape drug' by humans. Because this story is being conveyed

by an animal, I shall refer to the drug used as the 'capitulation drug'.

The capitulation drug neutralizes the rape victim. He/she is unable to move or speak. It's frightening! Sometimes, the victim can remember some, or much of the attack. However, it also causes confusion. I mean, like a 'foggy memory' of an event. This makes it quite difficult to take the case to court. Victims are not always their best witnesses.

Corey defiantly opened his eyes then leaped onto the bed; like a leopard. He stood in the opening between Cynthia's upper thighs. In effect, he was shielding her vagina.

Corey extended his claws and bared his incredible teeth. He was trying to hold his ground, even with incredible odds against him.

"Hey, drunkard, get out of the freaking way! Don't bother us while we're having fun. If you don't move out of the way, you'll end up on the streets!" shouted Jeff.

The other five rapists burst into a 'group guffaw'. They thought that Corey was a wannabe hero. Here he was a cat trying to defend a human. They couldn't comprehend it. If Corey had been a fighting dog they would've relented. Indeed, he wasn't. Corey was a drunkard cat who was trying to protect his best friend in the whole world.

## LIMPING AWAY

Corey was hoping that Jeff was bluffing. In one swift move, Jeff hoisted Corey off the bed, smacked him across the face several times, with his free hand, then took aim and threw him through the second floor window. At least, the window was open. If it had been closed, things would've been a lot worse for Corey.

Because Jeff was the GSC quarterback, he was able to throw Corey like a football.

The end result was a 'catastrophe' for Corey. He collided into a large branch, head first. This caused his 'righting reflex' to be temporarily upset. In other words, he couldn't use his incredible feline abilities to allow himself to fall on all fours. Corey landed on his left foreleg, in the manner. It hurt him terribly!

Instantly, Corey shrieked in pain. Although he was still thinking of Cynthia, he knew that his attempt to help her was futile. Corey was severely wounded, in incredible pain, and on the lawn of a fraternity house. Defending Cynthia was now out of the question.

If Corey had been able to return to the 'dreaded site' the rapists would've done him, once and for all.

Corey's feline curiosity forced him to wait on the lawn in order to tune into what was happening.

I will now use the words 'rapist/s' to identify the individual/s who gang-raped Cynthia. Previously, I used the words 'young men' or men. This is because in the earlier part of the narrative the act hadn't been committed yet. I was only trying to be fair and accurate in my analysis. Cats can be very 'precise' at times.

Suddenly, all six of the rapists peered out of the window. One of them pointed at Corey then laughed.

Judging from the voices emanating from room twenty six, more rapists had come for the feast. It was now a 'gang-bang-train'. Perhaps, a dozen or more potential rapists converged on the scene.

Corey heard Jeff talking to someone on his cell phone. Apparently, Jeff had invited more of his friends to the free copulation episode.

Sadly, there was more humiliation to come. Jeff ordered the other rapists to move aside, enabling him to peer out of the window.

Jeff looked straight into Corey's eyes then told him that he was sorry for what had happened. Corey, in his desperate state, believed Jeff.

"Come on, Corey! I'm really sorry about what happened. I want to be your best friend in the whole world. Please, get a little closer to the wall of the fraternity house. I won't hurt you. I promise! Let me tell you a little story," said Jeff.

Jeff was naked and holding a mug full of urine in his hand. It wasn't normal for a young man to peer out of a window, naked, and with a mug of urine in his hand.

Surprisingly, Corey gave Jeff the benefit of the doubt. An error, indeed!

Corey cautiously approached the fraternity house wall directly underneath Jeff's nose. Jeff grinned then he poured the contents of the mug onto the lawn. Although he was aiming for Corey's head, he missed by a few inches. Corey realized that Jeff had poured urine onto the lawn. He also knew that Jeff was aiming for him. Indeed, it was a terrible thing to do!

The splashing of the urine on the lawn startled Corey, but not without spraying a few drops on his beautiful coat.

Corey instinctively leaped to his left, then away from the wall. Although this was an automatic self-preservation move, it wouldn't be accepted by Corey's left foreleg. As expected, the sudden movement caused Corey incredibly sharp pain in his left foreleg. In fact, it may have aggravated Corey's preexisting injury.

Corey limped away until he was out of reach of Jeff and his rapist friends. Then he fell over onto his side. Although he was still conscious, there was to be no moving about for at least an hour.

Jeff began shouting obscenities at Corey. He called him the worst names imaginable. Corey was in no mood to respond. As soon as he was able to stand up, he continued to limp away.

Now, Corey had to deal with new problems: pain, limping, predators, automobiles, human sadists (people who enjoy hurting cats), food, water, the elements, companionship, shelter, A Cos, hostile animals, basic veterinary medical and dental care, relaxation, play time, other injuries, and general security.

After limping away for several blocks, Corey turned around then gazed up at 'the window'. Although the rapists were now busy doing their thing, Corey was able to see Jeff give his rapist friends high fives. Corey also heard Jeff telling the other rapists to move Cynthia to another room after they finished 'doing her'.

In reality, Cynthia would be out cold for several hours. She had a dangerous combination of alcohol, marijuana, and a capitulation drug in her system. This combination can sometimes be fatal. Even if a person survives this 'drug combo' ordeal, permanent brain and/or body damage is possible. It's troublesome to think about this. Unfortunately, many women and some men have been 'violated' in this manner. Many of them will never find out.

While narrating his story, Corey began to cry. My mother broke down and cried, too. For the proceeding hour, Corey, my mother, and the companion animals in the cargo section, cried their brains out. Many cats and dogs can understand the tragedy that Corey had to live with. Although their stories weren't identical to his, they had their own painful memories to deal with.

Thereafter, Corey was repulsed by the scent of semen, vaginal fluid, and human sweat. Whenever he scented it on a human, he tried to walk away. These 'scents' brought back painful memories. In fact, for three whole hours, Corey abhorred humanity. He slowly recomposed his thoughts regarding humans. Indeed, not all humans are bad, only some of them.

Prior to the gang-rape, Cynthia was actively searching for a good husband. She wanted a sweet man, who wasn't very good looking, with a decent job. Of course, he could never be physically or mentally abusive to her. Neither could he be neglectful of her needs. Shockingly, for a while, she had her eye one of Jeff's friends. The guy wasn't good looking. However, he was by no means ugly, either. Unfortunately, he was one of the 'minor rapists' who did Cynthia.

On numerous occasions, Cynthia made it clear to her friends that she was going to stay a virgin until marriage. She wasn't willing to give it up to anyone. Until marriage, that is.

"Did she really think that the perfect man would suddenly pop-out from amongst those party animals?" Corey wondered.

Corey continued to limp away from the dreaded scene. He just wanted to get away.

Corey limped through a quiet residential area, for roughly fifteen minutes. Although he was hurting like hell, he had to find a decent place to hide and rest.

Luckily, it paid off. He spotted a beautiful tree near an intersection. He exited Wharton Street then entered Mason Street. Of course, he looked both ways before crossing the street. Cats are smart, not dumb, like some other animal species.

As soon as Corey entered the yard, he collapsed several feet from the tree. It took him a minute to recompose himself. Afterwards, he limped to the tree. He couldn't muster up the strength to scale it.

Dawn was fast approaching. As soon as daylight engulfed the sky, Corey would have to be in a safe and secure place.

Corey awakened numerous times throughout his sleep. The pain in his foreleg was unbearable. He didn't know what to do. A handicapped, stray cat, without any friends, on the streets, was doomed to die. Unless Corey could think of something fast, big trouble would engulf him.

When the sun lit up the sky, Corey decided to awaken once and for all. He quickly stood up then fell onto his side. Because Corey had forgotten about his injury, he stood up too fast. As a result, he felt a very sharp pain in his left foreleg.

Corey pondered about his predicament for over an hour. By now, he was extremely thirsty. Indeed, he would've risked his life for a bowl of water. Lucky for him, an elderly woman exited the house nearby then she turned on the sprinkler. The water pressure was mediocre.

Corey hid behind the tree, because he didn't want the elderly woman to see him. Her response would be unpredictable. It could be empathy or outright hostility and aggression. Corey didn't want to take any chances.

After the elderly woman went back into her house, Corey limped towards the sprinkler.

Shortly afterwards, Corey was cleansed. Meanwhile, the sharp pain in his leg worsened. The bombardment of water on the injury was no consolation for him. As a result, Corey limped back to the tree then collapsed onto the grass. He was out cold for two hours.

The sun had now risen, and was heating everything within its domain. Indeed, it was a warm and sunny day. Too bad, Corey couldn't enjoy the beauty of it.

As if Corey's problems weren't already enough. Another 'sneaky problem' was beginning to affect Corey's psycho motor skills and mind. He needed a drink. Being accustomed to alcohol every single day, he couldn't comprehend being without it.

Corey had several separate seizures. Each time he foamed at the mouth. Also, he fell into a semi-conscious state, before slowly regaining his composure. Thankfully, he didn't swallow his tongue, or choke to death.

Nevertheless, Corey slowly arose then limped out of the yard. Sadly, he was in so much pain, returning to the tree became his only option. This time, he slept for six long hours. Corey was abruptly awakened by the voices of several kids. Four of them were boys, the fifth a 'tomboy'. Each of them was wearing a 'Lions' baseball caps. Indeed, they were little leaguers.

One of the kids called out to Corey.

"Hey, come on, kitty! Do you want to play with us? We'll make you one of the guys. Don't be afraid!"

This was a red alert! Although most kids love animals, some of them are outright cruel. This cohort of kids loves to perform the most horrific acts of torture against innocent animals; the majority of these animals are cats. Somehow, cats usually receive 'personalized' cruelty. What is it with these people?

"I placed myself on red alert. Although the pain in my leg was still tormenting me, I was in a potentially life threatening situation," said Corey.

The kids approached Corey like predators; their eyes focused on their prey. Then, in a swift move, one of them, a chubby boy with zits on his face, picked up a rock and threw it at Corey. The rock hit the tree beside Corey.

The kids erupted into a group guffaw. The rock thrower's guffaw suddenly turned into rage. Corey didn't run away.

A freckled-faced, pale-skinned tomboy, whispered into the rock thrower's ear. Then, they grinned and gave each other high fives.

What did Corey do to deserve this kind of treatment?

Corey prepared for an escape. He'd have to endure whatever pain emanated from his foreleg. It was that, or be stoned to death.

"Come on, kitty! We love cats! We were just trying to see how fast the rock could be thrown through the air. You can't believe that a bunch of kids would want to hurt a cute cat like you? Do you? Just let us get a little closer to you, so we can see your beautiful eyes," said the rock throwing boy.

No way! Impossible! Corey didn't fall for that lie. Those kids were up to no good. Besides, Corey saw a firecracker partially hidden in the right hand of the rock thrower. No doubt, he had a pack of matches in his pocket.

It's happened many times before. An innocent cat's held down, a firecracker is rammed up his/her rectum, and the rest is known.

However, cats have also much to be thankful for. Good humans have taken cats into their domiciles as pets, and have made them part of their family. There are many cat lovers out there. They treat us the way we deserve to be treated. I'm very proud and thankful that these humans exist. Humans in the animal protection movements usually don't forget us. They've placed cats and dogs high up on their hierarchical ladder of animals. I can't complain about that.

Domesticated cats and dogs have often been referred to as 'companion animals'. They are truly the companions of their human friends.

Wolves, foxes, and coyotes, have been trapped and killed by humans. The Government of the United States supports the Ranchers in their fight against the 'varmints'.

Yes, ranchers do have livestock to protect. Livestock is a rancher's 'bread and butter'. As sympathetic as I am to the plight of the hungry predators, I understand the rancher's perspective. If someone tried to steal my food, I'd fight him/her with every atom of my beautiful body. That is, if I was bigger and stronger than my adversary. This is the case regarding the rancher vs. predatory animals. The rancher's cachet of weapons is astronomically more superior to anything predatory animals could ever muster up.

However, I must tell you that almost all of the premature deaths that occur on large ranches are not from the so-called varmints Death of ranch animals is caused by disease and/or extreme stress.

Corey turned then limped away. One of the boys charged him, like a bull. But then, he stopped in his tracks. The other kids reminded him that they were supposed get back home, or else mother would throw a fit.

They were freaking siblings! What kind of family could produce five potential cat killers?

Although it was painful for Corey to move about, he still managed to limp away for several blocks. By the time Corey reached Palmer Avenue, he collapsed onto the sidewalk. He didn't have the strength to find a secluded area. Although Palmer Avenue was situated in an upper middle class neighborhood, enemies of cats are always lurking in the shadows.

No matter where a cat goes, there are creatures that want to harm him/her. Why? I really don't care! I'm a cat. As such, I'll speak out for the rights of my own kind. I couldn't care less why our enemies want us dead. My own kind counts the most! Corey rested on the sidewalk for roughly ten minutes. Then, he cautiously got up and continued his trek. To compound his problems, Corey didn't know where to go.

Corey was hoping that a human/s would have sympathy on him. Maybe, he/she would be kind enough to take Corey in.

## THE BARTONS

While Corey was walking on Palmer Avenue he suddenly took notice of a couple walking on the opposite side of the street.

Suddenly, they took notice of Corey. He had a good feeling about this couple. Before he knew it, they'd crossed the street and begun to walk towards him.

"Hey kitty, are you okay? My wife and I love cats. If you don't have a home and would like to be our cat, just say so," said the man.

Although Corey was flattered by the invitation, he still had an atom's worth of doubt in his heart. He was disabled; unable to run away, or defend himself.

After Corey carefully observed the couple's body language, he determined that they were non-threatening. As such, he let his guard down.

Corey limped towards the couple then zoomed in on the couple's ankles. He slowly rubbed the side of his face and body on their ankles.

In turn, the couple petted Corey on his back, sides, then between his ears. Mind you, all this rubbing was very difficult for Corey to do. The pain in his foreleg had not eased up, whatsoever.

Corey flopped over onto his back then allowed the couple to pet his underbelly. He was desperate for companionship, veterinary medical care, food, water, and shelter.

Whenever a cat's in the mood to be petted, go ahead and pet him/her. However, if a cat shows any signs of irritation, anger, fear, or frustration, back away! You can't imagine how powerful and dangerous some cats can become. A good bite or a scratch from one of us is painful!

The woman checked Corey's collar to see if a home address or name was printed on it. There was no collar to be seen. As such, the couple took Corey home with them. Luckily, the fraternity brothers didn't insert a microchip identifier under Corey's skin, either. Corey would've preferred to have died, rather than return to the fraternity house.

"I'm Linda Barton, and this is my husband, Robert Barton." Corey had a good feel about the Bartons. Although he was still a bit apprehensive, things seemed to be getting better. He'd have to be patient and alert.

"You're a cute cat. We're very pleased to meet you. We've always wanted a cute cat in our home. Cats make homes better places to live in," said Linda.

Linda was a very beautiful woman, early forties, with jet black hair and blue/green eyes. Robert was tall, well-built, and had brown hair and hazel eyes. Corey was under the impression that the Bartons were well off.

Linda hoisted Corey up onto her sternum. Then, she gently pressed him against her chest. Corey felt like a little baby. He liked it, because it looked like he'd gotten his meal ticket.

While the Bartons were walking back home, Corey could feel Linda's heartbeat. The thumping made Corey drowsy. Mind you, he still had to deal with the pain emanating from his left foreleg.

They walked north on Palmer Avenue for four blocks, until they arrived at the Bronson Street intersection. After looking both ways, the Bartons entered Bronson Street. Two blocks later, they were face to face with a white mansion.

Corey couldn't believe his eyes! The Bartons' mansion was enclosed by a beautiful white picket fence. The lawn was beautiful, and well-trimmed.

Glancing to his right, Corey noticed a three-door garage. This was the North American cat's dream come true. All Corey needed now was assurance that he was going to be accepted as a Barton companion animal.

"Robert, Linda, I apologize for not being very sociable. I have a pestering injury in my left foreleg. My foreleg's swollen, and it hurts like crazy. I hope I don't end up with gangrene.

Now on a more positive note, my name is Corey Jameson. It's my pleasure to meet you."

"Robert, I'm flabbergasted by Corey's politeness," said Linda.

As soon as the three entered the mansion, Corey almost fainted. He was overwhelmed by the utter beauty of the furniture and decor. It looked like Corey's life was going to change for the better.

But, there was a potential problem to be dealt with. The scent of another cat loomed in the air. Corey didn't know if the other cat was would be friendly, or aggressive.

As Corey was pondering about how to greet the other cat, a Siamese cat, who appeared older than Corey, entered the living room. She was slim and had an energetic aura. Not surprising for a Siamese.

"Corey, Linda's aunt Martha left us Tanya as a going away present. She moved to the Bancroft Senior's Home, several hundred miles north of here. Aunt Martha was eighty years old. She was in no shape to take care of her cat anymore.

Martha's arthritis, heart problem, and diabetes, weakened her considerably. Cats in homes need special care. Love, protection, food, water, veterinary medical care, companionship, shelter, play, and outdoors activities," said Robert.

"Corey, we did take notice of your serious leg wound. If you don't mind, please tell us what happened. We have to tell the veterinarian something, when we go tomorrow," said Robert.

Because Corey hadn't even partially recovered from the terrible ordeal, he didn't feel like spilling his guts out to anyone.

Corey glanced at Tanya then looked at the Bartons. Tanya understood what Corey was trying to say.

"Let's go to my litter box," said Tanya.

When Corey and Tanya were heading to the litter box, Corey sensed something unusual. His feline senses were placed on high alert.

Corey suspected that something terrible was looming in the shadows. For the time being, he stayed quiet.

Tanya's litter box smelled fresh and clean. It was larger than any litter box he'd ever seen. Indeed the Bartons were good folks who knew how to take care of their cat. While Corey was looking at Tanya's litter box, Linda entered the bedroom then carefully placed another litter box beside Corey. After smiling at both cats, she left.

Corey wobbled into his new litter box. Then, he relieved himself. He had to go really bad.

Later, Corey and Tanya decided to crash out in the living room.

Corey was amazed by Tanya's kind heartedness.

As soon as they entered the living room, Corey rolled onto his side, then instantly fell into a deep sleep. He dreamt that he was a lion on the Kalahari plains. An awesome dream for any cat!

In Corey's dream, the other animals on the plains were terrified of him. He roared, roared, and roared, as loud as he could. Animals could hear his roaring from miles away.

Naturally, he approached a lone lioness he had his eye on. Sensing that she was tired, he turned then walked away.

After Corey took several steps away from the lioness, he had a change of plans. His 'lion ego' got the best of him. He ran to the lioness then did his thing.

Corey mounted the lioness, over and over again, with frequent interruptions. Every time she'd had enough, he'd get a bop on the side of his head. Finally, when she took a fighting stance, he knew that his quick escapade had come to an end.

As Corey was walking away from 'his lioness', he noticed a lone zebra calf a hundred yards directly to his right. Perhaps she was lost. This was a lion's dream-come-true.

Corey squiggled towards the zebra calf, inching his way to a lightening-strike. While narrating his story to my mother, Corey began to drool like a dog.

As soon as Corey was in position, he 'rocketed' towards the zebra calf, took hold of her neck then swung her to the ground. Corey's incredible teeth and sharp claws dug-into the zebra calf's flesh.

Corey teased the calf, biting, then releasing. He repeated this routine a dozen times. Afterwards, he dug deep into her flesh. He ate the zebra's internal organs first. Big cats love to eat the internal organs of their prey. The internal organs are full of nutrition and blood.

While Corey was enjoying his extravagant meal, he was abruptly awakened by Tanya. He almost scratched her, not out of anger, but from 'momentum aggression'. When a cat's eating, fighting, sleeping, or copulating, stay clear.

As soon as Corey awakened, he found Tanya and Linda hovering over him. They were grinning. Linda was holding a bowl of cat food in each hand. Tanya told Corey that she wanted him to eat with her. Corey was amazed at how friendly his 'new family' was. He was very thankful to be part of the Barton family.

Because Tanya was spayed, she and Corey could only be 'chummy friends'. In other words, she could never be the mother of his kittens. There's a serious cat and dog overpopulation problem in much of the world, including North America. Millions of dogs and cats are killed each year in North America, because

they've been dumped by their owners, or were born on the streets.

Spaying and neutering helps to alleviate the dog and cat overpopulation problem. Many 'excess animals' are thrown out into the streets, sold to animal labs, given to shelters (often time killed if they aren't sold soon afterwards), sent to terrible breeders, or to cruel owners.

Corey and Tanya ate their cat food then asked for milk and water. Linda returned with plenty of milk and water for the two of them. Corey and Tanya took a long nap after their nutritious meal.

While napping Corey thought about his trip to the veterinarian. Possibly, the veterinarian would be able to fix Corey's ailment. Meanwhile, the pain in his eased up a bit. Companion animals expect their human caretakers to take care of all of their physical and mental ailments.

The long nap turned into a long sleep. By the time had Corey awakened, it was time to go to the veterinarian.

"Corey! You must get up, now! It's time to go to the veterinarian. No doubt, they'll withdraw some blood from your cute body. There'll be other tests too," said Linda.

Tanya reminded Linda that Corey would need to eat a wholesome breakfast before going to the veterinarian. In response, Linda ensured that Corey would leave the mansion on a full stomach.

After Corey had his fill, he rolled over onto his side. He was no longer able to roll around because of his terrible injury.

"Tanya, we're taking Corey to the veterinarian. You remember our veterinarian? Don't you?" asked Robert.

Although Corey was very happy to be part of the Barton family, he still had 'mild suspicions'. He was afraid that the Bartons wanted him to be declawed. He'd have to crop his ears, and use his better judgment. For the time being, he kept his feelings to himself.

Linda left the living room, only to return a few minutes later with an animal carrier in her hands. Corey didn't want to be placed inside the animal carrier. So, he gave Linda a sad face. It worked.

"I guess I'll have to carry you by hand. It wouldn't be right to induce claustrophobia in our beloved cat. Corey, we love you dearly," said Linda.

Because the veterinary clinic was nearby, the Bartons decided to walk there. Robert made sure that he didn't forget his wallet.

The Bartons walked down the street until they reached the veterinary clinic, which was located at 4155 Bronson Street. The

sign in front of the clinic read: Dr. RAYMOND GARCIA, DVM, and surgeon.

He was a veterinary surgeon! Corey's pulse and blood pressure almost shot through the clouds! He was terrified, but also felt let-down. How could the Bartons casually have him mutilated? It looked like they wanted the procedure to be done.

The Bartons entered the clinic, with Linda carrying Corey in her hands. They went straight to the reception booth. Robert took hold of Corey then took a seat in the waiting room. Linda spoke to the receptionist. Corey was ready to fight anyone who wanted to mutilate him. Corey wasn't worried about being neutered. He was worried about being declawed.

Neutering is a good animal population control measure. De clawing, however, is outright mutilation! No cat would ever want to be declawed! De clawing is cruel and archaic. It's pure and simple.

Corey and the Bartons waited for a total of fifteen minutes before the veterinary nurse called them over.

When Linda stood up, Corey instantly developed a minor stomach ache. He was jittery, confused, and felt let down. Corey scanned the area for a possible escape, in case he was unable to defeat his foes.

Dr. Garcia's office was spacious and clean, with numerous animal posters on the walls. Corey detected the 'scents' of previous patients who'd been in Dr. Garcia's office.

Dr. Garcia was a middle-aged man, short in stature, pock-marked, and spoke like a southerner. Initially, he seemed like a nice man, smiling at Corey often. He re-assured him that everything was going to be just fine, and not to worry or be afraid.

"Linda, I noticed Corey's favoring his left foreleg. If there are any other problems, please tell me. Indeed, he needs a complete physical examination," said Dr. Garcia.

"Dr. Garcia, I tried to get the story from Corey. But, Corey doesn't feel comfortable talking about it. I suspect that someone did him harm.

Robert and I assumed that Corey didn't want to return to his previous owners. Unfortunately, there are people who'd love to get their hands on him. Cat abuse is something that has been around for eons," said Linda.

"Okay, we'll have to scan him. We must be sure that he's not registered as someone else's cat. I want you and Robert to read the lost and found section of the local newspaper. Please do this for a week, just in case. Make sure that nobody's searching for him. Also, keep an eye on postings on poles, telephone booths, and bulletin boards," said Dr. Garcia.

Dr. Garcia told Linda that it was time to go to the examination room. Corey became increasingly anxious, to the point of trembling.

As soon as they entered the examination room, Dr. Garcia leaned over and picked up his medical bag. Corey wanted to limp away. Also, he felt like telling Dr. Garcia and the Bartons to leave him alone! But, he knew that patience is often a smart inaction. He waited intently to see what was going to happen.

"Corey, these are antiquated surgical instruments. They're not suitable for today's surgery. My grandfather used these in graduate medical school. Both my grandfather and father were surgeons.

Surgeons must be learned, patient, and able to work under extreme pressure. Time constraints, and death, are always lurking in the shadows.

During surgery, there's no room for fear. I mean, fear of blood, flesh, cutting, and death. In fact, when performing a procedure, a surgeon must be as cold as ice. The surgeon should never become too attached to the patient. Surgery is performed to correct, remove, prevent, or alleviate a problem. Therefore, drastic actions are often needed.

As a child, I fantasized about being a top-notch surgeon, until the dreaded day. It was the shocker of my life! On a hot and humid Tuesday morning, while I was walking to school, I took notice of 'lynched cat'. The lynched cat wasn't too far away from my home. Perhaps, four blocks.

It appeared that the cat had been lynched the night before. What was left of his tongue was dangling from the side. His eye sockets were empty, and the flies and maggots were enjoying their buffet.

I cut the noose then gently took hold of the cat's body. Luckily, the branch that the cat was lynched from dangled downwards. Kind of like a willow tree. Unfortunately, it was still a tad bit too high for the cat to be able to stand on its claws.

I carried the cadaver across the street to a tiny forested area. I buried him deep into the forest. Constant tears streamed down my cheeks. Miraculously, I was still able to make it to school on time.

However, the image of the victimized cat never left my mind. I say innocent, because no cat deserves to be hanged. No matter what he/she supposedly did," said Dr. Garcia.

Corey's physical examination took approximately twenty minutes. Dr. Garcia was thorough, knowledgeable, calm, and well-mannered. Now Corey felt secure.

Dr. Garcia is the kind of veterinarian that all sick animals dream of having. A minority of veterinarians are

outright cruel and ruthless. The same can be said about humanity, in general.

After the examination, Dr. Garcia asked the Bartons to follow him to his office. Meanwhile, Corey was cuddled in Dr. Garcia's arms.

Although Corey was thankful that he wasn't going to be declawed, he was anxious about the fate of his left foreleg. Also, about any other medical problems he could've had.

A 'debilitated leg' would certainly have depressed Corey for life. A limping cat is easy prey. In the wild, or on the tough streets, there's no mercy. Really!

As soon as the Bartons entered Dr. Garcia's office, he motioned them to sit down. Dr. Garcia tried his hardest to put on a smile. Unfortunately, his facial muscles weren't responding to his own deception.

"You've brought me one companion animal after another, for the past fifteen years. You guys are very kind and loving to the animals in your care. If I was a cat, you'd be my first choice for ownership. I respect both of you, from the bottom of my heart. If all companion animals were under the care of people like you, I'd probably go out of business! Certainly, having good owners is very important in the overall cat health scheme.

Anyhow, let me get to the gist of the matter. Corey, you have a very serious injury to your left foreleg. It was likely caused by an uncontrollable fall. Normally, cats have a special 'righting-reflex' that helps them to regain their composure/position during a fall. In other words, cats are designed to land on all fours.

Corey has abrasions scattered throughout his body. Although I can't be absolutely sure what had happened to him, I'll give you a hypothetical scenario based on my twenty five years of veterinary experience and animal activism.

I think that someone grabbed Corey by his scruff then threw him out of a window. I know this because the abrasions on his body are consistent with those of an animal who'd been thrown into a tree, then fell onto the ground. Believe me, I've seen this before.

Corey was dazed, injured, and taken off guard. His righting reflex had been turned upside down. In effect, he fell like a human. This caused him to land on his left foreleg, in an awkward angle," said Dr. Garcia.

"How could anyone do such a thing? Are you sure there are people in this world who'd resort to this kind of brutality?" asked Linda.

"Unfortunately, yes! There are people who, if given the chance, would do a lot worse. I've seen cats that were brutally beaten, mutilated, burned, hanged, drowned, butchered,

humiliated, hog-tied, shackled, starved, neglected, tossed, skinned, and even 'violated'. Thankfully, burnings aren't as common as they used to be. I mean, in North America.

In some parts of China, cats are also prepared as food. The poor kitties may be blow torched, beaten, then boiled, in order to make a special soup.

Centuries ago, many cats were systematically burned as witch accomplices, or because they were considered inherently evil.

Centuries ago, in France, 'bunches' of cats were placed in a basket then tossed into a fire. The viewers loved the 'show'.

Some humans don't want to believe that cats are sentient beings. Cats are alive and have physical and mental feelings. If you don't like cats, fine! Just don't harm them! It's that simple!" replied Dr. Garcia.

My mother began to feel groggy, while Corey was conveying his story. At least for the time being, she was too tired to listen to anyone. It was a long trip, and rest was called for.

Furthermore, the stress of hearing Corey's story zapped my mother's emotional energy. My mother, along with the other animals in the cargo section, told Corey that they needed time to recover from his sad story. My mother was surprised to see that the other animals in the cargo section were listening to the sad story.

## HAWAII

After several hours of sleeping and napping, the cargo animals asked Corey to continue his story. Unfortunately, the captain had already begun to descend the airplane. Soon, it would be time to say goodbye.

Although the descent was gradual, the animals felt it before the captain made his official announcement. Cats and dogs have superb senses. They can often see, hear, and feel, what humans are oblivious to.

"This is Captain York speaking. We're making our descent into Sunnyvale International Airport. As expected, it's 85 degrees, with overcast skies.

On behalf of our airline crew, thank you for choosing Trans West Airlines. On behalf of our entire crew, we hope you have a safe and enjoyable stay in Hawaii."

They finally made it to Hawaii. The animals in the cargo area were exhausted. They couldn't wait to get out of their stinking hell-hole.

In all the excitement, Corey defecated. One kitty puked her brains out. This 'intensified' the preexisting stench in the cargo section. My mother endured it.

My mother was excited about seeing Hawaii; a beautiful island surrounded by a gigantic ocean. Most cats could never dream of such a thing.

Domesticated cats and dogs have been taken along by their human owners, to many regions of the world. Some of us like cold weather, while others like warm weather.

Canine breeds such as the Siberian huskies feel right at home in snow covered lands. These large dogs can also be found in warmer regions as companion animals.

Captain York landed the Trans West airplane without incident. Captain York was a good pilot. While he was driving the plane to the terminal, my mother received a sudden rush of anxiety. She loved Corey dearly. But, knowing that they'd never see each other again was very painful. The other animals in the cargo section were aware of the close relationship that had developed between the two. They understood that whatever friendships emerged from the long trip would have to end soon.

As soon as the airline crew opened the hatch, the passengers began to leave. In the cargo section, two airline workers began to remove baggage, including the animal carriers from the airplane.

The animals that were in the cargo section were placed in a transport vehicle. The driver, a thin woman with red hair, snarled at the animals. Corey smiled at her, thinking that she'd change her attitude.

"You creeps make our airplanes stink! You don't have a right to take up space. You pee and poop whenever the plane takes off and lands. Not to mention, the period in between. Why can't you creatures just stay home!" shouted the driver.

The sound of the transport vehicle's engine helped calm the animals.

Security at the airport was tight. In the olden days, airports and embassies had considerably less security. In fact, many embassies around the world didn't have a security system worth mentioning. Nowadays, there are too many wars, civil wars, revolutions, angry maniacs, hostile movements, and dictators. They make this world a much more dangerous place.

The most dangerous dictators are those who have a very powerful military machine at their disposal, and also have 'absolute media powers' at their disposal. Although some of these dictators give off an aura of honesty and integrity, it's isn't even skin deep. Underneath their waxy skin is a creature ready to kill, maim, lie, and steal.

Understandably, the cargo animals were hungry and thirsty. What they were given during their flight was only enough to fill a sickly mouse.

Everything seemed to be going just fine for the Wilsons. They'd endured a long voyage, without incident. Aside from needing a few hours more of sleep, they were content. As for my mother, she was overburdened with a feeling of claustrophobia. She wanted to breathe some fresh air.

After being locked inside a filthy animal carrier, then a transport cage, she deserved something better.

The Wilson walked to the baggage claim section. They waited roughly fifteen minutes then snatched their bags, one at a time.

As soon as the Wilsons began to walk away from the baggage claim section they spotted a baggage handler. He was tall, broad shouldered, and a bit too old for the job.

"Can you take these bags?" asked Robert.

"Certainly, it's my job to do that!" responded the baggage handler.

Meanwhile, my mother was scratching her animal carrier. She was trying to get the Wilson's attention. She needed to be let out of her animal carrier! Strangely, the Wilson ignored my mother's desperate pleas. Maybe, they weren't that sweet after all?

The baggage handler placed the Wilson's baggage on a trolley, then pushed it to the nearest exit. A short while later, the Wilson were standing on the sidewalk waiting for a cab.

Linda flagged down a cabby then tipped the baggage handler. He smiled then walked away. As soon as the baggage handler entered the airport terminal building, the scabby pulled over in front of the Wilson.

"Hi, where would you like to go?" asked the scabby.

"Could you take us to the Skyline Apartments, located at 1500 Arlington Street, in Donahue," replied Linda.

"I can take you to Donahue. Don't worry. Be advised that the fare may reach seventy five or eighty dollars. I just want you to understand that after my overhead and other fees, I don't even make peanuts for money. Sometimes, I work up to twelve hours a day, in order to make a decent wage."

Cabby's have a right to be pissed off. Our passengers keep complaining about fare increases. They don't quite understand that we cabby's are suffering even more," said the scabby.

The Wilson felt sorry for the scabby. He had tears streaming down his cheeks, and was hyperventilating while he was speaking.

The cabby tried to deny that he was crying; claiming that he suddenly got a case of 'allergy sniffles'. The three vacationers went along with the cabby's explanation. Maybe, he was too proud to admit that even tabbies cry.

A short while later the Wilsons were on their way to the Skyline Apartments. It seemed like they were going to have an enjoyable vacation. Unfortunately, my mother was still in her animal carrier, trying desperately to get let out.

Thankfully, one person did take notice of my mother.

"Please, don't think I'm overstepping my bounds. But, your cat's trying to get your attention. I notice she's scratching the interior of her animal carrier. I have two beautiful cats at home. I'll tell you what the problem is. Your cat wants to see the landscape. Also, she probably feels a bit claustrophobic. Please, let her out," said the cabby.

"Mandy, what's the matter? Are you in pain? Do you want to be let out of your animal carrier?" asked Steve.

"Please, I'm going nuts in here! I want to freaking see Hawaii! Aren't I part of the vacation team?!" asked my mother.

Karen gently removed my mother from the animal carrier.

After pondering for a few seconds, Linda placed my mother on her lap. Instantly, my mother felt like a little kitty.

Finally, my mother was able to catch her breath and see the outdoors. She'd endured more than enough claustrophobia. To make matters worse, it took a total stranger to alert the Wilson about my mother's plight.

My mother took advantage of her new vantage point, glancing at the many interesting sights on the way to the Skyline Apartments.

The cabby slowed down, then came to a stop. The light was red, so the vacationers had to be patient.

Suddenly, my mother took notice of a vicious cat fight. Paws were flying at super speed. Even a prize fighter couldn't have seen the punches and scratches. Wimpy cats that live on the streets usually don't have 'a territory'. The males among this group end up with no progeny. They're as good as sterile.

There are times when a cat must turn and flee. Smart strays survive the longest. Cats that lose a vicious fight may end up with horrific, lifelong injuries. They end up with ugly gashes and scars, and/or partial immobility problems. Cheetahs are smart.

Often times, cheetahs are forced to leave their slab of meat, in order to avoid a fight with a formidable foe. Cheetahs understand that they can't sustain a serious injury. They must always be able to run very fast. Also, cheetahs aren't good fighters. They're awkward.

Although both combatants were launching incredible blows at each other, the smaller cat was eventually knocked out for the long count. Normally, cats don't fight to the death.

Unfortunately, the loser had blood oozing from the side of his head, and part of his left ear had been chewed off.

The triumphant cat snarled at his opponent, with the utmost arrogance. It totally shocked my mother! In the olden days, a cat that capitulated was permitted to walk away. Disgraced, but not beaten to death.

When the light turned green, the scabby continued his drive. The sound of the cab's humming relaxed my mother.

My mother cropped her ears in order to tune into the conversation at hand. She learned a lot about the Wilson, and the scabby. Cats can 'pretend' that they're per-occupied with another activity. But, they're really listening-in on what 'you're saying'. Cats are highly intelligent, incredible, agile, beautiful, athletic, tough, and resilient beings. What else could we ask for?

The Wilsons took their vacation partly because Karen wanted to feel Hawaii's warm air. She was born and raised in Anchorage, Alaska. She hated snow, cold weather, slush, and not being able to go outside in comfortable clothing all year-round. Hawaii was her dreamland.

Karen was well-educated. She received her Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science from Yale University. She later she earned a law degree from Stanford University. That's where she met Steve. Karen and Steve decided that they'd get married on the condition that both of them pass the Bar Exam.

Steve, a slim man who ate too much junk food, was born and raised in Kansas City, Missouri. He received his Bachelor of Arts Degree in English from Kansas University. Afterwards, he later received a law degree from Stanford University.

Who knows, what my mother's fate would've been if the Wilson hadn't passed the Bar Exam. Anyway, there's no use in pondering about this hypothetical scenario.

My mother decided to relax, in order to forget her daily problems. She tried to block out the conversation at hand, but couldn't. My mother ended-up pondering about her life with the Wilson. She never saw the Wilson get into a vicious argument, or throw insults at each other. Although, there were a few incidents when Steve became irritated by Karen's persistent pestering. Sometimes, she behaved like a 'borderline bitch'.

Karen would often pester Steve about moving to Hawaii. She got a partial answer, through a vacation. Like a cat stalking a mouse, she used stealth, cunning, and persuasion, to get to Hawaii. This was the first step in a full-scale move to Hawaii. Steve was unaware of Karen's secret plan.

While my mother was pondering away, the scabby interrupted her line of thought with an important statement.

"The Skyline Apartments are only three blocks away. I hope you enjoy your stay there. Don't worry, you don't have to worry about snow," said the scabby.

As soon as they arrived at the Skyline Apartments, my mother's jaw almost dropped to the ground! She'd never seen such an uppity apartment complex. It was fit for VIPs.

"Here we are! I'll pull over in front of the rental office. I've only taken a few passengers to the Skyline Apartments. These apartments are expensive and uppity. Who can afford them?" asked the cabby.

"We will spend three months at the Skyline Apartments. An old friend of my husband's sub-leased his apartment. Afterwards, we'll have to move out, or sign a lease for another apartment," said Karen.

The cabby stopped the meter then asked the Wilsons for sixty five dollars. Steve removed four bills from his wallet then handed them to the scabby.

"Please, keep the change! You've been a good scabby, and arrived in one piece," said Steve.

"A million thanks for the big tip! No passenger has ever given me this much 'tip money'. Really! Give me a call when you need a ride back to the airport, or anywhere else in the vicinity. Here, take my card," said the scabby.

The cabby carefully removed the Wilsons' baggage from the trunk, then placed the articles in front of the entrance to the Skyline Apartments.

After a short pause, the scabby insisted on carrying the Wilsons' baggage to the manager's office.

They entered the first set of doors then Steve pressed the intercom button to speak to the security guard. As soon as Steve's mouth opened, the security guard spoke.

"Skyline security, please identify yourselves and state your purpose for being here."

"We're the Wilsons. We have a sub-lease from a tenant named Albert Reynolds. He's been living at the Skyline Apartments for at least ten years," replied Steve.

"Yes, I was given instructions to let you in. Mr. Reynolds has been a very good tenant."

"As soon as you hear the buzzer, please open the door. Then, enter the foyer. The manager's office is at the end of the hall, on your right. You can't miss it," said the security guard.

The Wilsons entered the door, passed through the foyer, then walked to the end of the hallway. Meanwhile, the scabby had returned to his cab.

Moments later, the Wilsons were standing in front of the manager's office. Karen knocked on the manager's door four times then took a step backwards.

My mother heard the manager approaching the door. He walked slowly. As soon as he opened the door, Karen got the shock of her life.

The manager was a tall, handsome man, who was also slender, with jet black hair and sky-blue eyes. He was polite, soft-spoken, and friendly.

"Are you the Wilsons?" asked the manager.

"Yes, I'm Karen, and this is my husband, Steve. We're delighted to see you. The Skyline Apartments are absolutely stunning. We've never seen anything like this before."

"I'm Eric O'Connor, the Manager/Administrator of the Skyline Apartments. The tenants call me Eric. I hope your trip was enjoyable. You know the story; fill out these forms, pay the first month's rent, and then I'll give you your keys."

The Wilsons filled out the necessary forms, then handed Eric a check for the first month's rent. Afterwards, they asked him a dozen questions.

As soon as their questions were answered in full, the Wilsons felt a gush of relief. The long journey had taken an incredible toll on the three vacationers.

"Well, everything is in order. Here are your keys, receipt, personal copy of the lease, and handshake. I hope your three months at the Skyline Apartments are very enjoyable.

You'll find tourist guides and brochures in the foyer. If you have any questions, give me a ring. My office hours are posted on my door. Attached to your copy of the contract are important phone numbers, and mailing and email addresses. For emergencies, call 555-1678," said Eric.

As soon as the deal was finalized, Karen tugged on Steve's sleeve. She wanted to see their apartment, pronto!

Eric was amazed at my mother's beauty. My mother sensed that Eric loved cats. Too bad he couldn't have her as a companion animal.

"What's your cat's name," asked Eric.

"Her name is Jody Wilson. Although she has the Wilson name, we didn't give it to her. Jody's our precious little kitty. We love her so dearly. Look at her beautiful eyes.

Anyhow, we'll make sure she behaves herself. No pooping or peeing, unless it's done in her litter box.

Albert promised me there'd be two litter boxes in the apartment. He wanted to make sure that Mandy had a good place to relieve herself, "said Steve.

The Wilsons exited Eric's office, carrying their baggage. As they were walking to the elevators, they took notice of the beautiful carpet, wall paper, lighting in the corridor, and the beautiful paintings. They were utterly awed.

Meanwhile, my mother was placed inside her animal carrier. As shocking as it sounds, it's true! My mother tried to squeeze her head through the tiny gaps between the bars. Her attempts were futile. Because my mother wasn't a super cat, she had to

endure whatever suffering was to come. Otherwise, she would've broken out of her pathetic animal carrier.

Linda pressed the 'up' button for the elevator then waited patiently. A short while later, the number three elevator door opened.

The Wilsons carried their baggage into the elevator. My mother sighed in relief. She couldn't wait until the Wilson entered the uppity apartment. At least, she'd be let out of her animal carrier. Or would she?

Karen pressed the number five button then lowered her hand. She grinned at my mother, then at Steve.

For a brief moment, my mother thought about running away as soon as she was able to. But, logic overpowered her urge. Where would she go? How would she survive out in the real world? What kind of game plan would work? What would happen if she returned? These are a few of the countless questions my mother pondered about.

As soon as the elevator door opened, the Wilson began their march to their apartment. Almost immediately, a skirmish ensued between my mother and the Wilson. Steve and Karen wanted to turn right, while my mother insisted on turning left. The Wilson decided to follow my mother. Well, it paid off.

"Steve, we're finally here! An uppity apartment for three months! Because we don't know anyone in this city, we can relax and do things we wouldn't dream of doing back home. We can have our privacy at last," said Karen.

Karen was impatient. She snatched the apartment keys from Steve then unlocked the apartment door. After taking a deep breath, she pushed the door open. Immediately, an immense wave of room deodorizer engulfed the three vacationers. Apparently, the apartment had just been cleaned, all to the benefit of the vacationers.

The vacationers entered their apartment. Karen carried my mother's animal carrier into the living room then placed it on the carpet. After pondering for a few seconds, she carried my mother's animal carrier to the kitchen. As soon as Karen let go of my mother's animal carrier, she was bitched out.

"Karen, please! I'm suffocating here! Don't freaking leave me here! That would be totally inhumane and inconsiderate. Let me out! If you don't, I'll never speak to you again! Ever! Don't be a fucking bitch!" my mother shouted.

After recovering from the shock, Karen let my mother out of the animal carrier. Then, she took several steps to her right. My mother was in no mood to have her path blocked. Especially by the person who'd just imprisoned her.

My mother ran straight to the living room. As soon as she entered the living room, she spotted a black sofa. A few leaps later, she was rolling on the black sofa.

My mother never scratched or bit articles of furniture. She was aware of the repercussions. Often times, scratching cats are declared, put to sleep, or simply dumped on the side of the street.

"Be sure not to scratch anything! It's not our furniture!" yelled Karen.

My mother took that as a direct insult. She'd never bitten or clawed any articles of furniture. Why did Karen remind her not to scratch any articles of furniture? For a brief moment, my mother considered scratching the black sofa out of spite.

It seemed like the Wilson were becoming more and more 'unloving' and 'uncaring' towards my mother. Cats that are forced to endure this kind of predicament must have a good game plan for a sudden exit.

The Wilsons were exhausted. As such, they crashed out in the bedroom. Hunger and thirst usually take a back seat to sleep. A short while later, the three 'tenants' were sound asleep.

On the streets, a cat must keep one eye open, unless he/she has an incredible hiding place. All sorts of dangers lurk in the shadows.

While asleep, my mother dreamed that she found a lone slab of meat. It weighed roughly fifty pounds, was bloody, and waiting to be eaten. Initially, my mother froze. After the shock of it, she ran to the slab of meat then opened her mouth. That slab of meat was almost in my mother's mouth, but was snatched away.

My mother was abruptly awakened by the sound of a fallen vase. The vase had fallen because it was placed on the edge of the counter. Obviously, something spooky tipped it over.

My mother was totally pissed off! How could that stupid vase destroy her dream? She felt like pouncing on the broken pieces.

My mother stretched her muscles then roamed around. She was happy to live in a beautiful apartment. Also, she appreciated the air conditioner. What else could a cat ask for?

Wilson awakened about an hour later. Upon awakening, Karen went to the kitchen. Once there, she opened the kitchen storage room. Instantly, she got the shock of her life! The entire storage room was full of food particles! Linda was thankful that her husband's friend was such a sweet guy. For a split second, Karen imagined that she was married to Albert. Then, she remembered her sister, Sandra. Sandra was thirty years-old, and

still single. Maybe, she could set her sister up with Albert? She wondered.

Steve lethargically followed Karen to the kitchen. Once there, he heard Karen say something that no husband ever wants to hear.

"Steve, your friend Albert is the right man for my sister! If you weren't my husband, I'd marry him myself! I'm just kidding, baby. You are the only love of my life. Even my sister can't have you," said Karen.

My mother was shocked at Karen's slip of speech. She didn't believe that Karen was only kidding.

My mother became overly anxious, causing her to receive a sudden jolt of energy. She ran throughout the interior of the apartment until the Wilsons could bare it no longer.

"Mandy, I want you to stop horsing around! Slowly walk to the living room, then leap onto the black sofa and stay put! I will not repeat myself!" shouted Karen.

My mother obeyed Karen's commands. However, she did feel a bit of defiance in her heart.

Henceforth, the Wilson didn't seem that sweet after all. My mother decided to draw out a plan for a possible escape.

"Listen, what you see all around you doesn't belong to us! It belongs to Steve's friend, Albert. Albert's a good man. However, he'll go ballistic if he finds his furniture in ruins!" shouted Karen.

Meanwhile, my mother's hunger pangs returned. Saliva began to dribble down the corners of her mouth. Her hunger pangs could no longer be hidden or ignored. Jet lag was over.

As soon as Steve entered the living room, he noticed my mother was slobbering. He was shocked to see her in this condition.

Steve told my mother to go to the kitchen and wait. "Karen, Mandy's starving! We need to get her some food, fast! Please, on the double!" exclaimed Steve.

While Steve was speaking to Karen, his cell phone rang. After allowing it to ring four times, he answered. Steve then left the living room.

Meanwhile, Karen brought forth two cans of cat food. After opening both cans, she placed the contents into a blue bowl. My mother dashed to the blue bowl, then feasted like a lion. She cleared everything in sight.

Because my mother was still hungry, she followed Karen to the living room. She meowed, play bit Karen then yanked on her ant leg. It worked! Karen knelt down then picked my mother up. She gave my mother a kiss between the ears then carried her back to the kitchen.

After my mother ate two more bowls of chicken and tuna, she asked for milk and water. Luckily, there was plenty of milk and cold water in the fridge.

As time passed, the vacationers became accustomed to living in Hawaii. Karen's secret game plan was working. Now, even my mother wanted to stay in Hawaii.

Thankfully, the Wilson took my mother out on a daily basis. They also allowed her to ride in their rented blue Pontiac. However, I must say that my mother had many lonely periods. Sometimes the Wilson would go out until late at night. They'd return home satiated and drunk.

For the most part, my mother was satisfied. She understood that she fared better than most other cats, especially strays. If she'd only known what was in store for her. Nobody knows what the future will bring, until it becomes the present.

Even the Wilson' neighbors were friendly. Sometimes, they'd donate cat food for my mother. In addition, Eric came by once a week to inquire about the Wilson and my mother.

A couple of weeks prior to the Wilsons return to Missouri my mother met a very special person. This person would not only alter my mother's life, but also mine.

## NEIGHBORS

On a beautiful Friday morning, the Fergusons, who lived in apartment number 501, knocked on the Wilson's door. The Fergusons were leaving Hawaii.

Apparently, Mr. Ferguson was being transferred out of the country. He and his wife were moving to Calgary, Alberta; a thriving and expanding city.

Mr. Ferguson and his wife loved Hawaii's mild weather and 'Pacific attitude'. They weren't sure how they'd survive up north.

Steve invited the Fergusons into his apartment. The Ferguson declined; stating that they were going to the airport in a short while. Therefore, they had no time for a long conversation.

The Fergusons began to weep. They were born and raised in Hawaii. This was the first time that they were leaving home. They were already home sick.

"Come on, guy! Canada's a very nice place to live in. It's not like we're going to a country where the natives speak a foreign language. I think the cold weather, and just being up north, will be good for your psyche," said Steve.

The short pep talk was enough to cheer-up the Fergusons. They realized that they were being silly. No more crying for the

Ferguson. When they said their goodbyes, they were in good spirits.

Karen gave them another short pep talk.

"Don't worry. Both of you are scientists who can find work in any city across North America. If you don't like Calgary, move to another Canadian city. Or, come back to the United States.

Enjoy the beautiful snow. Purchase a cat from a shelter as soon as you arrive. You'd be surprised how important Mandy is to us. Every time my husband and I pet her, we can feel our blood pressure and pulse drop," said Karen.

"Thanks a lot! You've made our day! I think Calgary will be a good place for us to live in! We might even buy ourselves a cat!" exclaimed Mrs. Ferguson.

The Ferguson walked back to their apartment in good spirits. My mother waved to them one last time, before they entered their apartment.

My mother wished the Ferguson the best of luck. Although she'd only seen them a few times before, they did seem like a friendly couple; never bothering their neighbors with loud music, or big parties.

Four days later, another couple moved into apartment number 501. The husband was a muscular, fifty-something executive, with green eyes and brown hair. His wife was gorgeous, innocent-looking, and only twenty-something. She was a redhead and had 'sky-blue' eyes. Aside from her good looks, there was nothing worth mentioning. She was a typical airhead.

On the day of the Wilson's departure, they allowed my mother to roam the hallway unattended. But, there were conditions. She had to stay on the fifth floor, and she was 'absolutely forbidden' to enter anyone's apartment. These conditions are similar to those imposed on children.

The Wilsons reminded my mother that some humans have an extremely wicked interior. Sometimes, that wickedness is well-hidden, until it's too late for the victim. My mother didn't quite believe what the Wilson had told her. But, she went along with it anyway.

The Wilsons went out for some heavy-duty shopping, eating, and movie viewing, because it was their last day in Hawaii. The Wilsons left their apartment door slightly ajar. In case anyone tried to 'burglary' their apartment, Jody was ordered to scream and shout until the burglar/s fled the area. I guess their instructions were a bit contradictory.

My mother began to roam the hallway as soon as soon as the Wilson entered the elevator. Although she knew it was wrong to do so, she listened in on the 'private conversations' of the tenants.

As my mother was strolling through the hall, she heard a woman shouting from room number 510. My mother was shocked by the woman's profanity.

After the woman stopped shouting, she began to cry. She was obviously shouting at a loved one.

As soon as the man was within an inch of the apartment door, he apologized to the woman for every terrible thing that he'd ever done to her.

"Please, Cindy-baby, I'm so sorry for what I did! Please give me a chance to make it up to you. Look, we can go to the movies then we'll go to the mall. We'll have a nice meal and stroll around for a few hours. When we return, we'll make love. In that case, everything will be just fine."

"No! That's not enough! I want you to get on your hands and knees, like a dog. Then, you must apologize to me from the bottom of your heart. You lied to me! You told me that you were going to treat me like a princess!" shouted the woman.

"Please, why should I treat you like a princess?" asked the man.

"I AM YOUR FREAKING WIFE! THAT IS WHY!" shouted the woman.

"Jeepers, why does marriage have to be so hard?" my mother asked herself.

After a couple of minutes of quiet, the couple approached the door then they put on their shoes.

My mother ran to the end of the hallway then curled up into a ball. She was practically invisible.

The married couple exited their apartment then walked to the elevators. A short while later they disappeared.

As soon as the elevator doors closed, my mother uncurled herself then resumed her strolling. For a short while, there was hardly anything worthy of listening to.

As my mother was returning to the Wilson' apartment, she heard someone dry heaving. Then, the woman inside her apartment began to vomit and dry heave over and over again.

Naturally, my mother's feline curiosity got the better end of her. She stealthily approached the woman's apartment. My mother found herself in front of apartment number 500. After scanning the floor, she shoved her ear against the apartment door. Mind you, my mother wasn't trying to be a mosey cat. She truly cared about the fate of the person who was 'self-inflicting' a severe punishment upon him/herself.

After the second dry heave, my mother determined that the person was a young woman. Now, the woman was also vomiting. She was inducing herself to dry heave and vomit. Cats have a keen ear for these things.

The woman appeared to be alone and in severe psychological distress. She needed someone to help her. Perhaps that someone would be a cat.

Even cats know that inducing a dry heaving spell, and vomiting spree, is potentially dangerous. Fatal stomach ruptures can occur. Frequent vomiting can also cause throat, tongue, metabolic, nutritional, and digestive system problems.

Often times, the problem is detected at the dentist's office. In rare cases, the knuckles of the 'inducer' may have calluses or teeth marks on them.

Indeed, anorexia nervosa and bulimia nervosa (purgung type), are very serious cries for help. The pained one must stop his/her actions. Otherwise, it is imperative that he/she seek professional help. The end result may possibly be lifelong physical/mental problems, or even death.

The pained one may be in denial. Whether the eating disorder was caused by an incident/s, body isomorphic disorder, or idolizing the thin body image, we must never assume that things will automatically get better. In extreme cases, deliberate suicide, reckless behavior leading to suicide, or inadvertent suicide through persistent starvation/purging can occur.

Even a smiling anorexic/bulimic who appears happy, may be quite unhappy. Hell, he/she may be contemplating suicide.

Mind you, some humans have super efficient metabolism, or exercise too much.

However, if you suspect someone of suffering from an eating disorder keep a sharp lookout. If you have proof or verification of the problem, then it must be tackled immediately.

Mind you, drastic weight loss in individuals can also occur as a result of an underlying medical problem. The individual may be mentally healthy, but, physically unhealthy. Don't play doctor, unless you are one.

As soon as the 'episode' in room number 500 ended, a new problem arose. The woman began to cry. Initially, my mother froze. She never liked to see or hear another person cry. Instantly, she drew out a plan to help the woman. Cats are remarkable at helping humans who are in dire straits. Indeed, cats are very talented beings.

Receiving the comfort of a caring human, or animal, is sometimes as good as a large dose of medicine. Many cats are kind, loving, and caring. Well, they may not show it because of cat pride. Rest assured it's true. Cats know that they can lower a person's blood pressure, pulse, stress level, and many physical and mental problems. All they have to do is just be around. Sometimes when a cat 'mock attacks' a human it helps make the human feel more at ease.

## I WAS GANG-RAPED!

My mother pawed at the apartment door, over and over again. Then, she politely asked the young woman to open the door.

A short while later, a severely depressed, but still beautiful young woman, opened the apartment door. She looked straight into my mother's eyes. My mother's feline intuition and sharpness enabled her to see pain, depression, anxiety, confusion, fear, and apprehension, in the eyes of the young woman.

The young woman knelt down then blew my mother a kiss. Afterwards, she got on all fours and kissed my mother between her ears. My mother liked it! She now had a new 'human friend'.

"Come in, don't worry! I won't bite you. I've got some milk in my fridge; really fresh and tasty stuff. I'll leave the door wide open, in case you decide to leave my apartment. Please, trust me. I'll never betray you. I'll never use you even when you're down and out. I won't make fun of you in front of your face, or behind your back," said the young woman.

After the brief barrage of kind words, the young woman collapsed onto her bed. Then, she dry heaved several more times. A full minute later, the young woman was able to get out of her bed then slowly walk to the restroom. Once inside, she washed her hands, brushed her teeth then gargled with mouthwash.

After the young woman exited the restroom, she went to the kitchen and slowly fixed herself a health drink.

The young woman didn't take a single gulp until she poured some of the health drink into a blue bowl then set it beside my mother.

She was a kind woman indeed. After the two new friends had their fill, they decided to talk.

But then, my mother became a bit apprehensive. She wondered if the young woman was hiding a psychotic personality. Her behavior wasn't normal.

My mother turned right then took several steps towards the apartment door. Something made her stop dead in her tracks. It was then, that my mother realized that her fears were unfounded. The young woman was in too much pain, agony, and torment, to harm anyone, let alone, a cute little cat. The young woman was a victim. But, how was she victimized? My mother wondered.

My mother turned back then approached the young woman, stopping just an inch from her.

"My name is Cynthia Corbett I've always loved cats. Most cats are cute and sweet. No cat has ever harmed me. Let alone used me like a rag. Although I love dogs, some of them are extremely aggressive. I like to keep it safe."

I had many stray cat friends during my childhood. One of them was the love of my life. She's long gone now. You see, during my childhood years, I was bounced around from one foster home to another.

I don't want to overburden you with my problems. However, since the dreaded act, I've been very depressed, anxious, confused, and afraid. Not to mention pissed off as all hell! My eating and sleeping habits have been adversely affected. I'm having severe problems finding the right man. I just want to find Mr. Right. I just want to be loved! I just want to live a normal life! I just want to be married! I just want kids!

I'm afraid to use powerful psychotropic medications. Some have harmful, or potentially harmful, side effects. In rare cases, death is a possibility.

Rest assured I'll never take my problems out on you, or any other cat. I want to purchase a cat from a shelter. I want her to be as pretty and cute as you. But, I must get my own life in order first."

Cynthia leaned over then gently held my mother's collar between her index finger and thumb. My mother understood exactly what Cynthia was trying to do. She stood still and allowed Cynthia to read the name on her collar. Thankfully, the Wilson made sure that an identification collar was on my mother's neck.

"Jeepers, I forgot to introduce myself! My name is Mandy Wilson. I'm from Missouri."

"Gosh, your name is Mandy. That's a beautiful name. I have a friend in Washington named Mandy. She's studying biology. Biology students have to spend countless hours in the lab. Persons holding advanced degrees in biology are considered scientists.

After my friend Mandy receives her undergraduate degree, she'll apply to veterinary medical school, somewhere in Washington. Unfortunately, I don't call her too often. She's often busy hitting the books. I don't want to bother her.

Anyway, I have more pressing concerns at hand. I've got terrible problems to deal with. I know I'm sick. Anorexia nervosa and bulimia are very serious illnesses. I'm primarily an anorexic. Unfortunately, a few years ago, I went through three bulimic phases.

I think anorexics are directing their anger and pain against themselves. Bulimia is a matter of losing control, running away from problems, and using food as a cure-all. In my particular case an eventual return to anorexia is often the end result.

Honestly, my case isn't too extreme. As you can see, I only have another thirty pounds to lose," said Cynthia.

Cynthia became so emaciated from talking, she almost collapsed. My mother leaped onto Cynthia's chest, using her momentum to push Cynthia into an upright position.

After Cynthia regained her composure, my mother turned then leaped onto the carpet.

My mother wasn't going to let Cynthia to get away from her. My mother wanted to help Cynthia in every way possible. My mother was an incredible person. Nobody in the whole world could ever compare to her.

My mother began her sustained empathy by asking Cynthia an important question:

"What do you mean by you just have another ten pounds to lose? Girl, you're thinner than a pencil! Your breasts are like those of a prepubescent. The fact that you want to lose more weight means you need help! Please, get some help, fast!" exclaimed my mother.

"Mandy! YOU DON'T LOVE ME! You're trying to hurt me! You're trying to humiliate me! Mandy, you raped me!" shouted Cynthia.

"Cynthia! What are you talking about! Why are you behaving irrationally! I'm not trying to hurt you! I'm trying to help you!" shouted my mother.

"I'm sorry, Mandy. Whenever someone encroaches upon me, I get horrific flashbacks of 'the incident'. I often feel like I am being gang-raped again and again. Then tossed away like a dirty rag and mocked at.

"Mandy, I love you! I'm sorry that I snapped at you. Please forgive me, so we can remain best friends," said Cynthia.

Thankfully, all was now well. My mother forgave Cynthia. Afterwards, they made up. My mother licked Cynthia's chin then she pawed away the tears that were dribbling down her best friend's cheeks.

Although my mother was worried about Cynthia's determination to lose more weight she let it go for the time being. Instead, my mother 'scented' Cynthia, by rubbing her body against Cynthia's ankles. As such, my mother considered Cynthia hers, and absolutely no one else's.

Afterwards, my mother rolled onto her back, thereby exposing her vulnerable underbelly. My mother wanted Cynthia to understand that she trusted her so dearly.

Cynthia hoisted my mother off the carpet, then, pulled her against her cleavage. My mother found herself being smothered by a very skinny woman. Cynthia's sternum, clavicles, and shoulder blades were barely covered by what little flesh there was. Where were the neighbors? Didn't anyone care about Cynthia? My mother wondered.

Cynthia grinned then stroked my mother between her ears. Cats love to be petted and stroked between their ears. It helps to relax them.

Although Cynthia was thankful for my mother's empathy, she needed much more uplifting. My mother understood this very well. Being happy for the moment is nice. However, it's not a substitute for long-term treatment.

"Mandy, would you like to hear my story?" asked Cynthia.

My mother responded in the affirmative then licked the palm of Cynthia's hand. Cynthia put on a forced grin then gently rubbed her chin against the side of my mother's head. Cynthia was trying to become 'kin' with my mother. She was already beginning to behave like a cat.

Cynthia went to the living room then gently placed my mother on a beautiful brown sofa. My mother felt a very strong attachment to Cynthia.

Cats have seen the utter devastation caused by eating disorders. Actually, the eating disorder is the primary symptom, not the underlying problem. Cynthia was now lucky to have a caring friend nearby.

Cynthia braced herself, cried a lot, then reached over and grabbed a box of tissue paper. She removed several pieces of tissue paper then wiped her cheeks dry. Afterwards, she tossed the tissue paper into the nearest waste basket. Cynthia's 'Niagara Falls tears' were a testament to her suffering.

"Mandy, when you want me to stop narrating my story, just tell me. Point blank.

Several years ago, I was an undergraduate student at Gramson State College (GSC), in California. Gramson's roughly a hundred miles north of San Francisco. It's a small city with a population of roughly 50,000.

In the beginning, everything seemed just fine. I had a 4.0 GPA, tons of good friends, much money, and I was drop-dead gorgeous. I could tell, because men gave me that 'special look'. Actually, before 'the incident', I thought that they loved me. Well, I learned a big lesson after the incident.

Jeff, my 'former friend', had once been the best male I'd ever known. That is, until I found out that he was a monster in sheep's clothing.

Prior to the incident, Jeff often helped me with my homework. I reciprocated. Although we were both straight 'A' students, our majors were different.

Okay, every-so-often, Jeff would try to make 'an innocent move' on me. I really didn't think much of it. I mean, he'd try to touch me in inappropriate places, at inappropriate times. I figured it was normal under the circumstances," said Cynthia.

My mother tilted her head to the side, indicating that she wasn't quite sure what Cynthia was talking about. She needed more elaboration.

Cynthia understood what my mother was trying to say to her.

Whenever I had a problem in one of my assignments, Jeff would come over and try to help me. Of course, I did the same for him.

Regarding Jeff's inappropriate touching, I later found out that he was sexually assaulting me with his slick hands," said Cynthia.

My mother noticed that Cynthia began to shed tears again. So, she gently pawed Cynthia's face. Then, she told her that she loved her. This made Cynthia feel better.

"Before I understood the truth about Jeff, he was like a knight in shining armor. Most of the other girls at GSC would've made love to him in a flash. And, he knew it," said Cynthia.

My mother noticed that Cynthia wanted to ask her a question. Perhaps, she had forgotten my mother's name.

"Cynthia, my name is Mandy Wilson."

With all of the stress and tension of conveying my story, I'd forgotten your name.

Mandy, my entire life was altered in a flash. Jeff and Andy went to a pet store and purchased an incredible cat named Corey. It would've been better if they'd purchased Corey from a shelter, rather than from a pet store. Millions of cats and dogs in the United States are killed every year in shelters. There's a terrible cat and dog overpopulation problem in the United

States. Pet stores should be 'researched', before given any business.

Often times, people purchase pets, then toss them a few weeks, or months later. They don't understand that a pet needs much caring for.

Have your animals SPAYED AND NEUTERED! Anyhow, I need to get back to my story.

Many late night parties were held at the college dormitories and fraternity and sorority houses. There were GSC students who believed that college was a place to learn how to party and get laid. Studying was dreaded at all times.

On that dreaded day, students were celebrating the end of finals. I made the mistake of going to the party alone. Usually, I'd go with at least a couple of my girlfriends. It's a safety precaution designed to help protect women against violence. As soon as I arrived at the fraternity house, I started to 'binge drink'. I thought it was cool to do so. So did most of the other party animals at the fraternity house; men and women alike.

I lost count of how much I drank. As expected, I eventually fell into a stupor. In addition, I was given a 'chemical immobilization drug' (CID) by my so-called friend, Jeff. I didn't find out until after the incident that Jeff had slipped the CID into one of my drinks.

I remember him pulling his arm back quickly, upon my turning back to face him. We were sitting on bar stools in the lounge room. How could I have been so stupid? That was the question that rang in my head for weeks after the incident.

Luckily, after I cleared my head, it became apparent that everyone can be fooled or 'connived', under the right circumstances.

Suddenly, I awakened from a terrible night of binge drinking. My memory for the moment had faded. But, I soon remembered enough to know what had happened to me. I noticed that my shirt was smeared with dried-up vomit, blood, and tons of dried-up semen. Actually, one tiny slab was still a bit soggy.

I'd consumed so much alcohol and dope, my body literally catapulted it. In short, vomiting was my body's defensive strategy.

The thought of having been gang-raped now rushed through my head. It didn't matter whether the perpetrators were men, women, aliens, or animals. I was violated against my will. Worse yet, I was too inebriated to defend myself. No, I was paralyzed! Never mind, some of the men who 'did me' were supposedly dear friends of mine. They stabbed me in the back when I was down! Actually, they were the ones who put me down!

As for my deserving it, no way! Although, I shouldn't have made partying a big part of my life, nor should I have lowered my guard. I did leave myself open to an assault, like a giant slab of raw meat on the Serengeti Plains. Still, I didn't deserve to be violated. Especially, by so many guys!" exclaimed Cynthia.

Cynthia broke down again. Then, she curled up into a snail-like position. Afterwards, she began to hyperventilate.

My mother slowly calmed Cynthia down, intimately explaining to her that nobody was going to rape her, ever again.

Cynthia was shivering so badly, she looked like someone who was having a malaria seizure.

My mother pawed Cynthia's face then she gently rubbed the side of her head against Cynthia's chin. Cynthia recomposed herself.

Afterwards, my mother insisted that Cynthia eat a wholesome meal, without inducing vomiting afterwards. Thankfully, Cynthia followed my mother's instructions. She was now able to continue her story.

"As the 'seconds' passed, I began to form a picture of what had happened to me. I remembered the presence of several young men hovering over me. They looked like giant vultures, waiting to devour me.

Soon afterwards, they got to eat their flesh. In other words, they had their way with me. Too cowardly to do it with a fully-conscious woman; they found me an ideal target.

I felt so sad, depressed, apprehensive, guilty, violated, tormented, abused, sickly, disgusted, nervous, confused, dirty, stupid, naive, vain, oblivious, mentally incompetent, despicable, terrified, vengeful, used, betrayed, anxious, worthless, doubtful, angry, cheap, frivolous, and 'partially' in denial. Although I knew that it had happened, a part of me still clung onto the possibility that maybe it was a night terror. I think many gang-rape victims do that.

I was surely 'infected' with 'Gang-Rape Syndrome' (GRS). In other words, I'd have to endure a life of painful symptoms, and other untold problems. There was no way around it. It would only take a short while for me to fully feel the force of it all. What would I become?

Would I have to live as an anorexic, psychotic, paranoid personality type, overly anxious, or extremely depressed? Indeed, I felt like a water balloon that had just burst. I couldn't recompose myself. I'd have to deal with the tragedy every single day, for the rest of my life.

I fully awakened at 7:30 A.M., slowly getting out of the filthy bed I found myself in. Afterwards, I rubbed my eyes because there was dry semen and urine on my entire face. Aside

from sexually violating me, those creeps also relieved themselves on me. I smelled like a giant 'semen urinal. I was hygienically dirty!

Surprisingly, nobody else was in the fraternity house. Otherwise, they would've tossed me out, for being such a stink. I figured the guilty parties went to Balding Park to drink more alcohol and brag about their 'incredible conquest'. I pictured them eating pizza and drinking up a storm. Maybe, there'd be a girl or two with them. This breed of females is extremely ruthless. They'd call me a filthy harlot! A tease! A bimbo! A 'wanted-it-deep-down-inside-girl'! And, every other terrible name they could think of.

I slipped my right foot into my shoe, but couldn't find my left shoe. I decided to find my shoe before leaving the fraternity house. As I walked down the corridor, I peered into every room that I passed.

Then, it dawned on me. The gang-rape must've occurred on the second floor. I was on the third floor. The third floor only had two bedrooms. The rest of the space was designated for laundry, a study room, and a snack room.

I very-well knew that almost all sexual acts were performed on the second floor. This rule applied in student resident houses, fraternity houses, and even sorority houses.

I descended to the second floor then headed straight to the 'dreaded room'. I could smell semen and urine emanating from one particular room.

As soon as I entered the dreaded room, I spotted my left shoe near the bed. Apparently, things were a lot worse than I could've ever imagined. Those creeps must've 'done me', then carried me to several other rooms; one at a time. In the end, they carried me down to the second floor.

In all the commotion, why didn't any of my 'sisters' come to my rescue? Sadly, I'd never find out.

I sat on the bed, then reached over and grabbed my shoe. After slipping my left foot into my shoe and tying my laces, another object caught my attention. Shockingly, it was my purple panties. Tucked underneath a stack of books, it certainly looked out of place.

In order to make sure that they were my panties, I closed the door then dropped my pants. I wasn't wearing anything underneath! Next, I leaned over then grabbed my panties. They were wet! My panties smelled like semen, sweat, blood, and vaginal fluid. There was a lot of dried semen on my panties. It couldn't have all been from one person. I instinctively knew that there were multiple semen samples 'inserted' into my panties. It seemed like the more I investigated, the more I uncovered.

Although I felt very disgusted about wearing a dirty/stained pair of panties, I felt even dirtier not wearing anything underneath my pants.

At this point, there was no doubt in my mind: I was certain! I was gang-raped! I no longer thought of the young men as creeps. They were rapists! Pure and simple! Each and every single one of them!

The rapists were overconfident and conceded. There were many of them. I was in no mood to forgive any of them!" shouted Cynthia.

My mother had to insist that Cynthia stop her story for fifteen minutes. Cynthia was developing some major jitters. She almost looked like she was about to have a seizure. My mother couldn't allow that to happen.

My mother gently pawed and patted Cynthia's face for several minutes. Then, she licked her on the cheeks, chin, and right hand. Thankfully, my mother's actions were helpful. Now, Cynthia was ready to continue her story.

"I held my panties in my hands, staring at them, and sniffing them, for several minutes. It was then, that my first flashbacks occurred. It was so terrible I hugged the bed pillow for fifteen minutes. Mind you, I was crying at the same time. I tried to imagine what the rapists were saying while they were doing me. Maybe they said something like, 'come on baby just say no'!

After pondering about what the rapists may or may not have done, I began to ponder about what to do with my panties. Should I toss them? Wash them? No way! I decided to keep my panties as they were. No tampering with the evidence.

Even in Hollywood crime shows, the rape victim's usually intelligent enough not to take a shower, or destroy any of the evidence. I certainly wasn't going to make the mistake of destroying valuable evidence.

Out of nowhere, I felt a terrible burning sensation in my stomach. It was caused by incredible anger. I was pissed off as all hell! And some! In addition, I was still a bit hung over. It takes a while for alcohol to be completely processed out of the system.

Until I sobered up, my mental faculties wouldn't be up to par. In the meantime, I had to do something about my breath. I had barf, semen, urine, vomit, alcohol, and empty stomach breath. I could've driven off a giant dragon with my stinking breath.

I entered one of the rooms, opened the mini-fridge then removed some food and drinks. I ended up stuffing myself.

After eating, I returned to the dreaded room then took hold of my shoulder bag. Thank GOD they didn't also take my property. I think that the rapists were too busy taking my body, instead. I opened my shoulder bag then pulled out a toothbrush, toothpaste, dental floss, and a mini bottle of mouthwash.

After thoroughly cleaning my teeth and the inside of my mouth, I placed the articles into my shoulder bag. Then, I took out a pack of gum.

I ended up chewing on the gum for fifteen minutes, before I felt that I'd accomplished my mission: to cleanse and purify my teeth, and the inside of my mouth. The rest of my body would need much more work to accomplish the same goal," said Cynthia.

Cynthia had fresh tears streaming down her cheeks. I knew what was going to happen shortly afterwards.

"Mandy, you can't understand what it feels like! I felt so violated! I just didn't want to see, hear, or speak to anyone! Let alone be touched, hugged, or given a pep talk! It was a strange feeling. My friends and I had always been very 'touchy'.

For the time being, I could only tolerate the touch of an animal. Mandy, I wish you were there! It would've made my ordeal much easier to live through," said Cynthia.

My mother knew exactly what Cynthia was trying to say.

"Cynthia, I love you too!" exclaimed my mother.

"Mandy, when I was in grade school, I embraced my girlfriends often. They did likewise to me. After the gang-rape, I clearly understood that the good 'Ole days were gone forever," said Cynthia.

"Cynthia, I feel so much love, compassion, and empathy for you! Let's stay best friends, regardless," said my mother.

"Yes! I wholeheartedly agree with you! As such, I must continue my tragic story. I want to open up to you! Mandy, do you mind?" asked Cynthia.

My mother licked Cynthia's hand; indicating that she wanted her to continue her story.

"I peered out the window then scanned the entire area. Thankfully, there was nobody in sight. Otherwise, I would've had to wait it out. I wasn't in the mood to see anyone.

Mandy, I'm sorry for repeating myself over and over again, but, I was in so much pain! It seemed like the earth had stopped revolving. Nothing mattered to me anymore. A hundred stakes through my heart would've been easier for me to have endured. Even being burnt at the stake would've been a more viable option than my gang-rape ordeal.

As soon as I'd built up enough courage, I exited the dreaded room then went downstairs. Believe me, it was a very painful, anxiety-laden walk. Slight sounds startled me

intensely. Even the sudden appearance of my shadow almost gave me a heart attack!

Every step I took towards my sorority house got me further away from the scene, but closer to other humans.

As soon as I got to within a block of my sorority house, I took notice of three GSC students staggering in my direction. I hid behind a blue van then waited until they were gone. I didn't want them to see me. Deep down, I felt dirty and pathetic. Besides, they were all guys. I didn't want them to attack me. Mandy, I wasn't being paranoid, really!

I entered the property through the front lawn at 8:30 A.M. Most of my sorority sisters were zonked out from a long night of intense partying. After slowly opening the sorority house door, I entered it taking 'panther-like-steps'. Meanwhile, I was constantly scanning the area.

Although I didn't see anyone, it seemed like countless eyes and ears in all directions were cast upon me. I was the victim! As if I was guilty of some terrible wrongdoing.

As soon as I reached the door to my room, I slowly pulled out my keys. Because I had the 'jittery-jumps' my keys dropped onto the carpet. I picked them up then held them firmly with both hands. Then, I quickly entered my room, and closed the door behind me. I made sure it was locked.

I found myself on my bed crying my brains out. It was a terrible scene. I couldn't wake up any of my sorority sisters because they were hung-over from the night before. In addition, who amongst them would truly consider me an innocent victim? I wondered.

I slept for a couple of hours then grudgingly awakened. Still exhausted and feeling 'crummy', I decided to drink a large glass of orange juice. I was so dehydrated, the orange juice felt like a super-energy drink. So, I fixed myself another one; except this time I stirred a couple of eggs into the orange juice.

It was then that I decided to stop drinking alcohol, altogether. Henceforth, I'd always be sober, alert, and ready to defend my honor and dignity!

Safety precautions are always important. Mandy, don't think that this is some kind of a guarantee. Guarantees don't exist! They just don't!

If the young men who gang-raped me had canines and claws, they'd have eaten me too! It's true!

For some unknown reason, I didn't go to the police station. Maybe, I was too humiliated to tell my story. Who knows?

As days turned into weeks, my anger increased. When my feelings turned into rage, I finally decided to seek justice.

On a cloudy Sunday morning, my need to seek justice became overwhelming. I decided to go to the Grayson Police Station (GPS). Believe me, I got the jitters! The thought of having to tell my story over-and-over-again was terrifying. How would the police react if I cried my brains out? Would they shed crocodile tears, genuinely care, or snicker at me? These thoughts were ringing in my head.

I'm thankful to have chosen a Sunday to go to the GPS, rather than a weekday. Knowing that my friends would be hung-over Sunday morning was quite reassuring.

I went alone, with the intent of returning alone. No exceptions, whatsoever!

My friends were becoming very suspicious of my behavior. They'd noticed a drastic personality change in me. No longer was I the 'muggy' person they once knew. The first girlfriend who tried to hug me got a shove, then a tantrum! Although I apologized to her afterwards, both she and my other girlfriends thought I was becoming a 'don't touch me bitch'. Why didn't they know I was suffering so much? Weren't they supposed to be my loving friends? Can't other women tell when one of 'their own' has suffered a gang-rape? Where's the empathy?

I showered, dried-up, put on my cloths, ate breakfast, then brushed and flossed. Afterwards, I washed the dishes and utensils. Finally, I left my sorority house.

Although it was a ten minute walk to the GPS, it seemed like a hundred years' walk. Or, more like the 'Hundred Years Civil War'. I stopped at least a dozen times; going back then resuming my walk. On my way back, I'd change my mind, over and over again. I actually thought I was becoming an obsessive compulsive personality type. That walk almost drove me up the wall. It was like I was fighting with myself.

But, it was the thought of those gang-rapists 'doing' another innocent victim that got me to complete my walk to the GPS. I didn't want another 'sister' to have to endure what I'd endured from those gang-rapists. I was almost certain they'd done it before, and intended to do it again.

As soon as I was within spitting distance of the GPS entrance, I made an impromptu rehearsal of what I was going to tell the officers and detectives. When I finished rehearsing, I entered the GPS.

Instantly, it seemed like everyone, even the inanimate objects therein, were staring at me. I'd never felt that self-conscious before.

Mandy, I wasn't paranoid, really.

For a minute, I thought everyone in the world knew about my ordeal. The 'openly known secret', is what I called it.

Suddenly, I received a rush of fear through my veins. Was I beginning to go mad? I hoped not!

"I walked ten steps then was abruptly met by a couple of police officers sitting behind a counter. Nobody could go beyond this point without being cleared. Even police stations need to take security precautions," said Cynthia.

"Madam, how can we help you?" asked the male officer.

"Yes, officer, I want to file a criminal complaint regarding a gang-rape that happened exactly forty five days ago," said Cynthia.

Initially, the police officers were kind and cordial. They asked me if I wanted something to drink; if I'd only known.

"Yes, I'll have a pop, please. Diet, if you don't mind. Normally, I'd never ask for something to drink. But, my throat felt like sandpaper. No wonder, I was about to spill my guts to total strangers. I understood that they were officers of the law. Unfortunately, that didn't make them blood kin."

"A short while later I found myself drinking a diet pop. The carbonated pop and the caffeine made me feel a bit better," said Cynthia.

"Young woman, what's your name?" asked the male officer.

"My name is Cynthia Corbett."

"I'm Sergeant Frank Belmont, and this is Officer Linda Taylor. Please follow us to the interview room. We'll try to make this as painless as possible."

"Wait, are you the victim? Or a witness?" asked Officer Taylor.

"Damn it! I'M THE FREAKING VICTIM! And, I'm the freaking witness! I demand that you get those bastards! I want 'them' to be hanged by their testicles until they die ... twice!" shouted Cynthia.

I followed Sergeant Belmont and Officer Taylor to the interview room. If felt like I had a giant tire in my stomach. I was so furious, nervous, and sad.

Somehow, deep in my heart, I felt that the police officers had no 'true empathy' for me.

Officer Taylor looked like she could hold her ground. She probably thought I should've done so myself.

Thankfully, I was still a young, gorgeous, rich, and educated woman. I was well-dressed and clean.

The corridor was well-lit, containing interview rooms and interrogation rooms aligned on each side. As soon as we were in front of the interview room door, Sergeant Belmont and Officer Taylor asked me to enter before them.

As soon as I entered the interview room, Sergeant Belmont left. Then, an attractive blond entered the interview room. She

was tall, athletic-looking, and wasn't wearing a uniform," said Cynthia.

"Hello, Madam. I'm Detective Lauren Spencer. I'll be one of the detectives working on your case. Please answer a few simple questions, before we begin the interview.

Tell me your name, date of birth, place of residence, place of birth, and occupation. I'm sorry for having to ask you all of these questions. We must create a file for your case. In a short while, a specially-trained social worker will interview you. She can give you much information regarding therapy, coping, and prevention.

Afterwards, she'll take you to the Grayson Rape Recovery Center (GRRC). They have a special clinic for cases like yours. You must have a 'special' physical examination, also. Don't worry we've been blessed because the services at the GRRC is absolutely free! That's the least they can do for you, or any other victim. The GRRC receives funding from the city, state, and donations from individuals and corporations.

Of course, your physician will be a woman. We understand that for the time being, it'll be quite difficult for you to have to live on the same planet as men do. Remember, there are men who've been victimized by women, too. Generally, their victimization isn't through rape. It comes in various other forms. Besides, there are countless good men out there who've done much good for sexual assault victims."

"I felt like punching that little harlot in her face! How could she call me a sexual assault victim?! I'm a full-fledged rape victim!"

Mandy, I freaking hate it when people, especially other women, downplay a serious rape!" shouted Cynthia.

"Miss Corbett, I understand that you've probably destroyed much of the evidence. You washed your clothes, bathed, and unfortunately, let time pass," said Detective Spencer.

"Mandy, I felt like hurling a chair at that harlot-little-bitch! Also, I wanted to bite her very hard! And curse her too! How could that little harlot reprimand me?! I was the victim!"

Mandy, how am I supposed to know exactly how to behave after enduring the shock of my life?!" shouted Cynthia.

"Well, you're here. I guess you decided to come forward. I must warn you: the system can be extremely cruel, cold, and rough. We've got too many cases at hand, as is. Not that your case isn't important. Our criminal justice system is overflowing with criminals, bills, paperwork, and other problems. It's like Niagara Falls" said Officer Taylor.

Now, both 'WOMEN' were getting on my case. Perhaps, they'd been 'blunted'. I mean, they'd seen one victim after another. It was like working in one of Ford's early assembly-line factories.

"No! Here's the proof! I didn't wash everything in the freaking washer!

My panties are in this plastic bag. In addition, I remember tidbits of what happened to me.

The gang-rape occurred exactly forty five days ago," said Cynthia.

Officer Taylor gently pulled the plastic bag from my hand. Afterwards, she reassured me that the crime lab would work diligently to obtain any and all evidence pertaining to this case. The article in the evidence bag would be placed in a safe and secure place; the evidence room.

Somehow, I didn't believe it. Something was terribly wrong. It was just beyond the horizon. I'd have to wait it out. The bombshell was on its way.

Although I cried my brains out throughout the process, I managed to convey my story to Detective Spencer and to Officer Taylor. I had a catharsis; leaving no details untold. Mandy, let me backtrack a bit. The longer I rambled on, the more impatient Detective Spencer and Officer Taylor became. Officer Taylor kept looking at her watch. It was like she had an important date with her boyfriend, or something. I noticed that she wasn't wearing a ring on her finger. Was I keeping her from her date? Or, was she waiting to make love to her handsome boyfriend?

Detective Spencer looked like she wanted to swat flies," said Cynthia.

"There's just one thing that I don't quite understand. At any time, do you remember being naked while the men were raping you?" asked Detective Spencer.

"Please, don't say 'naked'! I don't want to hear that word again! I'm sorry for being this way! I can swallow the word 'undressed', or 'nude'!" shouted Cynthia.

We'll use the term you're most comfortable with, for now. However, if we go to court, anything goes," responded Officer Taylor.

Mandy, as soon as Officer Taylor ended her sentence, I felt a burning sensation in my stomach. In other words, I was terrified of going to court.

Here I was a victim in distress, only to be manhandled by the same criminal justice practitioners who were supposed to be helping me.

Detective Spencer and Officer Taylor left the interview room. Shortly afterwards, Sergeant Belmont entered the interview room. He was carrying a notepad. He was writing something down.

At that point, I almost left the police station. In addition to being terrified of being alone in a strange room with a man, I was totally exhausted. I was about to call it

quits. Somehow, I felt alone. It was like nobody in the entire universe understood my predicament, even other rape victims.

They left me in a strange room with an armed man! Soon, I began to feel extremely tense and uncomfortable. Where were my sisters in arms, I almost shouted my brains out. How could they do this to me?!

This man was bigger, stronger, and a lot tougher than me. I could feel giant beads of sweat dribbling from my armpits. My breathing became very shallow and labored. My eyelids began to twitch, and I instinctively clinched my fists. Then, I instinctively pulled my thighs together. Nobody was going pull my thighs apart! Absolutely nobody! Not even a detective!

When Officer Taylor returned, she told me that I was most likely gang-raped. Duh, like I didn't freaking know.

Also, she told me that although it would be difficult to find the perpetrators, she'd take the case very seriously. I had to interrupt Officer Taylor.

"But, in my original statement, I told you that Jeff was one of the perpetrators. What the hell's going on here?! Why wasn't Jeff arrested for raping me! Or, at least questioned?" I asked.

The interview process felt like it took a hundred years. I was asked to repeat my story over and over, without any let-up. I felt like 'I' was a suspect being interrogated for my own gang-rape.

Finally, after much pressure from me, Detective Spencer asked me to tell her the names of all of the people at the party. Everyone even the females. The list was long. Many of the persons on the list had just graduated from GSC. Unofficially, it was a Fall Semester graduation party. Some people end up graduating in December, rather than in May.

While I was calling out the names of the males, I performed a quick profile, wondering if 'the guy' was capable of raping me. Except for Jeff, I really couldn't tell. I couldn't believe any of those guys could hurt me in that way.

When I finished calling out all of the names, I broke down, again. I cried like a baby. Tears streamed down my cheeks, like Niagara Falls.

Officer Taylor looked at me cold-faced. Something had changed. It's like she'd had enough of my crying and bitching. Deep down, I think she was a bit pissed off at me. She was probably the kind of woman who believes that a girl must always fight back. Never mind, I was chemically immobilized. Officer Taylor gave me her card, but also a bit of 'blunt truth'.

"Call me if you remember anything else. Sometimes memories of events need cues to be brought out. Memories of particular

events related to rape can return years later. We'll do our part here.

Now, I want to tell you something very important: often times, rapists escape justice. It's not because the criminal justice practitioners involved want it that way. Memories often fade. Defendants often withdraw their complaints. Top-notch defense attorneys do an incredible job defending a guilty party. Overpopulation in the prison system, and too many cases to deal with, are certainly an energy drainer.

Listen: the system is often cold and rough to rape victims. Remember, each and every suspect is innocent until proven guilty. Guilty beyond any reasonable doubt, that is. That's the final rule regarding conviction, or acquittal. I'm sorry, but this is the real world," said Officer Taylor.

I almost puked my brains out. I became dizzy, apathetic, and confused. I didn't know who was worse, the gang-rapists, or our criminal justice system. The system that I was supposed to seek help from was cold, rough, and impersonal. Wow! My rapists had those same characteristics.

"You'll have to repeat your entire story over and over again. In a court of law, the defense attorney is your enemy. He/she is supposed to give the defendant the best defense, and fastest deal. Chances are that your case will be plea bargained. That is, if it goes to trial," said Detective Spencer.

If this Jeff guy's rich, his parents will hire a top notch attorney. You'll have to sludge your way through the justice process. But, either way, we'll proceed some," said Detective Spencer.

I wondered what was going on. I felt like everyone thought I was a super harlot. I was starting to lose it. For the second time, the thought of backing down from this ordeal entered my mind. The pain of carrying my story through a long process was terrifying. But, part of me also wanted justice. This was the part of me that was willing to die just to see those gang-rapists do hard time. I wanted them to do hard time as sexual offenders. Then, they'd almost feel what I felt. I say almost, because I was a completely innocent victim. My tormentors were as guilty as sin; each and every one of them.

Several persons entered the interview room then left. I had a hard time focusing on matters. Mandy, I was pooped!

Detective Spencer left the room as soon as the interview ended. A social worker sat with me for roughly fifteen minutes. She consoled and comforted me. Thankfully, she made me feel a bit better. I understood that every subsequent day was a new day.

Upon awakening in the morning, the first thought that enters my mind is the gang-rape. How could anyone expect anything else?

#### LIFE GOES ON

The social worker walked me out of the interview room, to the parking lot. We waited for a couple of minutes, until a slim, attractive policewoman approached us. She looked like a 'little doll' in her mid-twenties. Because I was also a beautiful woman, it felt nice seeing one of my own there to help me.

"I'm Officer Hauser. I'll be taking you to the GRRC. Although it's called a center, there's a clinic on the premises. The GRRC is for women who've been physically, mentally, or sexually abused. The staff and volunteers are well-trained, and really do care about their patients. Some of the staff workers and volunteers are survivors of incest and rape. You can really open up to them. They kind of know how you feel."

Unfortunately, GRRC is in need of more volunteers and more funding. Often times, these centers are underfunded. Staff is usually overworked and underpaid. Hopefully, the situation will change for the better, soon.

Follow me to my police car."

"We followed Officer Hauser to the police car then entered it. After turning on the ignition, Officer Hauser proceeded to exit the parking lot.

The ride took roughly ten minutes. Meanwhile, I was trying to forecast the next fifty years of my life. I had much suffering to endure. Also, I was now well-aware that the gang rapists probably wouldn't be punished for their heinous crime. I pictured them giving each other high-fives. They'd certainly have many 'sweet stories' to tell their friends.

A few years into the future, every single one of those gang rapists would probably be married. Each one of their wives would think that she was married to the sweetest man in the whole world. If I ever found out who their wives were, I'd be the biggest party-popper, ever. I'd confront their wives, one at a time. I'd tell them what their husbands did to me; sparing no detail.

Hopefully, their marriages would end. Or, so I'd think. I mean, maybe, their husbands would use cunning and lies to discredit me. They're cunning as is.

Mandy, what about my future husband? I was a die-hard virgin before the gang-rape. You can only be a virgin once. Once it breaks, you can never fix it!

I lost my virginity in the worst possible way! Would I ever be able to fall in love with a man?" asked Cynthia.

"Cynthia, please continue your story. The Wilson won't be back until after midnight. Cynthia, I'm all ears," said my mother.

"As soon as we arrived at the GRRC Main Entrance, Officer Hauser wished us the best of luck, and told us to have a nice day. That harlot didn't even have the decency to walk us into the GRRC.

As soon as we entered the GRRC, the social worker motioned me to stop. It looked like she wanted to tell me something very important.

"Gosh, in all the confusion, I forgot to introduce myself. Sorry ... my name is Linda McMaster. I'm originally from Los Angeles.

I'm married to the most wonderful man in the whole world. I finally managed to put my life back together. I had a rough childhood.

As far back as I can remember I was catapulted from one foster family to the next. I was abused in more ways than one, and neglected in two out of the nine foster families I lived with. I suffered a lot as a child. That's why I became a social worker. I know what it feels like to be used and abused!"

"Linda and I filled out the relevant forms then sat down. There was deafening silence for the next fifteen minutes. I guess neither of us had anything to say.

It didn't take long for tears to stream down my cheeks. I couldn't help it!

I closed my eyes then fell asleep. There was nothing else to do under the circumstances. Just as I began to dream, a nurse called out my name. I was startled by her rough voice.

The nurse asked me to follow her to the examination room. Instantly, I got the jitters. I followed her into the examination room then waited for instructions.

"Linda was asked to stay in the waiting room. She looked like she'd gone through the routine many times over," said Cynthia.

"Please, take off your clothes, then put this gown on. Don't feel violated, or humiliated. Many of our patients cringe when we tell them to take their clothes off. Don't worry, you're in good hands," said the nurse.

I felt like SCREAMING MY BRAINS OUT! I felt like I was re-violated'. Sadly, I had to continue through the ordeal. The sooner I left the GRRC, the better. Taking off my clothes had become a much more personal and painful act. For the time being, I didn't want anyone to touch, or even see my nude body.

Shortly afterwards, I was asked to lie down on the hospital bed. NO WAY! How could 'she' do this to me? I wondered. The nurse was confused. Like, I was to blame for my own gang-rape.

This nurse was a very old hen. She had so many wrinkles on her face and body she almost looked like a prune.

Back in her prime, women were expected to obey their man at all times. Gang-rapes 'didn't happen'. But, if they ever did happen, the victim was almost always a willing accomplice.

No doubt, this nurse was harboring ill feelings towards me. I wanted to bitch her out. Also, I wanted to violently shake her.

But, because I was being treated free of charge, I kept quiet," said Cynthia.

My mother interrupted Cynthia's story in order to correct her misinterpretation of events.

"Cynthia, I don't think that nurse harbored any ill feelings towards you. I mean, you were in such terrible pain. Maybe, you were getting a bit paranoid. I can see that you were suspicious of just about everyone who was supposed to help you," said my mother.

In response, Cynthia went totally ballistic on my mother. I must say, without any right, whatsoever.

"Mandy! YOU DON'T FREAKING LOVE ME! You're like those evil people who hurt me badly. You don't care about me! How could you hurt me?! You, of all people! I don't want to ever see you again!" shouted Cynthia.

"Please, Cynthia, I love you dearly. I'm a cat! Cats don't go around hurting people without just cause! Let alone, dehumanize them!

Cynthia, you're a really sweet person who has endured much pain and humiliation. Please, don't think that I'd ever try to hurt you physically, or emotionally. You were very sick and in much pain. Okay, if you say that 'she' was trying to hurt you, then, that's the way it was," responded my mother.

My mother gently pawed, and patted Cynthia's chin. Afterwards, she licked Cynthia's face. In return, Cynthia held my mother tightly, and kissed her between the ears. In effect, the two had made up.

Cynthia sniffled a bit then wiped her tears.

"Mandy, please don't do that again. You don't know what it feels like to be gang-raped by a group of thugs. These guys were creeps. Worse yet, Jeff was supposed to be one of my closest friends. He was supposed to protect me from all sorts of dangers. Instead of leading the 'rape pack', he was supposed to have stood between me and the rapists, like an iron shield. I've been betrayed too many times," said Cynthia.

Cynthia stood up, ran into the restroom. She violently closed the door then began to do her awful thing.

My mother followed her to the restroom door. She cropped her ears then listened intently.

Unfortunately, it was the same old story. Cynthia was inducing a series of vomiting and dry heaving spells. It lasted for several minutes. After Cynthia was done, she brushed her teeth, flossed then rinsed her mouth with mouthwash. Before exiting the restroom, Cynthia washed her hands and face with soap and water, then dried up.

Cynthia exited the restroom looking like a pale zombie. At that point, my mother threatened to end their friendship forever. She made it clear to Cynthia that there would be no more episodes. No more anorexia or bulimia. These two killers were only making matters worse for the two of them.

"Cynthia, you can't solve any of your problems by puking, or dry heaving your brains out. You'll only create new problems," said my mother.

"I'm sorry Mandy. I promise never to do it again. Actually, I've really had it with the side effects attached to puking and dry heaving. I can't handle it anymore. If you promise that you'll always love me and be my best friend in the whole world, I'll promise to quit this nasty habit, forever," said Cynthia.

"Cynthia, I promise! I'll always be your best friend in the whole world," responded my mother.

My mother asked Cynthia to continue her sad story, without any more interruptions.

"A short while later, a 'female physician' entered the examination room. She scanned me with her eyes, like an alien scanning a human strapped to an examination bed.

Again, I had a sudden urge to scream my head off! I hated what'd happened to me. But, the way my 'helping hands' treated me was also bad. Even at the police station, it seemed like everyone spoke to me in a condescending manner.

For a moment, I wondered if I should have forgotten what had happened. It seemed like I'd have to endure much more pain and discomfort, if I continued with my campaign for justice.

The physician was tall, slim, freckled faced, and as cold as ice. She reminded me of the Mona Lisa painting. No doubt, she'd been through this process many times before. I guess after a while, a person can become insensitive and rough on the edges," said Cynthia.

"I'm Dr. Elizabeth Saxon. Cynthia Corbett, I'll be examining you. You'll feel a bit uneasy at first. Rest assured we're here to help you. After the examination, I'll give you a card with a very important phone number written on it. It's a free 24-hour support line for female victims of sexual assault."

"I WASN'T SEXUALLY ASSAULTED! I WAS GANG-RAPED!

It annoys me when people like you use 'cushioned terms' to describe horrific incidents. I want to go home!" shouted Cynthia.

"Cynthia, I'm sorry you feel that way. You're the very first victim who's made that kind of complaint. Rest assured the word 'assault' in this context is very intense and serious. Nobody in this center will downgrade, or trivialize any aspect of your suffering. Please believe what I've just told you," said Dr. Saxon.

"I came to my senses then apologized for my outburst. I won't call it unjustifiable, but, perhaps I shouldn't have gone ballistic. That's what I thought at the time. I didn't know that there was more 'humiliation' to come. I guess I was still sensitive and hurting," said Cynthia.

"Kindly disrobe. I must examine your entire body; privates and non-privates. Normally, this is done immediately after, or shortly after the assault. I want to touch all bases. Just in case," said Dr. Saxon.

"She used the 'disrobe' word and the 'touch' word. I didn't like it, but, I held out.

The examination was extremely humiliating. I really felt like a 'vivisected creature'. Even though I'd apologized for the outburst, I was still pissed off as all hell. Dr. Saxon asked me very personal questions, and touched me in extremely sensitive areas. It was like I was being 'touched' all over again.

Throughout the examination process, tears dribbled down my cheeks. I couldn't hold a single drop back. The pain, agony, suffering, and humiliation, had overpowered all of my natural defenses. If the perpetrators' intent was to use and humiliate me, they got what they wanted.

If any one of them had had a heart, he'd repent then take an oath never to rape anyone again. Especially me!

Paranoia and other mental 'destroyers' are common among victims. The memories were eating away at me. Maybe I did fully awaken during the gang rape; on-and-off. That's probably why I was remembering more and more of the rape, as time passed.

If I could've remembered just a bit more, the police would've had a solid case. Certainly, I'd accept no excuses or explanations from the creeps. Prison time is what I would demand! Only in prison, would they get what they truly deserve!

The police are trained to interrogate suspects, and are skilled in the art of detection. That is, they can often sense when a person's concealing something. A line must be drawn between a thorough and vigilant interrogation, and harassment of a potentially innocent suspect. Regardless of how serious the crime, all suspects should have their rights respected by the participants of the criminal justice system. Remember, you're hearing this from a victim of an extremely heinous crime.

Interrogators should never be allowed to use torture or extreme intimidation on suspects. For one thing, I've always been against sleep deprivation. It's a form of torture. So is wash-boarding, and countless other actions.

Individuals working for any government who support this kind of awful treatment are double evil! Not only are they supporting torture, but often times they say it isn't torture. They're the ones who are supposed to protect us from torture. Let them go through the torture process. Then, they'll know what it feels like.

Mandy, cats have had a rocky relationship with humans. Many of your brethren, past and present, have been tortured by a minority of cruel humans.

I felt like I was living in a cage! Nobody in the whole world knew what I felt in my heart. Not even another gang-rape victim. Each person has her/his own suffering.

My mood and thinking began to sway as the clock ticked. I began to have doubts about attaining justice in my case. First, I waited too long to consult the police. Second, the 'hard evidence' was probably polluted. Third, I'd done what no rape victim should ever do: I took many showers from the time of the incident, to the time of my formal criminal complaint.

At the end of the examination Dr. Saxon informed me that the results of the blood test would be given to me within a week," said Cynthia.

"Well, Cynthia, I have to be honest with you. I see no signs of S.T.D. s, or pregnancy. We must wait until the results of your blood test are in. I'm sorry, but that's the reality of the matter," said Dr. Saxon.

"Doctor Saxon, does that include HIV and AIDS?!" I shouted.

"Yes, even HIV, AIDS. But, you're lucky they didn't impregnate you," answered Dr. Saxon.

I was so dilapidated, my back actually slouched. I felt like the hunchback of Notre Dame. I left the examination room in dire straits. By the time I was ready to go home, the only thing on my mind was sleep. Linda and a GRRC technician escorted me to the parking lot.

Mandy, to tell you the truth, I was so out of it! I can't remember if I left the GRRC in the daytime, or nighttime.

I told Linda I didn't want ride back to the sorority house. I wanted to take a long walk home. I didn't want to see or speak to another human being.

I'd inadvertently lowered my guard. Because it was a long walk back to the sorority house, any creep lurking in the shadows could've leaped out and done me again.

As I was walking back to the sorority house, I noticed a congregation of birds hunched on a large branch. They were staring at me. I hated it!

It appeared as though these birds suspected that I'd been gang-raped. I didn't know if they felt sorry for me, or if they blamed me for the gang-rape," said Cynthia.

"Cynthia, as a general rule, animals don't think that way. Maybe, those birds were admiring you. Or, maybe, they thought you were very beautiful. You shouldn't have had ill feelings towards them," said my mother.

"Mandy! YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT IT FEELS LIKE! I thought we were best friends! Why can't you agree with me on anything?!" shouted Cynthia.

My mother managed to calm Cynthia down. Luckily, she convinced Cynthia that the three birds weren't staring at her because of the gang-rape. Nor, did they feel sorry for her.

My mother gently pawed Cynthia's chin, then licked the back of her hand several times. In return, Cynthia gave my mother a kiss on the cheek. For the time being, all was well.

"Cynthia, please believe me when I say that you're an incredibly strong and resilient woman. You're also kind, intelligent, and fun to be with. Please don't keep lashing out at me like that. Remember, just because I'm a cat, it doesn't mean that I don't have any feelings," said my mother.

"I'm sorry for being a total bitch. Mandy, you're a sweet kitty who's full of love, kindness, and empathy," said Cynthia.

"Cynthia! There you go again! You just called yourself a total bitch. You're not a bitch! You were reacting to a very painful experience," said my mother.

Cynthia promised my mother never to call herself a bitch again, regardless of the circumstances. My mother convinced Cynthia that using derogatory terms against oneself was always counterproductive.

Cynthia walked back to the sorority house then crashed out for many hours. For several days, she pondered about whether she should drop her criminal complaint, or not. She was getting tired of all the waiting and apprehension. Criminal trials are very stressful and time consuming.

"A week later, the police gave me a call. They had a suspect. I was told to go to the police station then proceed to room number 21. I got out of bed like a rocket.

I was still wondering why they didn't arrest Jeff at the beginning of the process. Maybe, they were waiting for hard evidence? Who knows?

I ended up walking to the GPS feeling like a zombie that had just come back to life. It was a very stressful walk, indeed. Aside from knowing that Jeff was guilty, I really didn't know who the other gang-rapists were. Once again, I got the jittery-jumps. Every time I heard a noise, my pulse and blood pressure skyrocketed.

I was terrified the guilty parties would seek me out and 'do me' again. Worse yet, kill me. The police couldn't protect me for the rest of my life. Even if they did, what kind of life would that be? I just wanted everything to go back to what it was like before the gang-rape. I would've given anything for that to have happened.

After being cleared for entry, I slowly walked to room number 21. Shockingly, I was forced to endure another bout of the jittery-jumps.

A police officer, who was at least 6 feet 6 inches tall and weighed over 300 pounds, cut me off. His enormous size made me feel like a helpless little child. For a second, I thought that he was about to molest me. Maybe, to him, I looked like a cute little child," said Cynthia.

Luckily, my suspicions were unfounded.

"Madam, may I help you? Are you okay?" asked the officer.

"I'm going to room number 21. I want justice! Please, don't hurt me!" shouted Cynthia.

Two policewomen intervened during my shouting routine. They instructed me to follow them. One of them told me that I'd be safe, and that the suspect wouldn't be able to see me behind the

'special window'.

While walking to room number 21, I got rubbery-legged. Then I felt a cold rush run through my entire body. I was terrified! I was ready to ask the police to end it once and for all. I didn't want to see that creep's face! I believed that seeing his face would be a shocker! It would bring back terrible memories and flashbacks.

With every step I took, my fear doubled. It almost felt like I was an unarmed gladiator being forced to fight a hungry lion inside a Roman arena. Even with two policewomen walking beside me, it made no difference whatsoever.

Noticing my fear, the policewomen tried to comfort me with kind and comforting words. They convinced me to keep going at it. I reluctantly continued walking. I understood it was their job to say those kind words to me. I mean, each one probably had a husband, or a boyfriend to go back to. They'd go back home at the end of the day, and forget me. They'd be with their love; making love. I'd return to nothing but more pain, anxiety, tension, guilt, and confusion. I had no husband to comfort me.

As soon as we entered room number 21, a tall, chubby, red-haired man motioned me to take a seat. A policewoman sitting beside him scanned my body like an elevator then she looked down at her clipboard. She appeared to be a bland character. Maybe, she thought badly of me. It was almost like she blamed me for what'd happened.

Both policewomen who escorted me to room number 21 said goodbye, then wished me the best of luck. I never saw them again.

The chubby man introduced himself as Detective Frank Holliday.

Detective Holliday day was gray-haired, and balding. He gave me instructions about what to do and how to pick out an individual from a lineup.

"Again, I felt like shouting my brains out! What happened to the other detective assigned to my case? Was she living it up in Hawaii? I wondered.

I was asked to stand in front of the special window, without being afraid to identify the perpetrator/s of the gang-rape.

Detective Holliday then told me to take my time; to look intently and with full concentration. It was extremely important that I was to tell the absolute truth, and not identify someone in the lineup just to please the police. After all, the police were there to help me. Or, were they?

One-by-one, I looked at the faces of the men in the lineup. When I got to number 5, tears ran down my cheeks. Then I began to hyper ventilate. Thankfully, it only lasted for a short while.

Detective Holliday and the female officer tried to comfort me as best they could. Eventually, I was able to resume the identification process.

Detective Holliday day couldn't do anything on the official level until I gave him a verbal answer. Crying is not an answer. Detective Holliday day asked me if I wanted to tell him something about number 5. I told him that number 5 was one of the rapists. Seeing his face in the lineup brought back many repressed memories.

I remembered the shape of his nose, freckles, and scar on his neck. Also, I remembered feeling his ring pressed against my lips. Also, his ferocious face was hovering over mine. Before, during, and after he 'entered me'.

Although he was a very handsome young man, I considered him uglier than sin; that's not a hyperbole.

Detective Holliday day asked me again. I gave him the same response. He explained to me that it was standard procedure for the police to be certain of the answer given to them, regarding this kind of questioning.

Moments later, Detective Holliday day pressed the intercom button then ordered that number 5 be taken-in for interrogation for 'aggravated rape'.

I felt relieved as soon as I heard the words 'aggravated rape'. If I only knew what was really in store for me.

After three hours of tough interrogation, 'the suspect' didn't budge. He held his ground. He understood his rights. I was yet to understand mine! I mean, he had 'his attorney', but where was mine?

Detective Holliday escorted me to a special waiting room. I sat down in an uncomfortable chair for what appeared to be forever. I was all alone, except for the clock on the wall. I kept glancing at it, thinking that good news was coming soon. I was in a dream world.

Detective Holliday had spoken to the assistant district attorney concerning my case. There was no confession. Although the semen sample was a perfect match to one of the samples on my panties, it didn't prove that a rape had taken place. In other words, more evidence was needed. An eyewitness to the gang-rape would've been an incredible asset. What about me? I wondered.

Unfortunately, my bruises, scratches, and bite marks, had healed. Yes, bite marks. Those monsters even bit me. Why? I sure as hell never found out.

Mandy, you're probably thinking that I was attacked by a den of lions. That's almost correct.

Detective Holliday approached me then asked me to follow him to another room.

Upon entering the room, Detective Holliday asked me to sit down and brace myself. Brace myself for what? I wondered. As if there could possibly be more bad news on the horizon.

Detective Holliday called the assistant district attorney on his cell phone.

Something wasn't right. It was obvious to me that Detective Holliday wanted me to be present for the call. It was like he was trying to absolve himself of guilt.

Soon, it became apparent what was to transpire.

Almost immediately, Detective Holliday raised his voice, until his face reddened then it paled.

Detective Holliday's voice became quivery and rough. Then, his voice became aggressive. He began to spurt out nasty words. He obviously didn't like what the assistant district attorney was telling him.

As soon as the conversation ended, Detective Holliday looked at me with somber eyes.

I was totally pissed off! I knew bad news was on its way. Detective Holliday gently pushed a box of tissue paper towards my sweaty hands. Then, he told me to brace myself for hell on earth. I did as I was told.

I'd already had enough bad news in my life. What else could've gone wrong? Mandy, was I naive!

Detective Holliday told me that there was no proof that I was raped by number 5 (Jeff), or any other person. In a court of law, semen on a victim's panties doesn't necessarily prove rape. After all, I wasn't underage. If I'd been a child, the semen would've been enough to move onto the next phase of the criminal justice process.

Also, the fact that I'd waited so long to contact the police; bathed, washed most of my clothing, and hadn't 'announced' the gang-rape to my family and friends, worked against me.

What was I supposed to do: stand in front of the mayor's office and shout to the entire world that I'd just been gang-raped?

Furthermore, since I was heavily intoxicated during the alleged incident, my testimony could easily be 'demolished' by any two-bit defense attorney.

I felt like shoving my fist inside Detective Holliday's cell phone, then punching the district attorney in the nose. You see, I can't even mention 'her name'. I have to refer to her only by her stinking title.

The last thing that I wanted to hear was the phrase 'alleged incident'. It either makes me look like a liar, or a two-bit harlot.

I heard those two words coming from the assistant district attorney.

Mandy, was I supposed to forget the shock, humiliation, fear, apprehension, and confusion, that I was feeling; and just go to the police and tell them what had happened to me? Indeed, the system is 'arctic cold' and brutal.

As Detective Holliday continued talking, I went into a 'hallucinatory daze'. I couldn't comprehend who was talking to me. I just heard words and rambling. An officer who entered the room told me that multiple semen samples on a pair of panties could indicate a fraternity practical joke.

Like, they snatched my panties and each of the 'alleged assailants' jerked off on them, until ejaculation. Unbelievable! The worst was yet to come.

Detective Holliday's jaw looked like it was about to drop to the floor. Again, he gave me a somber look. Then, he dropped the 'atomic bomb' on my head. He told me that in a court of law, a young, attractive college student who sleeps with a bunch of young men will look like a 'wanted-it-harlot' in the courtroom. Who knows, what an elderly judge would think?

Mandy, I'm not a freaking harlot!" shouted Cynthia.

"I know, darling," responded my mother.

"Detective Holliday advised me to be tested regularly for sexually transmittable diseases, for a period of no less than one year. He also advised me to seek professional help. Then, I should enroll in self-defense classes for women, purchase extra locks, and not go to any 'party animal gatherings'. In a whispered tone, he told me to purchase a firearm.

Finally, the worst bombshell of all! A pretty policewoman suddenly appeared out of nowhere. She advised me to bite the bullet. And, that I looked like a tough little cookie. I understood that the case had ended. There was no use in proceeding through the process. It was like I was trying to free myself from quicksand that was up to my nostrils, and with an elephant sitting on my head.

I'm still so pissed off at that little harlot! I don't even want to remember what she looked like! Where's the sisterhood in all this?

By then, I was so exhausted, humiliated, and fed-up leaving that damn GPS was a priority. As if things weren't horrific enough! I couldn't believe what else I heard.

Detective Holliday took me to the side then calmly told me that the perpetrator's family was very rich and powerful. In fact, his father was a powerful lobbyist for one of the two political parties that have 'unconditional control' of our country. As soon as he finished uttering those words, I felt devastated! If I'd been in better shape, I would've smashed his

groin! I would certainly have been arrested for assaulting an officer of the law," said Cynthia.

At this point, my mother bluntly, but politely, interrupted Cynthia. She had to correct her.

"Cynthia, Detective Holliday wasn't totally at fault. How could you have felt like attacking him? He was trying to help you, but couldn't," said my mother.

"Mandy, YOU DON'T LOVE ME! YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT IT FEELS LIKE! I was pissed off at the entire criminal justice system! You don't respect me! You're not a nice person!" shouted Cynthia.

"Please, Cynthia, I love you so dearly! You're my best friend in the whole world! I understand that you've undergone an incredibly painful ordeal. But, just think about it for a moment. Detective Holliday would probably have strangled Jeff if he was left alone with him inside that room.

Detective Holliday was a GOOD MAN! Please, Cynthia, don't hate every single man in the whole world. What about the males belonging to other species? Will you hate them too?" asked my mother.

At that point, things cooled off considerably. My mother and Cynthia exchanged hugs and play bites. Once again, they were best friends. Cynthia continued her story.

"Mandy, I don't want you to tell anyone what I'm about to say. Before the gang-rape, I had a gigantic, secret crush on Jeff.

If Jeff had been the only rapist, and afterwards he'd told me that he loved me and wanted to marry me, I would've done just that.

Furthermore, I would've forgiven him for what he'd done to me. The gang-rape aggravated the situation beyond repair. By raping me with his buddies, he destroyed any love I'd had for him ... forever," said Cynthia.

"Cynthia, what if Jeff had proposed, but told you that you'd have to put out for his buddies. Would you have done that?" asked my mother.

"I would've slapped him across the face!" shouted Cynthia.

"Cynthia, if you had married Jeff, he would've used you as a punching bag, and as a starfish," said my mother.

"What do you mean starfish?" asked my Cynthia.

You would've been a sex toy, lying down on your back, and spread eagled. That's what a starfish looks like. Arms and legs wide apart, in 'X' formation," said my mother.

"Mandy, I think you're right. Instead of being raped by a stranger, I would've been raped by my husband. Most of the time, wives who are raped by their husbands endure it. They may

eventually leave their husband, but almost never file a criminal complaint. She may go off into the horizon and never return.

I understood that Jeff's parents would be in a position to hire the best defense attorneys. Not to mention ruin my life. I'd end up feeling like a willing partner.

Sadly, I'd originally planned to attend law school. After enduring that horrific gang-rape things changed, irreversibly. I had to move to another part of the United States, where nobody knew me.

It was only a matter of time before the townsfolk and students would hear about my story. Many of them would be sympathetic, while others (females and males) would truly believe that I really wanted it. Why else would a young, attractive college student spread eagle for a bunch of studs? What was I doing all drunk and high at a fraternity party, with guys all around me? Mandy, I just wanted to leave GSC and never return," said Cynthia.

#### PLEASE TELL ME !

My mother gently pawed Cynthia's face then licked her chin. In return, Cynthia grinned then stroked my mother between her ears. Cynthia was hiding another secret from my mother. My mother's superb feline senses alerted her to this important fact.

What was Cynthia hiding from my mother? It's not like she didn't open up to her. Humans must trust their close animal friends. Think of how many dogs, horses, donkeys, pigeons, and other countless species, have died in the line of duty. They were serving their human 'masters'. Of course, the animals weren't paid for their services.

My mother turned away from Cynthia then leaped onto the floor. She took several steps to the door then turned back. She 'flashed' her canines, not in anger, but out of frustration. She didn't like Cynthia's hiding secret/s from her. My mother's natural feline curiosity forced her to ask Cynthia the big question, point blank.

"Look, I want to hear about your other secret! Please tell me! I know there's more bad news buried deep inside you. You've got tears dribbling down your cheeks, and apprehension in your eyes," said my mother.

"I'm sorry ... I don't ... feel comfortable talking about it. I'll tell you my other secret, if you promise never to tell a soul. It was so horrible, please forgive me for not telling you the first time around," said Cynthia.

"Cynthia, I promise I'll try not to tell anyone about your secret," responded my mother.

My mother rolled over onto her back, then righted herself. Afterwards, she leaped onto Cynthia's chest. Cynthia held my mother tightly then blew her a kiss.

"Mandy, a few days after realizing that justice wasn't going to prevail, I decided to take an early morning walk through the GSC campus. Because the GSC campus was large and beautiful, I considered my walk a workout. In addition, GSC security patrolled the area 24 hours a day. If anyone had tried to assault me, I would've screamed my brains out.

If I'd only known what was going to happen, there would've been no early morning walk. Really!

As I walked by Kelsey Hall, I was struck by a 'GIGANTIC' attack! Sometimes, I feel like this attack was almost as terrible as the gang-rape. It was the 'red flag' that would break my back," said Cynthia.

A group of perhaps a dozen undergrads thought that the gang-rape would somehow benefit them. Apparently, word got around that I was a 'wham-bam-girl'. Indeed, it was a lie!

The undergrads fired terrible words at me, from a dorm room window. Also, their attitude was very nasty. If I was as strong as Superwoman, their necks would've been broken!" said Cynthia.

"Oh baby, come on! We heard you did six guys at the frat house! We've got a whole lot more guys in this room. We've got twelve hungry lions awaiting action.

Just 'cum' over here and make us lions feel better. You can break your previous record, and be in the Guinness Book of World Records!" shouted a creep.

"Leave me alone! I didn't 'do' those beasts! They did me! I was out cold when they took advantage of me!" shouted Cynthia.

"We won't take advantage of you, baby! We'll treat you just fine! We want you to be wide awake, so you can enjoy it! No dozing off!" shouted another creep.

"Mandy, the undergrads mocked me really badly. They wanted to believe that I would oblige them. I was lucky to have enough money to leave California. But, I wanted to humiliate those creeps before I left. All I needed was proof of their utter stupidity. However, I had to nail the flasher. He terrified me!

"Guys, just answer this question, and you can all have me. What is five multiplied by five?" asked Cynthia.

"Umm ... I know what the answer is! Isn't it ... umm ... fifty-five-thousand-five-hundred- and-fifty-five?" answered the 'flasher'.

"I received a bit of satisfaction by showing those creeps that I was an intelligent woman. I was more intelligent than they'd ever be.

Later, the taunting continued without any let-up. It spread throughout the entire city. I couldn't go anywhere without being taunted, or asked stupid questions. Sure, many individuals showed empathy towards me. But, the bad ones were always more aggressive and unforgettable.

It felt like there was no end in sight. My pain wasn't going away. I began having frequent cry baby fits.

Shockingly, a few weeks after the 'mooning incident', I had to endure another bout with a flasher. Initially, I ignored his chubby cheeks. However, when he turned around, I was forced to endure a horrible flashback. I was totally devastated," said Cynthia.

Cynthia paused then looked up at the ceiling. Afterwards, she looked down onto the carpet. My mother felt like Cynthia wanted to tell her more. So, she pressed her.

"Cynthia, are you being totally honest with me?" my mother asked.

Cynthia broke down. She stood up, took a few steps to her left then collapsed onto her bed. It looked like Cynthia was on the verge of having a nervous breakdown.

Cynthia regained her composure then started to cry. She needed someone who'd shower her with love and empathy; no strings attached. That's the least she was entitled to.

"Mandy, I'm in so much pain! I don't know what to do! Please, don't tell anyone that I cried my brains out. I don't want anyone to think that I'm a cry baby. I have more than enough problems on my mind.

Mandy, I've been having some horrific night terrors, eating problems, and trouble making new 'human' friends. It seems like the only persons I can trust are cats like you. I can open up to animals, especially cats, without feeling ashamed, or watched.

I think it's because I know cats don't want anything 'sexual' from me. I couldn't even trust my girlfriends. Maybe, one of them had a secret crush on me? I wouldn't want that little harlot to get off by touching my beautiful body. I don't need any more of that," said Cynthia.

"Cynthia, I think you're a very nice person. Look, be strong, confident, seek help, learn self-defense for women then get on with your life. I'm sure you'll find MR. RIGHT. Just be patient and faithful.

Cynthia, you're lucky you didn't come out of this with an STD, or a pregnancy. I don't mean 'lucky' in the sense that things weren't terrible for you. I mean, things could've been much worse.

Suppose you were fully-conscious at the time of the rape. Now, they wanted to have their way with you. If you'd put up a struggle, who knows what they would've done to you.

Cynthia, I hope that you pull through this terrible tragedy. Remember, you need to be around other women who've been raped, pure and simple.

Sure, you see women and men all around you, smiling their brains out, often. You can't read their minds. Everyone, even animals, has problems.

Cynthia, I'm not trying to downplay, or trivialize your traumatic experience. I know for certain that you've suffered immensely. If you don't make a serious effort at combating, "this problem, you may end up in a mental institution. I'm dead serious!" exclaimed my mother.

I'm glad to say that Cynthia began to show some signs of hope. She understood that living in a cage, without trying to confront her problems, would solve absolutely nothing. This kind of problem must be confronted, head-on!

Unfortunately, my mother and Cynthia were abruptly interrupted. However, their friendship would last forever.

"Mandy! Where are you?! Steve and I want you to come back to our apartment, immediately!" yelled Karen.

The Wilsons had returned from their shopping spree. Cynthia quickly dried her eyes with tissue paper then exited her apartment. She took several steps towards Karen then stopped.

Meanwhile, my mother was trailing Cynthia. It was then that my mother remembered the Wilsons' command not to enter anyone else's apartment.

My mother lowered her head in shame then slowly approached Karen. Afterwards, my mother rubbed the side of her body against Karen's ankles. My mother was hoping for forgiveness. After all, she was only trying to make conversation with one of the neighbors.

"Madam, you have a very lovely cat! Mandy and I had an incredible conversation. Mandy's intelligent, observant, beautiful, and loving," said Cynthia.

"Thank you for being so kind to Mandy! I'm delighted to have a good neighbor like you. Unfortunately, we're leaving Hawaii very soon. We're going back to Missouri.

Wait, were you crying? Please, let me help you," said Karen.

"No, I guess it's my allergies," replied Cynthia.

"I noticed you don't have a ring on your finger. You're young and very attractive. Find a good man. Fall in love with him. Then, get married!"

Steve and I are still together after all these years. Our love increases with time. When I wake up in the morning, I don't want to see anyone in the whole world, except for Steve," said Karen.

Immediately, my mother bared her canines.

"Oh, I'm so sorry! I also want to see our beautiful baby, Mandy," said Karen.

Karen and my mother said their goodbyes to Cynthia then they returned to their apartment. Karen made certain that my mother wasn't contemplating a return to Cynthia. She carried my mother by the scruff.

Karen told Steve about her conversation with Cynthia. Thankfully, she didn't tell him about my mother's entry into Cynthia's apartment.

It looked like my mother and Cynthia were never going to see each other again. Both parties were very saddened by this abrupt and permanent separation.

My mother and Cynthia were like two halves that were separated from each other. Neither half would ever be complete until it was rejoined with its counterpart.

Thereafter, my mother thought of Cynthia often. Sometimes, tears would dribble down my mother's face whenever she remembered what had happened to Cynthia. My mother often fantasized about reconnecting with Cynthia.

Sadly, my mother could no longer be Cynthia's special therapist. Cynthia needed someone to talk to, long term. Victims who choose to talk to 'someone' are moving in the right direction. The worst thing in the world to do in this kind of case scenario is to stay quiet. I'm sorry, this world isn't perfect.

If my mother had only known what was in store for Cynthia. Maybe, she would've run away from home and stayed with Cynthia.

You see, my mother was the most incredible cat in the whole world! She would've given her life, a hundred times over, to see Cynthia get better.

## GOING BACK HOME

Friday was travel day. It was warm, sunny, and calm. The Wilsons were finally heading back to Missouri. Although the Wilsons were excited about going back home, they adapted to living in Hawaii. Not to mention the incredible friendships they'd made.

The Wilsons awakened at dawn, showered, dressed then ate breakfast. Steve made certain that the three travelers left the apartment fully sated. He prepared an incredibly tasty breakfast for all to enjoy.

After the Wilsons finished packing, Karen called Eric. He was notified that the Wilsons were going check out in a short while.

Before formally checking out of their apartment, the Wilsons took a final look at the interior of their temporary vacation home, before locking up. My mother 'peeked' through the bars of her animal carrier, in order to 'imprint' every last detail needed. She understood that it was the last look that she'd ever have.

Steve didn't cave-in to Karen's requests. Although Steve enjoyed his stay in Hawaii, he was still a die-hard 'Missouri Boy', pure and simple.

In life, moving long distances shouldn't be taken lightly. When you visit a town or a city, the grass may appear greener therein. It might be because you're only a vacationer, or a visitor. Living in that particular place for an extended period of time, is another story altogether. Steve understood this point very well. Even cats must be careful about moving out of their lair.

Indeed, my mother loved Cynthia more than she loved the Wilsons, combined. It was a shame that my mother couldn't shower Cynthia with more love and empathy. My mother would've given up her posh life with the Wilsons, if it meant being with Cynthia permanently.

In fact, my mother almost asked Cynthia the big question. The big question being: can I hide in your apartment until the Wilsons leave Hawaii? My mother chickened-out at the last second.

The Wilsons walked through the hall to the elevators. After pressing the down button, Karen stuck her finger inside my mother's animal carrier.

My mother gently bit it then pawed it away. My mother was in no mood to play with anyone. She was too groggy. As expected, she closed her eyes then fell into a deep sleep.

My mother briefly awakened in Eric's office half-dazed and bewildered.

"We had a very enjoyable vacation. We saw much of Hawaii, ate well, met a few good people, took some tours, and walked in many good malls.

Next year, we'll go to British Columbia. I heard it's very beautiful up there," said Steve.

"Well, that's too bad; I won't get to see you guys again. I truly enjoy having tenants like you at the Skyline Apartments. You guys are the epitome of what good tenants are supposed to be like; friendly, clean, and respectful of the rights of your neighbors.

I once lived in an apartment complex that was infested with roaches, rats, scum bags, addicts, drunkards, and convicts. It was terrible! I had a hard time sleeping at night.

I had to endure thundering music, shouting, and fighting from by neighbors.

We had all the 'crummy stuff' a crime-infested community could ask for. Indeed, it was a tough neighborhood. Cats prowled the dark alleys in search of lone rats. Once a lone rat was cornered, it was curtains for it." said Eric.

Eric served the Wilsons coffee and cookies, then removed his copy of the sub-lease, in order to finalize the check-out.

The Wilsons were flattered by Ericson's hospitality. Certainly, he didn't have to go out of his way to please them. After all, the Wilsons were leaving the premises.

Steve handed Eric the apartment and mailbox keys, then signed the necessary papers.

The 'former tenants' were anxious, but understood that they had to return to Missouri. Life's not for free. The Wilsons had to get back to work. Thereafter, Eric would be a faded memory.

After leaving Ericson's office, the Wilsons strolled through the corridor, until spotting a dark blue sofa. Karen placed my mother's animal carrier on it. Then, she opened the animal carrier door.

In a quick move, Karen filled a vile with a blue-colored substance. My mother became apprehensive. Somehow, it seemed a bit unusual. My mother couldn't have imagined what was in store for her.

"Come on, Mandy. Just lick up this very tasty blue milk. I think you'll love it," said Karen.

My mother raised her head, then swallowed every last drop of 'blue milk' that dropped onto her tongue. Surprisingly, the blue milk was very tasty. If that's what you want to call it.

My mother was bamboozled! I mean, she was drugged. Not quite like Cynthia, but nevertheless, put out cold.

My mother was out cold for many hours. Whatever was in that blue milk was very potent, indeed! The Wilsons wanted my mother to sleep through the entire return trip. I guess they were fed up with my mother's bitching about being inside locked up inside a small animal carrier.

My mother awakened in front of the Kansas City International Airport's taxi stand. Indeed, my mother felt betrayed. She couldn't understand the logic behind it. Naturally, she didn't trust the Wilsons anymore.

"Sir, can you please take us to 1375 Bryson Street West, in Caseville, Missouri?" asked Steve.

"Yes, I certainly can. I know how to get to Caseville. Caseville's quite a distance away. Are you sure you don't want to take the shuttle bus? It'll cost you a lot less," said the cabby.

"We want to ride home alone. We don't want to be in a crowded bus, or van. We had a very enjoyable vacation in Hawaii. The last thing we need is a last-minute problem," said Karen.

They were on their way home. Thankfully, the cabby had a good temperament. Whenever she stopped at a red light or a stop sign, she grinned at my mother. Initially, my mother thought that the cabby was sick in the head. Actually, she was a die-hard cat lover.

"I love cats, dearly. In fact, I've got four cats at home. They're so cute and nice to play with. Unfortunately, I must leave them at home whenever I go to work.

I do this 'cabby work' part-time. I attend night school part time, also. I want to be a nurse. The money I earn from this job helps me pay for tuition and fees. My husband pays for everything else. My husband's a mechanical engineer. He grew up in Philadelphia. He moved to Missouri after graduating from college.

We'll move to Philadelphia as soon as I become a registered nurse. I think that my husband and I will earn a good living. My husband makes good money. He had a 3.5 GPA in his major. After graduating, he worked his brains out.

In America, if a husband and wife pull together, work very hard, and stay out of trouble, they'll be much closer to living in their dream home; a mansion with a white picket fence," said the cabby.

As soon they arrived at their destination, the cabby slowed down, then came to a full stop. Afterwards, he pulled the meter lever.

Steve handed the cabby three bills. Then, he told her to keep the change.

"Sir, madam, thank you very much. This is the biggest tip I've ever gotten. I wish you the best of luck in all of your endeavors," said the cabby.

After thanking the cabby, the Wilsons proceeded to walk to their mini-mansion. After living in an apartment for several months, the Wilsons' mini-mansion looked like a castle.

As soon as the three former vacationers were inside the mini-mansion, my mother detected an unusual scent.

"Karen, Steve! Please, stop! Remove me from this stinking animal carrier! I've been locked up inside this pathetic hell-hole for way too long! Another more minute and I'll go nuts!" my mother shouted.

Karen was shocked at my mother's audacity. Nevertheless, the point was conveyed. Karen opened the animal carrier door then gently pulled my mother out. As if she needed any pulling.

As soon as my mother was free, she gently pawed the brown living room carpet five times. Her actions indicated her protest. The Wilsons were oblivious to my mother's suffering.

Shockingly, Karen thought that my mother wanted some play time outside. So, she carried her out to the front lawn. My mother wasn't in the mood to continue shouting. Besides, she had major jet lag to deal with.

Although there was a white picket fence on the periphery of the Wilson property, any cat, dog, or adult, could scale the picket fence. In fact, it was only three feet high.

"Mandy go outside and play in the yard! You can play all you want to. Steve and I need to clean up then eat. Your dinner will consist of tuna, milk, and plenty of water.

I almost forgot. If you sense any danger, run back through the 'kitty door' then scream your head off.

Sometimes naughty humans do terrible things to little kitties. Even in posh neighborhoods, like ours. Honey, please stay alert!" warned Karen.

## I WANNA GO HOME!

It seemed like my mother 'almost' had it all; a beautiful home, white picket fence, companionship, play area, tasty food, clean water, veterinary care, litter box, and good health. Aside from the recent 'incarceration' she'd endured, everything seemed to be just fine.

Don't be fooled. Deep down inside, my mother understood that life wasn't a joke. Things weren't supposed to be that simple. Not counting her animal carrier ordeal, things were way too good to be true.

My mother was worried about an up and coming catastrophe. What was going to happen? My mother asked herself. Was it possible for a person to jinx him/herself? My mother wondered.

My mother's life was going to be turned upside down. It was only a matter of when and where. Never mind, the why.

Believe me, the event that shocked and destroyed my mother's will and resolve happened on a warm Sunday morning, in the month of August. The Wilsons were out eating brunch at the Pancake Castle. My mother was playing in her mini-playground.

Unfortunately, my mother let her guard down. She'd become oblivious to the 'evil-doers' who were about to destroy her life, forever.

On that dreaded morning, everything seemed normal, until something caught my mother's attention. It was a slow-moving van, that passed by the Wilsons' mini-mansion several times. The van was dark, and appeared ominous. Even the windows were tinted.

On the final pass, the driver parked the dark van across the street from the Wilson's mini-mansion. My mother took notice of it, immediately. So, she cautiously approached the perimeter of the lawn, squeezed her head through the fence postings then took a close look at the dark van.

My mother eyed the dark van for a whole minute. For some unknown reason, she went back to her mini-playground. The fact that the van was dark-colored, and had tinted windows, should have produced a red flag in my mother's defenses. In retrospect, this was a fatal error. It was an error for her and for her progeny (Jody Wilson).

Because it was Sunday, during brunch time, my mother assumed that the driver was eating. Never mind, that the driver had parked his van in a posh neighborhood. Furthermore, the neighborhood was as quiet as death.

Suddenly, a buncher, wearing blue overalls, with a beer gut, exited the van. In my mother's opinion, he was really ugly.

The buncher crossed the street then headed straight for the Wilsons' mini-mansion. Initially, my mother assumed that he wanted to ask her for directions.

As soon as the buncher noticed my mother gawking at him, he stopped then scanned the area. My mother became apprehensive.

Unfortunately, the coast was clear for the buncher. He briskly climbed over the perimeter fence. Then, he walked towards my mother.

The closer the buncher got to my mother, the more apprehensive she became. Now, she placed herself on red alert. Her adrenaline level shot up through the clouds. If need be she would've fought to the death.

"Hey kitty, don't be afraid of me. I'm a nice man. My name's Buster! I'm not one of those 'evil humans' your mommy and owners told you about. Really, I'm not kidding. I just want to be your friend.

Look, I've got a tasty snack for you. I ate three of them on my way here. I know you love fish bits. Can I get a little closer to you? Let me just hold you in my arms. You're so cute. Are you a purebred, or maybe, royalty?" asked the buncher.

Indeed, the buncher was a smooth talker. Too smooth, I must say. No doubt he was a creep.

Unfortunately, my mother didn't realize it at the time. As soon as the buncher smooth-talked my mother, she dropped her

guard even lower. The man knew which buttons to push. No doubt, he was a professional.

Shockingly, my mother rolled onto her back, then relaxed. Naturally, the buncher took advantage of my mother. He knelt down then hoisted her off the ground. Afterwards, he tucked her in his arms.

The buncher glanced at the living room windows, to make sure that nobody was watching him. As soon as he was sure that the coast was clear, he ran back to his dark van. I don't know why, but, my mother's guard was still down. What the hell was she thinking of?

While running across the street, the buncher was almost struck by a blue Pontiac. The driver stopped his car then looked at the man and my mother.

Out of utter horror, the man dropped my mother. The driver of the blue Pontiac lowered her window then asked for directions to the nearest highway. Upon hearing this, the man grinned then answered her question.

The woman thanked the man then asked him if everything was all right. I guess she wasn't a cat lover. She drove off without inquiring about my mother.

The buncher ordered my mother to return to him. For some unknown reason, my mother obeyed his command; without any hesitation.

As soon as my mother was in the buncher's grasp, he smacked her across the face. He need not have said anything. It was obvious why he smacked her.

"You freaking bitch! Don't ever 'go away' like that again. I command you to stay by my side!" shouted the buncher.

The buncher opened the dark van's double doors then tossed my mother into a rusty, filthy, gooey cage. The cage door was promptly closed.

"Look, kitty! I just want to take you for a short ride in my beautiful dark van. Because my friend's in the passenger's seat, I'll have to put you in the back. You can watch the beautiful scenery," said the buncher.

My mother instantly realized that there were no windows in the back of the dark van. Furthermore, there was a metallic screen partitioning the van into two. Sadly, my mother's life would never be the same again.

Thereafter, the buncher 'hit' a half a dozen more homes with incredible speed. With each hit, he'd snatch an unsuspecting dog, or a cat. In one of the homes, he snatched three companion animals.

As the number of animals 'stockpiled' inside the dark van, the stench became suffocating. Like a chicken farm, even

breathing the noxious fumes was pitifully dangerous. Everything from rust, puke, urine, vomit, pus discharge, maggots, fecal matter, blood, insects (including a few roaches), and sickness, engulfed the interior of the dark van.

After the buncher filled the interior of the dark van with hapless victims, he took hold of a night stick then goaded my mother four times. Although it hurt badly, there was no permanent damage.

In case you don't know: a buncher is a 'person' who steals companion animals from their rightful owners, in order to make a profit. Usually, this 'person' sells the hapless victim to an institution, rather than to a person.

The goading of my mother was a clear and visible warning: she was now a money-making, nothing! With no rights, whatsoever!

Immediately after the goading, every single animal inside the van cried. This caused the buncher to lose his temper.

Two dogs were goaded. Maybe, if they'd all yelled out for help, someone would've heard them. Or maybe, that's wishful thinking.

The buncher was working for the 'big boys'. The animals that are stolen from peoples' domiciles may end up in biomedical labs, pet stores, as fighters, or as punching bags for fighting dogs. The goal is always MONEY.

The buncher entered the dark van then began his drive to the 'secret location'. Approximately twenty minutes later, one of the dogs went nuts. He barked, yelled, screamed, and cursed the buncher and his buddy. That was a fatal error!

"Be quiet! Shut-up! I don't want to hear-it! All of you shut your freaking mouths! Or else!

Listen up: You losers are being taken to a secret location. Well, it's not really a secret location for us, only for the general public. When we arrive, you'll obey our commands. If you don't, a series of harsh penalties will be inflicted upon you!

Your new home will be Camp Puppy Mill! Your 'residency' will last until you can no longer help us, or when someone purchases you. I don't want to hear any yelping, barking, meowing, or pleading. In a short while, I'll be driving on the highway. That means I need to be on the alert. If any of you acts up, I'll beat him/her senseless. Now that we have an understanding, I'll continue my drive to 'my paycheck', " said the buncher.

The animals in the van were terrified, depressed, anxious, and confused. They clearly understood what the buncher had said to them.

The buncher entered Highway 733, heading west. He drove on the highway for roughly ten minutes then he entered Junction 485 North.

An escape attempt appeared to be virtually impossible. Wandering escapes are often dangerous.

The buncher drove on Junction 485 North for twenty five minutes, before pulling over into the curb. The animals therein froze in fear. They didn't know what to expect.

The buncher exited the van then walked towards a bushy area. He dropped his pants and underwear then urinated. While urinating, he farted seven times.

Although the animals inside the van were now hungry and thirsty, they still had it in them to laugh their brains out. Too bad, the buncher heard their laughter.

After the buncher finished doing his thing, he walked to the back of the dark van then opened the double doors. He turned around then farted into the dark van. Then, he quickly closed the double doors.

The animals inside the dark van began to gag. The smell of the buncher's fart was almost toxic. Anyhow, a minute later, the buncher opened the twin doors. The animals inside were relieved. Well, they wouldn't have if they'd known what was in store for them.

The buncher reached inside the back of the van, took hold of the same night stick then began to brutally goad a male German shepherd. The poor dog yelped and cried. It was to no avail.

Meanwhile, the German shepherd lay there, crying his brains out. None of the animals dared to cry out in protest. It was now apparent who the BIG BOSS was.

The buncher closed the double doors, then re-entered the dark van. A moment later, he resumed his drive on Junction 485 North.

The German shepherd puked his brains out. In the real world, German shepherds are tough, intelligent, and brilliant. Unfortunately, the dogs in the dark van were gradually becoming de-animalized.

Roughly thirty minutes later, a brown Dachshund began to bang his head against the cage bars. He was going mad. Stereotypical actions don't occur this soon after incarceration.

Most often, this kind of behavior can be seen in two-bit zoos, roadside menageries, and many circuses. The poor Dachshund was oversensitive to being locked up.

As soon as the Dachshund stopped banging his head on the cage bars, things began to quiet down. Some of the animals tried their hardest to get a wink, or two. More often than not, their efforts were futile. Then, a lone voice was heard.

"Please, listen- up! I don't have enough time to go through all of the details. I'll describe what kind of place we're being sent to. Please, no interruptions until I'm done with my story.

I grew up in a puppy mill somewhere in Missouri. Although I love my home state, it's probably the puppy mill capital of our beloved country. Because puppy mill animals don't pay taxes or vote, their predicament is usually ignored by powerful politicians. In that regard, don't expect help, soon.

When I was a puppy, two bunchers brutally snatched me and two of my siblings from our mother. Although our owners were dirt poor, they were very kind and loving. Overall, our family was content with our life.

The bunchers 'slithered' into our yard then quickly snatched us. My mother was sprayed with pepper spray. She totally freaked out!

Afterwards, the bunchers tossed us into filthy cages encrusted with containing dry urine, puss, rust, dirt, fecal matter, puke, blood, and other creepy stuff. Never mind, the terrible stench.

We were sent to a terrible puppy mill. It was la 'bestial concentration camp'. Nobody cared about our feelings, or health. We were given 'slop' to eat, and 'brown water' to drink. Some of our comrades ended up getting sick. Two of my neighbors died. I still don't know what happened to my siblings.

Many animals who survive the puppy mill ordeal are scarred for life. Others die behind bars.

"I've forewarned you. Please behave as long as you're an inmate at the puppy mill. Also, don't you dare try to escape!" said a white toy dog.

Meanwhile, the buncher pressed hard on the gas pedal. Indeed, he was a maniac.

As if that wasn't bad enough, the buncher and his buddy were cracking sick jokes. Most of their jokes pertained to animal abuse and neglect.

Soon, the buncher was driving the dark van at 90 mph. The animals inside therein were terrified! At least two of them defecated.

Suddenly, a highway patrolman peeled out his vehicle from the shoulder of the road. He proceeded to chase the dark van down; like a predator chasing its prey.

The buncher was forced to pull over into the shoulder of the road. After coming to a halt, he turned off the ignition.

Then, the buncher 'commanded' the animals to shut their freaking mouths, or else!

Not a single animal dared utter a sound. Indeed, that was a deadly mistake! They should've waited until the right moment, before erupting into a chorus of shouting.

"Hey Andy, is my .22 still in the glove compartment? If that cop asks us to open the glove compartment, we're finished!"

We'll end up behind bars, like the ugly critters behind us," said the buncher.

Andy chuckled then opened the glove compartment. Afterwards, he hid the .22 underneath his seat.

The buncher told Andy to take out the vehicle registration. To enhance their image, both men put on a fake smile.

"Sir, you were driving over the speed limit! I want to see your vehicle registration and driver's license. What's in the back of the van?" asked the highway patrolman.

The buncher was so terrified he let out a gigantic fart. We could hear the highway patrolman chuckle. That fart probably saved the two bunchers. Thereafter, the highway patrolman's mood was uppity.

"Officer, we have four carpets and some articles of furniture in the back of our van. We're taking these precious goods to my grandma's home. She's very lonely, and needs wall-to-wall carpeting, much furniture, and lots of love. My grandpa died of cancer last week. My grandma's been lonely ever since. I apologize for speeding. Scouts honor, I won't do it again," said the buncher.

Unbelievably, the highway patrolman believed that load of crap! He let him off with a stern warning. The animals should have made their move, there and then. The end result attests to their utter cowardice.

The highway patrolman returned to his vehicle then drove off. The buncher waited for a while, before driving off. I guess he was waiting for the highway patrolman to disappear.

Then, an ugly Labrador retriever began to swing his head erratically. He was going nuts! Yes, even animals can go nuts. My mother wondered what was going to happen to the poor Labrador. There's absolutely no use for a 'nutty dog' in a puppy mill.

As soon as the buncher took notice of the mongrel's erratic behavior, he pulled over into the shoulder of the road. Then, he turned off the ignition. After exiting the dark van, he pondered about what to do.

The buncher decided to take drastic action. His response was a stern lesson to the other animals inside the van. Now, there would be no doubt that the criminals in this sleazy enterprise would do anything to make a buck.

The buncher laconically grabbed a night stick then goaded the mongrel a total of fourteen times. This time, no holds were barred. He used momentum and brute strength upon his defenseless victim.

The Labrador screamed in terror! The other animals began to bark and meow, without any let-up. Before long, there was a lot

more feces, urine, and vomit, in and around the cages. It stunk like a rats' sewer!

In an act of noble courage, a black and white colored pleaded with the buncher to show some mercy. The buncher snarled at the cat then spat on her. The buncher had no limits to his evil ways.

As soon as the goading episode ended, the buncher returned the night stick. Although the buncher seemed like he wanted to inflict more damage onto the Labrador, he ended up returning to the driver's seat. Well, that's what it looked like.

The buncher took the .22 from Andy then he walked to the back of the van. After bitching-out the Labrador, he pointed pressed the .22 in the Labrador's face. The Labrador was in a state of utter terror. He spontaneously defecated and urinated. Then, he vomited his brains out.

"Listen-up: the next time one of you creatures makes a sound, this 'scummy-dog' will be executed! I'm dead serious!" shouted the buncher.

The Labrador's eyes rolled then he fell onto his back. He looked like a zombie-dog.

The buncher closed the double doors then got back into the dark van.

A few miles later, the buncher made a right turn on the first 4-way intersection. He headed straight to Jimmy's Burger Joint parking lot.

The buncher turned off the ignition then told Andy that they were going to eat-like-pigs. They exited the dark van then walked to Jimmy's Burger Joint.

By now, the animals inside the dark van were famished. Slabs of saliva were being dropped onto the van floor.

The animals were hoping that the bunchers would bring back a few dozen burgers for the animals to eat.

The animals inside the dark van fantasized about sizzling burgers, entering into their mouths.

The bunchers returned an hour later. They were wearing big smiles. In addition, they smelled like burgers, fries, pop, and apple pie. Sadly, their hands were empty. This was a glimpse of things to come. What would it be like at the puppy mill? A reasonable question the animals asked themselves.

The bunchers entered the dark van then they were off. After exiting the parking lot, the buncher resumed his drive to the puppy mill. The smell of burgers was tormenting the animals.

Approximately a half an hour later, the buncher entered a 'quiet street', the proceeded to drive for another fifteen minutes. He slowed down to a halt, looked both ways then entered dirt road. It was apparent that the puppy mill was close by. Worse yet, it was hidden away in some remote area.

The final stretch was terrifying for the animals. It was the typical side road to hell. Henceforth, there'd be no more highways, junctions, or civilization. The animals were now within spitting distance of hell-on-earth.

The animals were too terrified to complain about the jouncing on the dirt road. For all they knew, the buncher would've accelerated, in retaliation.

## CAMP PUPPY MILL

Finally, they were at the 'doorstep' of Camp Puppy Mill. Pain, agony, torment, confusion, terror, hunger, thirst, sickness, stench, apprehension, and death, were in the air. The puppy mill stunk like a sewer pit. Actually, it was worse.

The buncher slowed down, then came to a halt. He pulled out his cell phone then called someone working inside the puppy mill. After getting clearance, the security guard allowed buncher to enter the Camp Puppy Mill.

The buncher carefully drove the dark van to a parking space then turned off the ignition. He and Andy laughed up a storm. They were happy to have made a big haul. Big hauls equal much money.

A rugged man with a thick voice approached the dark van then ordered the bunchers out. In fact, he told them to get on the move. No doubt, he was a big man on the premises.

"Hey, how many creatures did you snatch for us this time?" asked the rugged man.

"Mr. Administrator, we've got about a dozen creatures in inside the van. We worked extra hard, just to please you. Because my cousin Andy and I are moving to Pennsylvania, we decided to end our employment with a big blast. These creatures are more precious than gold!" responded the buncher.

"Fantastic! Although I'm sad to see you guys go the creatures in the van will net me a lot of money. Now, let me calculate your pay," said the Administrator.

The animals had become nothing more than 'money machines'. Escape was absolutely impossible. Furthermore, it was apparent that the puppy mill workers (PMWs) would take an escape attempt personally. No doubt, retaliation would be swift and harsh.

After the Administrator paid the bunchers, they quickly exited Camp Puppy Mill. I guess that's what criminals do best; make a fast getaway. This category of criminals tends to be on the move, often. Looking over their shoulders; not knowing when the cops will nab them. Believe me, in the end, they usually regret their life of crime. Somewhere, or somehow, it'll get back to them.

Smart cats, like yours truly know this. Our species has been with humans for eons. We've seen wars, civil wars, genocide, murders, rapes, molestations, beatings, starving, fights, racism, persecution, witch hunts, and many other human-caused-atrocities, committed in the name of whatever the perpetrators feel justifies their horrendous actions. Cats, and other animals, are almost always the forgotten victims in human wars! Cats hate that!

An example of incredible human and animal suffering during a conflict includes the siege of Leningrad, and the Ukrainian Holocaust (1932-33). Sometimes the Ukrainian holocaust is referred to as the Holodomor.

Holodomor is the Ukrainian word for great famine. This is not a strong enough word to describe what happened to the 7 million plus innocent Ukrainian peasants who were deliberately starved to death. Also, many were executed or sent to Siberia.

Stalin's forces were so ruthless anyone who didn't appear to be starving was punished. Furthermore, foodstuffs and supplies were deliberately confiscated or destroyed. You can't live long without food.

The intent was genocide, destruction of the Ukrainian peasantry (by imposing Stalinist collectivization), and abolish Ukrainian nationalism.

In both Leningrad and the Ukraine, as famine set in, even companion animals became food. Of course, the companion animals were also starving. After dogs and cats were eaten, rats came next. Finally, there were cases of human-on-human cannibalism. This was a last ditch effort to survive and eat.

We can't blame the humans who did this, until we've endured what they had to endure. For some reason, bitterly cold regions bring out cannibalism faster than in warmer regions. Smart companion animals know better. They scram before it's too late.

Animals have been used as, byproducts suppliers, traction, entertainment, slavery, celebrities, protectors, companions, subjects of vivisection, punching bags, ridicule, torture, objects of scorn, mummies, and even worship.

These humans seem to forget that cats are incredible beings. We've done a lot of good for this world. Cats have made countless humans and animals much happier, and healthier.

Some cats have a lifelong fear of humans. Terrible childhood experiences with humans, or, no contact with humans for the first few weeks of life can cause this problem. Kittenhood is a very important period of time for cats. Kittens must have contact with humans, or they'll never get used to them. Of course, the initial contact must be positive.

Often times, a good-willed human approaches a stray or a domesticated cat on the street. The cat, who's not sure of the person's intent, may scram. Don't blame the cat. You 'humans' look like GIGANTIC BIPEDALS! You walk on 'twos' instead of 'fours'. Some of you humans look like walking buildings. Anyhow, a cat has a right to fight, or flee. The latter is generally safer.

Without notice, the Administrator, a truly ugly man, violently opened the double doors. The startling effect caused my mother to defecate.

After glaring at the animals, the Administrator ordered two PMWs to come to the back of the dark van. The PMWs hovered over the animals, like hungry vultures.

The Administrator grabbed one of the cages then violently yanked it out. The two PMWs followed suit. My mother felt 'horror' in her heart.

"Hey, send these creatures to their respective shacks. Don't fumble the Job! I can easily replace you with other idiots who'd be more than pleased to do your job for less pay.

As for you ugly creatures, look at the sign in front of the fence ... over there! It reads: CAMP PUPPY MILL. You're in a freaking puppy mill! Your lives are worth the amount of money you can bring us. Don't forget, you're expendable. If you misbehave, or attempt to escape, it'll be curtains for you! By golly, I freaking mean it!

Cases of escape or insubordination will be dealt with, swiftly and brutally. Dr. Strangler, our special veterinarian, will take care of the offender/s," said the Administrator.

One-by-one, the cages were yanked out of the dark van. In all the horror, my mother almost passed out. While being carried to their respective sections, the animals saw row after row of dogs and cats. Each and every animal was in dire straits.

The animals were incarcerated in tiny, filthy, and dilapidated cages. Although most of the inmates were dogs, there

were quite a few cats, therein. Truly, this puppy mill was a bestial concentration camp.

Some of the animals were emaciated, and had open sores scattered throughout their sickly bodies. One poor dog had maggots feasting on its flesh. Unfortunately, this dog was too weak and sickly to shrug them off. My mother couldn't comprehend the utter horror that was before her. In fact, my mother was so worried about the other animals, she forgot about herself. Briefly, that is.

Some of the animals were weak, but could be sold. The dilapidated animals could easily be tossed, if need be. Any sale that was made at the puppy mill was a profit.

It was the full-breeds who brought in the big bucks. Full breed studs were used for humping purposes. Bitches were used for reproduction purposes. Other full-breeds would someday be used for special purposes: guarding, hunting, fetching, running, or as docile pets.

A French poodle, which was obviously stolen from her owners, was licking the lead off the bars of her cage. Another dog was eating its poop. Because the poop sometimes overlapped, it was difficult to determine whose poop she was eating.

The PMWs at CAMP PUPPY MILL had to be callous and brutal. No PMW could have a kind heart.

About fifty yards to the right of my mother was a skinny, overall-wearing, PMW. He was bitching out a 'bitch' for not performing. Although my mother couldn't see either of the two, she could hear the conversation. Humping operations were conducted away from the general population.

Bitches in heat are supposed to 'perform' in order to produce more puppies. This bitch was in heat, but would flop over every time the well-built Rottweiler tried to mount her. From what my mother could hear, the Rottweiler was sick in the head. No wonder, she kept flopping over every time he tried to mount her.

Honestly, a small part of my mother held onto the belief that there was PMW. For CAMP PUPPY MILL, she was dead wrong.

The PMW carrying my mother's cage smelled like a sewer. He had patches of smeared feces, urine stains, blood spots, and dry sweat, and other creepy stuff, on his clothing.

My mother was promptly taken to Section C. Each section contained two or more sheds. Although CAMP PUPPY MILL was a mess, categorization was efficient.

The 'customer' could order whatever he/she wanted. So long as he paid in cash, in full. The customer almost always got what he/she asked for.

The journey to Section C seemed like it took forever. Seeing those suffering animals on the way was saddening. It was

there and then that my mother awakened to her fate. She realized that she was one of them. She was a creature worthy of no respect, whatsoever.

Hollywood couldn't have made a better horror movie. In fact, I've been wondering why Hollywood hasn't made a good movie about puppy mills. Keep the PMWs as they are. No makeup, disguises, or changes in behavior, are necessary.

Most of the cages in the sheds were stacked row upon row, and in linear form. There wasn't a smile to be seen. Dogs and cats on the lower-level cages had to beware. If any dog or cat on a higher level were to defecate, urinate, bleed, or vomit, it was bombs away. The unlucky targets were like chickens in poultry sheds.

Section C housed 'the living dead'. It contained twenty five dogs and three cats, none fully alive, and none truly dead. As expected, there wasn't a happy face in sight.

Initially, my mother cried her brains out, not only for the other animals, but also for herself. The reality of her predicament hit her like a ton-of-bricks. Camp Puppy Mill was a Fort Knox. There was no chance of escape in sight, except death or purchase. Purchase by whom? That's another problem, altogether.

In her naivety, my mother assumed that the PMW carrying her cage would feel a bit sorry for her. In reality, no empathy was given to her. All she got was a snarl and a subtle threat.

Shockingly, the PMW dropped my mother's cage then reached over to the shed wall and grabbed a night stick. She goaded my mother in her side. It hurt badly. Unfortunately, there was nobody to protect my mother.

The goading was a preemptive strike. Its purpose was to ensure that no future misbehavior would occur.

We 'animals' can feel physical pain, and mental anguish. Every single dog and cat who's ever lived in a filthy puppy mill has suffered immensely. We're not zombies!

Furthermore, animals can detect physical and mental cues from other beings more proficiently than humans can.

Cats and dogs do cry, too. Although their crying often sounds like pouting, yelping, or meowing, it's not. I'm not saying that every time a dog pouts or a cat meows he/she is crying. Some humans think they can understand animals' physical and mental cues. Humans sometimes interpret animal responses and behaviors in a way that benefits their own kind. Never mind the animals' benefit.

Sometimes, animals want to speak in their own 'lingo'. Why not? It's their natural right to do so.

Now back to the puppy mill story. Purebreds, or full-breeds, are worth a lot more money than mongrels. German

shepherd dogs are respected by breeders and fanciers, the world over. Not to mention, your everyday 'Citizen Joe'.

German shepherd dogs are perhaps the best 'well-rounded' dogs. Well, by feline standards, that is. German shepherds have been used by humans for fighting, guarding, chasing, breeding, sniffing, showmanship, companionship, wars, and steeplechase races.

Unfortunately, physical ailments may occur in German shepherds' hindquarters. Just take a good look at their sloping backs.

Dog breeders want a certain look, and behavior pattern, for each breed. Never mind the ill effects on the dogs! Even cats can see the gross deformities in certain purebreds. Inbreeding, line breeding, and out breeding, all for the benefit of humans. If done naturally, out breeding is not harmful to dogs.

However, it may not be right for a human to pick and choose which dog mates with which. I hope that my feline ancestors don't end up as varied and creepy as some dog species are. Humans have played with the natural order of things long enough. Just leave us alone!!!

The turning point came when my mother was tossed into her special, dilapidated cage. Cats know that locked cages are almost impossible to get out of. We're not as talented at picking locks as orangutans are. For a brief moment, my mother wished that she was an orangutan.

The floor of my mother's cage and the ground beneath it were engulfed in gooey stuff. My mother scented semen and vaginal fluid in the shed.

As if things weren't bad enough. As my mother was pondering about her pathetic predicament, a young PMW taped a squared piece of cardboard in front of her cage. The PMW pulled back the cardboard piece then flashed it in front of my mother's face: DETAINEE # 33456-A, Section C, Shed 2.

My mother was so shocked she actually stopped breathing for a few seconds. She couldn't believe her eyes! Where was the President of the United States? Where was the Governor of Missouri? Where was the mayor of the nearest town? What the hell?!

The PMW behaved as though my mother was an article of furniture. After finishing her job, she turned then walked away. As soon as she got to the shed door, she spat some chewing tobacco juice out of her ugly mouth. No wonder, she had bad breath.

A Dachshund bitch a few cages down begged for some water. That was a fatal error.

As soon as the poor Dachshund had uttered her last word, the PMW walked back to within a few inches of her cage then

grinned. After grinning, she spat a large wad of tobacco juice into the eye of the Dachshund's eye. Instantly, the Dachshund yelped.

The PMW laughed her brains out, then turned around and left our shed. The other animals in the shed weren't surprised by her behavior. In fact, their expressions appeared bland. Like, they'd seen this happen a bazillion times before.

Where did these 'humans' come from; another planet? My mother wondered.

#### TIMMY HOLDEN

A short while later, one of the animals, a Beagle, puked his brains out. Afterwards, he tried to yelp, but couldn't. He didn't have the strength to make a sound.

A short while later the Beagle urinated, then pooped. Both substances splashed onto the Beagle's hind legs. This further aggravated the preexisting burns located in the same spot. In addition, the Beagle had a large sore near his right eye.

His worst problem was a festering wound; a terrifying gash on his skin caused by scraping a 'splintered' cage bar. Sadly, the Administrator of Camp Puppy Mill wasn't going to call a veterinarian for this festering problem. As far as he was concerned, it would cost too much money. Besides, it was the Beagle's pain, not his own.

You see, the resident veterinarian's duties were limited to supervision of breeding, and quick repair before the sale.

My mother tried to comfort the Beagle by opening up a conversation.

"Hello, what's your name?" my mother asked.

"Who are you? Why are you trying to hurt me?! I haven't done anything to you, or anyone else! Please, don't hurt me! I can't take any more pain in my life!" exclaimed the Beagle.

"I'm not trying to hurt you, really. I was bamboozled into this hell-hole a short while ago. I just want to hear your story. Please, don't be afraid of me. Can't you see: I'm a freaking cat! It's not like I have the strength to bend my cage bars, then leap out and strangle you.

Please, let's try to eat the slop splattered on our bowls, first. At least, we'll some food in our stomachs," said my mother.

The slop was a mixture of low-budget animal byproducts, vegetable waste, and perhaps, rendered meat. In case you don't know, rendered meat is produced from dead animals. Specifically, from the animals who'd died in the puppy mill. This is 'forced cannibalism'!

A couple of PMW's came by with some more slop. Normally, servings were only enough to keep the animal alive. Apparently, the animals in Section B went on a temporary hunger strike. Therefore, the animals in Section C ate their comrades' share. Indeed, the Administrator was a cold person.

When the PMW's entered our shed, the animals looked the other way, in disgust. They didn't want to have anything to do with that slop. I can't blame them.

The PMW's didn't appreciate the way the animals responded to their kind gesture. One PMW proceeded to toss the slop at the animals. The other PMW thought it was entertaining. So, he joined in the 'fun'.

After the PMWs had enough of tormenting the animals in the shed, they promptly left. This I must say was to the satisfaction of the animals therein.

Afterwards, my mother took a long look at the Beagle, hinting that she wanted to hear 'his story'. She got what she wanted.

"My name is Timmy Holden. I was born and raised in Marshal, Missouri. I was previously owned by Rodney and Jennifer Dorsey.

The Dorseys were an elderly couple. They treated me like one of their own. In fact, they often went out of their way to please me.

In their youth, the Dorseys were social workers. They were very kind to me. Jennifer was a wonderful woman who had the attitude of a well-educated/behaved woman. In her golden years, she also did part-time volunteer work at the Marshal Public Library.

For example, every Saturday morning she read stories to children. In addition, she'd spend extra time with special needs children. It took a diligent effort, but, Jennifer was all for it. No cat or dog could've wished for better owners.

I was under the Dorseys' care for three whole years. They'd built a special 'doggy palace' for me. Although the Dorseys

loved me, they didn't want any dogs in their home. It worked for the better. My palace was spacious, and had good ventilation. It was cleaned on a daily basis. Food and water were provided for me twice a day, but more often, if I pouted.

On Fridays, the Dorseys would prepare a special steak dinner for me. I appreciated that. Compared to other cats and dogs, I was living in a dream world. Above all else, the doggy palace was mine.

Whenever the Dorseys walked me through the neighborhood, I saw other dogs and cats. Some of the dogs were going mad. These were the chained dogs. They were usually chained to a tree; others were chained to other fixed objects. For them, there was neither escape, nor relief.

The Marshal Police force couldn't have cared less about the countless chained dogs in their city. Unfortunately, the chaining of dogs for sustained periods of time is quite common. Hardly anyone calls '911' for this matter. Actually, it has to be made illegal first. Otherwise, the call will be to no avail.

Kitty, just thinking about the Dorseys' home brings tears to my eyes. I never imagined being an inmate in a gruesome puppy mill. That was the furthest thing from my mind. I'd heard stories about dogs and cats being snatched from their rightful owners. Sometimes this was done right underneath their owners' noses. I figured that kind of thing only happened in big cities."

"Give me 'specifics' about your life. You seem like a nice 'doggy'. Please, continue your story," my mother requested.

"Kitty, on a sweltering August morning, the Dorseys walked me through the neighborhood. About twenty minutes into our walk, I became apprehensive and anxious. We were approaching something strange.

Cleveland Boulevard was clean, quiet, and relatively safe, year-round. However, as we continued our walk my pulse raced. I didn't understand what was happening to me. Jennifer tried to calm me down, smiling at me with much love in her heart," said Timmy.

My mother interrupted Timmy then apologized. She didn't want Timmy to keep calling her Kitty. That wasn't her name.

"My name is Mandy Wilson. Like you, I once lived in an uppity home. I was literally an uppity cat. I guess we're in the same boat. Hopefully, we'll be purchased by a loving human," said my mother.

"I'm really sorry you ended up in this pathetic manure pit. I'll continue my story, so you don't fall asleep on me," said Timmy.

As we approached what felt like 'death', the Dorseys picked up the scent of rotting flesh. I was sure that this death was

emanating from a human. Rotting human flesh is perhaps the 'smelliest' of all species.

As soon as we crossed into Portman Street, the cadaver was within spitting distance of us. I noticed that the cadaver had several bullet holes in its chest. Excuse me, in HIS chest. I shouldn't refer to him as an 'it'. He had a boxer's nose, cauliflower ears, rough hands, and hamburger eyes. Indeed, even in death, this cadaver was a tough-looking character.

My first impression was that it was a gang-related killing. I scanned the area, looking for suspicious-looking characters. Thankfully, there were none around. If his killers were around, they would've shot us dead. As far as they were concerned, we were witnesses.

Jennifer shrieked in terror. After recovering, she pulled out her cell phone then called the police. The Dorseys couldn't have cared less, if the dead man had been a pillar of the community, or a creepy criminal. They were outstanding citizens of the community. To them, every human was worthy of respect.

"Please, send someone to 4356 Portman Street. There's a dead man on the sidewalk!" exclaimed Jennifer.

After Jennifer finished talking to the police dispatcher, she turned off her cell phone then put it inside her pocket.

Tears streamed down her cheeks. Rodney hardly shed a tear. He was better at holding back his emotions.

While waiting for the police to arrive, two men inside a dark Toyota pickup drove by the scene four times. On the fifth pass, I stared them down. That was the last time we saw them. I think they were the thugs who gunned-down the victim. For some reason, when I saw them, all the fear and apprehension inside of me disappeared.

Shortly afterwards, two police cars, along with an ambulance, arrived at the scene. Apparently, the dispatcher conveyed the wrong message to the police. The paramedics were behaving as though they were in a hurry to save a dying man. Not so. He was as dead as a 'corpse'.

Three police officers and two paramedics quickly exited their vehicles. Then, they rushed to the cadaver. As soon as they realized that the man was dead, they slowed their movements to a tortoise pace.

A young, handsome paramedic, made the official pronouncement of the man's death. As soon as he began to speak to the police officers, three more patrol cars arrived at the scene. Two of them were marked, while the third wasn't.

This time, a man in a suit, along with three 'uniforms', exited their vehicles. Apparently, this 'cadaver' had been a big time criminal when he was alive. No wonder, he was so damned ugly.

The officers questioned us about what we saw. Afterwards, we were told to wait at the other side of the street.

The police sealed off the area. We waited for roughly fifteen minutes before an Officer Hayes jotted down our names, addresses, phone numbers, and other important information.

Officer Hayes was cordial, understanding, and got to the point. He assured us that everything would be done to apprehend the murderer/s.

Officer Hayes asked us not to 'blabber' this story to our neighbors and friends. In effect, we had to close our traps.

Officer Hayes offered to give us a ride home. We declined. Afterwards, he thanked us 'diligently' for calling the police immediately after we saw the dead man.

Sadly, Officer Hayes was also frustrated because he knew that other people had passed by the dead man. A cursory investigation had determined that the man had been dead for several hours.

The first pedestrians who saw the dead man scammed, really fast. There's your good citizenry.

Mandy, when the Dorseys and I were leaving the crime scene, Officer Hayes yelled out to us.

"Hey, wait a minute! I forgot to tell you something important! Please, come here!" said Officer Hayes.

"The Dorseys and I approached Officer Hayes then cropped our ears.

Officer Hayes lowered his voice to a whisper," said Timmy.

"For the following week or two, if you see any stranger/s lurking near your home, call the police, immediately! It's possible that the killer/s saw you. You guys may be perceived as hostile witnesses," said Officer Hayes.

We thanked Officer Hayes then walked away. But, not before I received a harsh reprimand from Rodney.

"Mandy, next time, DON'T stare down potential killers! DON'T do it again," said Jennifer.

I was aware that we had to keep a lookout for all suspicious pedestrians and drivers. Cell phones should be within arms' reach at all times.

We walked back home, then crashed out for many hours. We were exhausted from the ordeal. Not to mention, a bit apprehensive.

Incredibly, six whole months passed without incident. It looked like the murderer/s had gotten away with their crime.

At the ten month mark, we stopped expecting a call from the police. As far as we were concerned, the case was closed.

Months later, on a cool September morning, Jennifer awakened from her nap by sharp back pain. She moaned and groaned for several minutes, until the pain subsided.

Afterwards, Jennifer went to the restroom. She washed her hands and face with soap and water, dried up, then went to the kitchen.

Jennifer opened a can of dog food then poured the contents into a clean bowl. After making sure that the can was empty, she tossed it into the waste basket.

Jennifer carried the bowl out into the yard then proceeded to walk to my castle. As soon I took notice of her, I developed gigantic wads of saliva. Each wad was dangling from my mouth. I was famished.

In fact, I was in a deep sleep until the scent of meat shot up into my nostrils. Once awake, I couldn't go back to sleep.

Jennifer waved the bowl of dog food in front of my face, left to right. She was kind of teasing me. If it were another dog, Jennifer would've been bit. Not me. I loved Jennifer.

I gobbled my food, relentlessly. Beef and gravy has always been my favorite. In fact, most dogs love beef and gravy. I never met a dog who didn't like this mix.

I noticed a peculiar weakness in Jennifer. She winced as soon as she bent over. I felt guilty after gobbling my food. Why didn't I ask Jennifer how she was doing? I later wondered.

Mandy, many species of animals sense when another animal or human is sick. This ability has existed in the animal kingdom for eons upon eons.

Mandy, your predatory ancestors targeted the weak, sickly, old, and vulnerable prey animals. Predators are especially good at detecting weakness and sickness. Mind you, I'm not saying that we can sense every single ailment and disease afflicting an animal or human. But, we can do a pretty darn good job.

Mandy, aside from dogs, cats are my favorite species. I'm one of those dogs that can't live without the presence of a cat, or two. It would be a dull world if there were no cats around.

Although Jennifer appeared a bit weak, she and Rodney still found time to take walk me at least once a day. For the time being, things were too good to be true. I mean, it was only a matter of time before Jennifer wouldn't be able to function properly. I was bracing myself for that dreaded day.

It happened on a cool Wednesday morning in the month of January. The Dorseys left home early. Something seemed odd about their behavior. They were hiding something from me.

Rodney drove his car around the block then parked it in a secret spot. Fortunately for me, I knew where the secret spot was.

I could hear Jennifer crying her brains out. Rodney was trying to perk her up with a good talk. His effort was futile. From what I could determine, Jennifer had an incredibly serious ailment. Which ailment? I certainly didn't know.

The Dorseys returned home the next day at 8:30 A.M. Rodney parked his car in the garage. I could sense that something was terribly wrong.

As soon as Rodney turned off the ignition, he leaned over towards his wife then kissed her on the cheek. That was strange, considering he'd never done this in public before. So, I decided to tune-into their conversation. I wasn't spying on them. I was concerned about Jennifer.

After the Dorseys exited their car, Rodney scanned the area, in order to make sure the coast was clear. He gently took his wife's hand then kissed it, with extreme emotion. Tears streamed down his cheeks. He looked deep into Jennifer's eyes then told her that he'd stand by her, regardless. He also told her that a diagnosis of bone cancer wasn't the end of the world. Jennifer put on a forced smile then told Rodney that she was married to the best man in the whole world.

While the Dorseys were walking to their house, I noticed that Jennifer's health had worsened considerably. She was barely able to walk. Also, she was pale and haggard; using a cane.

I was terrified. Bone cancer's a very serious problem! Prognosis: perhaps three years, give or take some.

After the Dorseys entered their house, I cried my brains out. I'd heard about dogs who'd endured their final days with bone cancer. I figured being a human wouldn't place you in a 'luckier state'.

As the months passed, Jennifer continued her downward spiral; slowly, but surely. Her visits to the hospital became more and more frequent. She lost weight and became sickly pale in appearance. She was no longer able to place a bowl of food in front of my paws. It was now Rodney's job to do that. Although he was a swell guy, Jennifer was the best feeder. Nobody could ever cheer me up like she could.

I figured that Jennifer had a short time to live. She appeared to be close to the stage of non-return. I didn't know what would become of me after her death.

Rodney and I were also adversely affected by Jennifer's illness. He and I became depressed, anxious, and lost weight. Ironically, we also became much better friends. He and I often talked about the good old days, as though there were no more to come. It was the sad truth.

After many months of unending deterioration, Jennifer was finally taken to the General Hospital Emergency Room. I must emphasize that she was taken by ambulance. I figured she'd never return.

It happened like a sudden jolt. While napping, I was startled by the sound of an ambulance siren.

Even though the ambulance was getting closer and closer, I assumed the ambulance was heading to another residence in the vicinity. Unfortunately, the ambulance ended up pulling into the Dorsey's driveway. Two paramedics quickly exited the ambulance, got their gear then ran to the Dorsey's front door.

Because Rodney was waiting behind the door, he let them in, without delay. I knew it was serious because both paramedics had that look on their faces.

Instantly, I became anxious; unable to relax or think about anything or anyone, except for Jennifer. Fifteen minutes later, they were off to the emergency room.

Jennifer was unconscious, and Rodney had teary eyes. As they were walking to the ambulance, one of the paramedics saw me through the corner of his eye. With that, he turned his head to face me. Then, he gave me a thumbs-down. At least he was honest.

The same paramedic turned back then spoke to Mr. Dorsey.

"Mr. Dorsey, I've got two lovely cats at home. It's nice having 'non-human' companions around. It's a fine and interesting addition. Sometimes, I get all fed-up and tired with the problems of life. Just take a look at my job. Although I love it, the stress factor's mind-boggling," said the paramedic.

I looked straight into the paramedic's eyes. Not in a show of aggression, or a challenge, but in friendship. He turned to face me then did likewise. For a brief moment, he and I were united.

It took me seven whole hours to regain my appetite. I was able to eat the beef and gravy sitting in my bowl.

Although I was famished I had a hard time eating. My beloved Jennifer was dying.

For the next several days, Jennifer lay in an emergency room bed at the General Hospital's ICU. Rodney and I were going nuts.

It was on the ninth day that I received another shocker. Rodney had returned home a 10:05 P.M. While walking to his house, Rodney gave me a long stare. Then, I saw a tear dribble down his right cheek. It wasn't caused by eye irritation. It was a genuine 'cry-baby-tear'.

After Rodney wiped his cheek he informed me that 'our love' was dying.

I'd never seen Rodney so pale and 'sickly-looking'. It appeared as though he'd been crying for some time. His eyes were more bloodshot than Count Dracula's.

Thereafter, Rodney visited Jennifer every single day. A week later, it happened. This time Rodney returned from the General Hospital at 2:15 A.M. He appeared very haggard. He staggered to my dog palace then fell onto the ground.

For the next minute or two, I was thrown into a state of utter shock. I nudged Rodney's head several times. Luckily, it worked. Rodney came to, then got up and looked around.

Rodney appeared apprehensive. It was like he wanted to do something, but was too shy to do it. What was it? I wondered.

Unable to control his emotions, Rodney wept like a little child. It became apparent to me that Jennifer was either on the verge of dying, or had already died. Both case scenarios would cause Rodney to weep like a child.

"Timmy, I've got some really bad news for you. I don't know how to lead into it, so, I'll be blunt. Jennifer died an hour ago. The doctors and nurses in the ICU did their best to help her. They went beyond the call of duty. So much so, that I plan to give them a generous donation after my beloved Jennifer is buried.

ICU staff workers around the world are true heroes. In addition to being in a medically-stressful environment, they have to deal with the presence of urine, fecal matter, vomit, blood, sweat, stench, and many sad outcomes.

The worst case scenario is death. Mind you, many patients walk out of the ICU and make a full recovery. THANK GOD FOR THAT!

There's hardly anyone around to thank the ICU staff. Truly, they are underpaid and overworked," said Rodney.

It was a sad morning, indeed. Rodney and I fell into a deep depression. Animals can really become attached to their human owners. I've heard stories about animals refusing to eat after their owner has died. It's quite understandable, considering the level of love between some humans and some animals. I use the word 'some' because not all of us are 'interspecies friendly'.

After mourning for two months, Rodney joined The Seniors' Mourning Club (SMC). A local organization that was formed to help seniors go through their mourning process, and to support them for the rest of their lives.

Rodney made a dozen or so friends at the SMC meetings. Within a month, four SMC members made bi-weekly visits to Rodney's home; Mondays and Wednesdays.

Things were fine for a while. I truly believed that out of this tragedy, something good would happen. Specifically, closer ties between Rodney and me. I really thought we were going to become buddies. Boy was I dead wrong. The bad news hit me like a ton of bricks.

On a cloudy Wednesday afternoon, in the month of April, Rodney approached my dog palace with extreme apprehension. As soon as he got to within a foot of me, he paused for a moment. It was like he'd rehearsed his words many times over.

Sensing bad news in the air, I became very anxious. My breathing became labored and very shallow. I began to tremble. I almost foamed at the mouth.

Rodney informed me that he was moving to the Yates Seniors' Home (YSH), five hundred and fifty miles north of town.

Rodney had found a buyer for his house. In other words, I was being dumped. Where to? I had no idea. After all the faithful years I put with that man. The nerve of him!

Alarm bells rang in my ears. Where would I sleep, eat, drink, and play? Was I going to be sent to an animal hoarder, shelter, or biomedical lab?

Assuming that I was going to be 'tossed' in a few days, I decided to prepare myself in advance.

Shockingly, I was given away 'to a good home', a few hours later. I had no time to escape, or do anything, for that matter.

Humans who intend to sell their companion animals should never advertise in this manner: FREE TO A GOOD HOME. Often times, animal abusers or individuals who want to make big bucks off 'doggies' or 'catties', answer this kind of advertisement.

During the interview, they put on an act. They behave themselves. Don't be fooled. They've never had those good qualities. Indeed, this is their deceitful facade.

Well, Rodney fell for it. I found out later that the couple who answered his ad claimed that 'I' was to be a birthday present for their little girl. In reality, they didn't have a little girl. They were low-level bunchers, sent to do a job.

I don't really have any anger towards Rodney. He was a sick, elderly man. His faculties were dissolving. At the time, I suspected that he was in the early stages of Alzheimer's disease.

Instantly, I ended up in the custody of David and Gloria Granger. I got bad jibes from them. They must've smiled at Rodney throughout their conversation, hiding the wickedness in their hearts. In the end, it was a fatal error for me.

As soon as Rodney handed me over to the Grangers, he looked at me with his teary eyes, then turned around and walked back to his house. That was the last time I ever laid eyes on him.

The Grangers quickly hauled me into the back of their blue van then drove straight to a hell-hole. A terrible puppy mill, that is.

As soon as we entered the puppy mill, a tall, husky, mean-looking man, waved us over to this shed.

The Grangers exited their blue van then ran to the man. I was dragged, tooth-and-nail. To intensify my pain and discomfort, the Grangers had placed a choke collar around my neck.

The Grangers sold me to the mean-looking man. It meant that I was now in his custody. I kept my eye on the Grangers as they walked away. I was trying to figure out what was happening.

To my horror, they walked into the snack bar, not giving a damn about me. Now, I absolutely knew that something terrible was going to happen. How could any human/s compare with the Dorseys? They were the kindest dog owners in the whole world. I began to weep. I just wanted to be sent back to Rodney. Was I wanting too much?

Mandy, I've been in this terrible hell-hole for so long; I hardly know what century it is. My official occupation is 'designated stud'.

Mandy, if these creeps could mate a dog with a cat, you and I would now be doing just that. Thankfully, there's no such thing as interspecies mating.

They've hooked me up with 'heated bitches'. Mandy, if you were a stud, you'd understand that a heated bitch is irresistible. I've mounted so many bitches I need a calculator to figure out the actual number. I've probably got droves of dogs who can claim to be of 'Timmy's progeny'.

Don't get me wrong. I must perform, or else. Once, I saw a former racing Greyhound stud being beaten mercilessly for not performing. He had open sores and slashes throughout his body. No wonder, he couldn't perform.

On a chilly Tuesday morning, in the month of February, the administrator of Camp Puppy Mill came by to take a look at the Greyhound stud. After being briefed by the PMWs, he ordered them to sell 'the creature' to a biomedical lab. As soon as one of his PMWs informed him that the Greyhound was an all-round-reject, the administrator ordered that the Greyhound be taken out into the forest and shot. Of the three PMWs there, two of them grinned. The Administrator 'guffawed'.

They thought it was going to be fun to 'take-out' an innocent dog. Yes, an innocent dog. By the way, the Greyhound's name was Brendan.

In his prime, Brendan was a professional racing dog. He raked in tons of money for his owner. Because of the brutal life Brendan was forced to live, within eighteen months, he developed severe bone fractures and ligament tears. Not to mention a terrible ulcer. Naturally, his owner dumped him into the hands of a thug; anything for a quick buck.

Tens of thousands of Greyhound racing dogs around the world are killed when they're young. These are the 'rejects'; unable to make the grade. Those who do make the grade are forced to endure immense pain and suffering in the terrible Greyhound racing industry.

I don't know which is worse, being killed outright, or living a terrible life?

Mandy, I'm sorry to have dumped my sad story on you. You seem like a very nice cat. I think you'll be adopted soon," said Timmy.

Suddenly, two PMWs entered our shed. They proceeded to open the cages then placed warm water in each of the bowls.

Both PMWs had cruel faces. No wonder, I smelled human flesh while Timmy was conveying his story. The PMWs were behind the shed door, listening in.

When they arrived at my cage, I tried to back away, but couldn't. I mean, there's only so much I could've done in a tiny cage. A human can easily reach into any corner of our cages.

"I don't give a stinking-crap what you animals feel like. I'm here to make a quick buck; tax free of course. Furthermore, I truly enjoy seeing you creatures in suffer. I really get off on it!" shouted one of the PMWs.

Mandy, only after one week of incarceration, the 'snap' in my physical and mental strength began to disappear. The lack of fresh air, exercise, nutrition, rest, proper shelter, and love, took its toll on me. The filthiness of the environment and the numerous diseases in the air didn't make matters any better.

My nights at Camp Puppy Mill were engulfed in the shrieks of pain and sadness that were emanating from the other animals.

Mandy, it was like we were doing hard time. Camp Puppy Mill was worse than Leavenworth Penitentiary.

What the hell did we do! Really, not one single dog or cat in this stinking puppy mill has committed a crime. Animals that have a habit of attacking humans end up on death row; not in puppy mills. We're all innocent of any wrongdoing.

As the weeks turned into months, I began to twitch every time a dog or a cat was goaded. Goading was performed as a disciplinary response, or just for the heck-of-it. Also, it provides a serious reminder to all the animals; you are helpless.

According to the Puppy Mill Administrator, misbehaving involved any animal who made too much noise, tried to attack a PMW, or griped about his/her predicament. None of the PMWs had the patience to listen to a complainant.

Attempted escapes or physical attacks inflicted upon a PMW resulted in the most severe punishment.

A successful escape resulted in the loss of revenue. Furthermore, if an example isn't set for the other animals, more of them will try to escape. Indeed, every precaution has been made to prevent an escape, and to capture an escapee. Of course, corporal punishment laid out for this action is performed in front of the other animals," said Timmy.

"Timmy, has there ever been an escape attempt that was known throughout the puppy mill. I mean, like a hero?" my mother asked.

"I must convey to you a sad and terrifying story. It relates to a dog who dared to defy the rules. He was brave, courageous, and very kind. What happened to him is a constant reminder for the witnesses herein. Mandy, crop your ears, and listen-up.

On a very humid night in the month of August, a German shepherd managed to get out of his cage. He quickly exited the shed then ran to the perimeter fence. I'm certain that he was a newcomer. The punishment for an escape attempt wasn't conveyed to him.

After realizing his mistake, the German shepherd stopped barking. Unfortunately, one of the sell-outs (guard dogs) had already heard his barking.

As soon as the German shepherd reached the perimeter fence, he desperately searched for an opening, or some kind of gap to squeeze through.

Roughly 30 seconds later, two sellouts charged at the escapee. They came out like wild bulls, charging a matador.

At that moment, the German shepherd found a gap in the fence barely big enough to squeeze through. After squeezing his slim body through the gap, he ran straight to Gordon Forest.

The sellouts sustained their pursuit in earnest, until the shift supervisor called them back. They obeyed his command, without delay. For a moment, the other animals thought that one of their brethren had escaped. Indeed, that would've been nice. Sadly, terrible news was just on the horizon.

The animals in the cages were so anxious for their comrade to escape many of them defecated on the spot! They knew that if he were to be captured, the consequences would be horrific; not only for their brethren but also for many of the other animals.

To make the chase more effective, the Administrator ordered the formation of two posses. Everyone involved in the chase was armed. Only one weapon or tool per person from any one of the following: firearm, knife, whip, flashlight, whistle, cell phone, baseball bat, and rope.

Mandy, don't forget: some animals will sell us out in a second. Bribery can be a very powerful weapon.

The Administrator was totally pissed off. In fact, everyone involved in the chase was pissed off. They wanted to get their hands on the escapee.

Mandy, the Administrator wanted to destroy our brethren," said Timmy.

"This is Mr. Administrator speaking! I'm taking this escape attempt ... personally! This 'mongrel-head' can't get away! I

don't want any of you idiot-inmates to get any ideas, either. All available personnel will form into posses! We'll hunt this bastard down then we'll punish him!

Whoever captures the mongrel-head will receive five hundred dollars in cash! No questions asked. As for the guard dogs, I've commanded them to resume their chase. Lets' go!"

Mandy, all hell broke loose! There were 'sounds' and 'noises' coming from every direction. Meanwhile, the barks of the sellouts became more terrifyingly vicious.

A chubby PMW with an ugly wart on his nose entered our shack. He brightened the overhead lights then stared down several of the animals. He too, got personal with us,' said Timmy.

"Too bad, we will catch your friend! Afterwards, we'll do him just fine! I can't wait until it happens! It will be very entertaining.

Camp Puppy Mill has no room for compassion towards any of its animals. Or, should I say, inmates? Creatures, this is a big business! Most people, including politicians, couldn't care less about you. In fact, I know of one very powerful state politician who purchases his dogs from Camp Puppy Mill, said the chubby PMW."

"Mandy, the animals in our shed knew that the chubby PMW wanted something from us. We had a gut feeling about it," said Timmy.

"Come on just help us capture this mongrel-head! If you lead us to his capture, you'll be out of this hell-hole in no time! Hell, you can become one of our guard dogs if you want," said the chubby PMW.

"Mandy, not one single animal in our shed accepted the chubby PMW's offer. We were sickly, tired, depressed, starving, dehydrated, and outright fed-up with the PMWs. The last thing we wanted to do was to help them.

As the chase continued, it became evident that 'our comrade' was going be captured. This discovery was devastating to the animals in the puppy mill. So much so, it caused widespread depression. In other words, many of the animals were totally 'bummed-out'.

The PMWs and the sell-outs were tightening the noose on the search area. It was a magnanimous hunt. The hunters formed a large circle then slowly walked towards the nucleus. With the circle getting smaller and smaller, there was no possibility of escape. Even if our comrade could've flown, it wouldn't have lead to anything. The bullets fired from the rifles of the armed PMWs would strike our comrade in mid-air, if need be.

When the dreaded moment came, we braced ourselves for the worst. Our comrade was captured. It sounded like three sellouts

had gotten hold of him. They were tormenting our comrade; taking 'snippets' from various parts of his body.

A short while later several more sell-outs arrived at the scene. Instead of protecting our comrade, they joined in 'the fun'. It wasn't until several human members of the posse arrived that things really got gruesome.

Our comrade was goaded, kicked, spat on, beaten with a night stick, and dragged around. Suddenly, there was quiet. As with previous escape attempts by other animals our comrade was muzzled by a PMW. Then, he was strapped onto a special stretcher, to be taken back to Camp Puppy Mill.

Our comrade lay on a stretcher, unable to move or resist. He'd been disgraced and defeated. This tragedy was a 'morale sinker'.

As soon as the PMWs entered the puppy mill, we felt a sudden rush of horror run through our veins. Next was 'Mr. Administrator's' short announcement, said Timmy.

"Okay, PMWs and animals! We've captured the mongrel-head. Good news for all of us! Randy gets a handsome reward for being the first 'dog' at the scene. Steve gets a reward for being the first 'human' at the scene. As for my three special guard dogs, Mickey, Butch, and Tony, you'll receive double-servings of food and cool bottled water for an entire month.

Furthermore, I'll also give you another gift. This gift will be of your choosing; assuming that your request is reasonable.

I want to congratulate the men and women who worked diligently, and tirelessly, to capture the mongrel-head. Next time, we shall be better prepared. With bigger spotlights and better communication equipment, no creature will even dream about escaping,' said the Administrator.

"Mandy, our comrade our comrade was paraded throughout the entire puppy mill. Not a single shed was forgotten. Our comrade was seen by every human and animal in the puppy mill.

After parading our comrade, the PMWs got down to business. Two burly PMW's untied our comrade. Afterwards, they dropped him onto the ground. The Administrator was eying their every move. Apparently, he enjoyed seeing our comrade being dropped to the ground. He laughed his brains out. He surely had a sickly sense of humor.

Because the Administrator was seated in an 'announcer's booth', he could see what was happening to our comrade. Furthermore, he had a microphone in his hand.

After the Administrator finished his 'guffawing spell', he left the announcer's booth. A short while later, the animals observed him approaching the scene.

As soon as the Administrator arrived at the scene, he snarled at our comrade then spat on him. Afterwards, he ordered all of the PMWs to come.

The Administrator ordered an obese PMW to tie a noose around our comrade's neck. We instinctively knew what was about to happen.

"Indeed, the Administrator wanted us to see the painful punishment for an attempted escape," said Timmy.

"Thank you, honey. Now, I can set an example for the 'creatures' in this facility!" shouted the Administrator.

The Administrator tightened the noose around our comrade's neck. This caused our comrade to gasp for air; to no avail. His oxygen supply was now seriously compromised.

In an act of brazen brutality and sadism, the Administrator ordered the PMWs to ensure that every single animal at the puppy mill had a good view of what was happening," said Timmy.

"You guys and gals must bring every single cage in this entire freaking facility to the open space in front of me. There will be a freaky show tonight. A real beauty, I must say!

Place 'them' in circular form. I want every single creature in this facility to see the show!" shouted the Administrator.

"Mandy, it took an hour to get all of the cages in place. The show wasn't really a show. It was a stern warning to the other animals.

What was to come was an act of utter monstrosity. If our comrade had known, he wouldn't have made an escape attempt.

The Administrator roughly turned our hero onto his side then he pressed his right foot against the side of our comrade's head.

To add insult to injury, the administrator laughed up a storm. Apparently, some people find acts of cruelty against animals humorous.

None of us could lift a paw, or a tooth, in our comrade's defense. In other words, we couldn't do anything.

After thirty seconds of continuous bone-crushing-pressure on our comrade's head, the Administrator removed his foot. It wasn't done out of mercy. The Administrator wanted to escalate the punishment.

After snarling at the puppy mill animals, the Administrator untied the noose from our Comrade's neck," said Timmy.

While Timmy was narrating his story to my mother, his tears became more intense and 'faster-flowing'. He began to weep like a little child. My mother comforted him in the best way she could. Given the circumstances, it wasn't enough.

"Timmy, please don't cry. It's all over. Whatever happened to your comrade is history. Cheer up! We'll be out of this

pathetic place, very soon. I'm certain that a nice family will adopt you," said my mother.

Timmy took a twenty minute break from his story. My mother tried whatever was possible to comfort her new friend.

"After the Administrator placed a 'special noose' around our comrade's neck, he lifted him off the ground. Our comrade tried to stand on his hind legs, but couldn't.

Our comrade was gasping for air. Considering the noose contained countless spikes on it, our comrade had no chance of resisting. Nobody can imagine how terrible our comrade's predicament was.

The Administrator put on a gruesome show," said Timmy.

"Hey! Guess what? This is the 'helicopter method'! It's used to 'toughen-up' creatures. Well, I'm not trying to toughen-up this creature! I only want him to pay dearly for trying to escape from 'my facility'.

Furthermore, I want you-all to see the terrible consequences of an attempted escape. You creatures are money machines!" shouted the Administrator.

"Our comrade's eyes bulged out. So much so, they looked like they were about to pop out of their sockets. Also, his tongue tangled to the side, and drool began to dribble and dangle from his mouth. He kind of looked like those dogs in China that are being processed as food.

Worse was to come. The Administrator, a very powerful man, bounced our comrade like a yo-yo. In addition, he made several 360's, to ensure that all of the PMW's and animals could see what was happening.

Mandy, I couldn't have imagined that such horror existed! The Administrator was a ruthless monster.

When our comrade was on the verge of dying, the Administrator dropped him onto the ground. Then, he ordered a PMW to untie the special noose from our comrade's neck.

Afterwards, the PMW was ordered to return the noose to the Administrator's office. Why? So it could be used again, again, and again.

The Administrator casually walked back to the staff building, as though he was returning home from a barbecue.

I kept a close eye on the Administrator, looking for signs of remorse. Actually, right before he entered the staff building, he waved a high-five to the PMWs looking at him. I guess he was flabbergasted by the big catch.

Several PMWs proceeded to return most of the cages back to their respective places. They took their time. I guess they wanted us to sweat a little.

The PMWs were ordered to leave fifteen cages near our dying comrade. Unfortunately, I was in one of those cages. I was forced to see the sad truth of it all.

We were horrified and saddened by the spectacle. Each of us was trying to run an imaginary scenario in our heads. Trying to imagine what would happen if we were actually able to escape.

Our comrade tried to get up and plead with the PMWs; without any success.

We cried for our beloved comrade, and also for ourselves. I became aware that we were residents of a bestial concentration camp. Bestial concentration camps are not human concentration camps. I must insist that animals and humans understand this.

Furthermore, I don't like to compare one with the other. Let's leave it at that.

Many of the animals in this hell-hole will eventually be sold. Sadly, a good percentage of them will never forget their horrific ordeal. In essence, all of the puppy mill animals were lifers. The memory stays with you, always!

The animals in the fifteen cages were given better food and water. In addition, our cages were cleaned daily. We were stunned by the 'better treatment'.

It took us three days to figure out what was happening. We were told point blank: eat-up, drink-up, and smile! Or else, you'll taste a more bitter fate than the mongrel-head.

Our comrade was going nuts. He was forced to see us living in cleaned cages, and well-fed and hydrated. Our comrade broke down," said Timmy.

"Please, help me! I need food, water, and medical attention, immediately! You can't be that cold and cruel. Please, I just want to live a normal life. I promise that I'll never try to escape again. In fact, I'll be a model inmate,' said our comrade.

"Mandy, our comrade's 'pleadings' went unanswered. There seemed to be no such thing as mercy and love in that hell-hole. The only thing that received undivided attention and respect was the almighty dollar.

Our comrade died the following evening. The animals in the puppy mill mourned for their beloved comrade. I knew that one day I'd have to leave. Otherwise, I too, would go nuts!

As we were weeping, five PMWs carrying ice water approached us. Then, they tossed all of the ice water on the loudest weeper.

The poor dog fell over onto her right side. She was out cold for roughly an hour. A dead silence fell upon the animals. That's how horrified we were.

The PMWs stared-down the fifteen animals placed near the scene. The 'stared-down-animals' lowered their heads then

defecated. No dog or cat dared challenge the PMWs. That was a given.

Decomposition set in. Our comrade's body was beginning to rot and wither away. Flies, maggots, fleas, and whatever else could have a free meal, appeared on our comrade. Our comrade, who was once a hero, became a free buffet for tiny creatures.

A terrible stench began to emanate from our comrade's carcass. Soon, it became a gagging stench. Indeed it was smellier than a squirt from a skunk!

The 'witnesses' couldn't walk away or ignore the stench. Every single dog and cat in the area would be affected for life. Our scars would run very deep.

These common atrocities are hidden from public view. Well, I hope someday the general public will become more aware of the happenings in many puppy mills. Thereafter, the public can begin to apply pressure on public figures. This will get the job done.

Our comrade's carcass was left to rot for several days. Then, it was hauled off to a special location. This way, nobody on the outside would ever know.

Apparently, the PMWs were ordered to take the black garbage bag containing our comrade's carcass deep into the forest for burial. The large hole in the black bag would ensure a continuous decomposition of the carcass. In effect, the evidence would disappear.

Mandy, as the weeks turned into months, my health began to deteriorate. The lack of sufficient food, water, happiness, and anything good, were taking their toll on me.

At one point, I assumed that death was just around the corner. I began to count the seconds, wishing that time would pass by at a faster rate. I wanted to die!

Once, when I was counting the seconds and listening to my stomach growl, a barrel-sized PMW entered our shed then he approached my cage. I was apprehensive about the prospect of a 'GIANT MONSTER' getting too close to me. I really didn't like it!

The PMW didn't bother to remove me from my cage. He carried my cage, with one arm then continued to walk away. For a moment, I thought about biting one of his fingers, then trying to squeeze through the cage bars. Afterwards, I'd run like hell!

After thinking about this option for a moment, I came to the conclusion that it wouldn't work. I wouldn't know where to run to. Even if I had escaped, survival would've been almost impossible.

The next three days were a complete blank. I think that the PMWs did something horrible to me. Or, maybe, I saw something horrible,' said Timmy.

## MOMMY'S PREGNANT!

After she was returned to the breeding shed, my mother did nothing for the next several weeks, but cry her brains out. Boy, did she want to return to that beautiful mansion that she'd once lived in. Not to mention, the beautiful family that she'd belonged to.

"Mandy, we're going to show you your new husband. You've got very good genes, tenacity, and cuteness. These are attributes that we need in our breeding facility.

Some nitwit placed you in the wrong shed. You belong in the PREMIUM BREEDERS' SHED! Special cats and dogs aren't supposed to be placed inside this shed,' said a young PMW," said a PMW.

It was terrible. My mother couldn't do anything! She was helpless!

After being taken to the special shed, my mother was placed inside a large cage. She understood very well that it was the end of her 'virgin life'. Thereafter, she'd be an 'induced harlot', of a sort.

My mother understood that after the first mounting, she'd have to grow up very fast. However, my mother had a trick or two up her sleeve. For instance, she knew how to 'de-heat' herself. Would it be enough to turn off the stud? As was later to become apparent, she was dead wrong.

Day after day, it was the same ole' routine. My mother's cat sisters were mounted by tom cats that had nothing on their mind but their own satisfaction. Thankfully, all of them weren't that way. One Tom cat, named Jerry, didn't feel like appeasing his human captors.

Jerry's decision was a fatal error. A PMW, along with Dr. Bracey, the new veterinarian, entered the special shed, late in the evening. They quickly walked over to Jerry's cage.

Afterwards, Dr. Bracey ordered a PMW to open Jerry's cage, then to grab the 'nitwit' by the neck, with a strangle hold.

The PMW did as she was told. Jerry was tackled to the ground using a terrible neck hold. Then, Dr. Bracey injected Jerry with a very potent drug. Instantly, Jerry's behavior changed. He became euphoric. Shortly afterwards, another PMW brought in a 'heated cat'. Immediately, Jerry ran to the heated cat then began to mount her. He moved like a lion.

My mother witnessed the entire episode. She now understood that resistance was useless. She had to accept whatever her captors threw at her. No questions asked.

Breeding bitches are almost always overworked, often beginning their work at a very young age. When they can no longer 'function,' they may be sold to a biomedical lab, chopped-up and given to the other inmates as food (rendered meat), or taken out to the forest and shot.

High class dog fanciers can afford to send frozen sperm samples to far-off areas. It's expensive, but effective. No mounting. Unfortunately, purebreds often have genetic problems.

The Administrator would've sold a puppy mill animal to an alien from another galaxy; as long as the alien paid for the animal.

For the following week, my mother received increased food rations. She suspected that her food was tainted with something. Furthermore, she was sick the whole week. Well, you can't be happy living in a penitentiary. Can you?

On the eighth day, the Administrator ordered that my mother be mounted by a select Tom cat. She put up a very good fight. So good, the PMWs left her shed in astonishment.

Unfortunately, it was too good to be true. After defying the orders of the Administrator to perform, my mother was deprived of food, water, and milk, for three whole days.

On the third day, my mother began to drool without any let-up. Even thinking about dirt made her hungry.

At a calculated moment, a PMW entered the special shed then placed a large bowl of milk inside her cage. My mother was too famished to determine whether the milk was tainted or not.

After she emptied the bowl's contents, a sudden feeling of drowsiness hit her. A couple of minutes later, she felt weak,

and somewhat incoherent. That's when it happened. Several PMWs rushed into the special shed; one of them was carrying a Tom cat in his left hand.

My mother had been drugged. No doubt, her captors had had experience with defiant kitties, like my mother.

My mother never blamed herself for the mistake she'd made. She was in need of nourishment. You have to be in her shoes to understand what she felt like.

Before my mother realized what was happening, she found herself being mounted by one tom cat after another. After the seventh one, she went blank.

The train-style-mounting had a two-fold purpose: first, to breed kitties; second, to punish my mother for being defiant.

Unfortunately, there was yet another shocker. As the days passed, my mother began to feel as though there was a separate entity inside of her.

It wasn't until weeks later that she'd realized what had happened. There were 'developing kitties' inside her, waiting to be let-out. What kind of life were my mother's kitties going to have?

We kept growing and growing inside my mother. My mother's stomach distended until it could no longer expand. In fact, my mother's stomach was 'over-distended'. She'd been given powerful drugs to enhance her pregnancy.

My mother reminded told me that as soon as we were born, Dr. Bracey examined us, with his wicked hands and cold instruments. She wanted to ensure the administrator that the kitties were profitable. Her behavior was based on greed, not love.

I was also told by my mother that only a week later, four of my siblings died. They were too young to be without their mommy. You see, I was the only one left with my mommy. It seemed like my mother's problems were increasing, geometrically.

For some reason, I can't remember those terrible days. I don't even remember when I first opened my eyes. It's strange but true.

My mother was intelligent enough to feel the evil engulfing Camp Puppy Mill. Kitties and puppies were being snatched from their rightful mothers, too early. Never mind, their fathers.

However, most of the fathers at Camp Puppy Mill either didn't give a damn about their progeny, or hardly cared, but didn't want to show it. There were a few fathers who blew their stack. They didn't want 'their progeny' to be snatched away from their rightful mothers.

As was the case throughout Camp Puppy Mill, not a single animal dared an attempt at stopping the kitten/puppy 'snatchings'. They were so 'de-animalized', it was pitiful!

Meanwhile, my mother's mind and body began to crumble. Sadly, my mother looked like a total wreck; even developing psychosomatic disorders. It was terrible! Her bones, muscles, internal organs, and head, were engulfed in pain.

Then, on a cold, windy Friday morning, in the month of January, the administrator, two PMWs, and Dr. Bracey, entered our shed. They scanned the area with their menacing eyes then stared at me for a good thirty seconds.

Strangely, they mistook me (Jody Wilson) for my mother. Well, that mistake helped alter the entire course of history; as you shall see later in my book.

Sadly, I was removed from my mother's cage, clear out to a special shed for rejects. I never saw my mother again. I never forgot her.

#### EXIT CAMP PUPPY MILL

"Hey, look at that sickly-looking cat! That bimbo's been here far too long. We've already sold her kitties. We certainly can't get anything out of her, anymore! Let's try to sell her to a biomedical lab, or to an animal fighting trainer.

I'll wait until Monday morning before attempting to sell her. We'll go at it for a week. If we can't sell this bimbo, then we'll have to kill her. This is a place of business, not a daycare center for dogs and cats!" shouted the administrator.

"Hey, boss ... can't we just toss her, like ... somewhere deep inside the forest? I mean, like ... nobody will miss her. Cats can survive in forests, can't they?" asked a PMW.

"As long as the 'origin' of this cat isn't brought to the attention of the authorities, I don't give a crap what happens to her! If the police ever find out we're stealing companion animals from their rightful owners, we'll end up like these incarcerated creatures," replied the administrator.

Under the present circumstances, escape was practically impossible. The place was built like a prison. We needed a 'gigantic' change, or diversion.

As our luck had it, that very evening, an incredibly terrifying thunderstorm swept the area. It looked like Missouri was about to drown in its own rain!

The winds picked up, creating a series of terrifying whistling sounds. We heard branches, doors, and other objects being 'manhandled' by powerful winds. The animals were worried that the 'two-bit-walls' of the sheds would wobble then collapse on them.

Our worst nightmare came true! The walls of one shed after another began to collapse. Many of the animals were crushed to death. Unfortunately, only a few died instantly. The screams of pain and terror swept through the entire area. Believe me, it was our version of the Titanic!

At least one PMW was injured. He'd broken an arm, a leg, and his neck. I couldn't have cared less.

"Listen- up, I don't want anyone out there to know how or where this man was injured! It's a matter of protecting my 'profitable enterprise'.

Take Victor to the General hospital. Tell the nurse on duty that you saw Mickey strewn across the street while you were driving away from the thunderstorm. Also, tell the nurse that there was a large branch beside him. It'll look like the branch fell on Mickey while he was walking on the shoulder of the road.

If you're questioned about the location of 'the incident', tell the nurse that visibility was poor.

You can also tell the nurse that the rain was poking your eyes; compromising your vision problems," said the Administrator.

The Administrator didn't care about anyone, but himself. Meanwhile, our shed's infrastructure was being compromised. It looked like our shed was going to collapse; very soon. In addition, rain was 'creeping' into our shed.

As if things couldn't have gotten any worse. A PMW closed our shed door then locked it. The puppy mill staff was worried about multiple escape attempts. They were bailing out on us.

Miraculously, a bitch Collie managed to push her cage door open. Indeed, it was an incredible feat! The other animals in our shed tried to do likewise. Unfortunately, their attempts were futile. The locks on some of the cages were new and extremely formidable. On others cages, the locks were very old and rusty.

I tried to open my cage door. After the fifth attempt, I gave up. A short while later my cage door began to 'jiggle' violently. It seemed like the thunderstorm was increasing in ferocity.

I started pouncing on my cage door, as a leopard pounces on its prey. My hard work paid off! The cage door swung open. I ended up landing several feet away from my cage. Another foot and I would've smashed into the cage parallel to my own.

I took one last look at my pathetic cage. It was an awful mess. I saw fecal matter, urine, dirt, mud, and insects, in that pathetic hell-hole. I shook my body; wanting to rid myself of dirty matter.

Afterwards, I scanned the area. Sickness, fear, anxiety, pain, agony, apprehension, and death, had engulfed our cages. The trapped animals in our shed understood that their hours were numbered.

I waded through water that was several inches high, in order to make at least one attempt at helping another animal. I noticed a cat that had the scars and bruises of abuse imprinted on her face and body. I figured, she'd had enough pain and suffering in her life.

I tried my hardest to pick the lock on her cage. For the moment, I'd wished there was an orangutan around. They're awesome at picking locks.

The cat eyed me for a few seconds then fell onto her right side. I squeezed part of my face through the bars of her cage. I licked her face several times. Then, I pulled my head back. It was useless.

Her tongue dangled to the side. After making a lethargic attempt at getting up, she fell over. That was the end of our short friendship.

Although I was saddened by her death, my own predicament called for immediate action. In other words, I had to take care of myself, first. An innocent cat had died before my very own eyes! She was an inmate like me. I certainly didn't want to end up like her.

I understood that the world could be a very cruel place. It seemed like justice has gone on an indefinite vacation.

The bitch Collie called out to me. It appeared as though she wanted to comfort me. Indeed, she'd seen the sad spectacle.

I took one last look at the deceased cat. I wanted the image of her face to be imprinted in my head.

I approached the bitch Collie, hoping that she had an escape plan. With the only visible exit bolted shut, it looked like we were finished.

As I was approaching the bitch Collie, I caught a reflection with the corner of my eye. A window! After taking a close look at the window, I noticed that it was slightly ajar.

Looking back at the bitch Collie, I noticed that she had a look of defeat in her eyes. It was a terrible sight, indeed.

My question was answered. The bitch Collie had a terrible wound in her abdomen. She couldn't have escaped even if she'd wanted to.

I got close enough to rub the side of my face against her foreleg. Then, I turned and walked away.

With one swift move, I leaped onto the window panel. Alas, freedom was beneath my paws!

The opening through the window was just big enough to allow a beautiful cat, like myself, to squeeze through. A Bitch Collie wouldn't be able to squeeze through.

The bitch Collie pooped then slithered to a corner of the shed. She'd have to stay there until the very end. The shed was slowly flooding, causing the other animals to cry out in desperation. I had to give them some good advice before I left.

"Fellows exercise faith and patience!" I yelled.

"Thanks for the good advice. You've cheered us up! We'll be patient and faithful," responded a hidden mouse.

Finally, the bitch Collie spoke to me.

"Kitty, my name is Tammy. I was sold by my drunken owner. The 'incident' occurred in the middle of the night.

I must've been shot with a tranquilizer dart. I would've never allowed my former drunken owner to sell me to a buncher.

I didn't see it coming. My owner set up a good security system on his property. You see, we lived in a posh neighborhood.

In this hell-hole, I'm just a super-bitch. Sure, I got to 'befriend' the biggest and healthiest dogs around. But, I don't like to be used by anyone. Do you know what I mean? Not to mention having my freedom snatched from me.

Please, don't delay your escape on our account. I hear several PMWs approaching our shed.

Good luck! Be cautious! Always keep an eye out for hostile humans. Remember, accidents can happen at any time. Always look in all directions before you cross the street. Road kill causes the deaths of bazillions of innocent animals every single year.

Never give a human, or an animal one hundred percent of your trust. Sometimes, even blood kin, or close friends, can stab you in the back."

"Wait, please give me good advice! I need a game plan. Where do I go and how do I get there?" I asked.

"I'll make this quick. When you leave the puppy mill grounds head north for approximately five miles. There, you'll see railroad tracks near a large green shed. The shed will be near a pond.

The tracks are owned by the Iron Horse Corporation (IHC). Fortunately, there's a stop located in the vicinity. A train will stop there once every four hours, around the clock. You must head northeast, to New England.

A friend of mine once lived there. He liked it up north. I'm trying to give you the best advice possible. My life's nearly over.

Kitty, you're young and cute. You have a long life ahead of you.

Remember, your deadliest enemies will be the dreaded VCOs. They can't be trusted. Their job is to take you in, at whatever cost. As far as you're concerned, they're your worst nightmare.

VCOs will chase you down like a prey animal. These people are ferocious predators. Don't be fooled by their bait, or sinister smiles. Sometimes they carry dart guns. This is a dead giveaway," said the bitch Collie.

After thanking the bitch Collie for the good advice, I leaped onto the ground then I left that stinking hell-hole of a puppy mill.

The horrific thunderstorm made it difficult for me to see. Visibility was terrible, and raindrops were poking my eyes.

It felt like I was slowly swimming on land. With my head down, and eyes barely open, I was desperate to find a good resting place.

Luckily, I bumped into a large tree. A large swath of the fence had been destroyed in the thunderstorm, thereby causing it to collapse onto the ground.

While trying to scale the large tree, I was brutally knocked to the ground by heavy winds. Thankfully, I landed on all fours, without sustaining any injuries.

I walked a bit more then bumped into another tree. However, this time I was very lucky. This tree had three gigantic branches that were dangling towards the ground. Furthermore, its twigs and leafs were very large.

I ended up crouched underneath one of the large branches. Indeed, I was unable to move, see, or hear anything, but the terrifying thunderstorm. It was as though it had come to life. It really seemed like the thunderstorm was getting personal with me.

For three whole hours, I had to endure high winds, heavy rain, and terror. As a result, I froze like a Popsicle I didn't dare leave my safety zone. Actually, I couldn't have left my safety zone, even if I'd wanted to.

As soon as the thunderstorm subsided, several PMWs appeared out of nowhere. They began to haul their 'priceless inmates', to a more secure place. These priceless inmates were the cream of the crop for breeding. Never mind the other animals. They'd have to wait until the breeders were secure, first.

Sadly, the low-grade animals were duly ignored. Those who survived the thunderstorm would have lifelong scars to deal with.

Miraculously, I was the only animal who'd escaped from Camp Puppy Mill. In the end, it was my own skin that I had to worry about. Everyone else was number two, or lower.

I carefully crept out of my safety zone, one step at a time. I couldn't take any chances being seen by a PMW, or an envious animal.

Henceforth, I was on my own. My immediate concern was finding the railroad tracks. In all the confusion, I'd forgotten about my mother. I couldn't blame myself. Although I loved her dearly, I think she didn't make it. She was so miserable and sickly-looking. Mommy, if you can hear me: I'LL ALWAYS LOVE YOU!

I decided to walk to the railroad tracks at a slow, but steady pace. I placed myself on red alert then scanned the area with my incredible feline eyes. I was on the lookout for any sign of danger.

Roughly an hour later, what appeared to be the sound of a train passing by the area caught my attention. Until hearing the sound of that train, I was a bit spaced out. Yes, even cats space out, sometimes. I hate it when humans think that cats never space out. They think that we don't fantasize, or wish for anything spectacular.

Instantly, I ran in the direction of the train. I ended up running into a tree, head first. Luckily, there were no other cats around. Otherwise, I would have become the laughing stalk of my species. Thereafter, I made sure to watch where I was going at all times. Exhausted as I was, I couldn't postpone any opportunities.

Jeepers! Creepers! There wasn't a train in sight! I was suffering from a case of 'auditory mirage'. I was so exhausted, stressed out, and outright bamboozled by life, the sound of a train approaching was a lifesaver. Although it wasn't there, my mind used it as an 'uplifting mechanism'. Maybe, I would've gone mad if I hadn't heard the fake train sound.

I don't mean to get all 'Dr. Cat' on you, but, felines can also suffer from stress overload. My biggest problem was the puppy mill.

Just to make sure, I searched through the area for tracks; to no avail.

Gosh, I didn't want to believe it. But, it was true. Tammy, the bitch Collie, had lied to me. No doubt, she was envious of me. I got to leave the puppy mill. She didn't.

I could never do that to anyone. It's beneath me. She took advantage of me!

By early afternoon, the sun had risen to an awesome display of beauty. Indeed, it evolved into a calm and beautiful day. Like many of those in Vancouver. For the time being, there'd be no more thunderstorms.

After discovering Tammy's terrible lie, it became apparent that her 'other advice' was suspect. I certainly wasn't heading north, to New England. Maybe, there were super VCOs in that part of our country.

Now, I was famished beyond belief. I was afraid that my body was getting ready to eat itself from the inside out. In desperation, I scanned the area, searching for someone or something that alleviate my suffering.

Eureka! I saw a row of houses about a mile west of my present location. I assumed that further down, there'd be a town or a small city. Although I was happy to see the houses, it would be a very lethargic walk for me. I was exhausted.

As I approached the houses, they appeared larger and larger. My desperation allowed me to notice things that would've been brushed aside under normal circumstances. Don't worry; I didn't lose my knowledge of size constancy. I wasn't that out of it. Only dumb humans and dumb animals don't understand the concept of size constancy. Of course, I'm not including the very young.

In all, there were seven houses on the crest of the hill. As soon as I got to the crest of the hill, I noticed a small city of perhaps 70,000 thousand inhabitants. The core of the city was a few miles away. Perhaps, the residents of the houses were related to each other.

Quickly, I pictured myself drinking milk, eating fish, and licking clean, cool water from a beautiful all-American home. I was still in Missouri. The friendly mid-western hospitality was still in the air. Of course, my guard would never be let-down. Evil humans and dangerous animals are scattered across our entire planet. Because I wasn't a human being, caution would be the first step in becoming a resident of the town.

Before I proceeded any further, I scanned the area, searching for a town sign. Eureka! The town sign read: HANSONVILLE, MISSOURI. To my utter shock, it was right behind me.

Thankfully, I backtracked several steps, out of curiosity. I had to know what the sign read. Well, this is a case of curiosity helping the cat. I was very thankful there weren't any other cats nearby. Otherwise, I would've been nicknamed 'Dummy'. I wasn't going to tell anyone about my silly mistake, except for you. Cats that are on the alert understand the importance of signs.

The name Hudsonville relaxed me. It's a name that projects an image of a quiet place, with friendly inhabitants; a place where people raise their young to be good citizens. No doubt, many of the residents of Hudsonville owned companion animals. I just wanted to be one of those lucky critters!

I walked past the row of houses, straight to the city. As soon as I entered Hudsonville city limits, I directed my walk towards a neighborhood with the scent of hamburger looming in the air. If I'd been a lion all of the hamburger would've been mine. I can't explain to you how good animal flesh tastes. I know many humans eat meat, but, they're not built to enjoy raw meat: drippy blood, bones, skin, tendons, flesh, and entrails. I drool whenever I think of it.

I crossed Maple Boulevard, into Norton Street. Norton Street was very long, clean, and uppity. This was the kind of place a cat could enjoy him/herself.

Before I knew it, I was on the lawn of a house located at 1440 S. Norton Street. There were dozens of men, women, and children, chomping down on juicy hamburgers. A few of them were eating double burgers. Jeepers, what a delicacy!

DR. FORRESTER

The people who were eating on the lawn were quite fond of each other. I could tell by their demeanor. But, I had more pressing problems at hand. For one thing, I was salivating like a rabid dog. Really, that's how freaking hungry I was!

In a calculated move, I scanned each and every person, seeking out the friendliest one amongst them. This is the man or woman who'd feed me well.

I spotted a young blond who was wearing a lovely red dress. Although she seemed like a nice person, she also looked like a street walker. I didn't want to end up living with a harlot. So, I had a sudden change of heart.

I was suddenly diverted from my gaze, by an elderly man. Perhaps he was in his mid-seventies. His hair was gray and white, and combed back. He had a fresh bite mark on his neck. Initially, I became suspect. The bites were made by another human.

The elderly man took notice of me gawking at him. He cautiously approached me then introduced himself.

"Hello, young kitty. I'm Dr. Randal Forrester. What's your name?"

"My name is Jody Wilson. I'm from Missouri. I'm looking for a good human friend, who'll take me in as a member of his

family. I'm very intelligent, athletic, cute, wonderful, and incredibly awesome. I'm sure that there are humans around who'd give an arm and a leg to have a cat like me in their household."

"Well, I'm looking for a good cat! Would you like to live in my home?" asked Dr. Forrester.

"I sure as hell would! No cat in her right mind could turn down an invitation like that! Oops! Sorry for my language. You must understand! Please, I need to feel secure. Also, I need to be a member of a good North American family!"

"Is there a catch? Do I have to jump through flaming hoops? Can I be a full-fledged member of your family? What kind of doctor are you?" I asked.

"I'm a criminal/forensic psychologist. I'm a part-time professor at Hudsonville College. I spend the rest of my time writing articles in journals pertaining to psychology, criminology, and criminal justice. I prefer to work solo," said Dr. Forrester.

Dr. Forrester introduced me to several of his friends.

After the introductions, Dr. Forrester placed a large slab of raw hamburger on a paper plate then placed it beside me.

As soon as I began to munch down on the hamburger, Dr. Forrester went to a makeshift wash basin. He washed his hands then dried them.

A short while later, Dr. Forrester placed a bowl of milk, and a bowl of water, beside me. Afterwards, he took several steps back.

Dr. Forrester seemed like a swell guy. I was hoping that he had a sweet wife at home. That way, I'd have two good friends, instead of just one.

Dr. Forrester left me for fifteen minutes. As soon as he returned, he pointed to his gray van. He carried me into his van then began his drive home.

We arrived at Dr. Forrester's home a short while later. His domicile was located at 1300 Wilmington Street. It was a decent house, suitable for an upper middle class family. I figured Dr. Forrester made big bucks.

Dr. Forrester parked his gray van in his garage then turned off the ignition. Afterwards, he grinned at me. I returned the favor.

Although I was happy to have a new home, my feline senses were sending me mild danger signals. While in the gray van, I scented 'faint human blood'. I knew that it wasn't from a minor nose bleed. I wasn't quite sure what to make of it. Maybe I was being a bit paranoid.

Upon entering Dr. Forrester's house, he waved me over to one of the bedrooms. I followed him like his own shadow.

There was a litter box near the bedroom closet. It was too good to be true! Well, I wasn't exactly complaining. So, I thanked Dr. Forrester then leaped onto my new litter box.

Although I sensed that it had recently been occupied, it was clean. I figured Dr. Forrester had owned a cat that had recently died. I didn't want to ask too many questions. So, I stayed quiet about this matter.

For the following six weeks, things went just fine. Dr. Forrester was a gentleman. He seemed so at ease with me. But, I had my suspicions. Dr. Forrester would often return home in the middle of the night, carrying a slight scent of human blood.

Also, he'd never been married. A man deep into his seventies who'd never been married? I mean, as far as I knew, he was as straight as a ruler.

My mild suspicions proved correct. On Saturday the 12th of December, I found out what kind of 'monster' Dr. Forrester really was. To be precise, it occurred at 11:45 P.M. I was rudely awakened by the sound of shattering glass.

Dr. Forrester had inadvertently knocked over a large pitcher while he was slithering into his home. This time, I decided to investigate.

This episode caused me to remember something very sad. Years ago, in Iowa, two guys decided to illegally enter a man's property, with the intent to smash the heads and bodies of countless cats. In case you're wondering what the tools of attack were: baseball bats, and whatever else. The poor kitties were absolutely defenseless.

This was a premeditated and sadistic act. As usual, the judge slapped them on their wrists, as though it was a minor mistake.

I decided to be very careful in my investigation. At the same time, I had to find out what was going on.

Like a leopard in the dead of night, I stealthily left my bedroom. I was so careful, even the house bugs couldn't have detected my movements. One step at a time, I approached the target area. As I got closer, the scent of death became overwhelming. Suddenly, it hit me like a ton of bricks! Blood, rotting flesh, and outright evil, had engulfed me.

As soon as I entered the living room, I scanned the area. I found no one there. As I was pondering about my next move, I was startled by a sudden thumping noise. It came from the kitchen.

I went to the kitchen, only to find the basement door wide open. I heard the thumping noise again, coming from downstairs. I decided to descend the stairwell.

When I got to the basement floor, I saw Dr. Forrester rip open a black garbage bag encasing a cadaver. I was shocked!

I stayed put, because I didn't want Dr. Forrester to take notice of me. I took a step to my right, in order to get a birds-eye view of what was happening. With that movement, I not only contradicted my initial intent, but screwed-up my covert presence.

I'd inadvertently stepped on a loose piece of wood, causing it to crunch. My mistake instantly caught the attention of Dr. Forrester.

"Hey, who the hell is that? I demand to freaking know ... right now! I'm armed and extremely dangerous! I'll destroy you in a flash! I'm not kidding!" shouted Dr. Forrester.

There was nothing to do but stand in the light then hope for mercy. After glancing at Dr. Forrester, I caught notice of the partially hidden cadaver. The victim was a tall woman, with auburn-colored hair. She would've been at least six feet tall when she was living.

It looked like Dr. Forrester had kidnapped the young woman. He probably tricked her into getting into his van then he strangled her to death. I could see slightly faded hand marks around the woman's throat. To know for sure, I'd have to find out from the murderer himself.

"Jody, come here! Jody, please don't be afraid of me! I want you to be by my side! Please, be patient with me, while I carry this slab-of-meat onto the operating table. You see, I'd always wanted to be a forensic pathologist," said Dr. Forrester.

Even though I almost gagged from the horrific scent of the cadaver, I went ahead and obliged Dr. Forrester. I couldn't escape, even if I'd wanted to. Dr. Forrester had a gun in his holster. Not to mention, the other deadly weapons hanging on the walls of the basement. By golly, he must've had a hundred weapons in his basement.

Dr. Forrester's basement looked like a dungeon from the Dark Ages; containing three shovels, two axes, hammer, bowie knife, surgical instruments, screws, a vice, operating table, a bottle of the capitulation drug, overhead light, chainsaw, and a surgical kit. All ready for use. I didn't have to ponder about what the chainsaw was for.

"Jody, I don't want you to think that I'm a lunatic! I won't punish a woman, unless she deserves to be punished. Rarely, do I ever punish a man, or an animal. The only females I can handle are from your species. I can't even handle canine bitches!

Jody, you don't know what it feels like. I mean, I see these 'evil creatures' who call themselves human. They hurt my feelings, so, I punish them! You'd do the same thing if you were in my shoes, wouldn't you?

Jody, promise not to tell anyone what I'm about to tell you, okay," requested Dr. Forrester.

"Dr. Forrester, I promise not to tell anyone what you are about to tell me," I responded.

"In my prime, I did this kind of 'work' three or four times a month. See, I'm what those lunatic criminologists call a transient serial killer. I love that 'title'.

I want to be like my heroes; Dahmer, Gacey, Son of Sam, Panzram, The Vampire of Dusseldorf, The Alligator Man, Fish, Bundy, Jack the Ripper, and countless others. Too bad, there aren't that many women on this list. You see, they can't make the grade!" exclaimed Dr. Forrester.

"Dr. Forrester, are you a virgin?" I asked.

Instantly, Dr. Forrester's demeanor changed. I saw the real Mr. Hyde in him. Boy was it terrifying!

"Who the freaking hell are you? You can't ask me that kind of question? Maybe, I should chop you up then feed you to the German shepherd next door! Would you like that?" asked Dr. Forrester.

"No, I didn't mean to provoke, or anger you. I was kind of wondering. Cats are natural suspicious beings," I said.

"During my childhood years, I often fantasized that I was Jack the Ripper. Boy, did it make me feel good. Now, I've just added another trophy to my collection.

If you tell anyone what I just told you, I'll skin you alive. Afterwards, I'll toss you into that barrel. In case you're wondering, all of the barrels in my basement contain lime. You'll slowly sizzle to death. Got it?" asked Dr. Forrester.

I played along with Dr. Forrester's weird game. I didn't want him to turn on me. Unfortunately, I had to watch Dr. Forrester chop-up the cadaver, piece by piece. Then he tossed slabs of flesh into the barrel. Boy, did it sizzle!

After Dr. Forrester finished his business, he went to the restroom. Meanwhile, I was ordered to stay put, or else.

I froze, unable to think of what to do. It was so bad, I thought my legs were about to turn into rubber bands.

When Dr. Forrester returned, I followed him upstairs. On my way up, I thought of how I, a cat, would re-mold Dr. Forrester into a better person. I figured it would take a year, or two.

As time passed, I really thought that we were making progress. Three months went by without Dr. Forrester committing another heinous crime.

On the first day of the fourth month, Dr. Forrester asked me to come along with him on a short trip. He claimed to have some important business to finish.

I suspected that Dr. Forrester was getting ready for another 'criminal charade'. In order to slither out, I dropped onto my side then played sick. Luckily, Dr. Forrester fell for it. If he hadn't I would've been in deep manure.

Dr. Forrester began to go out on nightly ventures. Luckily, he didn't ask me to tag along. Then, on a beautiful Saturday evening, Dr. Forrester drove his van to an undisclosed location. He brought along his tool box. It was a clear sign that he was on the prowl. By now, I knew that I had to act. There was no telling when that creep was returning home.

Luckily, there was a German shepherd next door. I decided to visit him then tell my entire story. I was hoping that the German shepherd was an honorable person.

I exited Dr. Forrester's house, then walked to the house next door. Upon arrival, I noticed that the German shepherd was sleeping.

I pounded my paws on the lawn, in order to awaken the German shepherd. It worked.

As soon as the German shepherd awakened, he growled at me. I had to act quickly, or else, face some serious consequences.

I cautiously approached the German shepherd, until getting within spitting distance of his muzzle. There, I rubbed the side of my head against his right foreleg. Afterwards, I began to speak to him in an open and frank manner.

"Hi, my name is Jody Wilson. Please, I need your help! I must notify the authorities about Dr. Forrester! He's a very dangerous monster! Do you understand what I'm trying to tell you?" I asked.

"Yes, I understand you quite well. Although I've suspected Dr. Forrester of doing evil things, I needed proof. I won't go on a witch hunt, until I'm certain of the facts."

By the way, my name is Greg Palter, and I won't waste my precious time on a lie."

After conveying my story to Greg, he agreed that something drastic had to be done, fast. Greg told me that there was a retired Bloodhound living at 1310 Wilmington Street. He'd been a sniffer dog for the Hudsonville Police Department until his retirement a year earlier.

Sadly, Greg was shot in the right foreleg just a few days before his official retirement.

I thanked Greg dearly then went to 1310 Wilmington Street. As soon as I reached the perimeter of the yard, I took notice of a blood hound peeking at me from inside his dog house.

## WALTER HOUND

"Please, I need to talk to you about something very important! But first, give me your word that you won't attack me, if I approach you," I said.

"Look, I'm so sad and depressed. I need to be useful to someone. I need a friend, really badly. Please, come here. Don't be afraid of me. I'll help you, if I can. But, be aware that I'm slightly handicapped," said the Bloodhound.

The Bloodhound invited me into his dog house, then, offered me a doggy bone. I declined.

"My name is Walter Hound. Officially, I'm a retiree. My owners are also retirees. The three of us worked for the Hudsonville Police Department.

Sadly, my owners' faculties are slipping away. So, if you need help in a police matter, you can only speak to me about it. Otherwise, you'll be wasting your time," said Walter.

Walter and I chatted for a few minutes. As soon as I remembered my purpose for the visit, I paused for a moment. Then, I went ahead and described my predicament to Walter.

Walter told me that he'd sniff through Dr. Forrester's yard, house, and garage; if need be. He suspected that there were many more victims on the premises. But, there was a

condition. All the field work would have to be done while Dr. Forrester was out.

I informed Walter that Dr. Forrester was out, all day long, on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays.

Walter and I decided to conduct our field work the following Saturday. But, on the condition that I was ready to do whatever was necessary to bring Dr. Forrester to justice, if relevant evidence was found. I agreed to the condition.

I endured three days and three nights of extreme anxiety and tension. I pondered about what could go wrong: Dr. Forrester could go out for a short period of time, snatch a young woman, then proceed to destroy her.

Thankfully, I had a good friend with me. When it comes to sniffing for evidence, Bloodhounds rule.

On the following Saturday, I awakened with little appetite for food. In addition, my mouth was dry. By 6:00 P.M., I regained my appetite then ate and drank up a storm.

The thought of Dr. Forrester's arrest had engulfed my mind. He had to be thrown into the jaws of justice.

Dr. Forrester left his home at 8:45 P.M. As usual, he left alone. I couldn't imagine how Dr. Forrester would treat his wife. I mean, if he'd had one.

I waited until Dr. Forrester was out of the neighborhood before going to 1310 Wilmington Street.

I found Walter waiting for me at the perimeter of his lawn. A short while later, Walter and I went to Dr. Forrester's house. As soon as we were on the porch, I reminded Walter that the mission may cost us our lives.

After reviewing our game plan, Walter and I decided to backtrack. We began our sniffing in the yard. Although cats are all-round incredible animals, they can't 'sniff' as efficiently as most dog breeds can. Not to mention Bloodhounds.

It only took a short while before Walter found a mass grave in the back yard. It was amazing how easily Dr. Forrester evaded the authorities and his neighbors' suspicions. No wonder that most serial killers aren't captured until they've wreaked havoc on their society.

Dr. Forrester could fit into any middle class neighborhood. In addition, he had a fairly decent job. By golly, he was a freaking professional!

After finding the mass grave, Walter and I resumed our search. We ended up finding more dead bodies.

There were three barrels inside Dr. Forrester's garage. Indeed, the barrels seemed out of place. Walter and I pulled off the lids of the barrels. Then, we knocked the barrels onto the ground.

Inside each of the barrels was a partially decomposed human body. I can't tell you how stinky those bodies were. Walter and I had to run out of the garage. Otherwise, we would've puked our brains out! Really!

After a short rest, Walter and I returned to the garage. We understood that there was more work to do.

Walter and I determined that the three victims were preteen females. Perhaps, they were nine, or ten years-old. Walter and I looked at each other in utter shock. We figured that there was probably more bad news to come.

We didn't have to wait for long. Walter and I detected the scent of human semen. Upon closer examination, Walter and I noticed that there were signs of 'forced copulation' upon each of the three preteens. Not a very pretty sight. Dr. Forrester was a serial killer/sexual predator. As if being a serial killer isn't terrible enough.

Walter and I exited the garage then rested in the yard for ten minutes. Indeed, it was a well-needed rest. We had streams of tears running down our faces. Could anyone blame us for crying?

After our rest, Walter and I entered Dr. Forrester's house through the front door. Surprisingly, he never locked his door. He probably thought that he was the most evil person in the whole world. What did he have to fear from another criminal?

Upon entering Dr. Forrester's house, Walter motioned me to the basement. He became very anxious. Knowing that there was something hideous down there, we braced ourselves.

"Walter, do you think what Dr. Forrester showed me in the basement was only the tip of the iceberg? Please tell me before we go downstairs," I said.

"Jody, I smell rotting flesh! It has been decomposed and chopped-up into pieces. After I see this catastrophe, I'm calling Chief Carmella. He'll send over reinforcements," said Walter.

We went down to the basement. This time, there were five barrels in the corner. We tipped over all of the barrels. Thankfully, the lids weren't securely tightened.

The stench was terrible! If I'd been a human, puke would've poured out from all of my orifices. Walter was right. What we saw were slabs of flesh, blood, maggots, rot, and other disgusting stuff. It was a shocking sight!

Apparently, Dr. Forrester had forgotten to destroy the cadavers. This mistake would lead to at least five more charges of murder.

A short while later, Walter and I left the basement. Specifically, we went to the kitchen. Walter convinced me that calling Chief Carmella was the best option we had. I agreed.

Walter climbed up onto the kitchen table, then reached over and grabbed the phone. After calling the police and explaining to them what we'd seen, Walter put the phone down.

At that very moment, Dr. Forrester pulled his van into his driveway. A terrifying ordeal, indeed!

"Let's hide in my bedroom. My closet's large enough for a mammoth. We can wait it out until Dr. Forrester sleeps, or decides to go out again," I said.

Walter and I ran to my bedroom then we hid inside my closet. Our adrenaline levels shot up through the clouds. Any higher, and we would've passed out. Really!

Dr. Forrester entered his house then headed straight for the kitchen. Unfortunately, he noticed the craters in his yard.

"Jody, I know you're here! You and a stinking dog! You and your doggy friend must show yourselves. If you don't come out, I'll find you. Then, you'll both be in big trouble!" shouted Dr. Forrester.

Walter and I understood that we had to escape. Dr. Forrester had more than enough weaponry to easily kill us.

Walter and I exited my bedroom then headed to the front door. We assumed that Dr. Forrester would block the back door exit. Well, we were dead wrong! We should have known better. Dr. Forrester was a cunning little devil.

We could hear Dr. Forrester's feet pounding on the carpet. He was heading towards the front door.

Walter and I picked up our pace, until we entered the kitchen. There, I leaped onto the kitchen sink, then waited for my beloved friend, Walter. At that instant, Dr. Forrester entered the kitchen carrying a shotgun. He didn't give us a warning. He pointed his shotgun at Walter then pulled the trigger. I don't have to tell you what happened next.

## YOU ARE FINISHED!

Since there was nothing I could do for poor Walter, I leaped through the opening of the window, onto the lawn. Then, I hauled ass! Good for me!

Dr. Forrester shot at me once, re-loaded his shotgun then shot at me another two times. Both times, I felt shrapnel zoom past my beautiful body. Thankfully, I wasn't hit.

I ran to the nearest alley then circled back until reaching a few houses down from Dr. Forrester's house.

A short while later, all hell broke loose! Five vehicles, four marked, and one unmarked, arrived at the scene.

Apparently, their sirens weren't turned on. Sometimes, it's better not to turn on the sirens. If Dr. Forrester had heard the sirens, he would've had time to escape. Thankfully, things didn't work out that way.

A bald, middle aged man exited an unmarked vehicle from the far end. In one swift move, he pulled out a blow horn then began to speak.

"This is Chief Carmella speaking. Dr. Forrester, we know you're inside. Your victims didn't die in vain! Understand this: there's absolutely no chance of escape! If you come out shooting, you're finished! We don't want a bloodbath here. We

want you to come out with your hands up, high in the air. You will not be harmed."

I cautiously approached Chief Carmella, then began to converse with him.

"Chief Carmella, may I be of assistance. I've been living in the Forrester home for quite some time now. In fact, Walter and I were the ones who discovered the bodies on Dr. Forrester's property.

I'm sorry ... Walter Hound is dead! Dr. Forrester shot him with a shotgun. We were conducting our own investigation into Forrester's evil doings. Once again, I'm sorry," I said.

Instantly, tears began to stream down Chief Carmella's cheeks. He lowered his blow horn then took a few moments to comprehend the sad news.

"Kitty, Walter was the best 'sniffer dog' our police department has ever had. Walter was a very modest dog. Never boasted about his feats considering he broke over two hundred cases with his incredible scenting abilities and wits.

I won't tell any of my men or women what'd happened to Walter until this problem has been solved. If I tell them now, they'll charge the Forrester house. If they get their hands on that bastard sociopath, they'll shred him into pieces. I have to answer to my superiors.

Dr. Forrester's originally from Chicago, Illinois. He probably told you that he was a professional of some sort. Well, it's true. Dr. Forrester is a learned man. He has money, a nice home, and brains. What an absolute waste.

Dr. Forrester's 'Mr. Hyde' began to surface years before he became a learned man. It began when he was working at the General Hospital.

Dr. Forrester was assigned to medical waste disposal. Often times, he'd carry big black bags full of body parts, entrails, and specimens.

Kitty, don't get me wrong. Waste disposal in a hospital is very important work. Individuals who have this particular job are hard-working, law-abiding citizens. Dr. Forrester is sick at heart.

Dr. Forrester traveled through the mid America, waiting for the right moment, then striking like lightening. It took five years for local, state and federal authorities to figure out that an evil person was striking a seven state area: Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, Illinois, Wisconsin, and Minnesota. Indeed, these were his favorite target areas.

The more times a serial killer/rapist strikes, the more likely additional evidence will be retrieved. It's unfortunate, but true. More victims have to die, or be harmed, for us to get closer to a serial killer/rapist. Unless he/she is stupid, or

very unlucky, this is the general rule. Reliable witnesses, however, are always worth more than gold in their weight.

Des Moines Police discovered a thumb and index print on a victim's belt buckle; what a miracle.

Dr. Forrester was slowly, but surely, tracked down as a result of the fingerprint discovery.

In addition, as Dr. Forrester continued to strike, he began to show signs of recklessness. Another big break came after Dr. Forrester did a job in a Madison park. He didn't plan this strike. It was 'impromptu'.

Actually, he was sitting on a park bench, eating his lunch. Suddenly, he spotted a potential target. Normally, he'd stalk her, form a game plan, then strike. But no, not this time, the temptation to strike was too great.

The twenty seven year-old blond was brutally raped, killed then disfigured. Worse yet, she was a newlywed. Her body was tossed into nearby bushes, then left to rot.

Luckily, Madison Police carefully removed every item from the trash cans in the park, and sifted through every strand of grass and bush in sight. They worked diligently, coming up with a set of fingerprints, hair fibers, and a piece of chewed-up gum.

All three samples came from the same man: Rodney Casper. Dr. Forrester had used one alias after another. Unfortunately, it's not always that difficult to change your name and personal history.

Dr. Forrester was already in the 'system'. He'd once tried to brutalize and rob an eighty year-old woman. Several witnesses jumped him, while he was dragging the poor woman into the bushes. GOD knows what he would've done to her in the bushes.

Thereafter, local, state, and federal authorities worked on this case. It took us quite a while to track Dr. Forrester down. We don't know what Dr. Forrester's his birth name.

Kitty, what did you say your name was?" asked Chief Carmella.

I didn't want to be a witness in a big criminal case. It would've drained my energy reserves. Furthermore, I didn't need the publicity. I did what I had to. Worse yet, I was hurting inside. My beloved friend was murdered, right in front of me.

I gave Chief Carmella an alias. I mean ... what else could I have done?

"Umm, umm, umm ..., I'm Lassie?" I responded.

"You know, that name sounds familiar. It certainly is a beautiful name. Somehow, I think of dogs whenever I hear that name. Yes, I've heard that name before. Well, maybe it was someone I knew back in high school.

In this big world of ours, I guess there are many women who have that name," said Chief Carmella.

Suddenly, we heard a racket from inside Dr. Forrester's house. It looked like the police had to go in and take Dr. Forrester out. I'm not talking about going to a fast food restaurant. I'm talking about gunning down Dr. Forrester!

"Dr. Forrester we want to help you! I will now call you. I want you to pick up the nearest telephone as soon as it rings.

You and I can talk, without any interruptions," said Chief Carmella.

Dr. Forrester opened a window then began to shout at Chief Carmella. Dr. Forrester knew very well that the sharpshooters were waiting for a good shot.

"This is my freaking house! I want you to go away and never come back! If you don't, I'll start shooting! You people are persecuting me!

The little harlots that I 'allegedly' chopped-up had it coming! They were worthless pieces of trash! Actually, they're worth a lot more dead, than alive! Their families should thank me from the bottom of their pathetic hearts, for ending their loved ones' lives!

Sure, I 'allegedly' did what I wanted with them, first. Then, I 'allegedly' butchered them. Indeed, things got really gooey! But, I like it that way. My two biggest 'alleged regrets' are that I couldn't get more of them; and the money I spent on those damn surgical gloves and 'special instruments'. Those things should be free for people like me.

I had it made! Unfortunately, those two creeps, Walter and Jody, ruined my 'alleged' killing streak! I got one of them right here; it's Walter! He's still alive! It's great! Now I can use him as a bargaining chip!

Guess what! Walter Hound's calling out for you, Jody Wilson! Jody, I know that you are there, beside Chief Carmella!

Jody do you remember Walter hound? I hope so, because you will hear him yelp, cry, and beg for mercy!

I demand a chopper! A million dollars in cash, in unmarked bills! And free passage out of this county! Give it to me, or else I'll kill an ex-police canine.

Carmella, give me a freaking answer ... now! I mean it!" shouted Dr. Forrester.

Chief Carmella couldn't give Dr. Forrester safe passage anywhere. Even if he could, he wouldn't. I mean, Dr. Forrester's was a threat to the entire United States.

Chief Carmella and his officers pushed for time. They played mind games with Dr. Forrester. They were hoping he'd tire out, and have a change of heart. They were dead wrong!

"Look, I've been waiting for my chopper for the last three hours. Carmella, you're a freaking liar!

Carmella, I will now plunge a steak knife into Walter's ugly heart. You know, like the way you plunge your knife into a juicy steak. I love it because there's nothing you can do about it!" Ha-ha-ha!" shouted Dr. Forrester.

We heard a loud yelp coming from inside Dr. Forrester's house. Exactly what a dying dog would do; yelp.

Afterwards, Walter cried out to me, to no avail. It was so bad I could hear him gasp for air. Then, the poor doggy died. This time it was for real.

I cried my brains out. Although I understood that my hands were tied, I still felt like a coward. I felt like I should have stormed Dr. Forrester's house.

By now, Dr. Forrester clearly understood that there was no escape, or leniency in sight. Aside from the other victims, he'd just killed a retired police dog.

Greg was loved by the entire Hudsonville Police Force. Not to mention the Mayor of Hudsonville. Walter helped make Missouri a safer place to live in; for both humans and animals.

Chief Carmella ordered the SWAT members to come to the scene, pronto! I braced myself for a big showdown.

A short while later a dozen well-armed SWAT team members arrived at the scene. Mind you, there were already ten SWAT members at the scene.

The news of Walter's murder spread like a wildfire. As expected, every officer was in a killing mood.

The SWAT team took up positions around the area. Also, more police officers were called to the scene. I think, even the Governor of Missouri wanted to help.

Suddenly, all hell broke loose! Dr. Forrester began firing at us, using an incredible, fully automatic machine gun. No doubt, it was military issue. If the Germans had had this weapon, they'd have won the war. Really!

Chief Carmella called in for Missouri State Police reinforcements. He was fiddling with the idea of calling in the Missouri National Guard.

I convinced him not to. We'd already committed overkill. More support would've been counterproductive. At the very least, there would've been a problem relating with the chain of command. I certainly didn't want that.

The 'lawmen' returned fire. In an incredible volley of rounds, Dr. Forrester's windows and walls were damaged beyond repair. Amazingly, it only took a few seconds of firing to do the job.

Meanwhile, Hudsonville Police were emptying the neighborhood; knocking on windows, and banging on doors.

It looked like Dr. Forrester went down for the 'permanent count'. One of the snipers claimed two direct hits: one to the chest, the other to the head.

As soon as Chief Carmella heard the news, he grinned then gave Captain Mullen a high-five.

Chief Carmella didn't want to take any chances. He wanted an absolute guarantee that Dr. Forrester was either killed, or had been permanently disabled. So, he gave the 'charging bull' orders.

Men ... women ... fire the tear gas, then charge that stinking house! No delays, whatsoever.

If Dr. Forrester is in possession of anything resembling a weapon, shoot to kill! Ask questions later!

Three tear gas canisters were fired into Dr. Forrester's house. I braced myself for much action.

Eleven SWAT members charged Dr. Forrester's house. They looked like a bunch of stampeding bulls.

I decided to slither out of the area. I had to get on with my own life. Also, I didn't want to answer any questions about Dr. Forrester. I was tired and anxious.

I walked for a short while then entered a yard, where I collapsed beside a large tree. Nothing, not even a world war could've awakened me. I was dead tired.

I awakened early in the morning. Luckily, I slept like a human baby. Unfortunately, I was famished. I had to get something into my system. Otherwise, I would've gone mad.

With intimidating clouds overhead, along with my other problems, things looked dim. It was time to find a new friend.

## YUM CHANG

As I was pondering about my predicament, a middle-aged Asian man approached me. Most of his hair was gray, and his hands were calloused. He smelled like janitor's liquid cleaner.

"Hey kitty, I'm Yum Chang! I'm a janitor at Hudsonville High. I'm going to work. Well, since it's a weekend, you can tag along. There won't be anyone else inside the main building. It'll all be ours."

"Jeepers, do you clean crap and urine inside restrooms? Do you mop floors? Do you take a lot of crap from the students? What about the faculty?"

I apologize for asking you so many questions. You're the first 'janitor' that I've ever met. I'd like to befriend you.

Yum, I'm pleased to meet you. My name is Jody Wilson. I was born in Missouri."

It looked like Yum and I were going to get along just fine. He really seemed like a swell guy. Yum was obviously a working class man.

He didn't have a ring on his finger. I could fill in his 'loneliness void'. A cat can do that for humans, you know?

Yum and I began our walk to Hudsonville High. A short while later, Yum hoisted me off the ground, then gently placed me inside his hand bag. He didn't want to take any chances. In case a faculty member was taking a walk near Hudsonville High.

Yum and I walked for a total of seven blocks, until we reached the entrance of the main building at Hudsonville High. After peering through the window of the double doors, Yum removed his keys from his pocket.

Yum quickly unlocked the locks then opened the double doors. Afterwards, he entered the building like a king. After taking a few steps, he removed me from his handbag. After blowing me a kiss, he gently placed me on the tiled floor.

As soon as my paws were firmly entrenched on the tiled floor, I scanned the area, searching for danger. Thankfully, the coast was clear.

I followed Yum into the supplies room. Inside, Yum took the articles that he needed then locked the supplies room.

As we were walking through the hallway, I detected the partially faded scent of alcohol, tobacco, and marijuana.

Indeed, drugs have become a big problem in many North American high schools. Even in small-town America, drugs manage to creep through tiny crevices.

As soon as we entered the men's restrooms, a horrific, monstrous stench, hit me like a ton of bricks! Honestly, I almost puked my brains out! I persevered because I wanted to see what janitors are forced to endure at work.

Considering what Yum had to endure, it was incredible how he could still manage to put on an occasional smile.

After Yum dunked his mop inside the stool, he pulled it out. Gooey water and ugly, stinky, gray-stuff, dribbled onto the tiled floor. It was really ugly-looking!

Yum mopped the tiled floor, not leaving any areas undone. I was pleased with his efficiency and earnest.

Yum then began to clean the toilets, and the tiled floor inside the stalls. It was a very saddening sight. If people could only see what kind of bullshit many janitors must endure, they'd clean up after doing their thing.

"See, this is the kind of horse manure that I have to put up with as a freaking janitor! Wait until you see what's inside stall number four! First, you must brace yourself. Okay?" requested Yum.

"Certainly, I'll brace myself. I want to know what's in that stall. Please, let me get a birds-eye view. I just hope it doesn't leap out onto my face, or something. As long as it stays in its place, I'm satisfied," I said.

Yum opened the door to stall number four, but didn't enter. He warned me to stay put. Even the floor inside stall number four was dirty.

Yum and I peered down at mounds, upon mounds, of pure, unadulterated ... shit ... everywhere! Even on the toilet lid.

In addition, a complementary roll of toilet paper had been tossed into the toilet. Not to mention the dry urine that was sprinkled everywhere. GIGANTIC snot dangled from the toilet handle. The perpetrators couldn't have imagined how much pain and suffering they were inflicting on their school janitor.

The mounds of shit before our eyes must've weighed over twenty pounds. Another pound on the toilet lid, and it would've collapsed.

What caught our eyes was a GIGANTIC log of shit, behind the toilet lid. It was so horrible, I almost cried. I took several steps back, but continued observing the spectacle.

Absolutely, worst of all was a janitor's 'monster nightmare'. Underneath all the shit, toilet paper, urine, and whatever else, was a rubber strainer taken from one of the urinals. You see, it was embedded at the bottom of the toilet bowl.

What did this mean? It meant that nothing could be flushed down the toilet, until the rubber strainer was removed. Unfortunately, Yum wasn't supplied with working gloves. In effect, he had to clean everything up with his bare hands.

"Jody! Do you see all that shit, urine, toilet paper; that GIGANTIC snot on the toilet handle, the GIGANTIC log, and the strainer?

Look! That freaking log looks like a giant python! It's all curled-up, with a heat and a tail end.

I've had it with this damn job! I keep complaining and complaining. All to no avail! The Hudsonville Board of Education treats me like an idiot who doesn't know any better!" shouted Yum.

Yum literally dropped what he was doing then motioned me to follow him. Apparently, he'd quit his job. I certainly couldn't have blamed him. I wouldn't have been able to endure those working conditions for a single minute!

Yum and I left Hudsonville High, without even glancing back at the school. It was a very somber walk to Yum's apartment. Overhead, the clouds became extremely menacing and dark. Normally, that would mean a soon-to-be-thunderstorm.

A short while later it began to pour, big times. Yum and I decided to run to his apartment. We ran several blocks, until we reached 1040 Centurion Street West. Yum motioned me to stop. He pointed to a dilapidated-looking building.

With utter shame in his eyes, he told me to follow him there. I obliged him. As we walked to the dilapidated building, Yum began to tear.

I was certain Yum understood that life would always be rough for him. Yum would probably end up becoming a beggar,

collecting unemployment, or do hard time in a penitentiary. Barring a miracle, that is.

Upon entering the dilapidated building, I felt a sharp 'stink'. It hit me like a ton of bricks. Actually it smelled like the restrooms at Hudsonville High. No wonder, Yum hated those restrooms.

Yum and I walked up a flight of stairs, to room number 208. Yum quickly took pulled out his keys, then proceeded to unlock his apartment door. As soon as both locks were turned, Yum quickly opened his apartment door then motioned me in. Then, he closed the door.

Surprisingly, Yum's apartment was relatively tidy. It was clean, but the articles of furniture were cheap. I didn't care about that. As far as I was concerned, Yum was a good friend.

"Jody, you're not like those creepy humans who torment me. They use me, ignore me, and they blame me for anything that goes wrong. I don't know what to do!"

Last year, my wife left me for another man. He was an attorney at Spencer & Gentry Law Firm. He made big bucks! I can never match that. Well, unless I go into the narcotics business. Don't worry, I won't do that. I've got enough problems, already.

Jody, I'm very lonely. I've got a bit of money invested overseas. Back home in China, my father was a big shot. We were from a very powerful family who had deep in the communist regime. You see, my father was a die-hard red. A freaking 'COMMY'!

Unfortunately, my father and uncles began to gamble, and waste their wealthy on stupid things. Luckily, I inherited a large sum of money before my father was able to waste it all. I decided to immigrate to the United States. Now, you see a dilapidated, unemployed man.

Jody, do you think I'm ugly?" asked Yum.

Yum was a very 'unattractive' man. He was old, ugly, chubby, short, and complained about everything. I didn't want to break his heart. So, I lied.

"Gosh, I ... think ... um ... you're a good looking man. Really! I don't think that you're old, ugly, chubby, short, and complain about everything," I responded.

"Jody, forgive me. I'm going to call up for some sweet company," said Yum.

"You can't do that! That's very naughty! Don't waste your money! Don't take any chances with S.T.D. s. Do not be a sinner! Yum, I know you're an honorable man! I understand that you've had a rough life, but, just hang in there! Things will get better! I mean, you can't be that horny! Are you?! If you are, I'm out of here!"

Yum, you're a swell guy! I mean ..., I ... mean, a swell American. You're a swell American! You are a citizen. Therefore, you're now one of us!" I exclaimed.

"Jody, I'm nothing but a dilapidated, has been, janitor! Before my wife left me, she called me a freaking loser. Also, she called me a 'citizen foreigner'. She said that 'my kind' could never become a real American.

Then, why did she ever make love to me? I wondered.

On that dreaded evening, I got home at 8:00 P.M., expecting some love and company. I got nothing but pure, unadulterated, bitching!

My wife and I were married for eight long years. I must admit, it wasn't all a waste. Actually, I cheated on her numerous times. You see, I was trying to get back at her for being a freaking bitch!

I had a right to cheat on her. Well, I suspected she was having an affair with another man. Guess what? It was the same creep that she ended up marrying!" shouted Yum.

"Come on, Yum! Please, don't talk like that! Look, why don't you order a pizza, or something. We'll eat together, and watch television. In fact, I'll even drink some pop with you. Don't worry, I love pizza and pop. Also, we can enjoy our caffeine buzz together. Order some high caffeine pop with the pizza. Guess what? Chocolate or sauce can intensify a caffeine buzz. I can't wait till we both have an incredible buzz together. How does that suit you?" I asked.

"Jody, you're something else! Let's do that! Just give me a moment to get the phone number of Anthony's Pizza," said Yum.

Yum got up, then walked over to the kitchen, looked at a posting on his fridge door, then called in for some pizza.

After calling-in his order, Yum returned to the sofa then sat down beside me. Instantly, both of us began to salivate like dogs. Just thinking about that pizza and pop was driving us crazy.

Yum turned on his television then flipped through the channels with his remote control. He stopped on KHJB Channel 48. A gruesome horror flick from the 60's was showing. I've always liked horror flicks. Yum and I watched the horror flick enthusiastically. Thirty minutes into the show, we heard a knock on the door. Yum got up like a rocket, pulled out some cash from his wallet, then opened the door.

"Extra large pizza, with onions, and black olives Also, garlic bread and a twelve pack of 'Lightening Pop', " said the delivery man.

Yum paid the delivery man, closed the door then returned to the sofa. Yum could sense how hungry I was. I was drooling like a hungry lioness on the Serengeti Plains.

Yum got up then went to the kitchen. He removed a large bowl, two paper plates, and a glass from the kitchen cupboard. Afterwards, Yum returned and placed the articles on the coffee table in front of us.

Yum poured pop into the bowl, and placed two slices of pizza on each paper plate. Afterwards, he poured some pop into his glass.

I plunged my canines deep into my food like a hungry lioness. Afterwards, I consumed every drop of pop in my bowl. Meanwhile, Yum was munching down on his pizza, and drinking pop.

Yum and I ended up finishing off the pizza and pop. Our stomachs were distended beyond belief.

After the horror flick ended, I searched the channels for something nice to watch. I ended up stopping at the Food Channel. Yum and I watched a professional chef prepare a delicious meal.

Yum and I closed our eyes then fell asleep. We ended up sleeping many hours.

As soon as I awakened, I glanced up at the clock. Wow! Time had flown by like a passing breeze.

Although it was now midnight, Yum and I were now wide awake. We conversed about various subjects.

Roughly an hour later, Yum went to the fridge then pulled out a 2 liter bottle of pop, and a bottle of Bourbon.

Immediately, I sensed that something wrong was about happen. Yum was very depressed and frustrated. The last thing he needed was booze in his system.

"Please! Yum, don't get wasted! You've got enough problems on your mind. You don't want to be drunk ... and ... depressed. That's a terrible combination. Your problems will only be aggravated. No doubt, you'll develop additional problems. Stay sober. We'll talk about many good things. Is that okay?" I asked.

Yum didn't respond to my inquiry. He sat down on his sofa then proceeded to down a powerful mixture; Bourbon and pop. He almost looked like a camel guzzling water.

As soon as Yum had 'consumed' a pint of Bourbon, he went to the fridge then brought back a six pack of beer.

Yum guzzled down the first two beers without even taking a breath. Afterwards, he slowed down to a normal pace. Indeed, Yum was a first class drinker. Too bad!

"Jody, I feel like I must tell you something about myself. I've been a freaking janitor at Hudsonville High for over twenty five years. I've broken school rules and regulations. Not to mention, the law. I only committed these acts during the graveyard shift.

You see, there were days and nights when I was supposed to be a janitor, and a security guard, simultaneously. The Hudsonville County Board of Commissioners stink big times!

Every so often, during the graveyard shift, I'd find pop and food in the faculty fridge. I even found money inside some of the faculty desks. Well, the temptation to take what I wanted was overwhelming. Especially when there were goodies inside the fridge," said Yum.

"What do you mean by goodies?" I asked.

"Jody, I'm talking about beer, wine, and hard booze! Okay, there was tons of food, too. Boy, that 'contraband' was good! I'd stop what I was doing, in order to eat, drink, and party. It didn't take long for me to get high and/or drunk. Afterwards, I'd crash out for an hour or two.

Upon awakening, I'd quickly make up for lost time. Thankfully, I always got the job done.

I mean, who the hell was going to discipline me? If anyone of those creeps in the school administration tried anything, I would've gone straight to the Hudsonville Gazette. That would've been one hell of a story.

Once in a while, I'd pick the lock of a desk drawer or cabinet drawer, in the administration office. This is where the special snacks were located. As soon as I took them, they became mine. Once, I snatched a one hundred dollar bill! Really! I'm not freaking kidding!

But, the article that I enjoyed snatching the most was a 'lone fifty' dollar bill inside the Vice Principal Willard's desk. I searched frantically, in order to find more bills, without any luck. Initially, I thought it was a trap. A moment later, my urge to take what was rightfully mine over-powered me," said Yum.

I interrupted Yum's story, because I couldn't comprehend the phrase 'rightfully mine', in this context.

"Yum, what do you mean, by 'rightfully mine'?" I asked.

"Look ... Jody ... I worked my ass off in that stinking hell-hole! That SOB principal had it against me. I knew that he was the major culprit of the restroom conspiracy against me.

The faculty and staff made a lot more money than I would've made in a hundred lifetimes. They had their fancy degrees, while I had my dirty, stinking, toilet-cleaning hands.

When I had the day shift, I soon noticed that not a single member of faculty or staff ever looked me straight in the eyes. Gosh, they never even looked at my face, for that matter. If one of 'me ever said hi, his/her head would always be turned away from me. I felt like a gargoyle. To them I was the 'China-man-school-janitor'. They couldn't understand how a 'Chinese guy'

was only a janitor. Like, we're all supposed to be geniuses," said Yum.

Yum continued drinking and talking. He refused to stop drinking. In fact, his attitude and demeanor were changing for the worse. Yum was now becoming an angry, insolent, self-pitying, and grouchy.

"Jody, you don't know how I freaking feel! Don't patronize me! You're nothing but a little pussy! I'm a freaking human being! I'm a man! I can do whatever I damn well please!" shouted Yum.

I felt like clobbering Yum on the side of the head, but help back. After all, Yum was smashed. I couldn't hit a drunkard. Yum had a drinking problem.

In fact, Yum began to show signs of intoxication early on in his drinking bout. Also, before he took his first gulp, his hands were trembling.

As soon as Yum passed out, I opened his fridge, then ate and drank whatever I could. I knew it was all over between us. The least I could do was to leave Yum's apartment fully satiated.

I ended up eating large quantities of beef, fish, and chicken. Also, I drank large quantities of water and milk. Although I left a big mess, I had no intention of cleaning it up.

## THE OLSONS

After I finished off the milk, I closed my eyes then fell into a very deep sleep. I awakened at 10 A.M. It was a sunny day.

I peered through Yum's kitchen window, in order to scan the entire area. I was searching for a highway, or a junction. Luckily, I found what I was looking for.

I quickly ran to the apartment door then leaped onto the door's lock. After quickly unlocking the door, I turned the door-knob then pulled back. I turned then leaped onto the carpet. Now, the door was wide open. I didn't even glance back at Yum. Apparently, Yum had puked his brains out while I was asleep.

I walked to Junction 455 West, with a very powerful urge to leave Missouri. Somehow, I felt like I was being called to another part of my country. Although I loved 'my Missouri', I needed to get a fresh start.

As I was walking on Junction 455 West, I thought about my new life. I began my trek out of my home state, waiting for a merciful human to give me a free ride. I stayed on the shoulder of the road, in order to make a quick leap away from any cat-hating driver.

I just wanted to live in a beautiful home, under the care of good humans. This is what the average cat wants. Why not? I was living in the land of plenty.

As I continued my walk, I noticed that every so often, a driver or passenger would shout an obscenity at me. Shouting obscenities spiked my hair. Every time it happened, I understood that the situation could easily get out of hand.

Let's suppose that the driver of a vehicle were to stop. Then, suppose three humans with baseball bats exited the vehicle. What would I do then?

In one case, a bottle of beer was thrown at me. In another, a bucket full of ice was tossed at me.

Three hours into my walk, a driver in a blue Toyota pickup slowed down, to the point of being parallel to me. I wasn't sure of his intent. I had to wait and see.

Well, a short while later, the driver of the Toyota pickup stopped his vehicle. He allowed me to pass him.

When I was a good fifty yards in front of the Toyota pickup, the driver sped towards me. I was terrified! Some humans get-off on road kill.

Fortunately, I was wrong. As soon as the Toyota pickup was within several feet of me, the driver turned to his left then slowed down. Shortly afterwards, he came to a full stop. A chubby man exited the Toyota pickup. He scanned the area then walked into the shoulder of the road.

Afterwards, he unzipped his zipper then urinated on the shoulder. Seeing an opportunity, I ran to the Toyota pickup then leaped onto the trunk.

Meanwhile, the chubby man let out a farting spree. It almost sounded like he had a tuba shoved up his rectum.

The area stunk so bad even a squirrel decided to scram. Humans often induce 'stench' upon themselves.

After the chubby man finished relieving himself, he pulled up his zipper then belched three times. A mixture of fart and beer engulfed the area. That's another drunk driver for you.

The chubby man entered his Toyota pickup then continued to drive due west. I stayed low. I didn't want to take any chances.

I was hoping that the chubby man would go all the way to California. California's climate would be just right for a cat.

For the first twenty five minutes of the drive, there were no problems. Unfortunately, the chubby man continued to guzzle down one beer after another. My incredible feline senses detected a slight swerving of the Toyota pickup. He had to stop drinking, immediately! Otherwise, both of us would've been placed in an extremely dangerous situation.

A short while later, the chubby man pulled his Toyota pickup into a rest area. A sign in front of the tourism office read: KANSAS.

I took advantage of the situation, by leaping out to safety. I didn't want to end up in a horrific car accident. The chubby man still had more beers to guzzle down. Furthermore, I didn't want any trouble with the law.

As soon as my paws hit the gravel, a group of teenagers began to yell obscenities at me. A burly teen charged me at once. I couldn't comprehend his logic. What had I ever done to him?

Glancing back, I saw the chubby man briskly walking to a nearby restaurant. Even if he'd seen the spectacle, he wouldn't have helped.

There was no way in hell I was going to allow a burly teenager to harm me. No way! Impossible!

I decided to 'punish' the burly teen, in my own feline way. I turned then ran. I let the burly teen get very close to my tail, in order to keep him running. I pulled away at the right moment. The burly teen abruptly stopped, bent over, then pressed unto his stomach with both hands.

Naturally, I stopped to get a better look at what was happening.

The burly teen dry heaved three times then he vomited his brains out. I wanted him to learn a very painful lesson: it's not nice to scare an innocent cat; especially, if she's cute.

After viewing the spectacle, I ran into the forest area then hid behind a large tree. I could still see and hear what was going on in the rest area. I waited patiently, and cautiously.

After the burly teen finished puking, his friends called him back. Initially, he tried to be stubborn and defiant.

Thankfully, the burly teen reluctantly returned to his friends then he shed a few tears. His crying made me feel much better.

I scanned the area in search of a new friend. Cats are very intelligent beings. In this world a cat must be smart, cunning, and assertive. Otherwise, you'll live and die a sucker.

Even though I'd always been a patient cat, I couldn't stay put indefinitely. After an hour of waiting, I decided to go deeper into the forest, where I could ponder about my next move.

Right before I turned to leave, someone pulled a beige-colored trailer pulled into a parking space nearby. I kept an eye on the trailer. Trailers often house good families. That is, families who love companion animals. Being wealthy is a bonus.

The trailer was new and maintained quite well. It appeared to have all of the amenities needed for full security and comfort.

A family of three consisting of a couple and their son exited the trailer. The vacationers were grinning. Cats can detect subtle cues. Our awesome ancestors used their senses to help them survive in the wild.

These vacationers needed a cat. Why not me? The couple walked away from their trailer in unison. Their son straggled behind. There was a short exchange between the man and his son. Afterwards, his son went to his mother.

The vacationers sounded like they were from the Canadian Maritimes. Some cats, like me, are very proficient at identifying dialects and accents.

The vacationers went to the restrooms, located approximately fifty yards from their trailer.

A short while later the vacationers exited the restrooms, in unison. They looked like the Cleavers, all happy and stuff.

The husband handed his son a candy bar, and some bubble gum. His son gave him an 'I love you' hug. After letting go, the boy told his father that he loved him more than anyone else in the whole world. Truly, a load of crap! I could tell by the way his son was smirking, it was all an act.

As soon as the vacationers spotted me, they stopped in their tracks. The wife got down on one knee then signaled me to approach her.

Suddenly, the wife's cell phone began to ring. As soon as I showed interest in her, she told the person on the other end of the line to call back later. Then, she said her goodbyes.

I slowly 'crept' towards the woman. Although the vacationers seemed like they were friendly, with humans, you can never be absolutely certain. They can lash out at you, in an instant. Like a domesticated wolf/dog hybrid.

"Hey kitty, don't be afraid of us! We've got two cats back home in Nova Scotia. One's a gray tabby, the other's a Bengal. We miss them so much.

We've got two houses back in Now Scotia. Most domestic cats aren't too fond of horrific snow storms, or cold weather.

However, if a cat's living in a good home, with decent human companions, things will almost certainly run smoothly; even if they are living up north.

Too bad we can't take you back home with us. We'd have to declare your presence to Immigration Canada, at the port of entry. Quarantine, paperwork, and other stuff, would give us all a terrible headache. We hope you understand. I mean, we can't take the chance of getting caught smuggling you into Canada.

Getting caught means much humiliation. A fine and a ten year blotch on our record are also expected. Who the hell wants that?

Kitty, you have a country. It's not like you're stateless, or anything. The United States is a very large country. You have your continental states, and as a bonus, Alaska and Hawaii. Oh, we can't forget your territories.

At the moment, we're heading to San Diego. You can tag along if you want. No charge, of course. You'll be our 'American guest', " said the wife.

"Jeepers, I'd love to tag along! I'm trying to get to California. I know that it's quite a distance from Kansas. Your lift would be highly appreciated," I said.

"Gosh, you must be lonely. Look, when we get to San Diego, you can accompany us on our city-wide tour. We'll show you the major sites then we'll drop you off at a good location. As soon as we're done sightseeing in San Diego, we're going up to Oregon. After Oregon, it's Washington. That'll be the end of our visit to the United States.

Afterwards, we'll enter Canada through British Columbia. If everything goes according to plan, we'll go due east from there.

Our accent probably sounds a bit funny to you. You know something, you guys sound a bit funny to us. It's not a problem. Remember, we're all speaking the same language," said the husband.

They seemed like a good family. Well, I didn't have a choice, anyway. I either lived with them, or starved without them.

"Oh, we forgot to introduce ourselves: I'm Kathy Olson, that's my husband, Tom, and our beautiful son, Sean."

Kathy petted me between the ears, then, she knelt down and hoisted me off the ground. After looking into my eyes, she held me up against her chest, and kissed me between the ears.

For that brief moment, I felt 'MARITIME LOVE', sink deep into my veins. What a family! I wanted to convince the Olsons to take me with them to Nova Scotia. I figured people in those parts are laid back and friendly. Once again, I just wanted to live in a good home, with a decent family.

After petting me, Kathy put me back on the ground. Afterwards, Tom hoisted me above his head then carried me into the trailer.

Kathy and Sean followed us in. I got a sudden head rush. It looked like the Olsons were going to treat me with the utmost respect. If I could've just made them love me enough, I would've been able to go with them to Nova Scotia. I could've easily hidden underneath their baggage. I wouldn't make a sound, until we entered Canada. If, a customs officer became suspicious, I

could sink my beautiful body further into the baggage. In essence, I'd become an article of baggage.

For this to happen, I'd have to contort my beautiful body then freeze into a comfortable position. My eyes would have to remain closed and my breathing would have to be severely curtailed. In the end, it would've been well worth it.

As soon as we entered the trailer, Kathy placed me in a special 'kitty chair'. Then she slid over into the passenger's seat. Thankfully, she didn't forget to fasten her seatbelt. Tom turned on the ignition then began his drive to California.

While Tom was merging into Highway 768 West, he looked to his left, to ensure that no oncoming vehicles would clobber his trailer.

When we were firmly entrenched into the highway, Tom turned on the radio. He zoomed in on a soft music station. For the time being, it calmed my nerves.

Fifteen minutes into the drive, I slithered out of my kitty seat, then began to jounce around. Being a cat, I couldn't sit still for too long.

Then, I leaped onto Kathy's lap. She was delighted. I allowed Kathy to pet me, until I became too groggy. At that point, I leaped off of her lap then headed for a corner. Once there, I closed my eyes, then fell asleep.

As I was enjoying my sleep, three bumps on the highway caused me to fully awaken. I'd been out for over three hours! Good for me. I was now closer to California.

I noticed that Sean tapping on the back of his mother's seat. She didn't seem to mind. However, I did. I found the tapping sound very annoying. Therefore, I made it clear to Sean, through my body language.

In response, Sean glared at me with his sinister eyes. He had envy and anger in his heart. I couldn't blame him. However, I wasn't ready put up with his behavior.

Later, Sean's tapping began to really annoy me. Enough was enough! I couldn't take it anymore. I stared Sean down. Then, I extended my claws and bared my incredible teeth! Thankfully, that was enough to straighten him out.

Sean was a smart-mouth little snot who needed to grow up. Although he was a preschooler, he behaved like a spoiled baby.

But, Sean was also a cute child. He had red hair, hazel eyes, and was freckled-faced and slim. His two front teeth appeared larger than normal, but very cute-looking. Although he looked like the typical kid-on-the-block, far from it, he had a serious attitude problem.

Cats must always be on the alert for sinister kids. These kids have an incredible urge to lash out at someone; especially

an animal. The object is normally perceived as being weaker, or non-threatening.

A short while later, Sean removed his seatbelt, then began to horse around. His parents didn't like that. Sean, however, was intent on doing his own thing.

Tapping his mother's seat was no longer fun. Sean began to punch the back of her seat, without any let-up. Now, his mother gave him a word or two.

"Sean, why can't you behave yourself, like Jody?!" shouted Kathy.

Sean quieted down, without hesitation. It only lasted for ten short minutes. Afterwards, Sean began to bark like a dog. He was glaring at me the whole time. No doubt, Sean had built up a rivalry with me. I didn't feel that way towards him.

After I'd had my fill of Sean's aggressive behavior, I smacked him across the face.

As soon as my paw landed on Sean's cheek, he let out a scream! This caused Tom to swerve the trailer. He'd been startled.

"Sean, you must behave yourself! Otherwise, you'll regret it!" shouted Tom.

It felt really nice hearing Sean get bitched out.

"Kathy, I'll pull over into the next rest area. That way, we can have a word or two with our son. Afterwards, we can use the restrooms and wash-up.

Sean, your mom and I can punish you in the most painful way; without laying a hand on you. For example, we can keep you inside our trailer while we go to the movies. Or, we can remove your television privileges as soon as we get back home. We know you wouldn't like that. We must have order and good behavior in our family!" shouted Tom.

"I'm sorry for being a naughty boy! I'll be a good boy from now on," said Sean.

Tom turned right at the next exit then glanced back at me.

Shortly afterwards, we were parked in the rest area. We were now in western Kansas. The terrain was flat, from every corner. The light westerly wind, and the blue sky, made it a nice day.

As soon as Tom turned off the ignition, there was a minute of total silence. I didn't know what to make of it. Was it a family thing? I wondered.

Then, the silence broke.

"Sean, do you need to go pee-pee or poop-poop?" asked Tom.

"No daddy, me no go," responded Sean.

"What about me?" I asked.

"Jody, we didn't forget you. Come with us. I'll find you a good spot to relieve yourself," said Tom.

After we exited the trailer, I disregarded what Tom had said to me. I ended up running into a forested area behind the tourism office. I couldn't wait for the Olsons. I had to go, really badly. I had no time to study the road or any of the fixtures. As soon as I was out of sight, I relieved myself. Boy, did it feel good!

I was too shy to ask my 'new friends' for a litter box. I mean, they'd already given me free room, board, and a very long ride.

After successfully relieving myself, I returned to the trailer. As soon as I close enough to the trailer, I leaped through an open window, like a Bengal tiger. Although it felt good, my landing was disastrous!

My paws landed on Sean's head! He became infuriated! Instantly, I leaped onto the interior carpet.

"Sean, I'm so sorry! I was so excited about returning to this beautiful trailer, I forgot the basics of cat safety. No cat in the wild would've done what I just did. It was foolish," I said.

Sean glared at me then gritted his teeth. Since I needed the Olsons badly, I declined to go head-to-head with him.

Backing away from a confrontation with Sean was a mistake. Thereafter, he began to tease me. He stuck out his tongue at me, cursed me (in a whispering voice), head butted me, and worst of all, he began to blow in my face.

Sean took a breather for a few minutes. Then, he resumed his evil activities, with a vengeance. He pinched my tail then spat on me. I couldn't hold back anymore. I decided to retaliate.

My retaliation had to be lightening fast, because the Olsons had slipped out of their trailer for a last minute breather. Now, they were approximately fifty yards away from the trailer.

I bit Sean's right hand, then scratched his right shoulder. He cried then yelled out to his parents. I backed off, fearing that Sean's parents would hear his cries. Well, Sean was a lot more evil than I could've ever imagined.

After Sean wiped his eyes and cheeks with the back of his hand, he grinned at me. Indeed, it was an aggressive grin. What was he up to? I wondered.

Sean stood up then peered out of the passenger window. Afterwards, he quickly dropped his pants and underwear.

I was baffled by Sean's unusual behavior. He was a young boy, who certainly didn't know anything about the birds and the bees. Well, I didn't have to wait for long to discover what he was up to.

First, Sean urinated on the interior carpet. Then, he bent over, and pushed as hard as he could. A large brownish-greenish 'log' dropped onto the interior carpet. It was really ugly-looking. Instantly, the trailer stunk like hell. I tried to ignore it, but couldn't.

All I could do was wait it out. I assumed Sean's parents would make him clean up the mess as soon as they entered the trailer. Parents should never tolerate misbehavior from a child.

Sean wasn't afraid, or apprehensive. Why? I wondered.

A short while later, Tom and Kathy were at the 'doorstep' of their trailer. I was looking forward to Sean's spanking. He certainly deserved it.

As soon as Tom and Kathy entered the trailer, I braced myself for an immediate onslaught. The stench would no doubt hit them like a 'ton of manure'.

"What the hell is that horrible smell?! We clean the interior of our trailer at least once a week! This smell is new to us!" shouted Tom.

"Honey, since it's not from us, it must be from one of them," said Kathy.

I stayed quiet. That was a fatal error!

"Mommy, daddy, I know who went poop-poop! It wasn't me! Look! Jody's the one who did it! Jody scratched me really badly. It hurts a lot!"

"She bit me until I started crying! I just wanted to pet her, and be best friend in the whole world. I love to cats! She's a lion!" shouted Sean.

"Damn you, Jody! I want you out of our trailer, now! I don't want you near my family, ever again! We have a long vacation to enjoy! I don't want you to ruin it for us!"

You're a cat! Cats are supposed to be clean! Out! Out!! Out!!! Get out of our freaking trailer, now!" shouted Tom.

Just before I exited the trailer, I glanced at Sean. I understood what his motive was. It was a case of cat envy. Sean considered me the little sister who he could never compete with. Nor could he ever equal me in cuteness. Naturally, he felt threatened.

Although I was pissed off at Sean, I didn't want to aggravate the situation by shouting at the Olsons. It wasn't my trailer, anyway. Furthermore, The Olsons had the option of calling the police.

As far as the police would've been concerned, it would've been an open and shut case. Sean was bleeding, bruised, and had scratch marks on his body. If the VCOs had been nearby, it would've been curtains for me!

I exited the trailer in a state of confusion. No matter where a cat lives, there are always 'problem humans' lurking in

the shadows. A cat must choose her human friends wisely. A human can turn against his/her cat at any moment. The cat may be sold, tossed out, abused, neglected, or used as a breeding machine.

In humanities' defense, let us not forget the countless kind and generous 'ones' amongst them. They are scattered throughout the world. They'll take a cat in, treat him/her as one of their own, and never betray the trust.

The highest category of humans by cat standards, are those who stand up for our basic rights. They are animal protectionists.

As soon as I exited the trailer, I headed straight for the forested area. A short while later I was deep inside the forest. That's when I decided to slow down my pace.

I ended up scaling a large tree, like my leopard cousins. I perched myself on a large branch. Indeed, I felt like a leopard scanning his/her territory.

All was not good, however. Hunger, thirst, permanent shelter, and a game plan, were issues that were lurking in the shadows.

Cats, like other incredible predators, have both physical and mental needs that must be satisfied. In addition, California was still far away. Indeed, life's not a joke.

I closed my eyes then fell into a deep sleep. I awakened a few hours later, partially refreshed. I re-scanned the area then closed my eyes again. Unbelievably, I fell into another deep sleep. I performed this act several times, before fully awakening.

Upon fully awakening, I descended from the tree then slowly walked to the perimeter of the forested area. Once there, I kept a low profile then scanned the rest area. Although it was still dark, I used my incredible feline vision to zoom-in on the digital clock 'pasted' in front of the entrance to the tourist office. It was 12:30 A.M.

At the time, darkness seemed like a protecting friend. In darkness, I could hide, like a leopard in the night.

The scent of food emanating from Jolson's Restaurant, which was nearby was causing me to go mad. I had to eat and drink! I couldn't have cared less how I acquired my nutrition. Nobody seemed to care about my hunger. Why the hell should I have care about theirs?

## THAT'S MY FOOD!

I decided to break the basic rules of cat-human relations. Reader, please remember, I was famished! Therefore, I had to resort to extreme measures, like snatching a meal from a human target. It was that pure and that simple. I couldn't be a nice kitty because that would've gotten me nothing but starvation and desperation.

You see, I had to choose a good target. After snatching the food, I'd scram. The target would have to be 'prey-like' and solitary. The less witnesses the better.

I had to make my move before dawn. Otherwise, I'd literally be a sitting duck.

I waited patiently until 2:15 A.M. Human traffic had slowed down considerably.

Suddenly, four women left Jolson's Restaurant. One of them was on crutches.

A few minutes later, a man exited a Volkswagen bug. Unfortunately, he was very tall and muscular. Also, he was holding a baseball bat in his hand. Baseball bats can be thrown, jabbed, poked, or swung at a cat. I wasn't ready mess with this guy.

By 2:45 A.M., I was seriously considering snatching food from the restaurant kitchen. My stomach was tossing and turning. I just couldn't take it anymore!

Thankfully, a geeky girl, with a pimply face, parked her Trans Am nearby. Eureka! This was my golden opportunity! Considering she was a teen, the cops wouldn't take her complaint seriously. Or, that's what I thought.

Instantly, I began to drool, like a starving lioness. Thick, gooey saliva dangled from my mouth.

I crouched down then waited patiently, and with full concentration. Certainly, I had to make it a successful snatch. I watched as the geeky girl walked to Jolson's Restaurant. Boy was I hoping she was getting a takeout order!

Beautiful! At 3:00 A.M., the geeky girl exited Jolson's Restaurant carrying 'my goodies' in her hand. This is it! I thought. There was no heading back. I had to have my cake and eat it, too!

I got ready then cautiously approached the geeky girl. No doubt, she was happy to have that delicious food in her hand.

In an incredible array of speed and agility, I sprinted towards the geeky girl then pounced on her right arm. A split second later, I snatched 'my bag of food' from her hand.

I felt like a hyena. What I did was quite insulting to my feline identity.

Thankfully, the geeky girl didn't have a chance in hell of stopping my incredible onslaught.

As soon as my goodies were in the clutches of my incredible canines, I ran towards the forested area. I wanted to enjoy my meal without having to suffer the consequences of my actions. I assumed that the geeky girl would walk away then cry her brains out. I was dead wrong!

Unfortunately, things didn't go as planned. The geeky girl charged me like an elephant's stampede. Gosh, the ground shook underneath her 'pounding feet'. I had a sudden change of tactics. I couldn't run into the forest. Things had suddenly changed.

I decided to run and run, knowing that I had to lose her, fast! Otherwise, the patrons of Jolson's Restaurant would come out to see what was going on. No doubt, they too, would be on my tail.

To make matters worse, the geeky girl began to shout insults at me. As a result of her persistence, and insults, I decided to pick up the pace. I ran around the periphery of the rest area, over and over again.

I figured she'd pass out, or puke. Then, I could leave the area.

I'm not taking anything away from cats, but, we've got an endurance problem. I mean, we're quick and fast as all hell, but, we can never be distance runners.

To my shock and dismay, the geeky girl continued to chase me, without any let-up. I kept turning back to see if she'd had enough. To my utter despair, she didn't let-up. Jeepers, even I began to feel a bit nauseous.

"Come back here with my freaking food, you little harlot! I just lost my husband to a beautiful bimbo. I'll be damned if I'm to lose my precious food to a little harlot like you!"

I will not let-up. I'm an experienced cat chaser! Damn you; I know your strengths and weaknesses! Cats can't sustain a full-blast-run for too long!" shouted the geeky girl.

The geeky girl almost had me there. Well, when I realized that her husband left her for a bimbo, a touch of pleasure and happiness ran through my veins.

But, I was also pissed off. The nerve of that girl! How could any human call a cat a little harlot? No way, she wasn't going to take 'my meal' away from me.

I stopped running in order to give her a mouthful.

"You're a geeky-looking bimbo! If I was a man, I'd be disgusted by your very appearance!" I shouted.

To my utter shock, the geeky girl had already begun her retreat. Apparently, she'd used up all of her reserves in the long chase. Her pomp was a bluff. I barely had enough strength to get away.

I kept an eye on the geeky girl, until I was certain that she couldn't see my next move. Otherwise, a large posse of humans would be conducting a search for me.

Lucky for me, the geeky girl went to the women's restroom, crying her brains out.

Because of my utter exhaustion, the forested area now looked like the only viable option for enjoying my meal. I entered the forested area in a state of utter dilapidation and confusion. Officially, the chase was over. But, I'd learned a valuable lesson: next time, snatch food from a fat human.

During the night, forest areas can be a safe haven for a cat; on the condition that there are no predators nearby. Our vision, hearing, speed, and reflexes, are better formed than those of a human's. Cats are also very agile. Indeed, our climbing abilities protect us from all non-climbing, non-flying enemies, except for humans. Humans can throw, toss, spray, kick, fire, and launch a weapon/s at us.

While strolling in the forest I spotted a large tree just waiting to be climbed. As a precautionary measure, I decided to go back to the periphery of the forest to see what was going on.

I wanted to enjoy my meal. I wasn't in the mood to be apprehensive while eating.

I went back to the periphery of the forest, then cropped my ears and opened my eyes really wide.

The geeky girl took one last look at Jolson's Restaurant, then entered her Trans Am and drove away.

The geeky girl owned a Trans Am. It's not like she was poor and/or homeless.

I turned around then headed back into the forested area. Upon reaching a designated spot, I ripped the sac of 'goodies' wide open, using my teeth and claws. Before my very own eyes were two fish sandwiches, and tons of fries. Because the salt content of the food was high, I'd have to consume much water afterwards.

I ripped open the ketchup and pepper packets then garnished my sandwiches and fries. I chomped down on every single morsel, with intense pleasure. I had the dream meal of a cat's lifetime.

The fish sandwiches were fabulous. The fries were thick, ruffled, and tasty. That's the way a cat likes them.

As soon as I'd finished my meal, I spotted a raccoon nearby. I let him get to within twenty feet of me before I bared my teeth, extended my claws, and hissed at him.

The raccoon turned to his left then slowly walked away. As an afterthought, I don't think he wanted to fight me. I think he was looking for a pitiful handout. I didn't have anything to give him anyways. I'd chewed my last morsel right in front of him. But, if I'd had any food left, I wouldn't have given him any of it. Look, I earned my bread and butter!

Regarding the geeky girl, she could've easily replaced her so-called 'missed meal'. All she'd had to do was reach into her purse, and pull out a wad of money.

If the geeky girl were to ever become poor, she could easily go on welfare. On the contrary, a cat's life on the streets is extremely rough. A cat can't find a normal job in the human world.

In addition, we don't qualify for state or government aid. In fact, in some jurisdictions stray cats are considered vermin. That means if a human were to deliberately run one of 'us' over, no charges or fines would ever be laid. How can you humans be so nasty to us?!

While I was pondering about the remainder of my life, a sudden ill-feeling struck me like lightening. Someone was watching me!

Suddenly, an unusual creature appeared before my eyes. It was the size of a large mouse, extremely ugly, and had incredibly menacing teeth. Not to mention large and curved claws. Normally, a cat could easily size up another animal.

However, this animal was so weird I didn't want to take any chances with it.

I ran into the parking lot of the rest area. Then, I looked back to see if the 'ugly creature' was following me. Thankfully, it wasn't.

That experience taught me about the possible dangers lurking within this planet. I decided to become more attuned to my surroundings. There are many creatures that haven't been discovered by humans, or even cats. These creatures have incredible abilities when it comes to camouflage and hiding. In other words, they don't want to be seen.

I ran to the tourism office. As soon as I got there, I scaled it. I crashed out on the roof. I couldn't understand why I was sleeping so much.

I awakened at 9:00 P.M., the following evening. It was time to continue my trek to California. I exited the rest area then walked due north on Haler Street. Haler Street would lead me straight to the highway.

I was happy to have awakened fully freshened, and to have gotten a free meal. But, I was extremely thirsty! 'Junky foods' usually contain too much salt, sugar, and/or fat.

Thank GOD, while walking on Haler Street, I spotted water gushing from a sprinkler.

In an act of utter desperation, I ran to the sprinkler then licked off as much water as I could. Mind you, my body was also being washed.

As soon as I felt completely sated, I stopped licking the water from the sprinkler. Afterwards, I continued my walk on Haler Street.

Twenty minutes later, I spotted the entry ramp into Highway 768 West. As I was just about to make my move, I heard a police siren. The patrol car was heading in my direction. Naturally, I couldn't have known that I was the target. After all, what had I done to deserve being bitched-out, or arrested by an officer of the law?

However, as the patrol car quickly approached me, I felt a chilly feeling throughout my body. I utterly froze. It was like I'd turned into a statue.

I'd been walking against traffic, in order to see and hear oncoming traffic. The fact that it was nighttime gave me a bit of a boost. I figured the officer wouldn't see me.

When the patrol car got really close to me, I realized that the driver was a Kansas State Trooper (KST)! He had a passenger with him. Gosh! I didn't know what to do!

Why the hell was the KST blasting his 'jack lighting' me? It began to look like he had a personal vendetta against me. Did

it have anything to do with that sac of food that I'd snatched? I wondered. Now way! Impossible! Or, that's what I thought.

A moment later, I found the patrol car within inches of my beautiful tail. That's when I placed myself on red alert.

I sprinted away as fast as possible. I kept running and running, hoping to evade the KST.

To my utter shock, the KST, continued chasing me down. I felt like a prey being chased by a lioness.

The KST placed his patrol car parallel to me. As I was running, The KST and his passenger began to throw taunts at me. In response, I gave them a word or two. As soon as I peered at them, I got the shock of my freaking life!

The passenger was the geeky girl! I was a dead goose! Or, should I say, a dead kitty. No wonder, the KST seemed intent on teaching me a lesson. It was only a matter of time before I ran out of steam. After all, even a cat can't outrun a fully operational vehicle.

I ran for another three miles, before scanning the area. There were two barbed wire fences, one on my left, and the other on my right. Game over!

I stopped running then collapsed onto the shoulder of the road. I ended up landing on my side. I tried to get up and run, but couldn't.

I felt dizzy then I began to puke my brains out. While puking, I tried to keep an eye on my tormentors. Meanwhile, the KST parked his patrol car just in front of me. He stuck his head out of the window then snarled at me. He looked like an enraged rhino. Within a few seconds, my worst nightmare became reality.

"Daddy, shoot that little cougar between her eyes! She must understand that some humans, like me, have fragile hearts. We don't like to be intimidated, or robbed by anyone. Especially a little harlot!" shouted the geeky girl.

I felt like calling her an ugly freaking bitch, but couldn't because I was still puking my brains out.

"I'm Trooper Bailey! I-AM-A-KANSAS-STATE-TROOPER! My daughter and I love to see criminals, like you, get their just desserts! Remember what Beretta used to say: DON'T DO THE CRIME, IF YOU CAN'T DO THE TIME!"

Kitty, take a look at that sign on your left. Yep, that one! It has the word PUKE, and '99', written on it? Do you want to know why?"

I used up most of my energy reserves to turn and get a good look at the sign. Yes, the word PUKE, and '99', were written on a large sign-post.

I tried to answer KST Bailey, but couldn't, because I'd heaved up another load of barf.

"In case you're wondering why the word PUKE, and '99', are written on the sign, listen-up: ninety nine cats preceded you in this manner. My daughter and I have now 'punished' a total of one hundred freaking cats, for stealing her food. Stealing my precious daughter's food, that is. Every single one of those critters showed utter disrespect towards my precious daughter.

Every single cat that we chased down puked in the exact same place. You see, you're just like those other 'thieving cats'.

Ah, don't worry, kitty! I don't feel like shooting you. I just want to watch you puke your brains out. It's a lot more entertaining, and fun," said KST Bailey.

I continued my puking spree, without any let-up. Being on a dark road and facing two arch enemies wasn't exactly helping any. What if Trooper Bailey and his geeky daughter decided to torment me even more? I wondered.

"Kitty, you're just as dumb as your predecessors. Don't ever consider yourself a good cat," said Trooper Bailey.

"Daddy, inflict more pain on that little harlot! Look at her! She's so geeky-looking!" shouted the geeky girl.

"Agnes, this is the best method of punishment! We can enjoy ourselves by watching this cat puke her brains out. This is fantastic justice!" exclaimed KST Bailey.

Agnes, let's eat our sandwiches. Yummy burgers, fries, and shakes have always made me drool. I've been eating this combo since childhood. You know, I shouldn't eat this type of food every day. My arteries are probably turning into clogged-up pipes," said KST Bailey.

The Baileys began a cruel guffaw spree, while I dry-heaved my brains out. Yes, dry-heaved. There was no more food or liquid in my tiny stomach to heave up.

The Baileys were enjoying the spectacle. How sadistic of them!

As soon as my condition began to improve, KST Bailey finished off his humiliation of me.

"Kitty, you're not welcome in Kansas! Damn you! I don't take any shit from two-bit criminals like you! You must leave Kansas, within an hour! Otherwise, I'll let Agnes have a field day with you! Now, get up! Move it! Go back to where you came from!" shouted KST Bailey.

For a moment, I felt a rush of relief. I thought it was over. As soon as I took a deep breath, Agnes exited the patrol car. She snarled then approached me. Afterwards, she placed the sole of her right shoe on my neck then pressed hard. Her intent was to humiliate me. She kept up the pressure for a whole minute, before releasing.

"You are a cougar! You hurt my feelings! You took my food from me! I was very hungry and depressed. I'd just gotten jilted. I mean, what else was I supposed to do, but eat? That's what most girls do after they've cried their brains out," said Agnes.

I felt like telling her to skip the cry baby act, and leave. Under the circumstances, I couldn't get myself to feel sorry for her. I just couldn't!

I waited until the Baileys drove off, before straggling up. From there, I slowly slithered to the highway.

Luckily, my strength returned quickly. I think that the relief of the Baileys' departure may have had something to do with it.

It was late at night, and I was very exhausted. As such, I decided to enter an underpass. There, I could rest up until I'd fully recovered.

When I reached the underpass, I decided to scale the incline. There, nobody could see me. As soon as I'd reached to top of the incline, I collapsed onto my side then passed out.

I dreamed that I was a prehistoric lioness, living on a lion's planet. It was really nice. Nobody messed with me, except the males of my species. Beside me were five cubs. They were the love of my life.

But, things weren't perfect. I was on the alert for scavengers. They're like giant flies trying to converge on a pile of shit. You can wave them away as often as you like, but, they always come back; sooner, or later.

In my dream, I fought off a giant lion who was trying to kill my cubs. Apparently, he wanted to mount me. I didn't agree. As such, I fought him off. No way! I wasn't willing to allow a two-bit lion to destroy my cubs! Nor was I going to allow him to mount me, without my permission!

Thereafter, I had one good dream after another. It was a remarkable morale booster. Considering what I'd been through with the Baileys.

## ROBERTO 'AMIGO' GARCIA

During my dream, I was abruptly awakened by the sound of an automobile horn. My body was catapulted two feet off the ground. Indeed, even cats can be startled. Believe me it does happen more often than you think. Cats were programmed to be on the alert. We're not supposed to be sleepy-heads, like many humans are.

Unfortunately, this is one of the downsides of becoming domesticated. We begin to pick up some of 'their' dirty habits, and physiological responses. Indeed, some of us are 'over domesticated'. Sometimes, the animal thinks that he/she is a human.

I slowly descended from the incline, onto the street. However, I made sure not to let my guard down. A middle aged man waved me over to his green van. I was a bit apprehensive, because it seemed like it was too good to be true.

"Hey kitty, would you like some food? I've got milk, fish, bottled water, and much more! I'm going to California! Be my guest! Hop along! Please, don't be afraid of me!" exclaimed the man.

I didn't know what to think of it. Was he really sincere? Or, was it a ploy? Well, out of desperation, I continued my descent from the incline, to the green van.

I'd heard stories of blitzkrieg-style attacks upon cats, by 'creepy humans'. A cat must always be aware of this important fact.

As soon as I was within a couple of feet of the green van, I carefully studied the expression on the man's face. I determined that the man was in extreme anguish. Mental anguish, that is. It appeared as though he was in a state of deep depression. Also, as far as I could tell, he was a friendly human. I figured that a friendly/depressed human wasn't a danger to me.

"Hey kitty, I hope you don't mind accepting a ride from a kind Mexican American? I was born in Mexico City; a very beautiful city. Unfortunately, we have too much pollution, poverty, political unrest, and corruption. The Mexican people are proud of their heritage.

My name is Roberto 'Amigo' Garcia. My friends call me Amigo. I'm a proud Hispanic.

What's your name, kitty?"

I leaped into the van then grinned at Amigo.

Amigo merged into Highway 768 West, then resumed his drive to California.

My name is Jody Wilson, and I'm a proud feline!"

"Jody, you should visit Mexico someday. Just be careful when you re-enter your country. Some humans don't want any animals to cross into their border, unless accompanied by an owner. Furthermore, ownership and health certificates are required upon entry.

Regarding humans, I don't respect the ones who enter a country with the explicit purpose of selling drugs, or breaking the law. People should respect their own countries, and those of others. Pure and simple!

Thankfully, there are many Mexicans who enter the United States as tourists, visitors, students, and as immigrants. You only hear about the ones who sneak across the border. Even many illegal Mexicans just want to work in the land of opportunity. These 'illegal crossers' are extremely poor. They can't find a job in Mexico. So, they are forced to emigrate.

Believe me, if the Mexican economy were to be drastically improved, and was fair to its citizens the numbers of illegal crossers would be reduced to a trickle, or less. The vast majority of Mexicans would enter the United States as visitors, students, or legitimate immigrants.

Jody, you shouldn't prejudge anyone. As a Mexican American, I've had some run-ins with individuals who stereotyped me. Sure, I didn't like it. But, I went ahead and endured it.

Look, when my parents formally immigrated to the United States, they were already filthy rich. Because of their immense

wealth, going through U.S. Immigration was relatively easy. When you've got big bucks, the immigration process tends to be easier than if you're poor. I'm not talking about the United States, per se, but about the vast majority of countries in this world.

Sadly, my parents became too 'comfy' in the land of opportunity. Just a year after becoming citizens my parents adopted alcoholism and gambling.

My mother began to experiment with illicit drugs such as cocaine, booze, and gambling. Yes, gambling. For my parents, gambling became a drug. It gives you the highs, lows, and addiction.

You see, my parents hung out with rich folks who also used illicit drugs.

As time passed, my parents began to use alcohol as an escape mechanism. They were no different than many other alcoholics.

It was only a matter of time before the alcohol, drugs, and gambling, took their toll. In effect, my parents' casual habits became addictions.

"Jody, don't tell anyone what I'm telling you. Please! Even blood kin," said Amigo.

"Cats honor! I promise not to tell!" I said.

"When I was a kid, I sometimes took a sip or two from my father's booze collection. Although it tasted really nasty in the beginning, later it became tasty.

I started taking mini-gulps from various bottles. I was searching for good-tasting, strong booze. Well, I finally found what I was looking for!

The first time that I puked my brains out from the booze was six months into my drinking routine.

On that particular night, I'd decided to take large gulps of booze, instead of the normal sipping.

I'd learned a valuable lesson: thereafter, I'd only drink good-tasting booze. No more yucky-tasting booze.

A month later, on a Saturday evening, my parents went out to an all night dinner party. Well, I decided to drink my brains out. I broke my gulping routine, and began a binge-drinking routine. I finally felt like a young 'macho man'. Why the hell shouldn't I booze it up? I'd asked myself. I just wanted to see what it was like to be wasted, as an adult.

My parents didn't return from their dinner party until late the next morning. If they'd seen me drinking, they probably would've encouraged me to keep on drinking. Really!

At the time, my parents still held onto five supermarkets. Alberto's Supermarkets were each profitable enterprises.

Sadly, because my parents were living in the fast lanes, one supermarket after another had to be closed. Improper

management, excessive spending, and living in the fast lanes, sent our family into unemployment status.

One day, we found ourselves out on the streets. No home! No business! No nothing! It was then that I began to have ill-feelings towards my parents. Although, I still had some love for them in my heart, most of it was bitter repulsion.

Jody it's tough being on the streets. Cats are better adapted to this than humans are. You guys can really get tough and bite the bullet, if need be. Humans living on the streets must receive help from shelters, handouts, or become law-breakers. Nobody wants to hire a dirty, stinky person.

Hunger, thirst, exhaustion, confusion, apprehension, depression, anxiety, loneliness, fear, and withdrawal symptoms, hit us really hard.

Thereafter my parents often wondered what it would've been like if they hadn't squandered their money on stupid things.

As for myself, I'd had it with my parents. Their squandering and utter stupidity was eating away at me.

After a few days on the streets, we managed to build a makeshift cardboard home. As expected, we had to defend ourselves and what little we had, with extreme ferocity.

Although most of the other homeless folks in the area left us alone, there were some who were predatory and opportunistic. My parents had to physically fight off some of these creeps. Another thing, we stunk like hell. It only took a few days for our bodies to begin to stink. I was used to showering twice a day. Even our breath became repulsive.

Then, on a cool Monday evening, just a couple of weeks into our dreaded ordeal, my parents slowly 'slithered' away from our cardboard home. Naturally, they did this in the middle of the night, while I was sound asleep.

They'd managed to beg and steal enough money for two one way bus tickets to the east coast. How the bus driver allowed them on his bus has puzzled me to this day. Maybe, my parents had an ace up their sleeve.

A few hours after the shock, I decided to take a walk around the block. I was trying to think of a game plan. I mean, I had to survive!

Jody, luck hit me soon afterwards. While walking around, I found two rolls of quarter on the sidewalk. I quickly snatched the rolls then put them in my pocket.

The first thing I did was call Aunt Rosa. After I told her what'd happened, she began to cry.

By the following morning, I'd become a new resident at my Aunt Rosa Garcia's home. Jody, it felt very nice to be inside a real house, again.

Jody, understand that I had to walk a total of 25 miles to get to her home. I couldn't ask her for a ride. I stunk like hell.

Aunt Rosa taught me good morals and ethics. As a result, I studied hard, worked, and behaved like a good citizen. I respected the rights of others and bettered myself.

Jody, I want to tell you another story. It happened in Grande, California, on a beautiful Saturday morning. Although I was only a kid at the time, I've never forgotten the tragedy.

It was before I started drinking. My brain and mind were still clear and normal.

At the time, my best friend in the whole world was a cat named Julia. Jody, you look like her. That's why my eyes are flowing with tears.

My friends and I used to play with Julia. She liked being one of the 'fellows'. We'd never allow a human girl to join our group. However, we made an exception for Julia. I mean, she was a cat.

We fed Julia as well as we could. In fact, she loved Mexican food so much she'd often lick her face after each meal. Then, roll onto her side, for more. Tacos were her favorite.

For several months, my friends and I had an incredible friend. Unfortunately, we took Julia for granted. But, we also cared about her dearly, knowing that dangers were lurking nearby. Whenever we were playing near a street, we'd remind Julia not to cross it before looking both ways, first.

It worked well for a while. Well, until that dreaded day. I mean, the day that we let our guard down.

There were five of us, including Julia, playing catch. We were having the time of our lives. For some reason, we'd forgotten to remind Cynthia about the rules for crossing the street. My friends and I assumed that Julia would always look both ways before crossing the street.

Disaster struck a short while later! Julia fetched my ball, into Apple Street. That's when she was struck by a speeding red sports car! Apparently, the driver was being chased by the police. He was driving 80 mph in a residential area. If the accident had occurred during school hours, there would've been a bloodbath.

Julia was catapulted twenty five feet into the air. As soon as she dropped onto the ground, we heard a splatter. Then, she was flattened by the same speeding car. It was a terrible sight. Julia had been disemboweled, crushed, and flattened.

My friends and I were shocked! Jose' wrapped Julia's body inside a rolled-up newspaper. Afterwards, my friends and I took Julia out into an open field. After scanning the area, we

quickly dug a large hole then buried our beloved friend. Afterwards, we filled up the hole.

Many students at our school had known Julia. Upon hearing of her death, some of them burst into tears. We wanted the blood of the creep who 'MURDERED' our Julia!

I was angry at the driver who killed my best friend in the whole world! To add insult to injury, we later discovered that the creep driver was a big-time drug dealer. Drug dealers destroy many lives. They're probably the worst type of criminals around.

'Martini', as they called him, was also a big boozier. He loved Martinis. He was known to guzzle down one drink after another, until it was time to use heavy drugs.

Although I had intense hatred and anger towards Martini, major depression caused me to fall into an incredible stupor. I almost quit on life. Thankfully, my friend Bruce convinced me to be patient and faithful. That's probably what Julia would've wanted me to do," said Amigo.

The cat in me wanted to know more about Amigo. Likewise, I was intent on telling him more about myself; without going into intimate details.

"Jody, you sound like you're from the Midwest. Are you?" asked Amigo.

"Yes, I'm from Missouri. I'm very pleased to meet you. Please forgive my shaggy appearance. I'd just finished a barfing episode prior to meeting you," I said.

"Oh Jody, I hope you feel better now. Cats are usually more resilient than humans. When I was in High School, my buddies once went on an all-night binging spree. By early morning, each one of us had puked his brains out at least three times. My stomach hurt for five whole days. I never drank Bourbon again!"

Thereafter, I understood that sobriety was the only way. Unfortunately, I still haven't kicked the habit yet. I'm down to 20 percent of what I drank back in Jr. High. If I don't look after myself who will?

Although Aunt Rosa helped turn me into a much better person, I still had traces of the old Amigo in me.

Now, my cousin Fernando was born in the United States. He studied and worked his ass off. I'm very proud to say that Fernando Garcia is now a professor of Business Administration, at Yale University. Fernando did exactly what his parents would've wanted him to do. He was patient, faithful, and very hard-working. Adversity was something to be conquered, not feared or avoided.

Fernando is 45 years-old, and presently lives in Providence, Rhode Island. He has a beautiful wife, and two children. Indeed, Fernando has attained the North American

dream. He lives in a large house, with a beautiful yard, and a white picket fence, along with two lovely cats.

Although I tried to better myself, things didn't go quite as well for me. I tried to stop binge drinking in high school, but couldn't. That's why I'm a manual laborer. Play now, cry later," said Amigo.

Amigo had tears dribbling down his cheeks. He was in dire straits. I gently pawed his right cheek, drying his tears in the process. Amigo, in return, smiled at me.

Afterwards, Amigo turned on the radio, setting the tuner on 108 FM. Apparently, Amigo liked jazz music.

Amigo patted me on the head. I could tell he wanted to know if I liked the music. In response, I placed my paws on his right thigh then grinned at him. I made certain not to appear aggressive. In return, Amigo smiled at me then petted me between the ears, for a whole minute. It doesn't sound like long, but, he was driving a vehicle on the highway. I was certain that Amigo liked me. I liked him, too. At this stage, my 'feel' for Amigo was still conditional. I needed to know more about him.

I didn't want Amigo to hurt my feelings. Humans are notorious for this kind of behavior. Not all humans, but plenty of them. Using 'them' then dumping them. Never mind, the animals' feelings.

Amigo looked into the rear-view mirror, slowed down, then pulled over into the shoulder of the highway. Now, I was a bit confused. I wasn't sure if he was going to toss me out of his van, or give me a lecture.

After coming to a complete stop, Amigo turned off the car radio, then the ignition. Afterwards, he reached into his glove compartment then removed a large bowl. After placing it near me, he reached behind his seat, then took hold of a can of cat food.

Wow! What a freaking coincidence! Amigo just happened to have a can of cat food in his Toyota.

After Amigo blew me a kiss, he removed the lid off the can then pointed his index finger at my watery mouth. I got up on my hind legs, and licked Amigo's neck.

Although I wasn't hungry, cats on the streets know that free meals can sometimes be less common than a pink elephant sighting.

I sniffed the contents, just in case the food was poisoned. Afterwards, I gorged on everything in sight.

Amigo brought forth another can of cat food. The same process was repeated a total of five times. After the fifth can, I'd had enough of fleshy foods. You know what I'm talking about. Imagine that you've just eaten twenty pancakes, with large dabs of syrup and margarine on them.

Amigo then brought forth a carton of milk. After opening the carton, he held it above my head. He allowed the milk to slowly dribble into my beautiful mouth. I enjoyed every single drop!

To my astonishment, Amigo removed another bowl from his glove compartment then poured bottled water into it. As soon as he placed the bowl beside me, I began to lick the water. It was very tasty, clean, and cool. Somehow, I felt a bit confused. Everything was conveniently in place.

As soon as I finished off the water, I placed my right paw on Amigo's right hand. For twenty seconds, there was dead silence. Then, I withdrew my right paw. Amigo grinned at me then petted me between the ears.

Now, I was almost certain that Amigo had had a functional problem in his left hand. I noticed that he never grasped the steering wheel with his left hand. He controlled it with his left forearm, just below his wrist. Yes, he had a big problem in his left hand. Cats are preprogrammed to spot weakness, fear, and illness, in other beings. After all, our ancestors were super-predators.

"Jody, I enjoy feeding cats. Watching you eat helps lowers my pulse and blood pressure. You eat like Julia."

Besides, I'm in a good mood. I recently found out that I'd inherited five thousand dollars from a wealthy Mexican uncle. I'm so freaking happy! The woman I marry will live in a beautiful house, surrounded by a white picket fence, and a gigantic lawn," said Amigo.

I felt absolute pity for Amigo. What kind of house can you buy for five thousand dollars? None!

Amigo turned on the ignition then continued his drive to California. A short while later we entered Colorado.

I was getting a free ride, from a very kind human. He fed me with no strings attached. Thankfully, I didn't have to jump through burning hoops.

Everything was going just fine, until we heard police sirens a few hundred yards behind us. Naturally, Amigo moved into the far right lane then slowed down.

I sensed that something was wrong. I decided to stay quiet. Amigo was such a nice guy; he'd feel hurt if I suspected him of being a criminal.

To my utter shock, the Colorado State Trooper (CST) positioned his patrol car behind Amigo's van. Amigo was terrified! He'd just inherited five thousand dollars. The last thing he needed was an arrest, or a fine.

"Pull over into the shoulder of the highway! I'm State Trooper Jeffries!"

Amigo slowed down his van, then pulled over into the shoulder of the highway. After coming to a full stop, Amigo turned off the ignition.

Amigo looked like he was about to puke his brains out. If he had, I would've followed in his footsteps. I could never tolerate human puke. Gosh, it's the smelliest and ugliest!

The Colorado State Trooper exited his patrol car then cautiously approached Amigo's van.

I instinctively hid underneath my seat. The presence of a blue bowl, five empty cat food cans, a carton of milk that'd been partially emptied of its contents, and the 'scent' of a cat, would be hard to explain. That is, if our 'nemesis' had made an inquiry.

"Hello, I'm Trooper Jeffries.

Sir, there's a dangerous kitty on the loose! Somebody saw this kitty enter a van. Please, be aware of your surroundings. Do not allow any cat to 'bum' a ride off you.

This kitty mauled the daughter of a Kansas State Trooper. I take this type of crime personally! Kansans are our neighbors. 'Colorado Lawmen' believe in the brotherhood of the law! Indeed, this is a very serious offense! Be careful, this particular kitty uses her charm and good lucks to befriend unsuspecting humans.

Out of curiosity, have you seen this cat? Or, did you give her a ride anywhere? If you don't have any relevant information for now, but do at a later time, call the police!"

"No officer, I haven't seen a cat for over a month," replied Amigo.

"Are you absolutely certain?" asked Trooper Jeffries.

"Citizen's honor; I'd never lie to a law man! I always obey the laws of the United States of America! Really!"

Trooper Jeffries, I'm a swell guy! I'd never lie to a law man. Especially a marvelous law man like you. You're so tall, confident, strong, handsome, and intelligent. You're like Marshall Matt Dillon," responded Amigo.

"Gosh! Do you really mean that?" asked Trooper Jeffries.

"I certainly do!" replied Amigo.

Trooper Jeffries swallowed Amigo's entire complementary slab of manure. Indeed, Trooper Johnson was a gullible idiot.

"All right, you can go. Good luck in your future ventures," said Trooper Johnson.

Amigo turned on the ignition then drove off. Trooper Johnson tailed us for a few miles. Maybe he was flattered by what Amigo said about him. Who knows?

A short while later, Trooper Johnson zoomed by us. Amigo waited until the coast was clear, before pulling over into the

shoulder of the highway. Somehow, I sensed that something was wrong.

As soon as Amigo turned off the ignition, he lowered his head then began to weep. Tears streamed down his cheeks with the force of Niagara Falls. Why was Amigo crying? I wondered.

"Amigo, what's wrong? I hate to see you cry! You've been very kind to me.

Most drivers couldn't care less about a lone cat, like me. You found it in your heart to stop, and give me a free ride," I said.

"Jody, I lied to Trooper Johnson. Worse yet, I used my citizenship of the United States of America as a weapon of deceit. I'm so ashamed of myself. How can I become a good citizen again?" asked Amigo.

"Amigo, you're a very nice man. Trooper Johnson was only making an inquiry about a so-called dangerous cat. You weren't lying to protect yourself. You lied to protect your friend. As far as I'm concerned, it's all over. I'm sure it'll never happen again," I said.

"Jody, you're a wonderful cat. I mean that from the bottom of my heart. Just looking at you makes me feel better," said Amigo.

After Amigo complemented me, he showed me the palm of his right hand. It was soaking wet. I was surprised that Trooper Johnson didn't suspect any foul play. Maybe, Trooper Johnson did notice something unusual about Amigo's demeanor. Maybe, Trooper Johnson was in a forgiving mood.

Amigo turned on the ignition then resumed his drive to California. I couldn't help but notice that there was something odd about Amigo's left hand. It was a bit swollen and 'darkish'. I stayed quiet about it for the time being.

"Now, just relax and be patient. California's waiting for us," said Amigo.

We drove through Colorado for several hours, then pulled into a rest stop and slept for a short while.

Upon resuming our journey, the warning 'beep' and the 'red flash' from the gas tank gauge alerted us. The gas tank was almost empty!

"Amigo, your gas tank's almost empty. It's almost midnight! Please, find a gas station, immediately!" I shouted.

Amigo turned into the next exit ramp, then began to earnestly search for a gas station.

It's very stressful to drive when your vehicle is low on gas. It's worse when you're in unfamiliar territory, and in the middle of the night. As expected, we got the jitters.

Amigo slowed down, then petted my back. It felt good. Some humans really know how to pet a cat.

Amigo entered a rest area, looked around then drove off. Too bad, a gas station nearby was closed. I cringed.

Amigo drove several more miles, before entering Marble, Colorado. I convinced him to stay on Jerry Street. After driving for several minutes, I spotted a gas station that was still open. It was on the right side of Jerry Street, approximately a hundred yards from our position.

"Amigo, there's a gas station, over there! Please, slow down then head straight for it. I'm so excited! You can't imagine how I feel!" I exclaimed."

"Jody, you're an incredible cat! It's nice having smart company," said Amigo.

After pulling into the gas station, Amigo parked next to pump number two. He turned off the ignition then exited his van.

It took roughly five minutes to pay the attendant, fill up the gas tank, and leave.

"Jody, this quantity of gasoline in my van will be enough to take us clear out of Colorado.

Suddenly, my eyelids felt like they weighed a hundred pounds each. It was time for a long rest.

I 'zonked out' for several hours. By the time I'd awakened, we were already in northern New Mexico. Amigo was taking the scenic route to California. I couldn't have cared less which route we took. I just wanted to get to California! Who was I to complain?

"Jody, I want to show you something. But, I must turn at the next exit, first. Also, I really want to get to know you better. I can't do that very well if I'm groggy driving on the Highway," said Amigo.

Amigo turned into the next exit then continued to drive until he could no longer open his eyes properly. Amigo's yawning became significantly more frequent. I became apprehensive. Certainly, it's very dangerous to drive while groggy. When you're groggy, moments are spent with eyes closed and in a state of semi-sleep. In that moment, a terrible accident can occur.

Amigo began to search for a motel. It was almost 5:00 A.M. The sun was getting ready to manifest itself. As such, I asked Amigo to skip the search, and just pull over into a secluded area.

Also, I asked him to roll down my window so I could exit the van later. I'd had more than enough sleep. It was now waking time!

Amigo did exactly as I asked him to do. I was lucky to have an incredible friend. What was going to happen to me when Amigo arrived at his final destination? Humans have an incredibly notorious reputation for dumping their cats, like heaps of

garbage. I'm not saying that 'most' humans would do that. I'm saying that 'some' would.

I braced myself for the worst case scenario. Even a sweet guy like Amigo could easily turn into a 'cat dumper'. As soon as he perceived me as excessive baggage, I'd be out of his life, forever.

It's rather difficult for a cat to leave a good friend; even when that friend is a human. Some humans think that 'we cats' don't feel love. They think that cats are like Vulcans. Enough with the Descartes philosophy!

Amigo turned into a side street then drove for two blocks, before coming to a full stop. Then, he turned off the ignition, and fell asleep.

Meanwhile, I leaped through the opening in the window then strolled around the neighborhood for a few hours.

When I'd had enough of sightseeing, I returned to Amigo's van.

As soon as I was inside Amigo's van, I laid on my back. Then, I began to play with my imaginary friends. No ... I'm not sick! Cats like to play with imaginary friends. They like to do this when they're alone.

At 10:15 A.M., we were abruptly awakened by a tapping sound. Tapping on Amigo's window was a tall, ugly-looking policeman. As soon as Amigo fully awakened, the policeman stopped tapping on the window.

"Hey, open-up! I demand to speak to you! I'm Officer Warren! I work for the Worthington Police Department. We don't 'appreciate' transients, or strangers, in our town.

Amigo rolled down his window, then apologized to Officer Warren. Thankfully, it worked.

"Officer, we're incredibly sorry for sleeping inside my van! We're going to California. My friend and I have been on the road for many hours. I'll drive to the next town then find a good motel to stay in.

Officer Warren, I'm a hard-working man. I obey and respect the law," said Amigo.

"That's fine! But, you're not allowed to sleep in your vehicle. In Worthington, we don't tolerate this kind of behavior.

The municipal bylaw pertaining to your actions calls for a fine. I won't fine you this time. But, if you do it again, I'll hit you with a magnanimous fine!

On another note, I'm glad that you're a hard-working man who respects the law. I've heard every line possible. I've seen the scum of the earth pass through our town. So, if you know what's good for you, leave!" exclaimed Officer Warren.

Amigo turned on the ignition, said goodbye then drove off.

A short while later we were back on the highway. Amigo and I were thankful that Officer Warren allowed us to leave, without taking down our names.

"Jody, I want to give you some good advice. Whenever you meet a human being for the first time, place yourself on yellow alert! Placing yourself on red alert, over and over again, would be hazardous to your physical and mental health.

Regarding strangers, you may end up getting a smack across the head, a pat, a petting between the ears, or something in between. If you're one of those truly unlucky cats, maybe you'll be 'kitty-napped', tortured, or even killed. Many humans like me love cats. The spectrum is wide; from love to hate; from acceptance, to outright rejection.

Once in a blue moon, you'll find a human who truly gets off on tormenting animals, especially cats. The victim's pain will be much greater than the average human political prisoner can ever imagine.

Sadists sometimes reserve their utmost cruelty for animals. Unfortunately, cats are often their favorite targets. There's almost no limit to what they can do to a poor, defenseless kitty, especially a companion animal that lives in a house or in the countryside. In essence, nobody will know what's going on in the offender's home.

On a related note: there are many humans, young and old, who are also being tormented at home. Remember, babies can't convey their story, said Amigo.

"Have you ever seen a cat that was being tormented?" I asked.

Instantly, Amigo broke down. He kept crying and crying. I thought he was about to have a heart attack, on the spot!

I convinced Amigo to exit the highway, then to drive to a rest area. Thankfully, he obliged me. The sudden change in direction helped to calm Amigo down.

A short while later Amigo parked his van in a rest area. Now, we were ready to talk.

"Yes, I have seen a cat being tormented.

When I was four years-old, I took a long walk through the streets of my home town. I ended up walking through the bad part of town. What happened thereafter would haunt me for the rest of my life.

While I was walking on Greene Street, I took notice of a group of teenagers 'hovering' over a defenseless/terrified cat. Three boys were holding down the cat, and a girl shoved a lit firecracker up its anus. You know the rest.

I ran home, crying my brains out! I went straight into my room and didn't speak to anyone until I finished crying. Believe me my crying spell lasted for two whole hours.

Jody, we mustn't forget the millions upon millions of humans around the world who love and respect the animals in their care. In addition, there are many animal activists around the world who diligently work to protect animals.

These individuals work for little or no pay. Only a few of them make big bucks.

Jody, a good family will make their cat feel right at home. The animal receives sufficient food, water, shelter, veterinary medical care, and tons of love," said Amigo.

Amigo rested his head on the steering wheel then began to weep like a child. I waited it out, not wanting Amigo to think that I was insensitive.

Several minutes later, Amigo turned on the ignition then drove back to the highway.

Amigo continued his drive on the highway for another hour then turned into an exit ramp. He entered a rest area then parked his van. Both of us were exhausted and depressed. We decided to stay inside the van for a few hours.

We ended up sleeping like babies. Luckily, there wasn't a single interruption. No police officers or state troopers tapping on the window.

As soon as Amigo and I awakened, we felt our stomachs growl. It sounded like there was a roaring lion my stomach.

"Amigo, I'm very hungry. I know that you're hungry, too. We need to get some food into our system, pronto! I exclaimed.

Amigo rubbed his eyes, turned on the ignition then drove to the nearest town. It didn't take us long to find one.

Sunnyvale, California is a beautiful little town of roughly 20,000 inhabitants. It seemed too pleasant to be true.

"Jody, I'm looking for a supermarket. I'll purchase the best foods that my money can buy. Afterwards, we'll have to find a secluded place to eat in. I'm very hungry, and I don't want to be bothered by anyone, except by my dear kitty. You're a very sweet cat. I'll enjoy eating with a splendid cat like you," said Amigo.

Amigo drove around for ten minutes, before spotting a 24-hour restaurant. I was hoping he'd get our food from there.

I could smell the roast beef inside the restaurant kitchen. Amigo and I were under the 'hypnotic scent' of the roast beef!

Amigo turned right then pulled into a parking space, in front of Joey's Meat House. It seemed like a good place.

After Amigo parked his van, he turned off the ignition. After scanning the area, he removed the keys from the ignition.

Amigo rolled down his window six inches, then grinned at me. I assumed that he wanted me to stay behind. No problem. As long as I got my food, everything would be just fine.

Some humans are outright stupid. They park their vehicles in the blistering sun, without rolling down any of the windows. Then, they go shopping while their companion animal's dying of heat exhaustion. Dogs pant, and sweat from their paws. That's it! We cats have our own problems, being left out in the heat. Don't forget the extreme cold.

When it's hot outside, a vehicle's interior can become a furnace. Sometimes, the animal therein dies an agonizing death.

In order to correct this problem, one of the car windows should be slightly ajar. But then, insects love to slurp animal blood. Therefore, precautions must be taken against this. Furthermore, a car should never be parked directly under sunlight, during the warmer months.

We decided to bypass the restaurant, in favor of Johnson's Supermarket. Johnson's Supermarket was very large, beautiful, and contained incredible stockpiles of food.

Amigo exited his van then walked to Johnson's Supermarket. Meanwhile, I was drooling like a hungry lioness. There was nothing on my mind but food and liquids.

A short while later, Amigo returned to his van carrying a couple of grocery bags. Although I was excited about eating, I noticed that Amigo's left hand appeared more frigid, swollen, and sickly-looking. My suspicions became unbearable after seeing Amigo carrying both grocery bags in his right hand.

As Amigo got closer to his van, I also noticed that he'd developed rings underneath his eyes. The long trip had taken a toll on him. In fact, he was sweating bricks.

Amigo entered his van then gently placed both grocery bags beside me. Then, his cell phone rang. He waited until the third ring before answering.

It was apparent from the onset of the conversation that something was wrong. Amigo kept glancing at me. Then, his face paled. A few seconds later, it reddened.

I knew it was bad news. Bad news for me, that is. Was the person on the other end of the line a cat-hater? I asked myself.

Look, this person had never laid eyes on me. How could he/she have hated me?!

"Jake, please don't say that! My friend Jody's a sweet kitty. I love her! Yes, I want to bring her with me to our secret location in California!"

No way! I can't accept that! You can't stop me! What will you do to her?!" asked Amigo.

Amigo turned his cell phone off then lowered his head. He looked like a defeated/humiliated man.

I figured the person on the other end of the line was tougher than Amigo. Amigo wasn't being forthright with me. I wondered why?

"Jody, I'm very sorry. I have to drop you off at the nearest town. But, I'll make sure that the town's near a large city, just in case you become bored with small town life. Please don't hate me. I have no choice in the matter. I love you, like my own flesh and blood," said Amigo.

Amigo was now crying. I comforted him then spoke my mind.

"Amigo, I promise to always remember you as an incredible friend. Cat's honor, I'll stand by my every word. Amigo, you're the cream-of-the-crop.

"Please, Jody, understand my predicament. Just look at my wrist! It's swollen. I've got freaking partial paralysis in my wrist!

Jody, please forgive me! I lied to you. Not about my cat friend, or my parents. I pumped myself up, so you'd respect me. In reality, I've committed many criminal acts. Also, I'd worked in treacherous and criminal jobs.

Jody, I used to work in a meat packing plant. Times were a bit rough, back in those days. The 'Administration' sent out recruits to hire 'special workers'. They preferred individuals who were either illegal, couldn't speak 'the language' well, a bit stupid, extremely desperate, or felons. If you had all the aforementioned characteristics, you had a guaranteed job.

Although I was a citizen and spoke the language fluently, I did the job anyway. You see, I have a criminal record. I actually did hard time for selling drugs, pimping, and grand theft larceny. I'm a career criminal.

Luckily, this packing plant was notorious for hiring criminals, and 'others'.

The work was often dangerous and exhausting. I cut slabs of meat all day long. Sometimes I worked deep into the night. After a month on the job, I began to feel pain in my left wrist.

Anyhow, I went to see the supervisor about my problem. I explained to him, in detail, what was happening. I also told him about some of the other workers' physical and mental ailments.

My supervisor called me a lazy freaking sloth! In addition, he told me that I could never be a 'true person'. Finally, my supervisor told me that my job had no benefits. Below minimum wage, and that's freaking all!

After my supervisor had finished humiliated me, the owner of the meat packing plant entered the supervisor's office.

The owner was mean, cold, and blunt. He threatened me, point blank! He told me that if I ever tried to lodge a complaint against the plant, I'd be fired on the spot. Worse yet, he'd send the 'big boys' to take care of me. Then, he told me to be a 'good idiot'.

Finally, he made some horrific racial remarks about my heritage. He called me a 'citizen foreigner'.

Jody, I'd seen the big boys. Plant workers called them 'recalcitrant busters'. Jody, they're tough and really ugly-looking. Just like in the movies. Stories about them had been told by other workers.

Jody, I was always hungry, confused, and lonely! I needed money, badly! At the plant, payment was in cash; small bills and many coins. I had to endure exhaustion, lack of sleep, sharp wrist pain, and incredible amounts of racism. It was so bad the low-level workers discriminated against each other.

After two years on the job, my left wrist began to stiffen and swell, to the point of outright intolerance. My right wrist was much better. However, that wasn't enough to keep me on the job. Meat packers must be fast, accurate, and machine-like. Well, like automatons. Also, we had to be able to endure extreme monotony. We got one short break every four or so hours. So, if you had to pee or poop, you did it in your pants. Or, you learned how to hold it back.

We work our brains out, so the people of this country can be happy eating their fleshy foods. At a cheaper price, may I add," said Amigo.

I just about freaked out! No doubt, the owner/s of the meat packing plant considered their workers nothing more than 'automatons'.

Descartes considered 'us' automatons, too. He along with others of his kind was responsible for countless horrific experiments on live animals. No human being/s could ever imagine how much pain, agony, and torment, we've endured at the hands of some wicked humans.

While I was pondering about this tragedy, Amigo interrupted me by resuming his sad story.

"Jody, my wrist pain became unbearable. I had to endure excruciating pain around the clock. The range of motion on my wrist was drastically reduced.

As expected, other factory workers noticed the swelling of my wrist. They'd seen my problem before. A close friend of mine at the plant told me to see a doctor.

Well, I certainly couldn't afford to see a doctor. For one thing, I had absolutely no medical insurance. Furthermore, if I'd started to gripe at work, I'd become unemployed before I finished my statement," said Amigo.

"Wait a minute! Something is not right here. Amigo, are you being totally honest with me?" I asked.

At that moment, Amigo broke down. In fact, he had a guilty expression on his face. There was more to his story. I was certain he was only giving me part of his story. I wanted to know the whole story!

"I'm sorry Jody. I wasn't totally honest with you. I'm a two-bit thug. I'm a first class criminal.

I'm very educated in the criminal arts. I'm a natural born criminal. Most likely, I'll die as such.

Jody, please understand that I was in extreme pain! I had to swallow my pride. I did the unthinkable," said Amigo.

Jody, promise me that you'll never tell anyone what I'm about to tell you!" requested Amigo.

"I promise I'll never tell anyone; on my honor as a proud cat!" I responded.

"I became a ... a... a... horrible criminal. I sold drugs, stole, pimped, embezzled, lied, consumed all sorts of illicit drugs, and I worked for a ruthless loan shark for a while," said Amigo.

"Wait, why did you do all of those evil things? Even if breaking the law was justifiable under the circumstances, you freaking went too far! Way too freaking far!" I shouted.

"I'm sorry. I guess being a criminal was normal for me. It was 'homeostasis' for me. Look, I like being a criminal. So long as I don't get caught. Look here, I've got \$250,000 coming to me as soon as I arrive at the secret destination, located in California.

In this last job, I was ordered to sell a 'bunch' of heroin and cocaine, back in Jersey. I kept a little for personal sales. That's why I was in such a chummy mood when we first met. Gosh, I was ready to buy you an airplane!

Before you and I met, I was pulled over by a nasty law man named Bailey! He was very harsh, racist, and nosey. Thankfully, I'd already sold my illicit drugs.

Bailey was terrible, but, his daughter was horrible! She was crying her brains out about some food theft. I think it was a couple of fish burgers and a super-size fries order. I think her name was Agnes. Boy was she an ugly duckling!

Bailey let me go. Well, he knew that I was guilty of something, he but couldn't prove it. It's tough luck for him.

Please, Jody, I'm giving you a free ride, food, and companionship. Please don't attack me. I'm a desperate, confused, human being. Please, don't bitch me out!" exclaimed Amigo.

"Okay, I won't insult you. Nor will I bitch you out. I certainly won't play the silent treatment, either. After you drop me off, don't ever speak to me again. As far as I'm concerned, you were never my friend!

Drug dealers are responsible for the destruction of many human lives, properties, and drastically increase crime in communities. PEOPLE LIKE YOU ARE DESTROYING MY COUNTRY! NO! DAMNIT! THEY'RE DESTROYING THE ENTIRE PLANET!

What about the drug dealer who ran over your 'best friend? What's the deal with that? Really, did you idolize this drug dealer?" I asked.

"Please, let's talk about my wrist. I'm in so much pain and discomfort. I feel like I'm going to cry my brains out. Please, give me some feline comfort. You guys are really good at that.

If the surgery that I plan to have is successful, my wrist will be frozen in a fixed position. I'll be able to move my fingers, but not my wrist. Like some 'has been' drummer boys.

My pain is monstrous! Sometimes it drives me crazy! Jody, please don't make fun of me!" exclaimed Amigo.

"I wasn't going to make fun of you," I responded.

I began to wonder about Amigo's mental stability. He seemed like he had a couple of chestnuts lodged deep in his brain. Anyhow, I'd had enough of listening. I closed my eyes and pretended that I was sleeping. Actually, at first I pretended then I actually did fall asleep. Even in sleep, I was trying to form a game plan.

What was I going to do after Amigo dropped me off? That was the million dollar question running through my mind.

As I was pondering about my life's predicament, I was rudely awakened by Amigo.

"Look, Jody! Willowdale, California! We found a nice town!

Let me find a good place to drop you off at. I'm so sorry. My 'contacts' don't like cats! They're really tough characters. On more than one occasion, they shoved a fire cracker up a cat's rectum. They love the sound of the blast. But, they love the sound of the cat's shriek of pain even more.

My 'Brothers' in Los Angeles love Pitt bulls, and other fighting dogs. No kitties, mice, or parrots. Only tough doggies," said Amigo.

Amigo was treating me like a slab of meat. Thankfully, I was a cat, and not his wife. If I'd been his wife, my face would've been used as a punching bag.

"Amigo, I need one more large meal to pull me through the evening. It's already 7 P.M. I need freaking food ... now! I shouted.

Amigo drove around in search of food. At this point, there was absolutely no doubt about Amigo's dropping me off. I'd learned a valuable lesson: never take a human for granted. Even if the human tells you that he/she loves you.

"Willowdale, California's a small, friendly town. I want you to be happy and safe here. After I drop you off, I'll drive to the secret rendezvous, in Los Angeles. First, you must get some nourishment in you," said Amigo.

Amigo continued driving, before finding a good convenience store. He parked his van then turned off the ignition.

Amigo and I exited the van then walked to the convenience store. As soon as Amigo entered the convenience store, I hid behind a truck. I couldn't go inside with him. I suspected that Amigo was a fugitive. Maybe, his composite was being flashed on national television. Jeepers, I sure as hell didn't want to be arrested with a hardcore criminal. My freedom has always been important to me.

Amigo exited the convenience store carrying cat food, milk, and water, in a white plastic bag. It was the last time that I ever saw him.

Amigo told me that he needed to get something from his van. And that I should stay put.

As soon as Amigo returned to his van, he turned on the ignition, reversed then took off. I never saw him again.

## THE DREADED VCOS

As soon as I finished my meal, an old man who'd been gawking at me, made his move. He approached me in a straightforward manner.

I became apprehensive. I sensed that there was something quite unusual about him. There was something about the expression on his face.

"Hey kitty, would you like to be my companion animal? I promise not to abuse you in any way, shape, or form. I'm a kind-hearted old man, who loves cats. If you become my companion animal, my grandchildren will accept you as one of their own. So, what do you say?" asked the old man.

"Get away from me! Now! I know what you are! You're a freaking weirdo! Go away!"

The old man reached into his pocket, then pulled out a switchblade. Instantly, I pounced on him!

In a flash, the old man was bloodied and bruised. I'd managed to leap onto his chest, causing him to fall on his back. Then, I scratched and bit him, without mercy. I'm not showing off or anything. Really!

After 'destroying' the old man, I leaped off of his chest then walked away. Knowing that the police would soon be called, I picked up my pace.

I exited the parking lot then scanned the area, looking for a place to rest. There was a lower middle class residential area, just north of my present position. Not exactly the kind of neighborhood that I was looking for, but good enough for the time being.

Ideally, cats and dogs want to live in posh neighborhoods. Don't get me wrong. There are loving humans from every socio-economic level. However, most of us would prefer to live with rich folks.

I entered the residential area, then walked east on Gordon Street. I was searching for a good tree to rest under.

Suddenly, I heard the pounding of footsteps. I looked to my right then I got the shock of my life! It was a VCO! She was charging me!

She had an expression on her face that signified intent, resolve, and utter hatred. Of me, that is.

I turned away, then hauled ass! The VCO tailed me, like an ugly hyena. This creep was getting too personal with me.

The VCO began to launch profane words and accusations at me. She didn't leave out a single 'cuss word', or insult. A partial narrative will follow.

"Hey asshole, you better stop running away from me! I've got friends in very high places! I'm carrying a big gun in my holster. I'll shoot you between your hind legs. It'll hurt like hell! Isn't that really funny?

Your momma won't like that. Come on, slime ball admit defeat!

If you surrender, peacefully, I'll go easy on you. I'm not kidding; on my honor as a VCO!"

I decided to pull the running cat trick, again. I allowed them to get very close to me during the chase. Boy, did she keep chasing and chasing.

After three hundred yards of chasing, the VCO finally collapsed onto the ground. I stopped running, turned around then ran towards her with incredible speed. As soon as she realized what was happening, she made a futile attempt at getting up.

"Who's the pathetic animal now?" I asked.

The VCO puked her brains out then hiccupped a dozen times. Her eyes were watery and non-focused. Indeed this VCO was pathetic-looking.

I turned around then began to walk away. Then, I heard an unusual sound emanating from the VCO. So, I looked back then cropped my ears.

I waited patiently to hear an apology, for her 'naughty' behavior.

In a last ditch effort to hurt me, the VCO haphazardly lifted up her arm then gave me the finger. Afterwards, her arm slammed downwards onto the concrete. I'm sure it hurt.

Seeing how helpless the VCO was, I cautiously approached her. As soon as I was within striking distance, she begged for mercy. Lucky for her, two VCOs were approaching our position. These guys were built like gorillas. As such, I took off like a cheetah.

Some VCOs can't handle a failed animal capture. They'll do whatever it takes to capture the animal. Even pulling out an unregistered gun then firing!

In some jurisdictions, if nobody claims or purchases an animal before the legally allocated deadline, the animal gets the ax. By ax, I mean: death (euthanasia, or a brutal method), biomedical lab, or sale. Whom the sale will be to is another matter, altogether.

Many shelters use lethal injections to take care of their unsellable animals. This is the most humane method of animal killing. Gas canisters (gas chambers), or a 'lethal spike' into the heart, can never be humane. Many stray cats are aware of what goes on in these creepy shelters.

Remember: gas canisters are in fact, gas chambers. Using a different name won't change the truth.

The animals inside the gas canister try to crawl out, but can't. They're squashed, and smeared against each other. I mean, there's nowhere to go. Or even move, for that matter. No need in using poisonous gas, they can die from a lack of oxygen, or excessive urine and poop splatters.

Their screams and shrieks of terror usually go unnoticed by shelter workers; but not the animals that are awaiting execution. It's really terrifying!

Let me elaborate a little. Imagine that you're cramped inside a tiny, overcrowded, filthy, gas canister. Suffocation is extremely painful and terrifying. You have to feel your pain and the pain of others around you. Puke, urine, blood, and fecal matter, are expelled from the bodies of the 'canister residents'.

The best way to deal with the companion animal overpopulation problem is prevention and maintenance. Indeed, most cats and dogs must be spayed and neutered. Does any human out there really expect us to practice abstention or coitus interruptus? No way! Animals don't do those kinds of things. This kind of behavior is for humans only.

As soon as I'd had enough of running, I slowed down to a walking pace. I scanned the area for a good resting place. The growls of dogs and the hissings of cats was proof that I had to be careful not to tread on anyone else's territory. A cat in my

shoes would have to squeeze into a tiny territory, make a powerful ally, or scram. There was no way around it.

Even solitary lions have hell to endure. Many of them are washed up former 'kings' or were always too wimpy to hold their ground. Dethroned lions are disgraced.

I decided to walk on the sidewalk. Although it would increase my chances of being seen by a VCO, it was a lot safer than walking through a dog's territory. That would be suicide. The incredible level of stress that I felt caused me to become a bit light-headed. I had to find a place to rest, soon.

## THE CHASE

While walking on Sandy Street, I spotted a spacious garage. Lucky for me, the garage door wasn't pulled down. Indeed, I went against my better judgment. However, you must remember how tired and stressed-out I was.

I conducted an abbreviated scan of the area. After determining that the coast was clear, I walked straight to the garage. With every step taken, I became more relaxed.

I could almost feel myself sleeping for a whole week. Afterwards, I'd have to search for foot.

As soon as I entered the garage, I collapsed onto the ground. I managed to get a few winks. I awakened at 11:00 P.M., to the sound of an automobile engine. I had to determine if the driver of the vehicle was a friend, or foe.

Oh, shit! Several feet away from me was a dark green van, containing two humans and three Dobermans. It was imperative that I haul ass, immediately!

As soon as I took my first step, the driver of the van blasted her high beamers in my face. Then, she began to honk her horn like a raving lunatic. No doubt, she was a cat-hater. Or, it was that time of the month for her. Don't worry. I know what I'm talking about. Female cats get that 'thing', too.

With high beamers glaring in my face, and a persistent ugly-sounding horn, there was nothing else to do but get the hell-out-of-Dodge!

As I began to pick up speed, a passenger opened one of the doors. Naturally, the three Dobermans exited the van then gave chase.

In fact, they tried to cut me off. They behaved like bulls, getting ready to bash a bull get ready to bash my brains out. Well, actually, it was worse than that.

Cats have countless enemies on this planet. Cat-hating dogs are incredible foes. They totally suck!

As I was running away from the Dobermans, they had a sudden change of tactics. One of them charged me directly, while the other two split up.

Each one covered a flank. For a split second, it looked like it was going be curtains for me. Three Dobermans could easily tear a little kitty like me, into pieces.

I leaped onto a nearby van. Then, I waited. For five whole seconds, it seemed like the entire universe had frozen. Then, I came to my senses. I leaped onto the ground, then continued running like hell.

I kept running and running. It was so bad, I actually felt like 'the fox' in a fox hunt. The Dobermans were so freaking close to me, I could smell their stinking breath. Also, one of them farted. They'd eaten fish, chicken, and liver, a short while earlier. The latter made me sick to my stomach.

Although I was sustaining a good pace, it wasn't going to last for much longer. I was breathing heavily, and felt like vomiting my brains out. Remember, cats are not known for their endurance.

To make matters worse, my leg muscles began to quiver. This is always terrifying for a fleeing animal. It meant that my muscles were beginning to give-in. I imagined myself being mauled to death by three ugly dogs.

I quickly ran into a yard then I took one last, desperate leap. It was well worth it. I ended up scaling a house. By the time I got to the roof, I fell into a stupor. Thankfully, the Dobermans had already headed back.

Although my large muscles were neutralized, I was still able to breathe out a good liner.

"Hey, can't you ugly nitwits catch a little 'kitty' like me? Come on, you guys are a disgrace to the doggy world! Well, what do you have to say about that?" I asked.

The VCOs are on their way! They've got a surprise for you. Just stay put," responded a Doberman.

VCOs! They were the *last* people that I wanted to see!

*"You are a sucker! We were only bluffing! We made you defecate, puke, and urinate; all for nothing. We wanted to see you shame yourself. Never try to outsmart three Doberman pinschers.*

Dobermans are very intelligent dogs," said one of my pursuers.

The Dobermans continued walking away from the house. At that moment, I felt like an idiot.

I waited on the roof for at least fifteen minutes. I wanted to be sure that there were no enemies lurking in the shadows. Thankfully, the coast was clear.

I got up then fell onto my side. I needed more rest time. So, I waited for another hour. Thankfully, it was enough time for me to recuperate.

I leaped onto a large branch then I performed a 'controlled landing'.

As soon as my paws landed onto the grass, I made a final scan of the area. Although there were several dangerous animals nearby, they were either tethered to a tree, peering through a window, or too depressed to take any notice of me.

## ROCKY DOGGIANO

I headed north on Andrews street for a total of fourteen blocks before taking notice of a junkyard. Junkyards are excellent places to hide in, especially at night. That is, if there are no guard dogs around. Most of them hate cats.

Most junkyard dogs are trained to run, chase, corner, growl, and attack. Some of these dogs are tough enough to chase away a leopard. They can easily scare off potential trespassers.

Mind you, I was exhausted, and in dire straits. I had no option, but to enter the junkyard.

I had three obstacles to clear: a ten foot fence, the coiled wires above it, and the security system. Be it a dog, motion detectors, and/or cameras. Although I could've cleared the fence on a very good day, the coiled wires on the fence would've ripped through my flesh! Even a healthy leopard couldn't have cleared those coiled wires.

Jeepers, I wondered why the owner of the junkyard place coiled wires on the fence. Junkyards aren't like prisons, or secret military bases. They don't house a mint, or anything of the sort.

But, I had no time to ponder about the details. I had to get on the move; fast.

I decided to walk the periphery of the fence, hoping to find an opening. As soon as I reached the half way mark, a powerfully-built black dog charged me! I didn't budge because he was tethered to a wall. The hook and bolts were actually inserted through the wall, making it quite impossible for the black dog to set himself loose.

As soon as the chain was fully extended, the black dog was violently jerked back. Not quite like a rubber-band jerk, but enough to remind him that it was unwise to try to overextend the chain again. It almost looked like a whiplash. Guard dogs can sometimes behave like bulls. They 'overcharge' without thinking about the consequences.

I determined that the black dog was a Rottweiler-Mastiff mix. In other words, he was a mixed breed. I don't like to use terms like mongrel or mutt. These terms are offensive to both cats and dogs. I don't care what humans think.

The Rottweiler-Mastiff mix produces a very tough and gallant dog. This dog menaces his/her opponents. Raised correctly, this dog will fight tooth and nail, literally. Except if it is raised as a friendly or a sissy dog.

As soon as the black dog's neck snapped, he winced. I was a bit surprised at his response because he looked like he'd been a tough cookie in his prime. He had many battle scars, indicating that he was once a fighting dog.

Humans in the dog fighting business don't give a damn about the combatants. The fighting arenas are filled with creepy degenerates. They love to wager, see blood, gooey discharges, fear, begging, apprehension, and ripped flesh. Often times, when one of the dogs shows signs of capitulation, the owner shouts abuses at him/her. If that doesn't work, the combatant will be taught a very painful lesson, if he/she survives the match. I'd like to see one of these creepy dog owners fight a dog inside a pit. The creepy dog owner will then know what it feels like to be treated as a thing.

If you ever see one of these matches call the police, and get the hell out of the arena!

Drugs, cigarette smoke, booze, weapons, and crime in general, engulf the arena. So much money is wagered on these matches, guns are needed for protection.

I shoved my face up against the fence then stared down the dog. Stare downs are the ultimate challenge to a dog, or a feral cat. However, in this particular case, my intent was good. I wanted to find out what'd happened to the black dog. Really, I just wanted to help him. Is there anything wrong with a cat wanting to help a dog?

The black dog barked, growled, snarled, bared his teeth, and then backed away.

A short while later he charged me a total of seven times. I was certain he'd eventually break. So, I crossed the street, in order to let him bark and charge himself into exhaustion, while I lay on my side.

A half an hour later, the black dog had been broken. He walked back to his so-called resting place. His resting place was somewhat filthy.

There was dry urine, fecal matter, gooey stuff, and dried up vomit nearby.

Finally, on the eighth charge, the black dog fell onto the ground. Almost instantly, he began to weep. It was an incredible, but sad sight. This dog, as vicious as they come, had a 'sensitive side'. He remained on his side, without getting up. I wanted to get closer to him. But, I had to make sure that he wasn't trying to pull a fast one on me. I mean, this dog was very big and powerful. Sure, he was ugly, dilapidated, and over the hill. But, he was still a formidable character.

After locating a tiny opening in the fence, I got the urge to enter the junkyard. My feline curiosity forced me to squeeze my beautiful body through the tiny opening.

I conducted a cursory check of the area. After seeing no other potential dangers, I took several steps towards the black dog.

The black dog instantly stood up, glared at me then resumed weeping. In response, I cautiously approached him, keeping my eyes on his teeth, ears, forelegs, and tail. I was trying to detect a sudden sign of anger, or hostility. I saw neither. As soon as I was within a foot of the black dog's forepaws, he dropped down on all fours. Now, he looked innocent. I had to get closer. But, I was still a bit apprehensive. If he'd made a blitzkrieg-style attack on me, I would've been history!

I decided to inch my way ever so closer to the black dog. He lowered his head briefly, then, he raised it. No sooner, I found myself face-to-face with a powerful fighting dog.

"Don't be afraid of me. Fear my superiors. They're tough, and uncaring. As far as they're concerned, I'm cheaper than a human security guard. Although we have a security system and cameras on the premises, I'm a formidable addition. I'm supposed to terrify would-be intruders.

My battle-scarred face and body, along with my bulky physique, scare the crap out of humans and animals. You're afraid of me, too. Dogs can sense fear in others.

Don't worry my fighting days are long gone. I'm a worn-out former champion. I was later known as a CHUMPTION. Even my former owner/trainer called me a CHUMPTION; as soon as I could no longer defeat my opponents.

In the 'fighting pit', former champs are quickly forgotten. Fans want young, fresh fighters. Not old has-beens, who don't have any sting left in their bites or punches.

As far as protecting this junkyard, I wouldn't fight a mouse for it. However, I do put on a tough act. Charging, growling, snarling, barking, and baring my canines.

You know, dog fight promoters, and trainers, are despicable swamp creatures. Some of them would sell-out their own mother.

I apologize for the rough show of force. Please understand that I was only trying to do my job. If I don't perform the minimum actions, the owner of this junkyard will toss me out onto the street.

By the way, what's your name?" asked the black dog.

"My name is Jody Wilson. I'm from Missouri."

"Jeepers, I'm so sorry. I thought you were a male. You're a female? Cats are so cute, males and females often look identical to us.

My name is Rocky Doggiano. I was born in Brockton, Massachusetts. I was named after the former 'Brockton Champ', Rocky Marciano.

My trainer/promoter was a scumbag. The only thing he ever gave me that I was thankful for was a cool name.

Although the 'Brockton Champ' retired undefeated (49-0), I sure as hell didn't.

During my peak years, I had the tenacity of Marciano. I never retreated. I had an incredible punch and bite. In fact, my trainer named my right cross after Marciano's Suzy Q. My Suzy Q was the best punch, ever. No dog had anything nearly as formidable or terrifying as my Suzy Q.

Jody, I've had a terrible life. I was born in a tough neighborhood. I never received tender-loving-care from any human or animal. My neighborhood doggy friends were tough and untrustworthy. They'd stab a friend or a foe in the back. No distinction, whatsoever. As far they were concerned, it was a dog-eat-dog world.

Actually, I only had one reliable friend; a cute German shepherd. She used to sneak into our yard then stand beside me. We'd talk until we had nothing more to say. I thought she really liked me. Well, I was dead wrong! She used me as a 'temporary friend'. A few months into our friendship, she found another dog. According to our neighbor's cat, he was a very handsome dog.

Ruth and Andrew Carmichael were my first owners. They couldn't have cared less about me. They tried to sell me off many times. I was described as a tough, black dog.

The Carmichaels told not to make new friends. I was to be sold to the first person who'd agree to pay the amount as for.

He/she was to pay in cash, small bill, and to ask absolutely no questions about where I came from.

"Jody, please don't make me your 'temporary friend'. If you want to be a real friend, do so. Otherwise, leave the junkyard at once! And don't come back!" exclaimed Rocky.

"Don't worry. I'm not like that. I'm a cat who's got self-pride, dignity, and self-confidence."

"Rocky, you can count on me. I shall make you a good friend," I said.

"Jody, do you think I have cool name?" asked Rocky.

"Yes, it's really cool. In fact, you have a very nice ring name," I said.

"Now, I'll tell you a bit more about my unhappy life. When I was six months old, the Carmichaels sold me to a creep named Joey 'Kick Your Ass' Patterson. For the sake of brevity, I'll refer to this creep as Joey.

Joey was an underground dog fighting promoter and trainer. A true scum of the earth; he didn't give a shit about any of his fighters. I wasn't his first or his last.

Joey liked to beat up on little kitties, too. Sometimes, he'd bring one home and beat her senseless right in front of me. That's not the worst part. He'd laugh during the act.

Most of all, Joey loved to see two dogs going at it in a fighting pit. Especially when his dog was the one that was kicking ass.

A fighting pit's more terrifying than a ring. As soon as the entrances are closed, the exits become neutralized.

Joey was very proficient at organizing underground fights. Sometimes, championship fights. He and his creepy friends had Sportsmen's Halls set-up throughout North America.

Originally, Sportsmen's Hall was a place where people could watch animals fighting other animals, or sometimes, humans fighting animals.

In these matches, the animals that 'fought' humans were smaller and relatively defenseless. Not like the Roman matches.

The original Sportsmen's Hall produced many gruesome fights. For example, there once was a man who'd chase down rats inside a fighting pit. As soon as he caught one, he'd clamp on it with his yellow teeth, dig-in then pull apart the poor rat with his hands. He'd do this for one beer. He often ended up with bits of rat flesh, blood, or hair, stuck between his teeth.

Joey and I moved to California because he had a criminal record in Massachusetts. He made sure to complete his parole first. Then, he conveniently changed his name as soon as we arrived in California. As stated earlier, I will use the name Joey, regardless of what alias he was using at the time.

Joey planned on making tons of money in California. After acquiring the 'big loot', he planned on moving to Hawaii. There, he could bask in the sun.

It was in California that Joey first began to train me as a fighter. I spent many months in a backyard, being trained as a killing machine. I was starved, exercised beyond my maximum potential, beaten, cussed out, imprisoned, and chained to a tree.

Dogs that are persistently chained to a tree develop severe mental abnormalities. They may become extra-territorial and extremely aggressive towards all strangers. Or, they got nuts. However, some of them turn into wimps.

After two months of training, Joey determined that I was ready for the next stage.

On a chilly Sunday morning, Joey placed me inside a cage for three consecutive days, without food and little water.

As I sat there daydreaming about flesh, blood, and water, Joey tossed a live rabbit into my cage, then he closed the cage door. I totally destroyed that rabbit! I shredded it to pieces. Eating all of its flesh! Chewing on its bones! Then, licking its blood! After I finished my meal, Joey opened the cage door then placed a bowl of cool water inside.

I should have killed him, right there and then! Unfortunately, he knew how to raise a tough dog. I was programmed to see Joey as the alpha male. Not me.

Thugs like Joey are good at breaking-in their fighting dogs, women, and humans who work for them.

Fighting dogs almost never bite the referee, or any other human who enters the pit during a match. Fighting dogs are trained to attack their opponent, while in the pit. What they do outside the pit is another matter, altogether. It all depends on the dog's upbringing, breed, and general temperament. Most fighting dogs are potentially dangerous to the public at large. If a fighting dog attacks a human, the end result is gruesome.

A couple of weeks later, Joey tested me again. This time, he chained me to a tree for several days, without any food, and little water. I was told not to bark much or whimper.

Every six hours, Joey flashed a slab of meat in front of me. I'd foam at the mouth because I was freaking hungry!

On the third day, Joey brought forth a hog-tied chicken. The poor chicken was pasted with blood. It was trying to put up a struggle. Her attempts were futile. Indeed, the poor chicken understood that its life was as good as over.

Joey told me to crunch down, and brace myself for an incredibly juicy meal. Although part of me felt sorry for the poor chicken, I was starving. Let me put this in perspective: when a human is eating a hamburger, he/she couldn't care less

about the slaughtered animals the meat came from. Remember, hamburger is 'bunched-up-meat' formed into slabs. Meaning, the hamburger that you eat may be parts of up to a dozen different animals.

Joey went to the shed then returned carrying a ladder. Then, he rested the ladder on the tree. At that moment, I sensed that he was up to something bizarre, or cruel. His eyes were glazed, bloodshot, and sinister-looking.

The incredible scent of the luscious chicken began to take its toll on me. Joey climbed the ladder then placed the chicken on a large branch. Afterwards, he tied the chicken so that it was hanging by a short rope. The chicken was a good twelve feet above the ground.

How was I supposed to stay put with that luscious chicken close by. Indeed, the average dog can't climb a ladder.

After Joey descended to the ground, then he carried the ladder back to the shack. He eyed me from inside the shack, for at least thirty minutes. I didn't know why, until he returned.

As soon as Joey returned, he unchained me. For some odd reason, he looked me straight in the eyes. Afterwards, he removed the collar from my neck. For the first time in eons, my neck wasn't engulfed in a collar. Believe me; some dogs don't like the feel of a collar around their necks. Would a human?

Joey took several steps away from the chicken, pointed his finger at me, then at the chicken. I growled, but stood there without moving an inch. I understood what Joey was trying to tell me. He wanted me to scale the tree then snatch the chicken. The reward would be felt in my mouth.

Meanwhile, my hunger pangs were increasing geometrically. I had to get that delicious chicken. While my eyes were fixated on the chicken, a dog inside an oncoming green Chevy began to bark at me. The driver of the green Chevy pulled into Joey's driveway then slowly continued into the garage.

Joey briskly walked to the garage. I knew that something wicked was in the making.

A short while later, Joey, a large man, and a ferocious mongrel, exited the garage. The large man had to hold back his Pitt bull terrier (PBT). The PBT wanted to freaking charge me!

As soon as we locked eyes, I felt a sudden urge to attack and kill him. The PBT had blood on his mind. He could've destroyed a wolf, or a cougar.

Joey whispered into the large man's ear. In turn, the large man gave a command to his PBT. The PBT zoomed passed me, 'ran' up the tree, then snatched the chicken. Right before my 'starving eyes'!

The PBT chomped down on the chicken. He began like a lion, and ended like a vulture. In other words, the chicken disappeared.

Then, the large man commanded his PBT to return. Joey thanked the large man then he petted the PBT. I felt envy and betrayal. I felt like killing that PBT! Thankfully, I composed myself.

In effect, I was being taught how to snatch a helpless animal tied to a tree branch. What I endured on that day, was an important lesson. There would be many more lessons to come.

Thereafter, twice a week, Joey 'hung' a different animal from the same branch for me to snatch and devour. The animal was always alive and pasted with blood. As time passed, I began to feel like a 'canine vampire'. I began love and crave the scent and taste of blood.

But, I loved the squealing and screaming of the victim more. I was truly becoming a fighting machine. Unfortunately, there were other dogs around the world that were also being trained as fighting machines. As usual, the bottom line is always money and sadistic pleasure. I don't care what any human says. This is the truth!

Two months later, on a bright Saturday morning, things got really nasty. I was sound asleep near my tree, when I felt a violent shaking. It was Joey.

I awakened in a state of utter confusion, finding myself being dragged towards Joey's special shed. I was told that the shed was off limits. Soon, I'd discover why.

While I was being led to the shed, I detected the scent and voice of a terrified toy dog. He too, was pasted with blood.

Apparently, there was a fighting pit inside Joey's shed. It was round, with a perimeter fence made of hardwood. The fighting pit was about the size of a boxing ring. No dog could get out, without someone opening one of the two doors. In addition, there were roughly one hundred seats around the pit. I was bedazzled!

The terrified toy dog was inside the pit. He was a Poodle/Dachshund mix. However, I felt a very strong urge to destroy him. I wanted to kill him! I began to perceive victims as objects of my desire. I couldn't feel love, mercy, or compassion.

The terrified toy dog defecated, urinated then puked his brains out. He knew why I was brought into the shack. In this type of fight, the combatants don't wear gloves. Nor do they wear head gear. The onslaught is horrendous. Although most of the combatants are males, sometimes aggressive females are pitted against other females.

Joey took me to the door that led into the fighting pit. My adrenaline level shot through the clouds! I was trying to run

towards the terrified toy dog, but couldn't. Joey had commanded me to stay put until permission was given to attack.

The terrified toy dog's pleas went unnoticed. I was hell-bent on destroying him! Furthermore, I had to take out my frustrations on someone. May as well be a weakling dog.

Joey finally gave me the green light for the kill. I went straight for my target! I bit the toy dog's neck then shook him violently. Meanwhile, I absolutely refused to let go of his neck. Now, I was the lion, while the toy dog was the hyena. Lions always win.

As soon as the toy dog died, Joey and five other spectators gave me a standing ovation. Afterwards, they began to chuckle.

Joey pulled out his cell phone then called his friend Rico. A 'real fight' was set with a German shepherd/Rottweiler mix. Generally, Pitt Bull terriers (PBTs) are the most feared dogs. Other dog breeds, like the Mastiffs, are also feared. Some Mastiffs are so bland they don't know how to be afraid.

The fighting breeds have been bred by evil humans. I'm not talking about training guard dogs, or special purpose dogs. I'm talking about evil humans who train dogs to fight other animals, including dogs, for monetary gain.

The dogs that are chosen for continued breeding have incredible energy, tenacity, ferocity, and sustained biting. Most dogs bite then snap back. These dogs attack hard then pull back.

PBTs, and other 'tenacious dogs', are super-grapplers. When they hold on, THEY HOLD ON WITH INCREDIBLE TENACITY! SOME OF 'EM WON'T LET GO, UNLESS THEIR MASTER ORDERS THEM TO.

Although German shepherds are relatively good fighters, they're not incredible grapplers. They're like most other dogs; they 'snap-bite-snap'. Don't get me wrong. When a large, powerful dog, bites into flesh, it sinks deep. German shepherd dogs are the best, coolest, all-round dogs.

I eventually became the most awesome canine grappler. But that would take many fights to do. My genetic composition, incredible training system, and Joey's brutality, helped make me a champion fighter.

Three days later, I was catapulted into the real fighting scene. Including the toy dog, my first dozen opponents were tune-ups. Joey was carving me up into a champion fighter. Not for my own good, but for his. Fight promoters and trainers get the big bucks, not the poor combatants. Gosh, that's so cruel!

My second match occurred on a cloudy Sunday morning. My opponent was an overweight, over-the-hill, German shepherd. He had numerous gashes and scar tissue scattered throughout his body. No doubt, these were from previous fights. There were no big bets on this fight. The spectators paid to watch a massacre.

I charged my opponent like a raging bull. Attacking him with full ferocity! He tried to fight back, but couldn't. I was so pumped up with adrenaline nothing he threw at me was felt.

I destroyed my opponent quickly. Biting him on the face, ears, muzzle, forelegs, and finally, giving him a deadly neck bite. After a long grappling, the German shepherd's tongue dangled out from the right side of his mouth. I'd killed him! Gosh, it felt really good!

After my victory, I got the customary doggy cookie and a pat on the head. I received a standing ovation. For the moment, I felt like the whole world admired me. Boy was I wrong! As is often the case, the truth comes out later.

A few days later, I was taken to another location perhaps forty miles away from home. Often times, I was taken to secret locales.

My next opponent was a stolen Doberman. He went down even faster than my first opponent. I went straight for his leg. With one quick 'crunch', his right foreleg was crushed. That's how a grappling dog's supposed to fight a lean opponent, like a Doberman. Dobermans have short tempers. They're sometimes referred to as 'devil dogs'. However, like their slim human boxer counterparts, they can't grapple with a bigger dog. Neither are they massive in size.

The fight was over before the Doberman could get a single bite in. I loved the rush I'd gotten after knowing that I'd defeated my opponent. I really felt like a champ.

As time passed, I destroyed one opponent after the other. Joey congratulated me after every fight. Instead of the customary cookie, he gave me a special meal, and took me to various places, for relaxation and walking. I really thought that Joey loved me. I actually loved him dearly.

In truth, Joey often fed me a load of crap about how much he loved me. He told me that we were going to retire in a beautiful suburb of Montreal. He also promised me that I'd soon become the undisputed champion of the world. This last promise was the only one that came to pass.

Joey wanted me to become a champ for his own sake. I really thought he cared about me. If someone tells you he/she loves you often, check to see if you're being used. If so, end the friendship or relationship. Immediately! Then, see how your 'lover' treats you afterwards.

There were moments when I did have mild doubts about Joey. I sometimes wondered where the rolls of bills ended up.

Dogs in this business generally can't fight too many matches. The injuries they sustain are horrific; sometimes maiming, or even deadly. Many dogs may only have a handful of

fights before they're out for good. There have been cases of dogs having only one fight.

For some reason, I was able to fight over three hundred opponents. My fighting record was even longer than that of the former Heavyweight Champion, Jersey Joe Walcott.

Throughout my prime, I never gave a damn about the dogs that I destroyed. It wasn't until much later, that I did.

Dog fighting is not like boxing, street fighting, or any of the martial arts. 'Our weapons' are attached to us. We literally fight like animals. No gloves or padding are ever worn, and all proceeds go to someone else. Our opinion is totally irrelevant. One last thing: blood is shed in every single fight.

The human boxers of old had bigger and uglier scar tissue on their faces. A higher proportion of boxers had cauliflower ears, lifelong hamburger eyes, and punch drunkenness. Humans use the label 'punch drunk'. We use the label 'over-bitten'.

Furthermore, dogs can't lean up against a rope or a fence, during a match. Going down doesn't grant you a break or a ten count. If you go down, you may be continually bitten. It all depends on what kind of match you're in, where it takes place, and the general mood of the main players (excluding the two opponents). Referees couldn't care less about you. They just want their cash after the job's done.

After my first dozen matches, the pace of my matches slowed down a bit. But, I was still able to capture title of 'United States Champion', within two years. I was the most awesome American fighting dog of my time. Because of the illegal nature of the dog fighting business, I never received positive recognition from a city, county, state, or news agency. Let-along the Federal Government.

I developed a reputation as an extremely tenacious fighter. Some fight promoters nicknamed me 'Terrible Rocky'.

I had streaks of early knockouts that lasted weeks. For a time, it seemed like I was unbeatable. Nothing could get in my way. Or, that's what I thought.

In reality, it was only a matter of time before I'd have to 'hang up my gloves'. Unfortunately, at the three-year mark, my opponents became more difficult to knock out. Also, they became more stubborn. Worse yet, their fear of me decreased significantly.

At this point, I should have kicked Joey's ugly ass, then split. I've never forgiven myself for staying with Joey, even after things got 'horrifically' bad.

Joey started to bitch me out after these progressively difficult matches. He did so without any mercy. He called me every dirty and stinky name in our lexicon.

When that didn't work, Joey reduced my food and water rations. That too, was ineffective. So, Joey intensified his mental torment of me. I was in a no-win situation. I simply couldn't fight any better, anymore.

Soon, my fighting abilities were decreasing by the match. I was physically and mentally exhausted. Furthermore, I was no longer a youthful fighter.

Although I'd captured the World Championship shortly after becoming The United States Champion, that wasn't enough for Joey. Joey wanted more and more money.

Indeed, Joey had become a millionaire. I'd heard him speak to his broker on numerous occasions. Joey didn't need any more money. He worshiped it.

As time continued to pass, the spectators began to verbally attack me. They couldn't understand how difficult it was to fight another dog.

These fans called me a LOSER, SCUMBAG, MORON, IDIOT, PUSSY, SISSY, GIRLY, PREGNANT BOY, MONGREL, MIXED-BREED, MULTI-BRED, COWARD, WUSS, CREEPO, HAS-BEEN, and the worst name anyone could ever call a fighting dog: CHUMPTION!

The words 'pussy' and 'femme' also hit me really hard. Those two words were Joey's favorites. He knew I hated those two words with a passion. In reality, Joey was attacking his ex-wife. My suspicions were soon to be proven correct.

On a hot Thursday evening, in the Month of August, Joey made me fight two has-beens. He thought I could be re-conditioned into becoming a champion. Well, that wasn't the case.

After barely defeating the second has-been, Joey harangued me out for not scoring a quick knockout. Apparently, other fight trainers and promoters had noticed that I hadn't had a 'legitimate defense' of my title for quite some time. Joey told me that I was almost as pathetic and ugly as his ex-wife. Also, that I was going end up in a river, like her. That is, if I didn't score any more big victories.

By then, my unbelievable stamina, endurance, and recuperation, had become a thing of the past. Indeed, it was dissolving quickly. I was certain that there would be no more big wins.

During my prime, all I needed was a good night's sleep to fully recover from a fight. I was the epitome of the champion fighting dog.

As I continued descending in ability, I began to feel fear. Dogs that I could've easily destroyed in my prime were launching successful punches, bites, and scratches upon my body. Now, I felt extreme pain during my matches. The constant traveling only aggravated my problems.

Joey and some of his buddies would place me inside one of their cars then we'd be off. Sometimes we'd drive all across the country to reach our destination. The dog fighting industry can be extremely secretive and well-coordinated.

My fighting days ended on a rainy, Sunday evening. It was in the month of October. We were in a secret location, just north of Los Angeles.

Fight promoters and numerous trainers had been persistently demanding 'THAT ROCKY DOGGIANO' defend his title against a formidable challenger.

Even before the fight, I felt utter fear and absolutely no confidence, whatsoever. Now, I truly understood what my former opponents of old had felt like when they had to fight me. If I could've gone back to the past, I would've apologized to every single opponent that I'd ever harmed; beginning with the toy dog.

Jody, I'm dead serious!!!

My final opponent was a purebred Mastiff. He was gigantic, mean-looking, and without any apparent fear. This dog was so huge and intimidating you'd think he belonged in a lion's den.

Typical of many fighting Mastiffs, he had to be destroyed in order for the fight to end. This Mastiff charged me as soon as our entry doors were opened. I hesitated, but was shoved inside the pit by one of Joey's associates.

Things went terribly from the onset of the match. I tried to launch several quick bites and blows, to no avail. I'd simply lost much of my snap.

As expected, the Mastiff countered with his own powerful punch-bite combination then tossed me away, as though I was a little kitty.

Because the Mastiff knew that I was no match for him, began a forward-march-attack routine. He attacked me without pause, or hesitation. During my prime, I could've launched a sustained blitzkrieg against him.

As the fight progressed, old physical wounds began to open up. I could now feel blood dripping from various parts of my body. Meanwhile, Joey and his buddies were shouting obscenities at me.

I was now exhausted, and didn't want to go on any more. Indeed, I'd been in the Mastiff's shoes many times before. I was certain he'd have absolutely no mercy upon me.

Later into the fight, the Mastiff tried to bite my eyes. I was lucky to have barely evaded his bite. Unfortunately, the next bite was successful. The Mastiff took hold of my right ear. He shook his head from left to right, and up and down. A few seconds later, I saw half of my ear in his mouth. In order to spook me, he freaking ate it.

Despite the Mastiff chewing off half of my ear, Joey and his buddies continued to shout at me. I glanced at Joey as often as I could, hoping that he'd take pity on me. He didn't! If I'd been killed, he wouldn't have shed a tear.

Deep into the fight, if that's what you want to call it, the Mastiff was able to bite me at will. He even bit my stubby tail. The Mastiff enjoyed tormenting me. He could've easily destroyed me at this point. No, he wanted to enjoy his championship victory.

Shortly afterwards, the Mastiff bit my neck, and didn't let go. I knew that I was finished. The only thing I could hope for was mere survival. After a short while, I went down for the long count. In other words, I didn't get up until the fight was over.

Now, I lay on my side, like a pathetic has-been. Blood was splattered throughout my dilapidated body, and on the canvas.

Still, Joey shouted at me without any let-up! He cursed me, and my entire family. At that point, I couldn't have care less what he or any other human thought of me. I was down, and I sure as hell wasn't going to get up until the fight was officially over.

I understood that I was leaving the pit with lifelong physical and mental battle scars. Even human champs can't go on forever. They must know when to retire. Otherwise, that one 'extra fight' may make them age ten years.

The referee finally pulled the Mastiff off of me then motioned my corner men to carry me out.

Apparently, I'd defecated and urinated on the canvass. The referee ordered the janitor to clean up the area.

Shockingly, Joey entered the pit then shoved me with his foot. Then, he ordered me to continue fighting. I remembered the championship rules: one of the fighters must die, or be knocked out, for the championship fight to end. Apparently, Joey couldn't quite accept that.

Maybe, there were mega-bets on my fight. Well, the fight continued. The Mastiff didn't bother wasting any time with normal bites. Like other incredible fighters, he knew when his opponent was defenseless and defeated.

The Mastiff charged me, like a Sherman tank. He got a hold of my neck then twisted his head clockwise then counter-clockwise. Repeating this motion a total of six times, before I finally went down for the 'final' long count. It was all over!

The referee made the official call. Instantly, Joey hurled his body over the wooden barrier then began to shout at the referee. The referee pointed at me then told Joey to shut up, or else he'd be thrown out of the secret arena. Joey looked at me, then back at the referee. He told the referee that he'd calm down, only because he didn't want to be thrown out.

I'd suffered severe mutilating injuries. Not to mention lifelong mental trauma. When I came to, I gasped for air. Now, I really found it hard to get up.

It took ten minutes for me to get up and limp away. Surprisingly, Joey seemed to have calmed down.

I really thought that Joey had a change of heart. Maybe his conscience had changed him? Well, I was dead wrong!

Joey took me to a nearby forested area. As soon as we were out of sight, he spat on me. Then, he kicked me. As if that wasn't enough, he began shouting obscenities at me. Finally, he called my mother a freaking whore!

During the reprimand, I thought of Joey's wife. As Joey continued his onslaught, vague memories of Joey's wife became clearer. I was now certain that Joey had murdered his wife for the insurance money. Not because she was a bitch, as he once told me.

Laura was a kind and gentle person. Jody, if she'd been my only guardian, I wouldn't be here talking to you.

Joey loved to boast about the conquests he'd had. One woman after another was bamboozled into sleeping with him. In fact, whenever Joey went out with a woman, she paid the tab.

Whenever Joey beat Laura up, he made sure that I was chained to an inanimate object. He wanted to make sure that I didn't come to Laura's aid.

Joey often called Laura a weakling. Unfortunately, Joey was too big, mean, and strong for her.

Joey then ordered me to follow him to the parking lot. As soon as we were near his vehicle, one of his buddies ran out of the secret arena, heading in our direction. When he got to within ten feet of us, he asked Joey if he'd like to go to Alabama.

His buddy tried to convince him to use me in a hog-dog-rodeo match. In this brutal sport a dog/s are unleashed on a defenseless hog inside a pit. The hog's tiny horns are broken beforehand, to ensure an unfair fight. The dogs usually attack the ears, genitals, and tails of their hapless victims.

I rolled over onto my side. I surrendered! I didn't want to fight anyone, anymore! I just wanted to live a normal life. Joey took one look at me then snarled. He knew that I was washed up as a fighter. He told his buddy that I was a piece of used toilet paper.

Joey shook his fist at me. Then, he told his buddy that I should be flushed down the toilet, head first. Better yet, with my mouth, eyes, and nostrils, wide open.

After Joey's buddy laughed up a storm, he recommended that I be sold to him, via a junkyard owner. Joey agreed. I was 'purchased' by Joey's buddy.

I was worried about the utter speed of the sale. Something was fishy about it. Well, it wasn't until I arrived at this junkyard that I found out.

While Joey's buddy was transporting me to this pathetic junkyard, he spilled his beans. I was utterly shocked by what he'd told me.

Apparently, my destruction was staged by Joey, and a secret friend. I was drugged just before the fight. Joey had actually placed a bet against me. He had a good idea of when I was going down for the long count.

With or without being drugged, the Mastiff would've kicked my ass, anyway. I was over the hill, and descending into an abyss, really fast.

Joey was an evil human. After I found out about his act of treachery, I began to wish him the worst of luck.

Three months after I arrived at this junkyard, somebody 'took out' Joey. He was wanted by the Fatso Family for embezzlement. He was shaving off part of the underground's earnings, and putting the money into his personal account. He should have known better. After hearing the good news, I grinned all day long.

Joey's buddy was an ex-con. He did hard time at The California State Penitentiary. His record consisted of aggravated assault, grand theft auto, forgery, possession of illegal narcotics, burglary, and wife beating. He was never charged with the promotion of illegal animal fights.

Joey's buddy had tattoos on both of his forearms. The tattoo on his right arm read 'DID FIVE AT SAN QUENTIN'. The tattoo on his left arm was an image of a lion. The guy must've been in his fifties, but was in top shape.

When I saw him in the parking lot, I noticed an outline of a gun pressing against his shirt. This type of person always carries a firearm.

In his line of work, money, drugs, fighting, competition, and enemies, make it imperative for an 'executive member' to carry a weapon at all times.

Jody, no ex-con should ever be allowed to carry a firearm! Not even a hunting rifle! The ex-con has already shown the public at large that he/she cannot abide by the laws of proper conduct.

Citizens should abide by strict guidelines for gun ownership and possession. I'm not calling for a general revocation of gun licenses. Law abiding citizens, with registered firearms, are 'legitimate owners'.

Jody, I get the jitters when I think about how much 'worldwide weaponry' there is in the hands of humans.

Canines have weapons attached to their bodies. We don't need firearms. Humans must use firearms for self-defense, hunting, and sport hunting. I'm not endorsing sport hunting, or anything of that sort. I'm only stating a fact.

Regarding hunting, even a fat-ass human could easily take down a lightning-fast animal," said Rocky.

As soon as Rocky began to shed tears, I recommended a rest for both of us. He agreed.

Rocky and I slept for a few hours. We awakened with extreme vigor. I was starting to admire my newfound friend. Rocky was honest, friendly, and a good narrator. I didn't want to hold his violent past against him. He was forced into a life of hell. Who was I to judge him?

"Please, Rocky, continue your story! You're an incredible dog!" I exclaimed.

More tears streamed down Rocky's eyes. Although I knew he was crying, this time, I ignored it.

"Jody, once when I was back in my prime, Joey got into a heated argument with a 'business associate'. The business associate was considerably bigger and stronger than Joey.

A horrific argument ensued. It looked like things were about to get physical. Indeed, Joey knew he couldn't kick the guy's ass.

In response, Joey pulled out his gun then fired six bullets into his business associate. Because it was late in the evening, and we were in an abandoned building, there was nobody around to call the police.

Jody, there was blood, gooey stuff, and 'disemboweled organs' scattered everywhere.

Immediately afterwards, Joey ordered me to shut the freaking hell up! And, that if I ever told anyone about what had happened, he'd kill me on the spot!" exclaimed Rocky.

By now, Rocky was weeping like a child. He really looked like a dismal character. I don't mean that in an offensive way, but it's the honest truth.

I felt sorry for Rocky. He'd had such a terrible life. Needing a shoulder to lean on, I offered him mine. He was delighted.

Rocky and I got along just fine for the next six months. However, I knew that our friendship was only temporary. Soon, I'd have to be on my way.

Rocky was a very generous dog. Meal time was share time. Really!

Rocky always granted me a portion of what was rightfully his. In response, I 'swiped' foods from various establishments,

then returned and shared my take. I didn't have the heart to tell him that the food was stolen. Instead, I always told him that somebody gave me the food.

Rocky and I conversed about various topics regularly. It got to the point where our circadian rhythms were perfectly aligned.

Whenever a junkyard worker entered 'our turf', I scrammed. I did this because Rocky would have told me that the owner of the junkyard hated cats. Also, he wouldn't have wanted his 24-hour guard chatting with anyone, especially a cat.

On a cool Sunday morning, I told Rocky that I was in the mood for a long walk. I ended up returning early in the evening. Boy, did I ever miss Rocky!

Throughout my entire walk, all I could think of was Rocky! His image ran through my head, over and over again.

Also, I wanted to talk to Rocky about a possible escape plan. Although Rocky was over the hill, I was confident he'd be able to survive on the streets. I mean, with his favorite kitty beside him.

As soon as I returned from my long walk, I discussed my escape plan with Rocky. While we were conversing, an ugly junkyard worker left the main office then proceeded to approach our turf. Rocky told me to scram. I ran underneath a large slab of metal.

The junkyard worker slapped himself on the forehead then returned to the main office. Apparently, he'd forgotten something.

A short while later the ugly junkyard worker exited the main office carrying two green bowls in his hands. One bowl contained meat, while the other contained milk.

As soon as the bowls were placed beside Rocky, and the ugly junkyard worker had left, I returned to our turf.

Rocky and I enjoyed our meal. It's very nice eating with a good friend.

When the ugly junkyard worker returned to remove the green bowls, I was safely hidden behind a row of rusted out cars.

It was unusual, because the junkyard workers always fed Rocky early in the morning and late in the afternoon. I figured it was a mistake. But, there was also a lesson to be learned. I had to stay on the alert for any and all junkyard workers. If I'd been discovered, Rocky and I would've become homeless, on the spot.

Rocky appeared to be anxious about something. There was something about the expression on Rocky's face, and his mannerisms. Indeed, it was bad news. I had to wait and see.

"Jody, while you were out walking, Mr. Hamilton came by and had a few words with me.

Mr. Hamilton's the owner of this junkyard. He told me that I'd been sold to a lonely, elderly couple.

The elderly couple's cat had recently died. Because their cat was considered part of the family, a 'replacement' was desperately needed. Yes, that's me!

I'm will be picked up by the elderly couple tomorrow at 8:00 A.M. They live in a small town fifty miles north of here.

Mr. Hamilton told me that the elderly reside in an uppity neighborhood. At least I'll eat high quality food.

Jody, I tried to convince Mr. Hamilton that the elderly couple would be better off with another cat, rather than a dog. My opinion was brushed aside," said Rocky.

"Rocky, don't cry! You're a big dog! You're not a little puppy! Besides, if you don't stop crying, you'll infect me," I said.

Rocky cried, cried, and cried. Deep down, I knew that our daily meetings were over. It was our fate to be separated.

"Jody, I want to give you some important information before we go our separate ways. There's an incredible black cat, named Toby. He lives near Los Angeles. I want you to be his friend, too. You deserve a good friend like Toby. You see, Toby's got a big reputation amongst cats, and even many dogs.

You guys are the cream of the crop. Of cats, that is! If you befriend him, your chances of surviving on the streets will be immensely increased.

But, I must warn you. You must be sensitive around Toby. He's had a pretty rough life. He's taken a lot of crap from a few animals, and many humans.

Jody, imagine how terrifying it would be to live in North America, as a black cat. There are many potentially life-threatening problems associated with being a black cat.

Halloween is the most dangerous time of the year for black cats.

I don't want you or Toby to end up like me; a dilapidated, punch-drunk, loser.

As you can see, I'm not the champion fighter that I used to be. My bones are aching, vision and hearing fading, and muscle tone's disappearing. As the days pass, I become more and more prune-like. I'm old and worn out. I don't want you to become too attached to me. You shouldn't be around when I'm 'snatched away' by the elderly couple. If they see you, they might call the dreaded VCOs!

Jody, I want you to leave as soon as possible. I love you dearly. That's why I want you to leave.

Please, watch out for treacherous humans, especially the dreaded VCOs. Also watch out for raccoons, dogs (a good percentage of them), rats, rabid animals, automobiles, roaches, and anyone else who's potentially harmful. Be prepared to defend

yourself with full ferocity. If you aren't adopted by a decent family, or have strong allies like Toby, your life may be shortened," said Rocky.

"Rocky, I'll miss you dearly! I hope we see each other again, someday. If not in our country, then, maybe up in Canada. We can start a new life up there. Just hope for it", I said.

"Jody, I've had such a terrible life. You're the only person in the whole world that I've ever loved. Furthermore, you really care for me," said Rocky.

"Rocky, I'm sorry you've had such a terrible life. I hope the elderly couple treats you well. Look, if they're abusive or neglectful, escape," I said.

## CAROL

I turned then walked away from my beloved friend. After exiting the junkyard grounds, I looked at Rocky for the last time. We had tears streaming down our faces. As painful as it was, I turned away for the last time, then ran. I didn't stop running until I was a mile away.

Then, I slowed down to a walking pace. It took me five minutes to find a good resting place underneath a beautiful tree.

I collapsed onto the grass then cried my brains out. My tear ducts worked overtime for a full hour. Then, I passed out. It was only a temporary rest from my ongoing problems.

As soon as I came to, my hunger pangs began to act up. I decided to walk the streets of Willowdale, in search of food.

It was now early afternoon, and the sun was pounding on my head with full force.

I got up then scanned the area. I saw a man and his wife packing vacation gear into the trunk of their station wagon. Hopefully, they were going to Los Angeles.

I 'slithered' towards their station wagon with extreme stealth. Even a leopard would've been amazed at my silence and precision.

I stopped near a tree, parallel to the station wagon. Waiting for the right moment, I fixed my eyes on the target. The

scent of luscious food was emanating from the back of the station wagon. Some of that food was soon to be rightfully mine. That is, as soon as I took possession of it. There was no time to be a nice little kitty. I was freaking hungry!

I ended up waiting for fifteen minutes before making my move. What ticked me off the most was the couple's lethargic pace of packing. Jeepers, they almost looked like a pair of sloths. But, they were built like lean stallions.

I became a bit apprehensive about getting into a vehicle owned by a sloth-like couple. I mean, they could've been cat killers, for all I knew.

For a brief moment, I decided to get my food and ride from another source. I wasn't willing to take any chances. Incredible cats, like me understand the importance of patience. Sometimes, it's a life saver.

I scanned the area then decided to walk east. As I was walking east, doubt filled my mind. Then, I heard something that made me halt in my tracks! It raised my spirits.

"Carol we have a full tank of gas, lots of money, and unlimited supplies. We're prepared for our extended vacation in Los Angeles," said the man.

"Frank we've got everything that we need. I deposited two thousand dollars into my account last Monday. That makes a total of twenty seven thousand dollars in my account, and forty one thousand dollars in yours.

We must take one more look inside our home, to make sure that we didn't forget anything. It would be terrible if we had to come to pick up an important article," said Carol.

As soon as the couple re-entered their house, I ran to the station wagon as fast as I could, then leaped inside. My free ride was assured.

As soon as my beautiful body was firmly placed inside the station wagon, I slithered underneath the vacation gear.

A short while later, Frank and Carol exited their house. For some reason, they approached their station wagon with extreme caution. For a second, I got the creeps. I figured they saw me leap into their station wagon.

"Come on, Sarah ... I mean ... Carol. We've must get on the She move! Your mom's expecting us for supper. I don't want to be late.

Do you remember what happened last time? Because we were ten minutes late for dinner, your mother decided to go ballistic on me. She told me that I wasn't good enough to be her son in law because I was a non-person, a loser, and a selfish little brat. Even after I'd explained to her why we were late, she still didn't stand down.

Carol, no offense, but your mother's a total bitch! That's a simple fact!" shouted Frank.

"She went ballistic on you because she suspected that you were having an affair with a woman named Sarah," said Carol.

Carol began to cry. She told Frank that she'd leave him if he didn't take back what he said about her mother.

What? What about the alleged affair? I wondered.

"Come on, baby, I really love you. I can't live without you. You're the most beautiful woman in the whole world! Come on, Carol. I don't have anything against you, only your mother.

Carol, your mother's a total bitch, and that's final!" shouted Frank.

"Just drive me to my mother's, so I can cry on her shoulder. I don't want to argue with you anymore," said Carol.

I decided to take advantage of the commotion. So, I opened a can of sardines then chomped down on the contents. The sardines were very tasty. Too bad, I couldn't add ketchup and lemon to them.

After finishing off 'my sardines', I tossed the can onto the street. Luckily, Frank and Carol were so 'jolted' from their argument, neither of them took notice of the clinging and clanging that my sardine can toss had made.

Afterwards, I stealthily opened the ice box then removed a 500ml carton of milk. After jabbing it with my claws, I consumed the contents.

A short while later a patrol car slowly crept up to the station wagon. When the patrol car was parallel to the station wagon, Frank and Carol shut their mouths. Apparently, somebody had called the police about their yapping.

As soon as the patrol car disappeared, Frank turned on the ignition then began his drive to Los Angeles. I was happy; thinking about the beautiful scenery in Los Angeles. I didn't want to think about the gangs engulfing many of the neighborhoods.

Frank drove through the residential area for fifteen minutes, before entering a busy street.

Frank turned left on the third traffic light then entered the entry ramp into the highway.

During Frank's drive on the highway, I sensed that something was terribly wrong. Why did Frank frequently glance at Carol? I mean, she was fast asleep.

Frank turned into an exit ramp about a half an hour into his drive. He continued driving until we reached Lanesville city limits.

Frank drove through Lanesville city limits then entered Junction 867 North. What the hell?

I was now certain that something was terribly wrong. We were heading towards Oregon!

After driving north for an hour, Frank pulled his station wagon onto the shoulder of the highway.

I slithered up from underneath the vacation gear, to take a closer look at what was going on.

Frank exited the station wagon then proceeded to walk to the passenger's side.

Unbelievably, Carol opened her eyes, hopped into the driver's seat, put the station wagon into drive then sped off.

"You freaking bitch! You bimbo! That's my station stinking station wagon! Come back here, now! What's your freaking problem?!" shouted Frank.

When Carol was a good distance away from Frank, she slammed on the brakes then exited the station wagon. She pointed her index finger at Frank then gave him hell!

"I'm not the one with the problem ... creep! You're the one with the problem! I'm going to mommy's home. We're going to have turkey, mashed potatoes and gravy, stuffing, veggies, fruits milk, juice, pop, bottled water, and much dessert.

The first thing I'll do when I get home is use the restroom. Oh, isn't that a shame! You'll have to hold it back for some time. Well, I don't think it would be a big problem for a man to 'go' in his underwear!" shouted Carol.

Carol returned to the station wagon then sped off. Meanwhile, I kept an eye on Frank. He tried to chase down the station wagon, to no avail.

"Honey, you can come out now. I know you're hiding underneath my vacation gear. Really, do you think you can fool a long time cat lover?

I can smell a cat from a hundred yards away. Kitty, I first caught a glimpse of you through my rear view mirror, while I was combing my hair. Don't you know that beautiful women, like myself, love to look at themselves in the mirror?" asked Carol.

I poked my head through the vacation gear then crawled out of the heap. Afterwards, I leaped onto the passenger's seat. Carol took her right hand off of the steering wheel then petted me between the ears.

I really liked it. When cats are in the mood, they love to be petted. But, don't you dare pet a cat when he/she is in a grumpy mood. You can't imagine how dangerous it is. Multiple spontaneous attacks may occur.

Imagine how pissed off you'd be if someone awakened you at 3:00 A.M., on a workday. Then, he/she tried to play with you. Well, now you understand. Try to be understanding, when dealing with a cat. It'll go a long way.

Carol petted me for a short while, because she wanted to concentrate on her driving. I decided to close my eyes and rest.

I opened my eyes as soon as we'd entered Laytonville. Soon, we were driving through the downtown core. Laytonville wasn't the 'ideal' American town. The part we were in was below par for a cat like me.

Carol continued driving on Kingston Street, until we left the downtown area. Now, the houses were appearing more and more run-down and dilapidated. It wasn't until Carol rolled up her windows then locked the car doors, that I became anxious. Something wasn't right. I eyed Carol, trying to detect important cues.

Carol appeared to be suffering from some sort of mental abnormality/illness. Now, I could see it as clearly as juice in a glass jar. I hadn't paid much attention to this earlier because of my preoccupation with Carol's confrontation with Frank.

In addition, my incredible feline intuition alerted me to Carol's ingrained hatred of me. Now, I began to sense Carol's utter hatred and envy of me. To make matters worse, I was alone with her, inside 'her' station wagon.

A short while later, Carol glared at me, then clenched her right fist. Carol's extreme emotion caused her to inadvertently press further down on the gas pedal. Where did this hatred come from? I wondered.

As soon as we entered what appeared to be a high-crime neighborhood, Carol turned to me then grinned. Indeed, it was an evil grin.

I was certain that Carol intended to harm me. Although the thought of a lightning-fast escape had entered my mind, I decided to sit still. After all, the doors were locked, and the windows were rolled up.

"Carol, please slow down! Otherwise, we'll end up in the morgue!" I shouted.

"Stop being a little bimbo!" shouted Carol.

I didn't appreciate the way Carol spoke to me. For strategic purposes, I decided to control my temper. If I'd attacked Carol while she was driving, the end result would've been catastrophic; for both of us.

Carol entered Robertson Street then pulled over into the curb. I figured something was about to happen.

"I want you out of my damn car ... you little harlot! You can't compete with me! I'm the only 'pussy' in my home! I don't want to compete with any cat! Out! Out!! Out!!!

If 'creepy Frank' had seen you, he would've adopted you! Can you believe that? I can't have a 'creepy kitty' in my house, crapping, peeing, meowing, talking, scratching, clawing, eating,

drinking, sleeping, rubbing, playing, and goofing around. I've always hated cats! I lied to you! I'm not a cat lover!

"When I was a child, we had a black cat that took all the cruelty I could possibly inflict on her, and more. I tormented her from the day my mommy and daddy brought her into our home," said Carol.

Carol closed her eyes for several minutes. I really thought that she'd calm down. Well, I was dead wrong. Later, things would get really ugly.

Gosh, Frank was lucky he was dumped out of Carol's station wagon. No doubt, Carol was a wacko of a woman. I wanted out, too. But, I had to wait for the right moment. Otherwise, I'd have to kick Carol's ugly ass.

Suddenly, all hell broke loose.

"GET OUTTA MY STATION WAGON! RIGHT NOW! OR I'LL SHOOT YOU WITH MY GUN!" shouted Carol.

I didn't know what to do. The doors were locked and the windows were rolled up. How was I supposed to get out? I looked Carol in the eyes then placed my right paw on her thigh. She stopped shouting then turned her head to face me.

"All right, whatever the hell your name is! I'll let you out of my freaking station wagon. This is a very dangerous neighborhood. I'm sure there are many cat haters nearby," said Carol.

Carol was an illogical and warped individual. She couldn't differentiate between good and evil.

"Kitty, I'm such a sweet person. You're lucky I didn't shoot you between your ugly eyes," said Carol.

I shrugged my shoulders then tilted my head to the side. I didn't know what to say.

Carol had become a big problem for me. For a moment, I considered a blitzkrieg-style offensive on her.

As I was pondering about my potential attack, Carol put her station wagon into drive, then took off.

Sometimes, it's hard to comprehend the illogical thinking and behaving patterns of mentally unstable humans. Just look at Carol.

Don't get me wrong. I'm not trying to belittle humans. I'm being objective regarding my conclusions; cat's honor.

Unfortunately, there was more illogical behavior to come.

"Kitty, you remind me of my sister-in-law. Your eyes are identical to hers. She's such a freaking bitch! I never liked being number two around her! You should have seen how Frank behaved around her. He loved her so dearly. I hated that. I'm his freaking wife! How could he love another woman?!" shouted Carol.

"But ... Carol ... wasn't this woman your husband's sister? It wasn't like he was having an 'affair' with her," I said.

"I don't want to ever hear that word again!" shouted Carol.

I didn't for an entire hour, thereafter. Now, we were on the highway. Well, at least I was getting a free ride. I'd underestimated Carol's 'wackiness' once again.

"Kitty, I've had a change of plans. I'm going to Weston City. You will be my passenger, by force, if necessary. I have to punish you! How dare you slither into my station wagon, like a little reptile!" shouted Carol.

At least for the time being, it didn't seem like a good idea to get into a slugging match with Carol. There was much traffic on the highway. The last thing I wanted to be in was a multi-car accident. Who knows, there may have been a cat inside a nearby vehicle. I could never forgive myself if I'd ever caused the unjustifiable death of another person.

"You better not think that I'm sick in the head! I get that crummy look from humans, often times. If you ever say it to my face, I'll freaking kill you," said Carol.

I held myself back. Whatever Weston City was like, it would be a hell-of-a-lot better than being with Carol.

A sign on the highway indicated that Weston City was ten miles away. That was a relief. Jeepers, I was so happy, I almost kissed Carol on the cheek. Whoops! That would've been a 'gruesome' experience.

Carol decided to partially roll down all of the windows. A nice breeze entered the station wagon. But, I could also taste the pollution in the air.

Why do humans pollute the environment so much? Don't they give a damn about 'our' beautiful planet? Don't they know that our planet is very sick? So sick, it's coughing up gooey stuff. A short while later, Carol entered an exit ramp then drove towards Weston. Soon, we were close enough to read a city sign that read: CITY OF WELTON POPULATION FIVE HUNDRED AND FIFTY THOUSAND.

On our way to downtown Weston, I saw many young people that were standing around, killing time. They were wasting their lives, without realizing it.

Initially, I didn't think much of it. However, as we continued on our course, the people standing around appeared tougher, and more criminal-like. We were entering an extremely dangerous part of town. This is what Carol wanted for me? I wondered.

It was the type of neighborhood that people in government tend to ignore.

Without notice, Carol slammed on the brakes, then reached into her glove compartment and pulled out a .357 Magnum. After

closing the glove compartment, she pressed the Magnum against my head then grinned.

"Carol you don't have to do this! If you want me to get out, open my door, or window. I'll get the hell out of your station wagon. Then, I'll leave and never come back. Pressing your .357 Magnum against the head of an innocent cat will get you nowhere.

"Do you want to kill me in cold blood? Your 'heart' will get the better end of you," I said.

"Don't be a little harlot! You're lucky I don't want the interior of my station wagon to be splattered with blood and entrails!" shouted Carol

Carol withdrew her .357 Magnum from my head then put it back in the glove compartment.

After Carol gave me a long look, she opened my door then waved me out. Without flinching, I leaped out of the station wagon then sped off.

I hate say to this, but my feline pride forced me to return to Carol's station wagon. I had to give her a precious word of advice before leaving. Not because I cared about her, but because I wanted her to know that 'this cat' was more intelligent than she was.

As soon as I was within spitting distance of Carol's station wagon, she let out a burst of fire from her mouth.

"I hope the ugliest, smelliest, most conniving sewer rat impregnates you! I don't want to ever see you again!" shouted Carol.

I was pissed off at Carol. But, I wanted to get the last 'verbal attack' before we parted. I'd show her how stupid she was.

"Carol! You're so stupid! Next time, hold your 'mini cannon' with both hands! If you'd fired a round at me, your mini cannon would've jerked back and thumped you on the head. Come on, how stupid can you be?" I asked.

I turned then bolted. I ran for ten blocks, without slowing down. The last thing I needed was a wacko using my beautiful body for target practice; using a .357 Magnum!

I slowed down to a walking pace because I felt like barfing. A cat living on the streets should never be extremely exhausted, or otherwise sickly.

Even cats can't see or hear every single creature around them. Lurking creatures can often be extremely dangerous. They wait until your guard's down.

I decided to rest on a large branch, located on the periphery of a dilapidated yard. As soon as I closed my eyes, sleep overtook me.

I awakened at dawn, with anxiety ringing in my head. I knew that I was on my own, and without a home to go to.

As the sun began to rise, I felt an urgent need to find another hiding place. The sun is such an awesome spectacle. Stray cats fear VCOs more during the day, than during the night. VCOs are generally not supplied with night vision equipment. This gives cats one incredible advantage over the VCOs. Daytime is VCO time!

There are many potentially dangerous animals out there. Here are a few: hard-core-violent criminals, rats, roaches (especially flying ones), hostile dogs, hostile cats, and raccoons. Raccoons almost always make their appearance at night.

As far as VCOs are concerned, 'the only good one is an absent one'. I'm not trying to pick on VCOs. I understand that they're trying to clear their communities of wandering animals. The people who control our cities don't want animals controlling large sectors of their turf. Furthermore, they despise and fear poop, pee, and zootropic (animal to human) diseases throughout their communities. In a nutshell: this is a turf war.

Given the chance, cats and rats could possibly take over large sectors of the average North American city. If these two groups ever made an alliance with each other, the world would be theirs!

Theoretically, a single rabid cat could bite and scratch many animals, and humans. You see, we've never resorted to extremes, because we're not the cold-blooded human killers that some media outlets portray us as.

Sadly, it's not all a piece of cake. VCOs usually catch their target, make an arrest then send him/her (usually a cat or a dog) off to be 'processed'.

Shelters across North America vary in size, architecture, capacity, and philosophy (empathy or brutality, kill or no-kill), and maximum stay. I'll tell you something: individuals who are cute, healthy, youthful, and purebreds, are almost always the ones to be adopted first. Ugly animals often get the ax. It may be done by lethal injection, a catheter jab in the heart, or a gas canister (gas chamber). In reality, many shelter animals are on death row. Gosh, just look at their faces!

In some countries, strangulation, burning, drowning, or beating-to-death, are also used. Gas canisters, are actually tiny gas chambers! Wow! What a sinister way of playing with words. Really, no cat or dog who's ever seen, heard, or 'smelled' the agony and torment emanating from gas chambers would ever call them gas canisters. Humans may fool other humans, but not us animals.

Cat hunts often ended in the victim being burned alive, or hanged. Countless cats have been lynched throughout history.

'Old America' had its share of cat killings. Cats were sometimes brutally persecuted; judged to be 'witch-like' or inherently evil. Extreme cruelty, without mercy, was meted out. After all, cats can't vote. No wonder, homeless people are totally ignored by politicians.

We hear a lot about the WITCH TRIALS. What about the countless CAT TRIALS? In fact, there were many cat hunts. Although, some men were also persecuted in the witch trials, most of the human victims were women.

Why can't humans give us a formal apology for what they've done?! Show some regret! Would you?! Write more books about our suffering. Also, write about all the good we've done for humanity.

Even cat adoption isn't a guarantee for happiness. Animal hoarders, ritual killers, abusers, incompetent owners, and persons using cute cats as bait for animal fighting, are potential problems. I must say: the most evil individuals can be found in the human community.

Upon awakening, I felt extreme hunger pangs and incredible thirst; pounding at me, without any let-up. I decided to hold out until sundown. Then, I'd eat and drink my fill.

Now, I was perched on a large tree branch. This gave me a birds-eye view of my surroundings. As the hours passed, people began to return from work. Thankfully, not one of them saw me.

## GANG WAR

While I was enjoying my 'temporary invisibility', all hell broke loose! Rapid gunfire was coming from two locations. Indeed, it scared the living daylights out of me. It was a freaking gang-war!

Turf, drugs, money, power, prestige, personal pride, low self-esteem, rebellion, vengeance, and pussy, are most often the causes of turf wars. Mind you, by pussy, I'm not referring to cats. I'm referring to the other kind of pussy.

Aside from rapid gun fire, a man in a house across the street was cursing at his foes that were in the house behind me. This man sounded dumb, uneducated, and ferocious. And, he spoke with a foreign accent.

Jeepers! A foreigner in our country involved in a gang war! What the hell's going on here? Why don't we go ahead and just invite all of the drug lords to the White House? I mean, some members of congress are really good at criminal activity. So good, they actually hide behind the law.

I 'scented' cocaine, heroin, hashish, and booze. Although I'd scented it when I first arrived in the neighborhood, I figured it was one of those innocent things.

Gang members destroy their lives in order to make a quick buck. Let a cat tell them: it's not worth it.

As I was cringing from the onslaught, a blue Mustang pulled over into the curb, right in front of 'my tree'. Two men and a woman exited the Mustang. Each was clutching a semi-automatic weapon, and an ammo belt. They quickly took cover behind the blue Mustang.

One of the men signaled to the shooters inside the house behind my tree. Apparently, they belonged to the same gang. It was the gang members who were inside the house across the street that were the enemy. For me, both sides were enemies.

As if the gang war wasn't horrible enough. Now, we had three more maniacs carrying heavy-duty weapons. Their ammo belts were aligned with bullets, waiting to be fired.

Now, bullets were whizzing to near me. I wouldn't have believed it, if I'd heard this story from a trustworthy cat. I had to have been there to believe it.

Soon, several 'reserve gangsters' arrived at the scene. They quickly ran into the house across the street. I was now in a freaking war zone.

I can't tell you what the difference between a gang war and a regular war is. It was time to get out of Dodge!

I leaped onto the grass, behind the tree. As soon as I landed on the grass, my brain got jiggled. My blood pressure and pulse were probably going through the clouds.

I crouched down, like a lioness does when she's about to charge a prey. I sure as hell knew that my beautiful body wasn't bullet proof. One bullet in the right place could have maimed or killed me.

The gangsters in the house across the street broke several windows in order to improve their shooting accuracy. Just like in the old westerns.

I couldn't count how many bullets had been sprayed at the blue Mustang. No doubt, the gangsters knew that the 'three enemies' were trapped. For two whole minutes, rapid gunfire was the rule.

If it was up to me, I'd force the mayor, governor, and President of the United States of America, to live in that crime infested neighborhood, throughout his or her entire term. I'd apply this rule throughout the entire world, if possible. Politicians would be 'forced' to fight crime in the same manner and tenacity as they do wars. Wouldn't that be nice?

Incredible cats, like me, are very intelligent. My people have been around for eons. We've seen many of the goof-ups made by humans. When humans lived in primitive cultures, my ancestors and their relatives were hunting whatever they damn well pleased.

Humans, who have large brains, stereoscopic vision, bipedalism, grasping hands (tool making, etc.), highly developed

language abilities, superb cognitive abilities, rationality, and the ability to wage large-scale war, eventually displaced even the most formidable of animals. Today, even polar bears must run for their lives.

Usually, running away only delays the inevitable. No polar bear can outrun an oncoming helicopter, airplane, or any land vehicle.

Truly, humans have become the most powerful 'beings' on this planet. The weapons used in this gang war alone, could kill even the most formidable land and sea creatures. If dinosaurs and King Kong did exist, machine gun fire could take them down, quite easily. They too, are made of flesh.

Aggressive ant species and chimps can wage wars also. Hyenas on the other hand, can fight other 'tribes' with incredible ferocity. These 'combats' pale in comparison to those of humans'.

We're lucky ants are so tiny. Hyenas are too awkward, ugly, and stupid, to be a serious threat to humanity. For now, lions are still the kings of the beasts. For how long, I certainly don't know.

Humans in many parts of the world can kill stray cats, without having to worry about legal consequences. In fact, some townships don't want us around, period! A cat may see a few 'lynched' kitties on the outskirts of a village. This is a stern warning to them: DO NOT ENTER, OR ELSE!

One of the three gangsters taking cover behind the blue Mustang got stiff legged. He stood up then shook his right leg. Afterwards, he tried to shake his left leg, but couldn't. You see, he was promptly gunned-down. He got 'three' in the head. As expected, he died before dropping to the ground.

Now, there was a large puddle of blood beside his head. Not to mention his splattered brains, skull, scalp, and hair. Although it was a disgustingly sad sight, I had to worry about myself, first.

The two remaining gangsters taking cover behind the blue Mustang appeared very distraught by what had taken place. Either way, they were forced to push his body away.

The dead man had stood up in dangerous territory. An infantryman man in a World War 1 battle would've known better. Stay down in your trenches! Don't get up until the order's given! Peeking at the enemy may cause you to die!

"Damn you! Someone will pay for this killing! I don't care how long it takes us. Our 'boss' will plan your killings. We know who you guys are!" shouted a gang member.

I turned to see exactly who it was. Somehow, the voice sounded very deep and menacing. Using my incredible feline

vision, I noticed a gang member standing in the living room behind me.

He was a tough-looking character. He had black hair, cruel eyes, awesome shoulders, and stood at 6 feet 6 inches. Jeepers, he could've terrified a Doberman.

This gangster had a boxer's nose, cauliflower ears, and hamburger eyes. His voice was rough and ugly. He looked like the late Rocky Graziano. Except Graziano didn't look like a cruel person. He looked like a prize fighter.

Thankfully, I wasn't the one who'd killed him. Unfortunately, I didn't have an escape plan. On the other hand, I certainly didn't want to a sitting duck.

"I don't give a crap what you say, or what you think! Your dumb boss can go to hell! You entered our territory! We have a right to protect our territory from rival gang members! We also have a right to sell whatever kind of 'merchandise' we want to! We have a right to earn a living!

Why shouldn't we be allowed to own a slab of territory?! Our families have been in this country for eons!" shouted a gang member.

One of the gang members slowly opened the door of the blue Mustang. Then, she carefully removed two M-16 Rifles. Actually, they were 'enhanced' M-16 Rifles.

It was time to get the hell out of that damn war zone! I quickly made a dash away from the area. I figured 'they' wouldn't shoot at beautiful kitty. Well, I was dead wrong!

Shockingly, one of the gangsters holding an enhanced M-16 Rifle decided to use me for target practice. He aimed then fired a wild volley of bullets at me. Jeepers, I was in the middle of the freaking street! I was caught between machine gun fire, and more machine gun fire! I decided to run to the house across the street. I figured that the members of this gang would have to be cat lovers.

Shockingly, all of the gang members decided to use me as target practice. Jeepers! I had to run zigzag, like a gazelle being chased by one of my big cat cousins.

In a split second, I turned to my right then leaped into a white Volkswagen Station. I was lucky the owner of the vehicle forgot to roll up one of the windows.

As soon as I landed in the Volkswagen Station, I saw a man with long hair, and glazed eyes, smoking some really powerful weed. This guy stunk, worse than a skunk.

The man was smoking two joints at the same time; one was hashish, the other marijuana. The man had no inkling that there was a serious freaking war raging just outside.

"Come on baby! Man, like ... what's up? Do you want a drag? Please, kitty, don't say no! I hate to smoke weed alone. You

see, I've been alone for over three months now. My wife left me for a square. Right before she broke up with me, she called me a stinky loser, burnout, asshole, addict, nobody, and many other hostile names. Can you believe that bitch? I'm not a burnout! I only get high once a day; all day.

Like, man ... some of my high school buddies got high several times a day. I don't think I'm like that. I'm an honorable dope smoker."

Now, I realized that being outside, where there was a chance of escape, was a lot more promising than having to endure 'the burnout'. He was driving me up the wall. Without saying hi, or goodbye, I turned then leaped out of the window. Thankfully, that was the last time I ever saw the burnout.

The gangsters resumed firing at me. I swerved left and right away from the zooming bullets. I didn't want the shooters to hang me up as a trophy.

Suddenly, I noticed a slight opening in the window of a Pontiac Grand Prix.

I ran to it then leaped through the opening. Truly, I had the skill of a leopard. Once inside, I slithered underneath the front passenger's seat. I decided to stay put.

"Come on pussy cat! Come on out, so we can shoot your ugly face! We don't tolerate anyone watching our turf wars. That includes ugly cats like you.

We'll give you to the count of five to come out, or else I'll make it my day's resolution to wound and torment you. My 'associates' and I are seasoned shooters," said a gang member.

In all the commotion, I didn't notice what direction the voice was coming from. In effect, I didn't know whose side made the threat. But, I did know that both sides had fired on me. In that regard, the threat was comprehensive.

I didn't know what to do. If I did what the gang member wanted me to do, I'd be shot. If I tried to run away, he'd take it personally, then he'd shoot me. If I stayed put, I'd have to dodge at a hundred bullets. Gosh, I had three rotten options to choose from.

While I was pondering about my predicament, the sounds of police sirens filled the air. At least four patrol cars were 'zoomed-in' on the battle scene. Apparently, someone did care about the 'hood'.

This sudden shocker caused the gang war to immediately end. As such, I was able to peek through the window of the Pontiac.

Both of the gangsters who took cover behind the Mustang were wounded. They were able to get into their bullet strewn blue Mustang, then drive off to safety.

I decided to scram. After leaping out of the Pontiac, I ran through a dozen lawns. I just wanted to get the hell out of there!

While running away from the chaos, I quickly glanced back, just to make sure that nobody was trying to get a 'sneaky' bullet into me. Thankfully, the shooters didn't take notice of me. They had more urgent matters to deal with.

## BARBARA

Shortly afterwards I slowed down to a walking pace. I strolled through a decent neighborhood for fifteen minutes, before spotting a good place to rest; a spacious garage. Luckily, there were no vehicles inside. It seemed like time was flying by like a jet airplane. Part of me was a bit apprehensive. But, I had more immediate matters to deal with: hunger, thirst, exhaustion, and anxiety. I simply ran out of energy.

While recovering in the garage, I detected the scent of roast beef emanating from inside the house. I knew that getting some of that roast beef into my system would give me an incredible energy boost. I was so hungry, nothing could've diverted me. The scent of roast beef 'negated' my exhaustion. Instantly!

For a moment, my good half got the better end of me. I questioned myself about the morality of 'snatching' roast beef from its rightful owners.

No! I was too freaking hungry to ponder about the morality of taking food from someone else. It's not like I'd never done it before.

Good cat owners live in sweet homes that contain tons of good food, and gallons upon gallons of clean water and fresh milk. Not to mention toys for a cat's personal use.

A cat that is cute, well-behaved, and lucky, stands a good chance of being taken in by a good human family. Also, some cats are good actors. They know what to do in order to get what they want. In effect, these cats know how to 'sucker' a human. But, I must make an important point: there are countless cats who truly love their owners.

As I'd stated earlier, a cat must always 'beware' of evil humans. These evil ones are capable of inflicting immense pain and suffering upon an innocent/naive cat.

As my stomach began to grind on itself, nothing mattered, except my slab of roast beef. I actually began to feel the roast beef in my veins. Jeepers, I was that hungry!

If I had to endure another hour of suffering, I would've turned into a freaking zombie. That roast beef was mine for the taking. There was no room for a guilty conscience, or empathy. Don't judge me, until you've endured what I've had to endure.

I exited the garage then headed straight for the kitchen. As soon as I was within several feet of the kitchen door, I played the cute cat routine.

I shouted into the kitchen door, making sure not to let-up until someone in the house answered my call.

"I'm hungry! My mommy died! I have to eat 'much' roast beef!" I shouted.

"Who is it? Are you a little kitty? Come on don't run away when I open the door. If you do, you won't get a treat," said a woman.

Shortly afterwards, a woman opened the kitchen door, lowered her head, then looked me straight in the eyes. I rolled onto my back, in submission then righted myself. Afterwards, I waited attentively.

Instantly, the woman got down on one knee, then petted me between the ears. Although her petting felt really good, it didn't relieve my hunger pangs. It was food that I needed! The petting could be delayed.

If a 'sweet Samaritan' ever sees a half-starved cat he/she will do the right thing.

The cat will soon have solid food, milk, and water to consume. The aforementioned are a cat's 'BIG THREE'. However, some cats don't like milk. Don't worry. They're in the minority.

Shelter, friendship, petting, and overall security, are also very important. Too bad, Abraham Maslow didn't write about an animal hierarchy of needs. It would've been revolutionary!

"Madam, you're so sweet and beautiful. I'm very glad to meet you. You must have a hundred boyfriends. Why ... no man in his right mind could ever resist you. I'd like to be your friend.

However, I do have a tiny problem at hand. I've been on the streets for quite some time. I'm starving and dying of thirst. Last night, I cried my brains out. Please, give me whatever you can," I said.

I figured that a ton of crap would do the job. Flattery can often work wonders.

"Well, aren't you going to tell me your name?" asked the woman.

"I forgot. How impolite of me. My name is Jody Wilson. I'm from Missouri. Although I miss my home state, being on the move does have its advantages. But, someday, I'll return home."

"My name is Barbara Belington. I grew up in Vancouver, British Columbia. Vancouver's a very beautiful city. I miss the greenery, and the rain. It rains a lot, but it also clears up a lot. That's when you see the beautiful greenery.

Cities with cold winters are also nice. But, you need to dress up during those cold winter days. You must also have decent heating, and access to good transportation.

A homeless cat or dog that lives in a cold city has big problems to deal with. Cold weather has no mercy. Old man winter couldn't care less if you're warmed-up, or freezing to death."

"I'd like to get to know you, after I've had something to eat and drink," I said.

"Jody, I'll give you some tasty roast beef, milk, and water," said Barbara.

As soon as I heard the words roast beef I felt a gigantic swath of saliva form in my throat. Because it caught me off guard, I almost choked on it.

Luckily, Barbara calmed me down. She showed incredible concern for me. She almost took me to the veterinarian.

Luckily, we were able to resume our conversation, unhindered.

"Jody, I'm only a temporary caretaker of this house. This house belongs to a dear friend of mine. She's returning next week.

Then, I'll be off to Vancouver. Too bad, you can't come back with me. I think you'd really like it up there. After all, we're neighbors. Aren't we?

Last Friday, I was walking my friend's cat through the neighborhood, when she stepped on a shard of glass. The glass was from a broken beer bottle.

As soon as my friend's cat, Katy, stepped on the shard of glass, she shouted then hopped and fell onto her side. After she got over the shock, she started crying.

Now Katy's a patient at The Lawson Veterinary Hospital. It's very sickening how people can go out and get wasted, then drop, or toss their beer bottles onto the ground. They should think about the potential harm they're doing to animals; not to mention their 'litter-bugging'.

I kept my friend posted about Katy's condition. Either way, she decided to return to California.

The veterinary surgeon informed me that Katy's paw would take weeks to make a partial recovery. This was the best case scenario.

Katy's paw would be damaged for life! The creep who tossed the beer bottle onto the sidewalk IN A RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOOD, is probably laughing up a storm," said Barbara.

Barbara invited me inside the house then proceeded to lead me to the kitchen. Upon arrival, she walked over to the stove. After throwing me a big smile, she put a giant slab of roast beef into a green bowl. I stayed put, near the kitchen table.

Barbara returned with a bowl full of roast beef. I ate the contents. While I was eating my roast beef, Barbara placed a bowl of milk, and a bowl of water beside me. I consumed off everything in sight. Indeed, I felt like a lion.

As soon as I cleared the contents of all bowls, I asked Barbara to get me some more water. All that eating made me very thirsty.

As soon as Barbara placed another bowl of water beside me, I finished it off. Now, I was satiated.

"Jody, lay down near the washing machine. I'll get you some munchies," said Barbara.

As soon as Barbara said the word 'munchies', my hunger returned. It was unbelievable, but true.

No doubt, Barbara was a generous woman. So, I decided to take advantage of her. After all, I'd be on my way soon.

I waited patiently 'slobbering' like a hungry lion. The sweet smell of food ran up my nostrils, all the way to my brain. I couldn't wait.

Before I knew it, Barbara came out of the kitchen closet with three large strips of beef jerky. I felt like leaping up into the air and snatching the 'beef jerky strips from her hand.

Before I could do that, Barbara knelt down, removed the strips of beef jerky out of their plastic wraps then placed the food beside me.

Naturally, I lowered my head then devoured my food. I looked like a lion that was devouring an antelope carcass.

"Jody, I'm a biochemist. I work at the Vancouver General Hospital. Most people tell me that I look like a housewife. You know what I mean; a house cleaner/cook. Also, a woman who's had two or three pregnancies.

That's not the case. Although taking care of 'your kids' is a noble job, I chose to pursue my studies to the highest level. Jody, do you think I'm a snobby bitch for doing that?" asked Barbara.

"Umm ... I mean like ... absolutely not!" I answered.

"Jody, you are an incredible cat! Let me tell you more about myself, okay?

I was always brilliant in school. So, why would I even consider wasting my intelligence away?" asked Barbara.

Gosh, Barbara was so full of herself. Didn't she have a maternal instinct to satisfy? I wondered.

"Jeepers Barbara, you must've hit the book really hard in school. You were probably under immense stress and pressure," I said.

I leaped onto Barbara's chest then licked her hand several times. In response, Barbara told me that she loved me.

Somehow, Barbara was hiding her major depression from me. Aside from her beautiful eyes and freckles, true happiness just wasn't there.

In fact, Barbara looked like she was about to cry. I could see tear drops in her eyes that were on the verge of dropping. No doubt, she didn't want to cry in front of a cat. How could anyone (human being) not want to cry in front of a cat? It's not like cats mock crying humans.

"Jody," please follow me to the garage. Don't worry. Nothing bad will happen to you. I'm an honorable woman," said Barbara.

While following Barbara, apprehension and confusion 'engulfed' my mind. Was it a trap, or was Barbara an honorable person? I decided to give Barbara the benefit of the doubt. If she'd wanted to harm me, an attempt could've been made while I was gorging on my food. During which, I was fixated on the contents of the bowls.

As soon as we entered the garage, Barbara picked up a wooden rocking chair, carried it to a corner then put it down. She sat in the rocking chair for a minute, without saying a word. Then, she waved me over to her. I leaped onto her lap then turned over on my back, signifying total submission.

A short while later I began to play bite Barbara's right forearm. Although I was only goofing around, it was also a reminder to Barbara that I could defend myself, if need be. Cats can quickly right themselves, even if they're on their backs.

"Jody, I want you to be very careful out there! I can cats fighting almost every single night. It's a tough world out

there! You must be a smart/tough cookie to survive. Dumb cats can't survive on the streets. Smart cats strive for that North American home. That's what I'd do if I was a cat.

There are many caring people in this world. They love cats, sincerely. If you end up in their care, your life will be a picnic. Good sleeping quarters, litter box, toys, food, water, milk, veterinary medical care, and much love. If you're super lucky the house will contain a friendly animal companion.

If by some cruel mistake, you end up on the streets, always have at least one good hideout, and a good friend. As a warning, be prepared in case your friend decides to betray you. Be wary of 'deceitfully-friendly' dogs, cats, and humans. I'm sure you've come across someone like that before.

Another thing: all humans aren't cat lovers. In fact, some humans enjoy harming cats. Other cats and dogs can also be dangerous to you. Dogs are bigger and stronger than most cats. Some sinister humans deny animals their inherent rights.

Jody, please search for a black cat named Brian. He lives in West City. West City is only 10 miles southwest of here. Brian's very intelligent, street smart, assertive, friendly, and can really help you out in life. I heard about him from one of the neighbors.

Keep on Brian's good side, so you can enjoy the benefits of being his friend," said Barbara.

It wasn't the first time that a human asked me to find and befriend another cat. Well, this time I was intent on finding Brian.

"Barbara, you've been a sweet friend! I wish there were more humans like you on this planet. I'm sincerely thankful for the nourishment, advice, and friendship that you've showered upon me. I wish you the best of luck.

Now, I must leave, before 'my goodbye' becomes too painful," I said.

As I began to exit the garage, I suddenly stopped in my tracks. After turning around to get one last look at Barbara, I noticed that both of us had teary eyes.

I was now certain that Barbara truly loved me. I understood that she had to go back to Vancouver, soon. What a shame. She and I could've been good friends.

## IT'S A TOUGH WORLD

I exited the garage, walked through the yard, then disappeared into the neighborhood. I was still weary because the neighborhood wasn't quite posh. Although it was significantly better than the gang-war neighborhood, I had high hopes for something better.

I'd been given advice about meeting up with a good person. Because Barbara truly seemed like a sincere person, I made it my goal to find Brian. Another thing: I was too shy to tell Barbara that I loved her, too. Perhaps I loved her much more than she could ever have loved me.

Just thinking about Barbara makes me cry inside. Yes, there are some incredible humans out there. I'd always wished to meet up with many more of them.

As I was walking, a dizzy spell hit me like a ton of bricks. It felt like something serious. Thankfully, the feeling went away a short while later. In effect, I ignored it.

Several days later, I had another dizzy spell. This time, it lasted a bit longer. I figured it was from stress and exhaustion.

As time passed, I felt my overall strength slowly evaporate. Being on the streets is very tough and energy-draining. I had been many months since I'd last seen Barbara.

I needed a good friend. I mean one of my own. A million human friends couldn't satisfy my need for a cat friend; vice versa.

Could a human survive with only cat friends? I don't think so. The best choice is to have the best of both worlds.

I used one makeshift resting place after another. Always on the move, and never firmly attached to another person. No wonder, I was stressed out.

One day, I kept on walking and walking, until I reached the periphery of a dilapidated yard that was in front of an abandoned house.

I walked through the yard then entered the abandoned house. As soon as I entered what was once the living room, I collapsed. For how long, I don't know.

I awakened to the sound of two gargantuan rats creeping up on me! I was startled, disgusted, and terrified! In a split second, my body was out of the abandoned house.

Leaping through an empty window frame, I descended into a sweltering hot day. As I strolled through the neighborhood, I saw youngsters standing on street corners. I could smell the marijuana, hashish, and other illicit drugs, emanating from their bodies. Not to mention, what was inside their little plastic bags.

Gosh, I'd entered another dangerous neighborhood. Why me?

Many humans are willing to pay big bucks for a short blast of pleasure. Certainly, in the short run, things seem really nice. However, in the long run, the user's brain is as good as fried.

Some cats get stoned on catnip, and other 'secret cat drugs'. These 'dopers' look like heroin addicts. They form groups called 'catnip dens'.

Catnip dens are an utter disgrace to the cat world. But, our addiction problems pale in comparison to those of humans'. Humans are the masters of addiction. I mean it!

I continued walking east on Barry Street. I could actually hear the droves of roaches running inside select houses.

Also, there were more rats around, than the residents would have liked to have known. But, what caught my attention the most were the two angry dogs that were fenced inside what appeared to be a crack home. No doubt, they were fighting dogs.

I walked for another hour until exiting the dangerous neighborhood. Now, with each step taken, I got closer and closer to the 'Leave it to Beaver' neighborhood. Yes, I imagined that beautiful home, with a beautiful white picket fence on its perimeter.

When I was getting ready to turn off into Hollingsworth Avenue, I took notice of several boys playing stickball in a parking lot.

Naturally, the boys were enjoying themselves. So, I didn't consider them a potential threat. Lowering my guard, I walked on the sidewalk, just passed the periphery of the parking lot.

Suddenly, the pitcher took notice of me. After pointing at me with his right index finger, he cocked his right arm then threw the plastic ball at me!

The plastic ball struck my tail! It hurt like hell. For a moment, I felt like beating up that little twerp. Then, the other boys took notice of me.

Now, I had to deal with a 'platoon' of angry boys. They charged me like bulls in an arena. With only a split second to study my options, I decided to run away.

"Hey kitty, please don't run away like a scaredy-cat! We don't want to hurt you! We know that you're the kind of cat who's afraid of kids!" shouted one of the boys.

I continued running without any let-up; keeping alert for potential dangers. After running for ten minutes, I collapsed in front of a gray Land Rover.

I saw a fat man sitting in the driver's seat of a Land Rover. He was munching on a half pounder with everything on it, super-sized pop and super-sized fries, along with a jelly donut. Jeepers, I had to get some of that food, pop, and jelly donut, into my system.

I became so infatuated with 'my food' I had minor-convulsions throughout my body. I had to get at that food! No 'fatso human' was going to prevent me from eating! It's not like he was starving, or anything. I mean, his arteries were probably clogged and 'cemented'. Gosh, I probably would've done him a favor by snatching his food.

This guy was so fat, he'd fit in just fine in a walrus community. With so much blubber underneath his skin, he could've easily gone a few weeks without eating.

I positioned my body for a 'blitzkrieg snatch'. It seemed like nothing could've stopped me. Well, everyone makes mistakes; even an incredible cat, like myself.

As I was about to leap into Land Rover, I got the shocker of my life! I simply couldn't believe my eyes ... or ears!

The fatso gently placed his food on the counter then exited his Land Rover. In a quick, automatic move, he pulled out a sawed-off shotgun! Then, he pointed his weapon at my beautiful face. I froze. As you perfectly know, even a cat can't outrun shotgun pellets. I was too damned close!

"Hey ... kitty, you better not do that! My food is for me! I've dealt with 'creatures' like you before. Now, kitty, you

probably think that this delicious, saliva-generating food, that's in my possession, should be yours. You're probably thinking that I'm just another fatso human who needs to go on a diet. Maybe, I've got so much blubber underneath my skin, snatching this tasty food from my possession would actually serve a noble cause.

Kitty, you can't do that to me! I bought this food with my hard-earned money! I'm a barber! I have ten-hour workdays. My body's constantly sore. I relax by eating delicious junk food. Now, if you know what's good for you, you'll turn around and leave! I mean it!" shouted the fat man.

I turned then walked away. Shortly afterwards, my head felt very heavy. Apparently, I was so shocked, depression hit me hard. I walked around for the next hour, with my head stooped downwards. I utter shame. Then, I collapsed beside a hedge.

The warm weather, along with my incredible energy expenditure, zapped much of my strength. I couldn't afford to close my eyes for too long.

For the next three days, I was only able to snatch tiny quantities of food from various establishments. Thankfully, I had plenty of hose water to drink. My rib cage began to appear. Soon, other bones would appear.

As time continued to pass and my hunger increased, I began to feel like a walking zombie.

Merely walking became a chore. With nothing on my mind but food, I went to work. Sniffing and 'sighting' for food. Finally, my hard work paid off. I detected the scent of a good meal emanating from a supermarket nearby.

This supermarket, like all others, had everything that I needed: meat, milk, and much clean water. Indeed, my nostrils couldn't take it anymore!

Somehow, the effect gave me a temporary boost of energy. I wanted that 'bloody stuff' that cats crave!

I crossed Davenport Road, then walked 1 block south on Gallagher Street, entering a relatively large parking lot. The area was an outdoor mall.

Roy's Supermarket was the place I wanted to enter. I wanted to remember the name for future reference.

Supermarkets can be restaurants and 'free motels' for roaches, rats, mice, and cats. Because raccoons are much larger than the average-sized rat, they're generally limited to eating out of garbage bags. However, if the garbage is securely locked inside a dumpster, there's no meal for the raccoon. No wonder, many establishments padlock their dumpsters. No raccoon or rat can pick a good lock.

Roaches can be a big problem for supermarket owners. Some species of roaches are capable of producing a quarter of a

million roaches from one fertile female. That is, if they're not sprayed or fumigated on a regular basis.

In addition, there are species of roaches that can reproduce asexually. Of course, this is an optimum case scenario. Some breeds of roaches can actually fly. Yikes!

I think roaches are disgusting. I'd never want to live in an establishment engulfed with those ugly creatures. Roaches often lurk inside walls, underneath homes, in kitchens, and crevices. They like to come out when it's dark, or when there's nobody around.

Vibrations and lights cause roaches to scram! If cats reproduced like roaches, they would've conquered this entire planet. Eons ago! No 'human civilization' could've defeated us. Today, humans are the 'alpha beings' on this planet. For how long can they sustain their status for? I sure-as-hell don't know!

In general, humans have become too powerful and conceited for their own good. Most of the time, human encroachment totally sucks!

For example, polar bears love to tread through the circumpolar region. Nowadays, with all the advanced equipment out there, any polar bear can be captured, transferred, and/or killed. Transfer to a zoo or a roadside menagerie is worse than being gunned-down in cold blood.

In addition, Polar winters are becoming shorter, thereby causing the hunting season to shrink. Polar bears tread on solid ice, in order to move and hunt.

Animals sometimes endure terrible humiliation by their human captors. For instance, animals in circuses, entertainment, or roadside exhibitions, must be broken-in; especially in circuses and the entertainment industry. The animals therein are supposed to behave in a certain manner; even when this kind of behavior in question is unnatural for the animal.

Can anyone in his/her right mind expect a bear to dance on a whim? Or a large cat to jump through flaming hoops? What about the elephant who takes orders from a tiny human.

Although animals and humans are predatory in nature, tormenting, humiliating, or abusing another being, is almost always an act committed by a human.

When cats play with their prey, it's just that. There's no sadism ... really!

The future of many mammals looks dim. A shrinking habitat is one of the most serious problems that wild animals have.

The ancestors of these animals could never have envisioned this kind of predicament. If they'd known what was in store for them, the fight against humanity would've been much bloodier.

Perhaps several species of animals would've joined forces to 'demolish' humanity.

Like a leopard stalking its prey, I stealthily approached Roy's Supermarket. As I was making my approach, I noticed a larger supermarket roughly a hundred yards west of my position. I disregarded the other supermarket.

Meanwhile, I placed myself on red alert. I understood that a sudden lurking danger could leap out from nowhere.

What?! A notice posted on the front door of Roy's Supermarket read: ROY'S SUPERMARKET IS PERMANENTLY CLOSED! I felt like shouting the 'F' word.

I was forced to go to the larger supermarket. At this point, I was too famished to ponder about my new target.

Initially, I'd made a mistake. I walked to the supermarket that was closer to me, rather than the larger one.

I began to slobber like a hungry Bengal tiger. Well, I also looked like a person who'd just been gassed. Foamy-like saliva dangled from my beautiful mouth. Gosh, it was disgusting!

A short while later I was at the doorstep of Polson's Supermarket.

I back tracked, because too many humans were eying me. Although they'd gone to Polson's Supermarket to buy food and other products, a cat standing in front of a busy supermarket stands out like a pink elephant.

Begging for food was out of the question. I'd rather snatch, or steal what I needed. It's much more honorable.

As I was beginning to leave the area, a young, tall man, with hazel eyes, called out to me. As I approached him, I notice that he was quite handsome.

"Hey kitty, come here ... please. I've got some milk for you."

I ran to him as fast as I could!

Without saying a word, I snatched a carton of milk from the handsome man's hand then I sped off. Believe me I had no time for introductions. I just wanted that freaking milk!

I couldn't have cared less, if he was ugly or handsome. What difference would it have made to me, anyway? I'm a freaking cat! It's not like he and I were destined to fall in love, or anything.

I ran through the parking lot, then crossed the street, and continued without stopping. Meanwhile, I was desperately holding onto the carton of 2 percent milk with my powerful jaws. Nothing could've stopped me.

After deciding that I'd ran enough, I zoomed-in on a large tree.

Like a cheetah after a successful chase-down, I was forced to recuperate. Meanwhile, my eyes and ears were placed on red

alert. I could hear faint screaming, shouting, and yelling, coming from the handsome man. He was pissed off as hell. He couldn't quite understand why I'd snatched the carton of 2 percent milk from him. Well, wasn't he getting ready to give it to me anyway?

As soon as I'd gotten enough rest, I poked a few holes into the carton of milk. The rest is all history.

The nourishment that I received from the milk enabled me to stay low until dark. However, I was still in desperate need of nutrition.

As such, I walked back to Polson's Supermarket. It was now 1:00 A.M. Polson's Supermarket was now officially closed.

The Polson fellow had done an incredible job as a business man. Truly, his supermarket was gargantuan. As soon as I was within a foot of the parting, I scanned the entire area. Thankfully, there were no potential threats. Once again, I began to salivate like a Bengal tiger.

Now, hunger hit me like a ton of bricks! The milk's value had worn off. I needed more nutrition! I was famished, homeless, friendless, and confused. Can anyone blame me for wanting to snatch my food from a human establishment? Look, cats don't get any tax breaks! In fact we can't even freaking vote!

I scanned the area a second time; searching for security cameras, humans, animals, and 'convenient entrances'. Convenient entrances are just that. They're convenient for people like me who don't want to be seen or noticed.

Naturally, these convenient entrances must be hidden from the employees of the establishment. Otherwise, the 'enterers' would have to deal with problems such as poison, security personnel, traps, and closures.

Now, a yucky slab of saliva dangled from the corner of my mouth. It was so slimy and ugly I decided to rub my face against the parting doors, in order to smudge it off. Thankfully, the GIANT snot was now pasted on the parting doors.

You know, that slab of saliva dangled so far, it almost reached the ground! I'm dead serious!

As soon as I was about to make my move, I spotted a patrol car nearby. The driver entered the parking lot then sped in my direction.

Look, I don't mind cops, as long as they leave me alone. I had a split second to respond. One mistake and I was a dead goose!

I dove underneath a dark van nearby. I figured that being under a dark van, at 1:00 A.M., was good cover. Well, I was dead wrong!

I had a birds-eye-view of the driver of the patrol car. She parked next to the dark van. After turning off the ignition, she exited the patrol car.

After looking very carefully at the dark van, the policewoman cautiously circled it several times. In fact, she drew out her freaking gun.

"This is officer Francine Williams. I found the getaway van. It's parked in front of Polson's Supermarket, located at 1500 Park Street West.

I'm certain this is the getaway vehicle. I can see the two large slashes on the right rear door. In addition, the engine's still warm. No doubt, the liquor store robbers exited their van a few minutes ago. Send over the crime scene guys.

The creepy thieves have robbed over fifty freaking stores in a one hundred mile radius. They've tormented our store owners long enough! Furthermore, the governor's going ballistic on us. He called the chief of police a two-bit idiot."

I was under a dark van that was about to be searched, then taken to the police garage. What the hell? It felt like I was standing between an angry lion and an angry tiger.

After slithering out from underneath the dark van, I slowly 'crept' away from the scene. I decided to go to the back of Polson's Supermarket. As soon as I turned the corner, I was out of sight.

My adrenaline level went through the clouds! Indeed, I could've have been arrested as an accomplice to the evil-doings of those criminals. The last thing I needed was to be near evidence.

Thankfully, I spotted a window that was slightly ajar. It was too good to be true.

The lighting in the storage room was dim. Indeed, Polson didn't want anyone to snatch any of his supplies.

Unfortunately, I ran into a brief problem. I got another dizzy spell. This time, it lasted a few minutes. Even my vision became blurred.

When my vision returned, I used it to the best of my ability. My night vision enabled me to see what needed to be seen.

I was still on the alert. It could've been a trap. The security equipment used nowadays is incredibly sophisticated. Sophisticated enough to track a cat, and possibly enable the police to make an arrest.

I readied my ears, flared my nostrils then scanned the area. I was trying to determine if there were any 'creepy dangers' lurking in the shadows.

Like an agile leopard, I took four steps then leaped onto the window panel. Shockingly, my first attempt was a failure.

For some reason, I hadn't fully recuperated from my dizzy spells and utter exhaustion. I decided to take a five minute breather.

This time my leap was successful. I landed on the window panel. From there, I performed a cursory scan of the storage room. Thankfully, I saw many food items.

However, I sensed that 'others' were inside Polson's Supermarket. By others, I mean animals. The scent of cats and rats was in the air. I'd have to be on yellow alert throughout my foray. That means, no dozing off. A lightning-fast escape may be called for, at any moment.

Now you have a better idea of how tough life can be for a stray cat. Understand there are times when we must take food from humans, through cunning and smarts.

I say this with full earnest: taking food from the elderly, infirmed, or incapacitated, is not something that I would do off hand. However, if need be, I sure as hell would do it.

I leaped onto the floor then walked around trying to find food that wasn't encased in a puncture-proof container. Too bad I wasn't walking around with an orangutan. Orangutans are very good at picking locks, and opening things.

Once again, a giant goblet of saliva dangled from the corner of my mouth, dropping to the floor with much force. The force of the drop caused it to make a splashing sound. It also caused my head to jerk downwards. Food had to enter my system soon. Otherwise, I would've gone mad.

I pushed open the double doors leading to the supermarket then headed straight to the 'foodstuffs'. As I got closer and closer to my free meal, my salivary glands began to go haywire. It got to the point where I could almost drink my own saliva.

Eureka! Aisle number five! Right before my beautiful eyes! I couldn't believe it! After recovering from temporary shock and disbelief, I galloped towards a large bag of Acme cat food. Like a lioness stalking her prey, my eyes fixated on a lone bag. Nothing in this world could've broken my concentration.

As soon as my paws were in striking distance, I scratched the Acme bag four times then split open the largest of the gashes that I'd made. I wanted to shove my face into my luscious food.

But then, I got an idea. I 'pawed' the Acme bag just hard enough to make it drop onto the floor. As soon as that happened, much of the contents inside the Acme bag spilled onto the floor. There it was! My free meal!

I ate as though there was no tomorrow. I ate every single morsel possible. When I finished eating, the floor looked like it was just polished. The saliva that was dripping from my mouth was part of the cleaning mechanism.

Before eating, I was so hungry even the floor kind of looked tasty.

I ended up eating much fish, chicken, and beef. What an awesome meal! Thereafter, all I needed was something nice and wet to lubricate my throat. I raised my head, turned then began my search for some lubrication. I walked to the refrigerated foods section. I couldn't believe my eye! There, I saw countless cartons of milk! Wow! What a joy! I'd always loved milk.

Cats who don't like the taste of milk don't know what they're missing; pure and simple. I feel sorry for these individuals.

I'll tell you, Polson's Supermarket was very clean, and well-decorated. The interior design was unbeatable. But, I didn't see any security cameras? What about the alarm system? The security guards were nowhere in sight. I decided not to ponder about the subject for too long. The issue at hand was nourishment then exit.

As I was deciding my next move, a faint series of sounds interrupted my concentration. Yikes! There were other animals nearby. They weren't cats. As a result, I placed myself on red alert. I determined that the intruders were slimy rats.

With barely enough time to casually accomplish my mission, I decided to dash for 'some' milk, then forcefully scratch-open a carton, and lick-off what I could. The job had to be completed in the shortest time possible.

Cats who live on the streets must learn how to consume foodstuffs at an incredibly fast pace. Just like in the military.

This rule always applies when danger is nearby. If there's no perceived danger nearby, then eating and drinking at a moderate pace are permitted. However, a stray cat should never be oblivious to his/her surroundings. There have been cases of stray cats being mauled by larger and stronger animals, while the poor critter was eating or drinking. The attacker was able to sneak up on the cat.

I dashed to a carton of two percent milk then yanked it down onto the floor. Afterwards, I made several 'puncture wounds' into the carton, then turned it sideways. Milk began to dribble out of the carton. I swallowed what I could, fast!

After having my fill of milk, I noticed that the 'treading' was getting louder and louder. The rats were trying to 'creep' up on me.

Now, an unexpected problem arose. I suddenly felt a strong need for water. The food I'd just eaten contained much sodium. Even milk contains sodium.

I was too thirsty to exit Polson's Supermarket. I ran to the bottled water section. Eureka! Right before my eyes were

stacks and rows of bottled water. I got to choose; refrigerated, or warm. I chose the former.

I attacked a particular bottle the way a lion attacks a hyena; with no mercy, and straight to the point. A few seconds later, I began to lick the water that was dribbling from the gashes and bites that I'd made.

After I had my fill of water, I decided to scram. Like they say quit while you're ahead. I was certainly ahead.

I walked back to the double-doors leading to the storage room. Suddenly, I had an attack of hiccups. I stayed put until my hiccups disappeared. Knowing that time was against me, I resumed my walk to the double-doors.

Yikes! Yikes!! Yikes!!!

Out of nowhere, six gargantuan rats made their appearance in front of the double doors. In essence, they were blocking the path. These rats were noxiously ugly! Not like me! I'm cute, intelligent, and very athletic. You can't imagine how disgusted I've always been with ugliness.

The rats exposed their incisors; glaring at me with their ugly eyes! They were hungry and in the killing mood. After all, I was stiff competition. As far as they were concerned, I may have been the kind of cat who goes around telling other cats where the free food is. In that case, my friends and I would end up taking over Polson's Supermarket.

I slammed on my brakes. I couldn't think of any way to get through those six ugly rats. So, I did what any smart cat would do. I rolled over onto my back, and then stayed in that position for a full minute. All but one of the rats approached me. The lone rat stood in front of the double doors. He was making sure that I didn't try to pull a fast one on his buddies.

When the five rats got to within a foot of me, I righted myself. After a quick scan of the area, I leaped onto a nearby food shelf, then onto the floor near the double doors.

Now, I was behind five of the six rats. With lightening speed, I ran towards the lone rat then pounced on him. I clawed his ugly face, and then gave him a final reminder of the true strength of cats: I bit and yanked on his left ear.

The lone rat went down for the long count. Without any hesitation, I rammed through the double doors, fully aware of the rats on my tail. Although smaller rats can run reasonably fast, and do have some agility, larger rats are considerably slower. Either way, a cat's much faster than a rat.

Thankfully, these large rats were as slow as sloths. But, they were persistent in their chase.

As soon as I entered the storage room, I ran to the window, and then leaped onto the panel. Gosh, the rats were still

chasing me. So, I leaped onto the asphalt just outside of Polson's Supermarket.

I landed several feet away from the storage room wall. The rats were still inside the storage room. I could hear them panting.

I was lucky to have been able to leap to safety. However, it wasn't quite over.

As I was walking away, the rats made another attempt at capturing me. They were very talented at that.

"Come on, baby! We don't want to hurt you; really! Look, we just want to talk to you. We're lonely; unable to make friends with other rats. You look like a nice cat.

Please come back inside so we can chat. Please, don't be afraid. We'll treat you like one of our own," said a rat.

"Damn-it, I'm not your freaking baby! Besides, I'm a cat. What would I do with a bunch of rats? Or should I ask, what would a bunch of rats do to me?

You guys are probably looking for a free meal! I won't fall for any of your 'trickery'. Look, you need to hit a new target. The security guard's on his way to the storage room. I can see him," I said.

"How stupid do you think we are? You're trying to trick us, so we'll go away. Well, it won't work. Rats know that in order to survive, a good supply of food and water is necessary. We'll 'leach' off this supermarket, until we're sick of it. We'll decide when it's time to go, not a cute cat like you," said a rat.

I kept quiet for a few seconds then quickly scanned the back of Polson's Supermarket. I ran behind a nearby dumpster then stood idle. Afterwards, I eyed the approaching security guard, very carefully. He was speaking to someone on the other end of the line. If my vision wasn't so incredible, I would've thought he was talking to himself. My GOD, how technology has advanced!

"Linda, this is Marty. I think the creature that entered Polson's Supermarket did so through an opening in the window, in the back of the storage room. I need backup to search the premises. I'll search the exterior, and two other security guards can search the interior."

What the hell did he just say? I'm a what?! I almost pounced on that creepy security guard. How could he call me a creature? I was just trying to find something to eat and drink. This is what I get for being such a sweet and kind cat?

I decided to wait it out until the coast was clear. Marty stayed around for several minutes then walked away. He had a large area to check.

As Marty was walking away, I could see his eyes shifting from left to right. He really wanted to catch 'the creature'.

As I began to creep away from the area, a creepy voice called out to me. It sounded like one of the rats. The caller persisted. He didn't stop calling out to me, even when I was a good fifty yards away. I became a bit apprehensive. If the caller were to be heard by Marty or Linda, things could get nasty.

I returned to the 'area'. I had to know what was going on with that rat who was calling out to me.

As soon as I was within a foot of Polson's Supermarket wall, I saw a rat peeking through a tiny opening. Because he was too large to fit his body through the tiny opening, I figured he couldn't harm me. So, I listened attentively.

"I'm sorry I called you Baby. I know that's not your name it's an offensive name for such a sweet cat like you. On behalf my buddies and I, please accept our sincerest and deepest apology. We promise never to do it again. In fact, a cat friend would be an incredible asset to us. With our alliance, no human could ever catch us. Please, get closer to me. I won't hurt you," said the rat.

Jeepers, the rat began to cry. I was certain that he was sincere. I got really close his face. Mind you, my guard was still up. Just in case.

We 'sniffed' each other then I rubbed the side of my face against the rat's nose.

This was a true friendship. Not the kind that you can buy with money. This type friendship comes straight from the heart.

I took several steps back then leaped onto the window panel. Afterwards, I leaped into the storage room.

Now, there were a total of twelve rats in the storage room. One of them was a youngster. He still had a lot to learn about life.

No doubt, there were other rats creeping on the premises. Actually, there were too many for their own good. If food stocks were to be noticeably depleted, too fast, Mr. Polson would hire the exterminators. Those guys/gals are just as terrible as the dreaded VCOs.

"Please forgive us for calling you baby. We had no right to do that. We made you flee your food source. We're ashamed of ourselves!" exclaimed a rat.

"Stray cats are used to being called derogatory names. You guys seem like a bunch of good rats. Unfortunately, I must be on my way," I responded.

"Look, if you see a black cat named Brian, tell him we said hi! He's the most awesome cat we've ever known. He's street smart, too. He'll give you the ins-and-outs of living on the

streets. He lives near Chung's Seafood Restaurant, on Derwood Street," said a rat.

"Thanks, guys! Now, I must find this black cat, named Brian. Making friends with the right people is very important; especially if you're a cat living on the streets.

Some dogs can be very friendly. Others will kill a cat, without even knowing why. Stray dogs that have never been close to humans are almost always ferocious towards cats. I guess we look like tiny predators. Competition that can be destroyed," I said.

We said our goodbyes then I left Polson's Supermarket.

As I was crossing the street to leave the parking lot, I noticed that dawn was near. Luckily, there were many homes and trees surrounding the area.

Daylight can be bad news for strays; especially raccoons. You'll never see a raccoon during the daylight hours, unless the poor guy was suddenly confronted with a dangerous situation. Most raccoons are terrified of humans. They know what humans have done to their species. Not to mention, countless other animal species.

To better ensure my security, finding a decent hiding/resting place was necessary. Resting in an unsafe place is a recipe for disaster. A cat must feel safe, somewhere. Otherwise, the persistent stress will destroy him/her.

I'll tell you a short story. Many years ago, a cat named Caroline was playing in her owner's yard. Suddenly, she noticed a mangled-up cat walking on the sidewalk. He looked like he'd been in a grappling match with a bobcat. Caroline felt sorry for him. He glanced at her then continued walking away.

Caroline slowly approached him. Then, she invited him into her yard. He, in turn, cautiously approached her.

The mangled cat's name was Eddy. Unfortunately, he was unable to find a safe place to rest or hide in. He'd recently entered the territories of two aggressive Tom cats; one after the other.

A cat must set him/herself up in a good place then satisfy all nutritional needs. Fights with other cats should be avoided at all costs, unless there's absolutely no other alternative.

Eddy was so depressed and dilapidated he fell over onto his side, then cried his brains out. He hadn't seen a friendly cat in eons. Compassion's uncommon on the streets.

Unfortunately, as soon as Caroline's owners saw Eddy, they called the dreaded VCOs. A short while later the VCOs arrived at the scene. Before Eddy realized what had happened, he'd been captured, transported and incarcerated.

Because of his 'ugliness', he was one of the first cats to be euthanized. What a tragic story! Truly, there are many stories like this one; some even worse.

I picked up my pace then headed south into a residential area. I wanted to find the perfect place. I had to be very careful, because I was walking in an unfamiliar neighborhood. Unfamiliar neighborhoods can be enjoyable, or nightmarish. I placed my senses on yellow alert.

As the sun slowly ascended, I spotted the right tree. Afterwards, I scaled it. I closed my eyes then fell asleep for many hours. By the time I awakened, it was nighttime. Now, I had a bird's eye view of the neighborhood.

I slept for too long. Once again, I pondered about my physical health. I suspected that I had a virus or bacteria in my system.

I decided to rest for the entire night. There was nothing else for me to do. I was completely sated, and confused.

At dawn, I descended onto the grass. After scanning the area, I decided to begin my stroll on Pincer Street. Pincer Street was curvy, long, and aligned with beautiful trees. The trees looked like soldiers waiting for their commanding officer to arrive for inspection.

It would be a shame if any one of those trees were to be chopped down.

Humans must now follow an important rule: for every tree that's chopped down, at least one should be planted.

Trees are very important for this planet. Humans, animals, insects, the soil, and other plants, need trees. Even trees, need trees!

My big cat ancestors perched on large branches. Apes and monkeys also consider trees very important. What would this world be like without any trees?

I slowed down my pace considerably. There was no reason for me to waste valuable energy. I took notice of each and every tree. De-forestation can't go on forever. At this rate of deforestation, forests will be gone soon. Everyone, including cats, will be forced to live in a concrete jungle. It's ironic that you humans use the word 'jungle'.

Regarding my fate, I was hoping that some rich folks would adopt me. I've heard incredible stories of cats actually waiting on rich folks' doorsteps, to be adopted. They can smell the tasty foods emanating from the kitchens.

While eying the Pincer Street trees, I decided to turn left, into Haler Street.

I made it a point to remember this vital intersection, as a marker. In case I decided to backtrack, months or years later. Markers are used by intelligent cats.

Now, the sun's light began to engulf the area. I walked two blocks on Haler Street then I was rudely startled. I noticed two large dogs standing behind the living room window of a house across the street.

Suddenly both dogs started growling. Then, they snarled and barked at me. They were pissed off because I'd invaded their turf. I was in a bad mood, as is. Besides, their behavior only pissed me off some more.

I decided to get my revenge. I entered the owner's yard then stood a few feet away from the living room window.

I played peek-a-boo, over and over again. The two dogs went ballistic! They kept barking and barking, without any let-up. A few minutes later, their owner got out of bed then headed straight for the kitchen. I quickly ran behind a large tree nearby.

The owner of the two dogs humiliated them, mercilessly.

"Hey guys, stop freaking barking! Carla and I are trying to sleep! We've got another hour of sleep. We need that vital hour in order to function properly at work. Unless it's an emergency, don't bark! I mean it!" shouted the dog owner.

As soon as their owner went back to bed, I carefully approached the two dogs. I could hear low-level growls emanating from their throats. Tough luck for them! I stood in front of the living room window for fifteen minutes. Afterwards, I ran to the same tree that I'd hidden behind.

After ensuring that the coast was clear, I scaled the tree with lightening speed. I decided to perch on a large branch.

I perched on the large branch for ten minutes. I only wanted to torment the two dogs who were trying to scare me away.

Then, I descended from the tree. Wow! I felt the polluted air enter my lungs. Even the sky wasn't blue. Grayish, with an ugly-like appearance; no wonder environmentally conscious people are going nuts. The earth is being over polluted! Not by us animals, but by you humans!

Animals also feel the effects of over pollution. We know that many generations ago, the air was much cleaner. Our ancestors inhaled cleaner air, and drank cleaner water.

THIS IS OUR PLANET, TOO! Humans don't own this planet! They didn't create it, and they certainly don't have a good track record of maintaining it. The earth appears to be getting sicker. I don't want to be around if it goes into convulsions. That'll be a terrifying period in the history of the earth.

In the olden days, there was an overabundance of game for predators. I mean most of the time. There were no sport hunters with super weapons that could easily wound, maim, kill, or terrify animals. There were no steel jaw leg-hold traps,

conibair traps, or snares. NO BIG BOMBS! NO LANDMINES. NO! NO!! NO!!!

Humanity has the strength to wipe out all the other mammals on earth. This includes the mammals living in the water. Humans should only be thankful that animals are living on this planet. This planet would totally suck if there were no animals living on it. Imagine what it would be like if everyone belonged to the same species. Humans, humans, and many more humans!

But, there may be some good news for the animal kingdom. We just might be able to defeat humanity, someday. Actually, humanity will first defeat itself.

After the humans have beaten each other senseless, an animal species will fill in the slot of 'colonialist or alpha species'. It could happen.

All it would take is a horrific war with incredible super bombs being launched and dropped on major cities throughout the world. A natural cataclysmic disaster would also do the job.

I suddenly got a strong urge to snub those two dogs, just one more time. As such, I returned to the living room window, then pooped and urinated, right in front of the two dogs. I utterly shocked them. They couldn't believe the level of my audacity.

If a dog stares at you hold your ground, or slowly walk away; unless the dog is pouting.

Because both dogs were behind a large window, it was impossible for them to get at me. So, I stared back at them, not giving a damn what they thought. I had too many problems on my mind to care about them.

Both dogs resumed their barking spree. I responded by shoving my face against the living room window. This caused my adversaries to go ballistic! One of the dogs actually rammed the living room window with his head. I guess he was trying to smash his way through, in order to tear me apart. Too bad, he couldn't. I continued staring down my adversaries, until I heard human footsteps.

I fled the scene. It was funny because I heard the owner bitch out both of my adversaries. However, if I'd been seen by the owner, the dogs would certainly have been let out. In that case, I would've been a dead goose!

I wasn't trying to be a trouble maker; really. I just wanted a bit of respect. How would you feel if two ugly dogs treated you the way those two treated me? I thought so.

I ran east for several blocks. It was now 10 A.M. I began an earnest search for a safe place to call home.

I slowed down to a walking pace as soon as I reached Wharton Street. Traffic was considerably heavier than in the

interior residential areas. In addition, there were people on both sides of the street walking their dogs.

As I continued my walk on Wharton Street, I noticed an elderly man walking his Schnauzer. As soon as the Schnauzer took notice of me, he growled then barked. I became weary because his owner was walking on a cane. If that Schnauzer had made a dash towards me, his owner wouldn't have been able to hold onto the leash.

Luckily, they were on the other side of the street. If the Schnauzer made a dash towards me, I'd have a bit of a head start.

Suddenly, I got the shock of my life!

"Hey, get the hell out of my neighborhood; you dumb stray! If you don't leave, right this minute, I'll call the VCOs! I don't take too kindly to strays. You might be infected with rabies, or some other contagious disease. Maybe, you're extremely aggressive. Kitty, if you know what's good for you, leave!" shouted the elderly man.

I walked away from the two 'gargoyles' as fast as I could. I didn't want to run away, because that would've roused them. I wanted to stay cool, and safe.

But, as I was walking away from them, the thought of speaking my mind became overwhelming. How could that creep speak to me in that manner? I wondered.

"Listen, you old geezer; I don't give a crap what you think of me. As far as I'm concerned, you two guys are sewer roaches!" I shouted.

Shockingly, the elderly man glared at me, then removed the collar from the Schnauzer's neck. The Schnauzer and the old man charged me like rhinos do a foe. Although, the elderly man was half-limping at me, his teeth were yellow-ugly, and ferocious-looking. Not to mention, his dragon-like breath.

The elderly man put his right hand inside his pocket then pulled out a knife casing. He stopped limping towards me, in order to remove the Bowie knife from its leather casing.

The Bowie knife looked like a mini-dagger; really menacing! It looked like the kind of gadget that's used to skin a cute little animal; like a cat.

Luckily, the old man had arthritic fingers and hands. He had a very hard time handling the Bowie knife. But, his intent was evil.

Sweat poured down his temples. Meanwhile, his dog stopped in his tracks. Something was dead wrong!

Suddenly, the old man's face turned purplish-red. He winced then fell onto the ground. His Schnauzer ran back to him.

I scanned the area, in search of an escape. Maybe, the Schnauzer was going to blame me for his owner's heart attack.

I ran for several blocks, before spotting a ladder that'd been leaned against the side of a house. No doubt, someone had been working on the roof. I didn't give a damn whose ladder it was. I headed straight for the ladder. As soon as I close enough, I leaped onto one of the ladder steps, then 'ascended' to the roof. Gosh, you should have seen me!

As soon as I was positioned on the roof, the heat of the sun's rays began to pound me. I felt like an overheated slab of meat in the marketplace. Meanwhile, what appeared like a posse was approaching the house.

I stayed low for fifteen minutes, before being startled by the sound of a freaking posse! Seven men, three women, and the dreaded Schnauzer, were quickly approaching the house. Apparently, the Schnauzer had blamed his owner's heart attack on me. Who knows, what he told the posse members.

For the time being, I stayed put. I didn't want to use up any of my energy reserves in haste.

A young, fatso woman within the posse ran to the front door of the house. Then she began to pound her fist on the door. Finally, she rang the door bell, like a crazy maniac. I sure as hell wasn't about to stick around.

I ran to the other side of the roof then leaped onto the ground. I fled the scene, without even glancing back.

After running through an entire neighborhood, I decided to slow down to a walking pace.

Again, I was on the move. My three biggest problems at the moment were: obtaining nutrition, finding a safe haven, and getting a relief from the numerous enemies I frequently encountered.

I noticed a beautiful tree located in the corner of a large lawn. Although there were two other trees in the same lawn, I chose the most beautiful one. I entered Bumblebee Street then walked west for roughly fifty yards.

I relieved myself on the sidewalk, just beyond the periphery of the yard. I couldn't hold it back! Considering that I was in an upper class neighborhood that was very dangerous.

After finishing my business, I entered the yard then scaled the beautiful tree. Immediately, I scanned the neighborhood. Thankfully, it was just fine. Large houses, mini-mansions, and countless swimming pools, engulfed the area. I could smell the chlorine, and hear the motion of the pool water. This, my friend, is a cat's dream come true!

I'd always fantasized about living in one of these beautiful homes. While I was temporarily in fantasy land, I received a sharp jolt of reality.

Three cats poked their cute faces at me. They were standing behind an open living room window.

I must say, they had terrifying expressions on their faces. I understood that the branch I was perched on was never going to be mine. I descended onto the grass, and then walked away. Somewhat like a vagabond, I wandered the area in search of something good.

I crossed Bumblebee Street, in order to enter Stellar Avenue. In the process, a creep in a blue Chevy tried to run me over. I got a good look at her ugly face. I think she'd been recently jilted. Some humans lash out at the nearest person or object, after being jilted. Why not an innocent cat?

As if trying to run me over wasn't enough. This bimbo opened her big fat mouth then gave me a bitching'.

"Asshole move out of the freaking way! Next time, I'll make sure to run you over. Then, I can see your entrails, blood, skin, bones, and whatever else, scattered onto the street! Wouldn't that be nice!" shouted the woman.

Maybe, it was PMS? Who knows?

Cats must always be on the lookout for 'sinister drivers'. This 'cohort' increases road- kill! It's not funny!

Wild and stray animals have no access to medical care. Shockingly, injuries resulting from road kill result in extreme agony, confusion, anger, fear, and anxiety. Unless the animal dies instantly, he/she has only pain to look forward to. The 'elements' have no mercy on maimed and dying animals. Not to mention, dead ones.

As a result of my close call, and the shouting I'd received from the crazy driver, my pulse and blood pressure shot up through the clouds. Any higher, I would've fallen into a coma. Sensing danger, I took shade underneath a tree.

While resting underneath the tree, several passersby in cars gawked at me. They knew that I was a stray. Strays aren't welcome in uppity neighborhoods. Uppity residents have it in their minds that stray dogs and cats will poop and pee throughout their neighborhood. In addition, they think that 'we' kill off too many birds.

For the most part, I ignored the passersby, until the dreaded one passed me. He was looking for trouble. I sure as hell wasn't. Really!

"Hey! No strays in our neighborhood! Look ... my brother's a VCO! Leave, or else he'll be on you like a vicious lion!" shouted the dreaded person.

I left the area, immediately. I decided to change streets, just in case he tried to intensify his aggression upon me.

I entered Waldorf Street, all jittery. I figured it would take at least an hour for my system to get back to homeostasis.

Waldorf Street was something else. It was aligned with mansions, mini-mansions, posh houses, swimming pools, well-

trimmed hedges, and beautiful trees. If I'd been in Europe, perhaps I would've seen a castle or two.

My country doesn't have any 'oldies castles'. Why didn't those first Europeans build many castles? Well, I can only guess: they were dead set against being ruled by royalty. I guess they didn't want anything in the so-called New World to resemble a monarchy. What other reason/s could there be?

The thought of being adopted by one of these rich families became overwhelming. Because I've always been a proud and stuffy cat, begging was out of the question! There had to be a more honorable method of slithering into a mansion.

While I was pondering about this matter, I crossed Waldorf Street without looking both ways, first. Jeepers, I was almost run over by a cyclist! He was a nice human. After seeing me leap out of his way, he stopped then made a U-turn. He wanted to see if I was all right.

"Hey kitty, are you all right? I'm sorry for scaring you like that. Actually, I wasn't paying attention to my surroundings," said the cyclist.

After leaping onto the cyclist's chest, I licked his cheeks then rubbed the side of my head against his chin. When I'd had enough, I leaped onto the ground. We parted ways. Too bad, I never saw him again.

## THE RESILIENT WOMAN

I entered Ebert Street. While strolling through the neighborhood, I saw a drop-dead-gorgeous woman exit her mansion. She was young, energetic, green/blue eyed, jet black hair, and freckled. No doubt, men drooled over her beauty.

Gosh, I really wanted to live in her mansion! She and I could become best friends' in the whole world. We'd be like family. That is, if the cat she was holding in her arms didn't mind.

Living in a mansion can help alleviate a cat's daily problems. Good food, clean water, veterinary medical care, toys, loving owners, shelter, a nice litter box, beautiful lawn, and perhaps, a playmate. This is a cat's fantasy land.

Looking deeply into the woman's eyes, I felt that she'd suffered from major depression, anxiety, and loneliness. I'm referring to a different type of loneliness. She probably had many good friends, but aside from her cat, no intimate ones. Although cats can't read peoples' minds, they do have incredible intuition.

Because petting a cat can lower a person's blood pressure and pulse, I decided to play good kitty.

I approached the woman with extreme caution, not wanting to appear too bold. The black cat she was holding in her arms gave me the elevator eyes. He scanned my body, trying to determine

how friendly I was. Seeing that I meant no harm, he lowered his guard.

When the woman took notice of me, she gave me a beautiful smile. I was lucky, because she was getting ready to enter her car and drive off. Now, the three of us were close to each other.

"Why would a cute cat like you roam the streets? Are you alone? Do you want to be our friend?" asked the woman.

"My name is Jody Wilson, and I'd really like to have you two incredible individuals as my new friends. Has your cat been with you for long?" I asked.

"Your name is Jody Wilson. What a beautiful name. I once knew a cat from the Wilson family. She was the most incredible cat in the whole world," said the woman.

At that moment, the black cat gently bit the woman on her right thumb. He was trying to remind her that the cat in her arms was also incredible.

"Ouch! Oh ... my black cat's also incredible!

Brian's been with me for a couple of years. He's not a furniture scratcher. The four scratching posts in my mansion are enough for my baby," said the woman.

The black cat loved being referred to as 'my baby'.

"Jody, do you belong to anyone? If so, I can't allow you to be become part of our family. I can't 'steal' you from your rightful owners. That would be dead wrong!"

"Jody, please be honest with me at all times. Are you owned by anyone?" asked the woman.

"Nobody owns me! I'm my own cat!"

Anyone who claims to 'own' his/her cat does so only in a legal sense. No human being owns a cat's mind or personality," I responded.

"I'm sorry. I didn't mean it that way. I'd never deliberately insult a cat. I love cats. My best friend in the whole world's a cat," said the woman.

As we were conversing, a blue Ford pickup pulled over beside us. I could smell the alcohol and marijuana on the breaths of the driver and passengers. These guys were rabble, who didn't know any better. I braced myself for what was to come.

"Honey, come on! Come on, baby we know that you're lonely. Just give us the word, so we can keep you company. You're too beautiful to be without the company of a real man. Those two cats can't give you what a man can; ever. Can't you find a real man?!" asked the driver.

The woman pulled out a pen and piece of paper from her pocket then she wrote down the license plate number and make of

the vehicle. She made sure that the driver, and his 'buddies' knew what she was doing.

Gosh, this woman was well-rehearsed. It's like she'd gone through this 'garbage scenario' many times before.

I kind of felt sorry for her. I sensed that she'd been 'severely jilted' on more than one occasion. The pain was still inside of her.

"I've got your license plate number and make of car written down! Leave, right now! Or else, I'll call the police!"

You guys have insulted my humanity! I won't take any more harassment or 'rape talk' from creatures like you! I've been hurt, and I don't like it! This time, I'm not lying down!" shouted the woman.

The last statement that came out of the woman's mouth raised my hair. I wasn't quite sure what she meant by it. Somehow, her story seemed a bit too familiar. I just couldn't 'place-my-paws-on-it'. Where did I hear about this story before?

"I would like to introduce myself: my name is Officer Davidson! I'm a cop! Leave, right now!" shouted the woman.

The driver of the Ford pickup was so terrified he let out a big fart. It was so loud, we all 'guffawed'. After we finished enjoying the spectacle, the driver of the Ford pickup sped off.

As the driver was speeding away, a passenger in the back of the pickup dropped his pants and underwear. Then, he flashed two very flabby-looking buns. If that wasn't bad enough, he turned around then flashed his genitals. It was disgusting!

"Jody, I've suffered so much in my life! I've reserved most of the love in my heart for cats. They've helped me so much! A good kitty can really raise a person's spirits. I can't open up to another human being. I cry my brains out almost every single day! It's hard to open-up, when you've been hurt by those whom you love.

Jody, a few years ago, I fell into a 'profound depression'. Technically, it was major depression. But this is not a serious enough term to describe what I've endured.

Luckily, an incredible cat named Mandy helped me dearly.

My cat Brian's an incredible cat, too! He's brilliant, athletic, superb, knowledgeable, and very intuitive. Not to mention, he's the best friend any human could ever have," said the woman.

I interrupted the woman, to ask her a very important question.

"Please, what's your name ... you're not Officer Davidson?" I asked.

The young woman went totally ballistic in her response. Not at me, at life in general. I could tell by her response, she'd endured incredible harm from some evil persons.

I'm sorry. In all the commotion, I forgot to tell you. My name is Cynthia Corbett.

I'm not an officer of the law. I was only trying to scare the daylights out of those ... FREAKING RAPISTS! THEY'RE LIKE THOSE BASTARDS THAT GANG-RAPED ME! I WANT THEM TO ALL JUST DIE, BE CASTRATED, AND BE SHIPPED OFF TO JUPITOR! I DON'T WANT THEM TO EVER HURT ANOTHER WOMAN AGAIN!

I'm sorry for shouting like that. I've had two best friends in the whole world, both were cats. The first was Mandy Wilson, the second is Brian. This is Brian."

"Jeepers you've suffered so much! I'm sorry that you were gang-raped.

On another note, your first best friend in the whole world was my mother! Corey Jameson conveyed your life's story to me.

Corey loved you more than anyone else in the whole world! I don't know if he's still alive. Corey never forgot you. After all that he did try to save you from those 'monsters'. I'm so happy to see you in person! I think that the three of us will become best friends.

Don't worry I won't let anyone harm you. If anyone tries anything, I'll attack that person with extreme ferocity!" I exclaimed.

"What about Corey? Did he fully recover from the beating he was given by Jeff and his friends?" asked Cynthia.

"Actually, there wasn't a beating, in the real sense. Well, he received a few slaps, punches, and a kick or two. The terrible tragedy occurred during the throwing incident. Jeff's throwing of Corey caused incredible damage.

I know that Jeff was the star quarterback for GSC. He threw Corey out of the window, like a football. Corey collided with a large branch then he came crashing to the ground. As I recall, his left foreleg was permanently damaged. Poor guy, he had a noticeable limp. He also had a noticeable wince. A wince in pain, that is.

Corey had to endure excruciating pain whenever he tried to move about. That's why he limped, and didn't walk much. His pain was a constant reminder of the evil Jeff. Jeff was guilty of leading his pack of predators to gang-rape an innocent young woman, that's you.

You had a potentially promising career in law. Neither you, nor anyone else deserves to be gang-raped.

Cynthia, I know that you found a criminal justice system that was overworked, overburdened, understaffed, and worst of all, as cold as the North Pole," I said.

"Jody, let's drive around for a while. I want the three of us to be a happy North American family. Look, you are a very

special cat! You are the daughter of Mandy Wilson," said Cynthia.

We entered Cynthia's Honda then took off.

"Brian's a really tough cat. A few months ago, he held a Mastiff at bay. The dog growled and growled, to no avail. Of course, if the Mastiff had attacked Brian, he (Brian) would've been destroyed," said Cynthia.

"What was Brian doing holding a Mastiff at bay?" I asked.

"That creepy man ... I mean that Mastiff got too close to me. He barked at me! Then, he growled and tried to slobber all over me! And ... he tried to touch me. Brian didn't like that!" exclaimed Cynthia.

Although Cynthia was driving slowly, every time she said something that upset her, she inadvertently pressed down on the gas pedal; briefly causing her Honda to accelerate.

The three of us ended up conversing about various topics. It really looked like we were on our way to becoming a happy North American family.

Driving through a posh neighborhood felt really nice. The homes, lawns, and automobiles, looked very new and polished. They were expensive-looking, too.

However, I was very worried about Cynthia. She had emotional problems that had to be dealt with. Maybe, two cats could solve Cynthia's problems.

In spite of Cynthia's emotional baggage, she was still able to hold her ground in the real world. She always had a good home to live in. Not to mention, a hefty bank account.

But, Cynthia did have some emotional issues to solve.

"Jody, Brian, I'll never place myself in a dangerous situation again; drunk, out cold, in a bed, with a half-a-dozen monsters hovering over me!

I promised myself that I'd always be sober, and ready; ready to defend myself against any assailant/s. My self-defense for women training really helped. Too bad, not many women bother to take this valued art of self-defense. It's brutal, but most often gets the job done. Mind you, there's never a guarantee. A woman must take proper precautions at all times. The perpetrator can be a friend, enemy, ugly, handsome, cute, rich, poor, popular, stranger, or even another WOMAN.

Guys, I used to be the typical North American white woman, gorgeous, rich, highly intelligent, and career minded. I thought that rapes always happened to the 'other woman'; the woman that I never met.

Although many rape victims eventually get on with their lives, they'll never forget what happened to them. LET ME REPEAT MYSELF: THEY'LL NEVER FORGET WHAT HAPPENED TO THEM! I DON'T CARE

WHAT ANY STINKING, IDIOTIC EXPERT OR VICTIM SAYS! SHE'LL NEVER EVER FORGET!

Jody, imagine that you're running along, only to step on a giant slab of broken glass. Now, try to envision the incredible pain. Even if you're treated by the best veterinary surgeon, you'll always be a bit apprehensive when running outdoors. The memory won't go away," said Cynthia.

"Cynthia, I suspect there's something else that you want to tell me. Please, don't be shy or apprehensive. You see, although we belong to different species, you can still talk to me about 'female stuff'. I'm a girl, too," I said.

"Don't worry, Jody. I know what Cynthia wants to tell you. It took her months to build up the courage to tell me.

Cynthia believes that self-defense classes for women should be free. After what Cynthia told me about her experience, I agree wholeheartedly. Humans don't have weapons attached to their bodies. Cats certainly do," said Brian.

"Brian, I absolutely knew that you were going to rub it in! Yes, humans don't have weapons attached to their bodies," said Cynthia.

Brian apologized to Cynthia for being a conceited, snobby little cat, and for insulting her species.

"For starters, free workshops pertaining to safety precautions would be a good start. Prevention is the best defense. An incredible offense is the second best defense. Trying to talk your way out, or disgusting the perpetrator, are sometimes effective. But, don't count on it as a guarantee.

Listen let's be honest about this matter. Some males from the human species turn into lions when they become sexually aroused. These guys don't understand the meaning of the word 'NO'. They just can't. Some of them are so big and strong, one punch unto any woman, equals a knockout. Or, he can sit on her; and say he happens to weigh THREE HUNDRED POUNDS. There's no struggling thereafter.

Suppose there are a pack of them, out in the middle of nowhere and in the middle of the night; say in Kansas, Nebraska, or Wyoming.

Well, you better not be nearby. This is perhaps the worst possible case scenario. Nobody to call 'help' to," said Brian.

We chatted about this topic for an hour. It got so heated-up, Cynthia actually parked her Honda.

Brian and I decided to change the subject as soon as Cynthia began to go ballistic on us. Furthermore, she was crying like a baby. I think she'd had it with the topic; at least for the time being.

Cynthia turned on the ignition, then drove back home. Neither Brian, nor I, made any mention of her ballistic temper tantrum. Even cats should have some tact.

"Jody, you'll be living in a four bedroom mini-mansion, with a large lawn, double parking garage, and a patio. No swimming pool. Swimming pools are too difficult to maintain. Regarding pools, you must be on your toes at all times," said Cynthia.

"What else, Cynthia? I'm not trying to be a suspicious cat, but, I really wanted to know," I said.

"I don't like swimming pools! I hate them, terribly! I don't want anyone in the whole world to see my beautiful naked body! Gawking, touching, fornicating; that's what those creeps will imagine doing to me!" shouted Cynthia.

I sensed that there was more to Cynthia's problems than the gang-rape she'd endured. Something about swimming pools. Let me see: maybe something happened to her when she first learned how to swim. Maybe, it was her swimming instructor. What did he do to her? I wondered.

"Cynthia, when did you first learn how to swim? Was your swimming instructor friendly?" I asked.

Brian nudged my shoulder with his head then he cropped his ears. He wanted me to stop yapping about the topic. We changed the subject, again.

"Jody, what's your favorite food?" asked Brian.

"I don't have a favorite food. I'll eat anything that tastes good. After all, why would a cat be picky?" I asked.

"I'm glad you're now part of our family. Sometimes, I think about other cats. I mean, Cynthia's very sweet and generous, but I need to socialize with one of my own, too. I'm not a human, I'm a cat! But, I must admit that you and I are extremely lucky to have a friend like Cynthia Corbett.

Humans are often ignorant about a cat's needs. Not to mention, behavior. This ignorance sometimes causes a cat to lash out at the human nearby.

We warn them, beforehand. They either don't understand the warning, or they ignore it. So, they get clobbered.

I've scratched humans before. Sometimes, I don't feel like playing, or to be touched. I could be plain 'ole tired," said Brian.

Finally, we arrived. It was nice to know that I had a place to call home, and two individuals I could call family.

Cynthia pulled into her garage then turned off the ignition.

"Guys, it's very dangerous to keep an engine running in an enclosed area, especially inside a garage. The first thing that

I do after I park my Honda in the garage is to turn off the ignition," said Brian.

We exited Cynthia's Honda then walked through her beautiful lawn. As soon as we entered Cynthia's mini-mansion, I almost fainted! The decor was astonishingly beautiful. I pictured myself eating, drinking, playing, and sleeping. I figured a year of this kind of fun would make me put on at least ten pounds of blubber. What a life!

Cynthia locked the door behind her then re-set the alarm.

Cynthia took several steps into the living room then started to take off her shirt. Suddenly, she froze. Then, she looked at us. She grimaced then went to her bedroom.

For Cynthia, this specific kind of trust must be earned; even though Brian and I were cats. Cynthia wasn't quite ready to totally open up to us; maybe, in the near future. I thought.

A part of me was pissed off as hell! I'm a freaking female cat! What the hell did Cynthia think I would've done to her?!

When I calmed down a bit, I told Brian that we should go to the television room. Brian led the way. We walked through a long corridor. It was dimly lit, with many beautiful paintings strewn on the wall. Also, there were two giant chandeliers hanging from the ceiling. I'd never seen such a beautiful interior.

On another matter, why was Cynthia still single? Couldn't she, a very attractive, young female, find a decent man? Maybe, she needed help from an incredible cat, like me? This thought kept ringing in my head.

I wanted to gently confront Cynthia regarding her 'single status'. Unfortunately, Cynthia had a rough barrier between her, and the outside world. I don't mean that she was difficult to get along with. Gosh, she was an incredible person. She needed to learn how to open up, completely, to her two cat friends.

Furthermore, Cynthia was wasting her youth, because she wasn't actively searching for MR. RIGHT. I understood that she'd been through hell with that gang-rape. But, she had to move on. She'd never forget, but, she had to try to cope.

Cynthia needed a good fishing rod, and tasty bate. That's how female cats get the Tom cat that they want.

Cynthia was an inherently good person. I could almost smell the goodness of her spirit. Cynthia's husband-to-be would have to be understanding, loving, trustworthy (no lies, no cheating around), non-coercive (physical or mental), and full of empathy; a handsome and athletic man for that matter. One more thing: he'd have to be rich. Now, where the hell could we find a man like that? I wondered.

In this world, weakness is often a liability. Being as clever as a fox is an incredible asset. Cynthia had to learn how to be a bit more cunning. I've seen human females make their

males act like little puppy dogs; paying for this and for that. They make their 'man' say things like: ROSES ARE RED, VIOLETS ARE BLUE, and I JUST WANNA BE MARRIED TO YOU.

What happened to Cynthia was a fine example of human barbarity, brutality, treachery, conniving, aggression, assault, debauchery, and pompous boasting. Yes, pompous boasting. Jeff and his associates boasted about their conquest; didn't they?

As soon as Brian and I entered the television room he leaped onto the coffee table. After grasping the remote control with his powerful teeth, then he leaped onto the carpet. As soon as he placed the remote control next to his right paw. He turned on the television, pressed the number four button then the number five button.

Now, we were watching XNZB Channel 45; an animal channel. At the time, a special about lion behavior was showing. Naturally, it caught our undivided attention.

Brian and I watched the show for fifteen minutes, until Cynthia entered the television room. She took several steps in our direction then gave us a million dollar smile.

Cynthia sat on a dark blue sofa chair then began to comb her beautiful, soft, shiny hair. Her hair shined like glazed silver on a black platter.

Cynthia was so beautiful. She had cat eyes and beautiful skin without a single blemish, or wrinkle. Her lips were the perfect size and shape. She had an incredible Roman nose. Cutest of all, she had freckles scattered on her face and her entire body.

I was very pleased that Cynthia had no permanent scars or marks on her body as a result of the gang-rape. However, it would make it that much more difficult to prove the incident after all these years. The judge would take one good look at her, and see a very beautiful and happy woman.

Cynthia had no S.T.D. s, or an unwanted pregnancy. Her problems were primarily mental. Indeed, mental stress can be as painful as a physical ailment. Sustained mental anguish can destroy almost anyone's physical health. That includes cats.

"I'm going to the study room. I'll try to read for an hour and a half. Afterwards, I'll return with some goodies. Please, don't 'cat around', " said Cynthia.

As soon as Cynthia exited the television room, Brian turned off the television. He and I chatted about many interesting topics: animal welfare, crime, history, and cat stuff. It was nice being with one of my own.

"Jody, I was born in Greenville, British Columbia. Unfortunately, I was bounced around from one place to another, starting from a young age.

You've probably heard many nice things about Canada. I prefer the northern latitudes. I like it up north. I'm here for Cynthia. Otherwise, I would've trekked northwards. She and I plan on going back to our country. As they say: HOME SWEET HOME!

"Although many cats are suffering in North America, we're better off than our kinsfolk elsewhere. You've certainly heard the horror stories emanating from far-away countries. I'm glad I live here," said Brian.

"Brian, you've had a decent life. I guess that's why you smile a lot. I mean, it seems like you don't have any problems. Is that the case?" I asked.

Oh, Jody! Nobody (human or animal) can live on this planet without having problems. Life itself is a series of tests and problems. Some tests and problems are larger than others. I've had my share of problems. I'm not the kind of cat that takes my frustrations out on others; be they human or animal.

I do have a potentially life threatening problem. Do you know what it feels like to be a black cat? Even in North America? Things can get really nasty!" exclaimed Brian.

I was bedazzled with my new cat friend. Brian was a sweet, handsome, and intelligent cat. I had to learn all I could from him.

"Jody, I've only managed to make a few super-friends in my lifetime. You're one of them. As such, I'm going to tell you a BIG SECRET. I want you to promise me that you won't tell anyone, especially Cynthia," said Brian.

"I promise, I'll never tell!" I responded.

"Cynthia thinks that I stay indoors every night. I don't. I'm a cat who 'loves' to venture out into the real world. I often sneak out of Cynthia's mini-mansion after midnight. But, I always make sure that she's sound asleep, and the weather is acceptable. I wouldn't want to muddy-up Cynthia's carpet.

For the following week or two, I won't venture out after midnight. Instead, I'll teach you the ins-and-outs of becoming an incredible cat. You can teach me a thing or two, also.

For the time being, we'll venture out only during the daylight hours, until I'm certain you're ready.

If Cynthia, the sweetest woman in the whole world, ever found out I was 'sneaking out' late at night, it would break her heart," said Brian.

Brian and I continued our chat until Cynthia returned. That's when we slammed on the brakes! We quickly changed the topic of discussion.

My heart felt like it sunk into molten lava. Here I was, keeping secrets from an incredible woman; a friend. She'd put me up in her beautiful and luxurious mini-mansion; for free. I

couldn't justify my actions. Honestly, part of me wanted to sneak out with Brian. I fell into a deep state of ambivalence.

No doubt, Cynthia had partially opened up to us. I understood that Brian and I were being unfair to Cynthia. Well, if she ever found out about our little secret, Brian and I would have to stay in every single night, or be thrown out onto the streets. Cynthia would be more suspicious of our actions.

As soon as Cynthia entered the television room, she appeared apprehensive. It was like she suspected something was going on. We understood that she suspected foul play, but didn't know the particulars.

Cynthia was a woman of her word. After remembering her promise to us, she exited the television room then went to the kitchen.

"Come and get-it; I've got some tasty goodies!" yelled Cynthia.

Brian and I ran to the kitchen, faster than Kentucky Derby horses. We were thankful to be living with such a sweet woman. Okay, she didn't bring our goodies to us, but we still got to eat them.

Brian and I were each given a large bowl of cat food. Brian didn't want the brown bowl, because that's the color of human poop. So, I switched bowls with him. He got my blue bowl.

Brian and I chomped down on every single morsel in each of our bowls. Afterwards, we looked up at Cynthia, with our cutie-pie eyes. We were telling her that we were still hungry. She got the message, really fast.

Cynthia brought forth two large bowls of milk then placed them beside our salivating mouths. Although we were expecting fleshy food, milk's still awesome! We licked every single drop of milk in our bowls.

Again, we looked up at Cynthia. Before we knew it, two bowls of cool water were placed beside our dry mouths.

After finishing the water, Brian and I went to the living room then crashed out. The feast was followed by sleepiness.

We didn't mean to leave Cynthia alone. But, we had to. She would've done the same thing, if the situation had been reversed.

Upon awakening, Brian and I strolled through Cynthia's mini-mansion. We were anxious to go outside.

Brian informed me that for now, the perimeter fence of Cynthia's yard was the boundary. No wonder, he sneaked out a lot.

Cats don't like to be controlled in that manner. We are roamers. So were our ancestors. Unfortunately, not all cats are intelligent enough to roam around the human world. Intelligence is a must for cats.

"Cynthia, please come here!" yelled Brian.

As soon as Cynthia entered the living room, Brian rolled over onto his back then righted himself.

"Look, I don't want either of you to leave my yard, without me as your escort! There are many dangers in this world! I, for one, should know. Rats, dogs, cats, VCOs, cruel humans, automobiles, and countless other problems are lurking in the shadows. You have to be very careful out there, really! I'm very thankful to have two cats in my family. I've suffered so much at the hands of evil humans! Please, don't betray me! Please ... not you!" exclaimed Cynthia.

We understood the 'don't betray me' part, but Cynthia was sounding like a control freak. She couldn't control her own life, so, she had to control ours. Although I didn't like it, I kept my mouth shut. Thereafter, the thought of sneaking out late at night became an obsession for me.

Brian took several steps in Cynthia's direction, and then leaped onto her chest. Cynthia, in turn, pressed him against her chest. Brian and I knew that Cynthia was in much pain. There was a lot more pain; deep inside of her. I was too apprehensive to ask her what those other 'secret problems' were.

Cynthia had opened up to Brian; but not completely. Brian and I would have to slowly and carefully dig-in.

Brian turned his head then leaped onto the carpet. A short while later he glanced at Cynthia to see if she felt any better.

Sadly, Cynthia had tears streaming down her cheeks. No doubt, she wanted to be loved.

Come to think of it, I think Cynthia suspected Brian and I were keeping our own little secret/s from her. She was right.

"Guys, I'm going to hit the sack. It's getting late. I recommend that you do likewise. Tomorrow's a new day. There's no better way to begin a day, then to have a good night's sleep," said Cynthia.

Cynthia went to her bedroom. Brian and I listened intently; making sure that Cynthia wasn't pulling a fast one on us. We waited intently, until Cynthia had fallen asleep. When the moment came, I looked at Brian, waiting for instructions.

"This isn't the right time. We shouldn't sneak out tonight. You've just become a member of our family. Cynthia suspects that we're up to something. We should wait at least a week before sneaking out," said Brian.

## GOING TO THE ZOO

Brian and I waited patiently before sneaking out of Cynthia's mini-mansion. Believe me, that was one long week. So long, it felt like an entire century.

It all happened on a beautiful Saturday night. Brian and I slithered into Cynthia's bedroom, to ensure that she'd fallen asleep. Yes, she was snoozing.

Brian and I crept through the cat hole in the kitchen door. I made sure to follow Brian, and not to ask too many questions; especially on our first outing.

Brian made it clear that absolutely no time should be wasted. Obviously, we were on a fixed time schedule.

Brian and I scaled the three foot fence located at the perimeter of Cynthia's yard. Excitement was running through our veins.

The neighborhood was very quiet and calm; only the sounds of nature were apparent. That was good for us. Cats often have problems with stimulus overload; a human-induced problem.

Then, a shocker! We saw a car approaching. Without notice, the driver of the car flashed the high-beams in our direction.

Brian and I quickly took cover behind a tree. We were freaking terrified.

It turned out to be a patrol car. The officer was conducting a routine scan of the neighborhood.

Brian and I pooped at the same time. Good, neither of us could mock the other. Our fear and apprehension were understandable.

Brian and I waited several minutes until the patrol car exited our neighborhood, before heading south on Livingstone Street.

That's when Brian told me that we were going to the zoo. We decided to pick up our pace. I was very excited about seeing some of my animal brethren.

Our walk on Livingstone Street was enjoyable. However, Brian and I were aware that a sudden danger could come out of nowhere.

"Don't worry, Jody. I've been to the John Barrymore Zoo (JBZ), many times before. I have many good friends there. I know the ins-and-outs of the place, including security, animals, lighting, business hours, and paths. I've never been captured, or even chased, inside the JBZ.

Jody, if we're ever chased by a security guard, splitting-up would be the best thing to do. Then, leave the JBZ as fast as possible! If you make it out safely, go to the nearest forested area, near Ellen's Fried Chicken Restaurant. I'll surely be there, sooner or later," said Brian.

We continued walking on Livingstone Street for a short while, before entering Lands Road.

Brian told me to follow him through a nearby parking lot, to a tree near a dumpster. We couldn't hide behind the dumpster because it was stinky and filthy. Also, there may have been a rat, raccoon, or creepy bugs in and around it.

We waited patiently for an unsuspecting pickup driver to take us to the JBZ. There could be no room for mistakes. If we 'boarded' a pickup that was heading in the wrong direction, we'd have to jump off, immediately!

"Jody, the JBZ is near Cougar Hill. We'll have to board a pickup truck at the right moment," said Brian.

A short while later, a hillbilly in a blue Ford pickup parked near us. He looked like a jolly-good-fellow.

This hillbilly was something else. He was 6 feet eight inches tall, long-bearded, long-haired, pot-bellied, and was wearing typical blue overalls.

Brian noticed the Kentucky plates on the back of the Ford pickup.

As soon as the hillbilly entered the Thomas Liquor Store, we leaped onto the back of his Ford pickup. Then, we crouched down, like stalking cats.

I'd never seen a real hillbilly before. I had to get a closer look at him. So, I leaped onto the ground then ran to the Thomas Liquor Store window. I gawked at the hillbilly.

Shockingly, the hillbilly turned and faced me. I didn't know if he actually saw me. It was dark, and he was looking at me from the inside of a well-lit place. Humans don't exactly have the best night vision.

I quickly ran back then leaped to my reserved place. I understood that rash actions weren't safe.

"Jody, you shouldn't have done that! You could've sabotaged our entire operation! Remember, I'm the expert, not you! Just because someone looks like a nice person, it doesn't mean that he/she actually is.

Furthermore, the only thing you know about this hillbilly is that he's from Kentucky. There are many people who live in Kentucky; many of them friendly, some of them not so friendly. If you place all of them into a single category, you're being ignorant.

Every animal and human on this planet has a unique personality. Okay, I'll admit, the hillbilly does seem like a friendly guy. Regardless, you must always keep your guard up," said Brian.

The hillbilly exited Thomas Liquor Store carrying a plastic bag in each hand. He must've told the cashier not to put his bottles of booze inside a brown bag.

Brian and I were hoping the hillbilly wasn't about to drink and drive. If that was the case, we'd have to find another ride. No cat would ever be stupid enough to knowingly sneak into a drunkard's vehicle. Or, so I thought.

The hillbilly scanned the area then entered his Ford pickup. He took several large gulps from a half pint of Bacardi. Eighty proof, in case you're wondering. Afterwards, he tried to drink beer from two cans at the same time. As expected, he got beer on his overalls.

The hillbilly burped twice then farted three times. The hillbilly farted so loud a sleeping bird almost fell to the ground. The poor had been startled big times.

Brian and I forgave the hillbilly for his behavior, because he thought there was nobody around. After all, he was giving us a free ride.

We were desperate to get to the JBZ. The basic cat rules of not getting into a vehicle with a drunkard would now have to be broken.

The hillbilly adjusted his baseball cap then turned on the ignition. We were off to the JBZ! Brian told me to be patient. As soon as it was time to leap off, we'd do just that.

The hillbilly drove east until Rover Street. Upon arriving, he stopped his Ford pickup. I peered up at him. He looked like he was concentrating. So, Brian and I waited patiently.

"Oops! I almost forgot! We must leap off the Ford pickup ... right now!" exclaimed Brian.

Brian led the way. I followed him like his shadow. It was really nice being with an incredible cat like Brian. Aside from being incredible, Brian was also a good friend.

After leaping onto the ground, Brian and I found ourselves right behind the Ford pickup. We instinctively crouched down, staying still. There was a slight possibility that the hillbilly would see us through his rear view mirror. Thankfully, he didn't.

Brian told me that Cougar Mountain, which was really a hill, was only a hundred yards away. Just beyond the hill was the JBZ.

As soon as the traffic light turned green, the hillbilly drove off. From our location, I could see the faint outline of the JBZ. I was so excited! Under the circumstances, how else should I have felt?

Brian and I walked towards the JBZ, scaling the hill, until reaching a tiny forested area across the street from the JBZ.

Brian told me that we should hide behind a large tree nearby. We stayed there until the right moment.

"Be patient, Jody. You see that security guard sitting in that booth? He uses the restroom, eats, then naps, at the same time every single night that he works here. He's like a computer. I even know how many times he dozes off per hour. In a short while, he'll go to the restroom. Afterwards, he'll go to the kitchen to eat his late night meal.

Brian was right. A few minutes later, the security guard left his booth. As expected, he entered the restroom. Although there were hi-tech security cameras throughout the zoo, they were made to detect human intruders, and 'captive escapees', not cats like us. It's awesome being a cat.

As soon as the security guard was out of sight, Brian and I slowly crossed the street, then 'slithered' to the perimeter of the JBZ.

Before our eyes was a large gate, with high parallel bars that couldn't be bent. There was a five inch gap between each parallel bar.

Even an obese cat could've easily 'slithered' through one of those gaps. What an awesome feeling! Somehow, Brian and I felt right at home. Our brethren in 'animal kind' were nearby. We were about to enter a caged jungle.

We entered the JBZ, with Brian leading the way. I was in no position to make requests pertaining to which animals I wanted to see first. Brian was the boss, and that was final.

As we strolled through the JBZ, I noticed that some of the prey animals were a bit jumpy. Although Brian and I are relatively small animals, as far as they were concerned, we were still predators. I mean, even small cats kind of smell like their big cat cousins.

Many wild animals live their entire lives without ever scenting, or seeing a domestic cat. I understood their fear.

"Jody, we must be slick. Keep your eyes, ears, and nose, wide open. We must always be on the lookout for security guards, or other zoo personnel. It's their job to keep this place safe, secure, and free of trespassers, like us."

Trespassers are never welcome in zoos. I don't know what zoo personnel would do if they capture us. I sure as hell don't want to find out," said Brian.

We continued strolling through the JBZ, looking, and sometimes gawking, at many of the caged animals. Unfortunately, many of the animals were hiding in tiny enclosures.

For a while, I kind of felt like a human zoo patron; enjoying the sights of amazing creatures. I was free to come and go; they (the incarcerated animals) weren't. That's the biggest difference between a zoo patron and a zoo animal. Zoo patrons should never forget this very important fact! Please, DON'T FORGET IT!

Thankfully, some of the animals came out of their enclosures, while others simply had no enclosures. Some of the animals showed signs of deep depression and psychosis. They performed stereotypical actions; over and over again. These poor animals had been 'de-animalized'. There was no snap, pride, or happiness, in their personalities.

I couldn't last a freaking week as an 'exhibit animal'. I'd end up either attacking my handlers, attempting an escape, or I'd go nuts. No doubt about it!

It's always sad to see fellow animals in tiny enclosures. When it's time to hit the sack or rest, the animals go back to their cement homes, or mini-enclosures. Zoos enclosures must look identical, or almost identical, to the natural habitats of the animals therein. The size of the habitat is impossible to match for most animals such as polar bears, small and big cats, gazelles (and related animals), hyenas, elephants, zebras, birds, wildebeest, equines, etc. Unfortunately, animal habitats are quickly disappearing from the face of the earth. My country once had bazillions of roaming animals. Even our forested areas were gigantic.

Some zoos allow stimulus overload to engulf the animals in the enclosures. The living quarters' architecture does not allow the animals to escape the human gawkers during business hours. The animals must wait until closing time, for relief. Then, it's boredom time.

Look, predators in zoos can't hunt for prey, while prey animals can't run around, and forage. The scent of both must drive each other crazy. I mean, suppose you were a hungry lion who was surrounded by prey animals. But, you couldn't get to them.

Prey animals who are continuously too close to predators may become extremely tense, or otherwise, lose their flight instinct.

Brian convinced me to follow him to the gorilla enclosure. Walking there made me extremely anxious. We were going to see the most powerful primate on earth; unless King Kong or Bigfoot is alive.

As soon as we arrived at the gorilla enclosure, Brian told me to crop my ears, and pay attention. Afterwards, Brian 'aped' some sounds then waited patiently.

Suddenly, a giant male Silverback gorilla exited his concrete enclosure then charged at us with full force. Well, it was the charge of an old gorilla.

This guy was still formidable, but had less snap than a young male's. Instinctively, I turned then fled. Brian didn't follow me. This caused me to stop running.

I returned to my place. I'd jumped the gun. The gorilla couldn't have harmed me, even if he'd wanted to.

An impenetrable barrier had shielded us from the gorilla. A large moat encircled the gorilla enclosure. In case you didn't know, gorillas can't swim. Furthermore, between us and the moat was a fence.

Brian looked the gorilla over for a few seconds then asked him where Chip was. The Silverback told Brian that Chip was sold off to a 'bidder'. Chip wasn't a young gorilla anymore.

Apparently, while Chip was being hauled away, he kept yelling out Brian's name.

"It was a sad sight, indeed. When the big boys came for Chip, he instinctively knew that there was an imminent transfer. His transfer, that is. Initially, he appeared apprehensive. Then, he tried to put up a resistance. It did not delay the transfer.

Chip pooped, urinated then decided to spit on the big boys. Unfortunately, his efforts were immediately neutralized. The veterinary technician on site darted Chip.

As expected, Chip went down and didn't get up. If it wasn't for his deep breathing, I would've thought he'd died.

JBZ Director, William Hale, couldn't have cared less how angry or terrified Chip was. Director Hale practically worshipped money.

The incident was a two-fold lesson to the other gorillas in the enclosure. First, resistance is futile. Second, when you're washed up, you'll be sent away, almost definitely to a worse place.

"As you can see, I'm an old gorilla. I think the 'big boys' will be transferring me in the near future. Patrons to our enclosure have already begun to complain about my ugliness and old age. The patrons want to see young, handsome, athletic gorillas," said the Silverback.

Brian and I thanked 'our friend' explaining to us what had happened to Chip. Afterwards, we continued our stroll in the JBZ.

It looks like more animals will be boxed into tiny enclosures in the future. Today, shelters, animals can be found in reserves, game parks, homes, zoos, circuses, roadside menageries, and in biomedical labs.

Animals that are used by the entertainment industry most often are forced to perform unnatural acts. Questionable are the training methods that are used. The animal is at the mercy of the trainer and the establishment.

No bear should be forced to ride a bicycle! No big cat should be forced to jump through hoops (flaming or non-flaming)! No bullfights! No circuses! No roadside menageries! No abuse! No humiliation! No-nothing!

The animal is the only person who never gets paid for work rendered. Furthermore, animals who are 'boxed-in', or chained, for extended periods, may rock back and forth, self-bite, head-bang, hyper-masturbate, walk in circles, become overly aggressive, excessively passive, eat or play with their own feces (in an unnatural manner for the species involved), pull their hair, or suffer from excessive self-grooming.

Gentle Ben, a 'bear actor', was a tragedy. If you look carefully at Gentle Ben while he was tethered, his head and body bobbed and weaved. In addition, he took unnatural steps forward and backwards; repeating this behavior over and over again. Didn't the 'actors' on the set notice anything peculiar?

Only 'sinister humans' could induce this behavior in another species.

It's sad that many domesticated animals lose their natural behaviors. Sometimes, cats and dogs actually pick up certain human behaviors and habits. For example, excessive eye contact, not respecting personal space, ignoring body language, and bothering another person while he/she is eating. Farm cows and tamed ranch horses are nothing like their wild cousins.

In the animal kingdom, excessive eye contact, or direct eye contact, can signal a challenge. Although, some humans also abide by this rule, they're usually the aggressive or criminal type.

I'm not talking about staring. That's frowned upon even in the human world.

"Jody, primates around the world once had incredible tracts of forests. Depending on the particular species, families, extended families, and friends, were nearby. Food was plentiful, and predators were few. The Virunga Forest was a much better place, just a few decades ago.

Jane Goodall, Dian Fossey (murdered), and Birute' Galdikas, are the three most impressive primatologists in modern history. They were Leakey's girls.

Dr. Leakey was a very hard worker, and a genius in his own field. However, he was also an excavator. Women are more likely to study primates on site, for many years. Men tend to have the one-two-three, goodbye attitude. They finish their project or degree then go home, really fast.

Fossey was murdered because she made too many waves regarding gorilla protection and conservation. She made many enemies in government and amongst big time poachers. She was also a foreigner in a dangerous land.

Primates who still live in the forests dread the sound of 'tree chopping'. Excessive tree chopping is referred to as deforestation. Deforestation destroys the homes and habitats of native tribes, primates, and non-primate animals.

For many primates, the lumber industries are equated with death, destruction, terror, and being turned into food. The Bush meat Crisis is a terrible tragedy. Jody, I'd give my own life to solve this terrible tragedy.

Poachers are willing to kill, mutilate, or steal, any primates that they get their hands on. It depends on the purpose of the 'criminal mission'. But, in all fairness, some low-level poachers are filthy poor. It's the big boys who run the operations.

Weapons, drug, and animal smuggling, are three gigantic problems facing this world. Our leaders seem to be ignoring what should be tackled. Although, I must say: illegal arms smuggling pales in comparison with 'legal arms sales and giveaways'.

Primate flesh sold in restaurants is considered a delicacy. As such, it's very expensive. Gorilla hands or ground-up gorilla penises are also big sales items. Each primate that is snatched from its natural environment ends up becoming a performer, sideshow, an exhibit, food, a pet, or an experimental trinket.

Jody, Chip was most likely snatched away from his mother's arms, inside his community. Naturally, his mother and many of

his relatives tried to defend him. The poachers have a quick solution to this problem: gun down, and/or ax whoever gets in the way," said Brian.

Brian began to cry. He couldn't help it. Chip had become another statistic; one of countless primates who will never be happy again. An old gorilla like Chip has no options in life, whatsoever.

As we continued our stroll the JBZ, I noticed the incredible variety of animals. However, some of them were 'dilapidated caricatures' of their free counterparts. These guys and gals were doing hard time. What crime have they committed? I know as a fact that none of them was sentenced by a court of law.

We stopped to gawk at an incredibly tall giraffe. I got a bit closer then spoke to him.

"Hey, Mr. Giraffe how are you?" I asked.

"How the hell do you think I am!?" shouted the giraffe.

"Mr. Giraffe, why are you so freaking hostile to me?" I asked.

"I'm freaking doing hard time ... right in this stupid dump! I'm freaking going nuts! Back home in Africa, I was able to run around and play with family and friends. We had land to run about in. Our species is the tallest on land! I was a proud giraffe, until those damn humans snatched me from my home.

Now, I'm nothing but a has-been; a tall inmate with several physical and mental illnesses.

Get out of here, fast! That's Dr. Samantha Stacey! If she sees you, you'll end up like us!" shouted the giraffe.

"Thanks," replied Brian.

Brian told me to follow him behind a nearby tree, where we could hide behind. I did just that.

Dr. Samantha Stacey, a middle aged woman, with long blond hair and blue eyes, slowly walked through our sector. Thankfully, she didn't see us.

"Brian, what's so bad about this lady?" I asked.

"She's got the title of Chief Zoo Veterinarian. She's callous, and sometimes rough in her handling of animals," said Brian.

As soon as Dr. Stacey left, Brian and I continued our stroll through the JBZ. We walked through a man made path, three mini-streams, and two mini-jungles.

These accessories were made for the sake of the zoo patrons. Although the zoo animals had man-made environments, these environments weren't as beautiful and large as the zoo patrons'.

The JBZ Administration should have invested a little more money for animal comfort and happiness; better food, water, housing, activities, and veterinary medical care.

As soon as our hunger set in, Brian and I decided to get a free meal from the staff dining hall. What else were we going do? Beg from the inmates?

I enthusiastically followed Brian to our free meal source. We were lucky that none of the JBZ staff were nearby. If they'd seen us, we'd have been dead geese!

As soon as we reached the portico of the dining hall, Brian and I scanned the area. We were looking out for mortal enemies. After determining that the coast was clear, we slithered through a window that was slightly ajar.

The 'scents' of delicious foods was driving us up the wall. We had to eat 'our food'!

Brian and I went straight to the kitchen. Even if we'd been blind that food would've been found. Our noses lead the way.

As soon as we entered the kitchen, all hell broke loose. Each of us forgot the presence of the other. We ate and drank like Roman emperors. By the time we were done, we'd eaten an incredible quantity of food, and drank as much liquids.

Unfortunately, dawn was fast approaching. We had to get back home before Cynthia awakened. If she'd discovered that we were gone, all hell would've been thrown at us!

Although we were satiated our exit was lightning fast. Afterwards, we briskly walked to the exit of the JBZ. Running would've excited the predators.

As we approached the exit of the JBZ, we spotted a zoo cart. We hid behind it, keeping an eye on the security guard.

"Brian, are we going to wait here all night long? Remember, we must get back home before Cynthia awakens. I can't imagine what would happen if she found out that we'd betrayed her. How many humans have already betrayed her? I think it would devastate her, if she found out our little secret," I said.

"Don't worry. I know this security guard like the back of my paw. Just wait a few minutes. He'll get up, walk over to the snack room then return with a coffee and a jelly donut. He does this every single night, shortly before dawn.

This guy has to sit in the same booth, Mondays through Fridays, fifty weeks out of the year, on an eight hour shift. The other security guards get to stroll around the zoo. This chump's too fat to move around. Except when he wants to use the restroom, or eat.

His friends call him 'Fatso Eddy'. Fatso Eddy got 'the job' because the interviewer owed him a favor. Isn't that something else?" asked Brian.

As soon as Fatso Eddy got up to leave, Brian and I slithered through the exit, then made a quick getaway. We understood that time was now our worst enemy. We had to get back home before our beloved Cynthia awakened.

Brian and I speed walked for a mile, then slowed down to a walking pace. I glanced up at the sky, then the horizon. Now, dawn was imminent. I could tell from the way Brian was behaving, he also knew.

We walked on Grover Street until we reached a large white house. Brian instructed me to wait until a beautiful woman exited the house. Apparently, Brian had been through this routine many times before. That was good news.

A short while later a beautiful woman exited the white house. This woman was almost as beautiful as Cynthia. She had blond hair, blue eyes, freckles, and was somewhat taller than the average North American woman. Even her walk was cute.

The beautiful woman was wearing a long beige-colored dress, a golden watch, and brown walking shoes. I didn't see a marriage ring on her finger. I wondered why she was still single. Maybe, she was divorced? No, she didn't seem like the type. She looked like an innocent woman who wanted only one 'Mr. Right', for life. In North America this type of woman is slowly disappearing. Remember, this is a cat's opinion.

The beautiful woman circled her van, peering inside while she was walking. This is a good safety precaution. Drivers should always do this before entering their vehicle. Especially when the driver's alone and it's dark.

I took three steps towards the van, because I wanted the beautiful woman to pet me between the ears. Brian gently bit my tail then pulled me back to where I was before. Apparently, I had a lot more to learn.

We waited stealthily. Not making a single move. Brian told me that the beautiful woman drove by Cynthia's house every morning. Apparently, she had a sister who lived a few houses down the block. That was incredible. Brian must've done some hard-core investigating.

What would've happened if the beautiful woman was on vacation, or if she'd been ill? I wondered. For the time being, I kept quiet about the matter.

Brian and I slithered towards the beautiful woman's van, like leopards stalking prey. As soon as the beautiful woman opened the door of her van, she lowered the right rear window. No doubt, she wanted a little draft of air. She may have been claustrophobic. That was good for us.

The beautiful woman turned the ignition on. Then, she turned on the radio. That's when Brian and I leaped through the opening of the window.

The beautiful woman put her van into reverse then pulled out of her driveway. Afterwards, she put her van into drive. We were off!

Brian told me to stay low. Every so often, Brian would carefully peer out of the window, to make sure that we were heading in the right direction.

The beautiful woman drove steadily to her destination. Brian and I were very glad that she was inadvertently driving us back to our home.

"Jody, we're close to Cynthia's house. As soon as I leap out of the van, do likewise. Hopefully, we'll be back home in a short while," whispered Brian.

The beautiful woman slowed down her van, eventually pulling over near a stop sign. Initially, we thought that she'd spotted us. Luckily, that wasn't the case.

The beautiful woman exited her van then scanned the neighborhood. Afterwards, she crouched down then she entered a yard nearby. Unbelievably, she snatched a racing bike. After she scanned the area, she carried the racing bike back to her van.

Meanwhile, Brian and I had leaped out of the beautiful woman's van. We figured that she'd have to open the double door in order to put the stolen racing bike inside her van. In that case scenario, she would've spotted us.

Brian and I hid behind a blue Volkswagen, nearby. We had a birds-eye view of what was happening.

The beautiful woman quickly opened the van's double doors then placed the racing bike inside. Afterwards, she closed the double doors. She was off in a jiffy.

Brian and I glanced at each other. Both of us had been shamed! Neither of us even considered trying to stop the beautiful woman. Indeed, the owner of the racing bike had lost a precious item. Indeed, he/she would be pissed off as all hell. On the other hand, the owner should have secured the racing bike.

Brian and I rationalized our inaction by pouring partial blame on the victim, with the rest, on the thief. I guess that was the only way we could absolve ourselves of any guilt. Anyhow, we had our own problems to worry about.

A short while later Brian and I were at home. We made sure not to make any unnecessary movements, or sounds. We moved like slithery pythons on a tree.

Brian and I slithered back to our bedroom then closed our eyes. It was as though nothing had happened.

At breakfast time, Cynthia brought us two large bowls of milk.

"How are you guys? Did you guys sleep well last night? Or ... did you sleepwalk? Remember what I told you. It's very

dangerous to go out late at night. I know you guys would never do such a thing. You're good cats, who'd never betray me ... right?" asked Cynthia.

## YOU BETRAYED ME!

"Cynthia thanks for the compliment. Cat's honor ... we'd never betray you. Cynthia, you're an awesome woman. We stayed put. In fact, we didn't even peer out of any of the windows. We're happy that you trust us so dearly," said Brian.

Suddenly, Cynthia's mannerisms and tone of voice changed. In fact, the change was profound. Her face reddened then it paled. Instantly, I got the creeps! Something was wrong. But, what was it, I wondered? Well, the onslaught was on its way.

"Cats who sneak out of the house without permission are no better than sewer rats! I think those kind of cats are the scum-the-earth! I'd rather live alone, then be with any one of them. Let alone, two of them! You guys are too good to be like them! I know you'd never betray me! Especially, after what I've been through!" shouted Cynthia.

"Cynthia, you're such a b..., I mean, you're such a nice woman," said Brian.

"You mean ... I'm such a bitch?! Get out! Both of you! Just leave my freaking house! After all I've done for you! Brian, I opened up to you ... so much! Now, you have the nerve, temerity, and audacity, to call me a bitch. You know that I've been through way too much of that kind of abuse.

That's not all! I know that you guys slithered out of MY HOUSE! Brian ... shame on you! You guys raped me!!! You're like Jeff, and his creepy buddies! You used me! You betrayed me! You mocked me! Then, you lied to me!" shouted Cynthia.

"Jeepers, Cynthia! How the hell did we rape you? Why are you talking to us in that manner?" I asked.

I opened up to you guys! So, you turn around and trick and deceive me. You've broken my trust! This is exactly what I went through with Jeff! I loved him, and look how he betrayed me! You kitties raped my trust! You raped me!!!

Leave now, or I'll call the chief VCO of this city! I'll tell him that you 'cats' slithered into my house then threatened to kill me. In the process, you took much of the food and milk in my fridge. Of course, by force and without my consent! Also, I'll tell him that you kitties touched me in inappropriate ways. The chief VCO will certainly believe me!

As a danger to the community, you'll be sent straight to a shelter. Nobody will ever adopt you!" shouted Cynthia.

It was unusual for Cynthia to lose her temper like that. Brian tried to squeeze in an explanation regarding the 'b' word, and a 'we're so sorry'. Cynthia didn't want to hear any of it. She should have been patient and attentive.

But then, maybe Cynthia wasn't all there? She'd been through so much pain, confusion, and backstabbing. It would only be natural for her to lose some of her marbles. Well, we had no choice in the matter. It was her mini-mansion, not ours.

Brian and I looked Cynthia in the eyes for the last time. We were hoping she'd change her mind. In response, she glared at us then pointed her index finger in the direction of the living room door. That was our final cue to leave.

The steps Brian and I took to the living room door were slow and lethargic. Besides being all 'bummed-out' about what had just transpired, we were really worried about Cynthia. We weren't sure if she was thinking about harming herself, or maybe someone else.

I knew that she was living one day at a time. With her bulimia/anorexia nervosa problem, anything could happen.

Shockingly, Cynthia's eyes were bloodshot, teary, and that's not all. She brandished a menacing Bowie knife at us. Then, she took two steps in our direction. It was time to leave!

#### THE 'N' WORD

In an instant, Brian and I became homeless. For strays, there are dangers lurking on the streets, day and night. In a residential area, daytime dangers come primarily from unleashed dogs, or tattle tale humans.

When a cat's on the streets, anyone can become a worst nightmare. Even someone the cat doesn't even know exists. For instance, that someone could call the VCOs and tell them that there's 'a feline' prowler in the neighborhood. That someone could be peering out through a kitchen or living room window. Any John or Jane who hates cats can do this.

A short while later, Brian and I decided to run away from Cynthia's mini-mansion as fast as possible. After several blocks of intense running, we slowed down to a walking pace. The sun was steadily rising, making our predicament more troublesome.

Brian and I spotted a tree at the north end of Gamble Street. Within a flash, we scaled the tree, like leopards. You should have seen us.

From our new vantage point, we could see oncoming danger, allies, and prey. In a manner of speaking, we could choose to run, hide, descend, or freeze.

In our utter exhaustion and stress, we didn't notice a Doberman across the street. No doubt, he took notice of us.

A short while later, a policeman pulled his patrol car into the dog owner's driveway. The policeman exited his patrol car then walked to the front door of the house. Then, he rang the doorbell. A short while later, an old witch, with a large pimple on her nose, opened the door. I must say, she was uglier than sin! Even by human standards.

The old witch was 'written-up' for 'chaining' her dog to a tree for too long. The poor Doberman appeared haggard and dilapidated.

Brian and I were ecstatic, because the old witch got what she deserved.

The old witch threw a fit. She cursed, shouted, yelled. Then, she changed her tactics. She begged for forgiveness and mercy. It didn't work.

The ninety dollar fine had to be paid within thirty days, or else she'd be summoned to court.

Brian and I crouched down, just in case the officer looked in our direction. I mean, we were homeless cats. Humans call us feral or strays.

"Brian, were you getting ready to call Cynthia a bitch?" I asked.

I certainly wasn't! I was about to tell Cynthia that she was a BRILLIANT woman. Why would I ever call Cynthia a bitch? Why, we were family. She treated me right and gave me shelter, food, water, veterinary medical care, and tons of love. I didn't really force the issue, because she'd already made up her mind.

"Besides, you and I are a male and a female. Cynthia must've 'felt' like she was still single. With no Mr. Right in sight, she went up the wall! I'm being 'bluntly-honest'. The gang-rape she'd endured wasn't the only sad episode in her life," said Brian.

"Cynthia's always been a victim. Sometimes, she makes up stories about her past, to block off the painful memories. She's not a liar. She's been through so much pain and anguish. It seems like no human has ever really listened to her."

"In this world, most people are too busy with their own problems, and trying to attain success and wealth. They don't have time to wallow in sadness; with a woman who's been through hell and back, several times over," said Brian.

Brian lost it. He started crying like a little baby. As such, I convinced him that we should rest up for a few hours.

As soon as we finished resting, our hunger pangs began to pock at our stomachs. In fact, it became quite unbearable.

It was noon, and the sun was shining on us with a vengeance. Soon, we'd also need plenty of liquids to hydrate our beautiful bodies.

Brian and I walked on Bolton Street. Bolton Street was busy at this time of the day. So, we decided to walk on the far side of the sidewalk.

While we were walking, thirst hit us like a ton of bricks. Now, we had at least two gigantic problems to deal with; hunger and thirst. A single problem would've been more than enough.

Brian and I decided to get some food and water from a nearby store. We turned into Roper Street then headed north. Roper Street was also very busy at this time of the day. It seemed looked like everyone was taking their lunch break.

We spotted a grocery store a mile north of our position. Brian and I received many taunts and thrown objects from numerous passerby. Our physical safety was essential. So, Brian and I decided to be on the alert.

As we were treading along, a driver in a gray Chevy slowed down to a cat's pace. The Chevy was packed with college students; males and females. They were inebriated. The scents of alcohol and marijuana were in the air. It must've been a holiday of some sort.

"Jody, we must be very careful! Keep your senses on red alert. Sometimes, when young humans party, harming cats seems like a fun thing to do.

I think it would be wise for us to walk a bit further away from the street. We can continue our walk near the dirt. If anyone tries anything funny, run to your right," said Brian.

"Brian, is it common? I mean, what happened to Cynthia. Do many young women have to endure what she's endured?" I asked.

"Yes and no. I think Cynthia was at the wrong places at the wrong times. She didn't ask for what she got. These problems were imposed upon her.

Most women don't endure as much pain as Cynthia's endured. But, quite a few endure more than they should.

Most of the time, the 'induced sex' is from a husband, or a boyfriend. Or, the perpetrator may be an acquaintance. Mind you, women can hurt men, too. They do it in their own unique way," said Brian.

"I don't quite understand the last point. Brian, please elaborate," I said.

As soon as Brian opened his mouth to speak, a 'trucker' driving a 'semi' tried to run us off the sidewalk. No ... he tried to freaking kill us!

Jeepers! In all the confusion, Brian and I had forgotten about the Chevy. Luckily, the driver had sped away before the trucker came by. Otherwise, we would've had two gigantic problems to deal with.

The trucker was so intent on killing us he floored his truck then swerved onto the sidewalk. Afterwards, he made his intent fully known.

"Hey, get out of the freaking way!" shouted the trucker.

Brian and I made a sharp right. We barely got out of the trucker's way.

Apparently, the trucker wanted some more. So, he pulled over 'into' the curb then exited his truck. He gave us a word, or two.

"Next time I won't have any mercy on you two farts! I don't want to see you walking on our streets, or sidewalks; ever again! Creatures like you should either be behind bars, or dead!" shouted the trucker.

Brian and I weren't in the mood to start anything with the trucker. So, we kept quiet. Besides, we knew that the trucker was from out east. He couldn't have cared less about 'our streets, or our sidewalks'. He just wanted to shout at the nearest kitties around.

"Brian, we must now place ourselves on 'imminent-danger-alert, and be ready to react, spontaneously. All it takes is a split second of spacing out. In that case scenario, one or both of us could die. The world can sometimes be very cold and brutal," I said.

Brian and I continued our walk, until we picked up the scent of tasty food emanating from the grocery store.

While Brian and I were spaced out about the food, another driver, this time in a blue Mustang, swerved onto the sidewalk then headed straight for us. Brian and I were barely able to get out of the way.

"Get out of the way, you freaking nigger!" shouted the driver.

I was shocked! I knew that the 'N' word was racist to the bone. But, why would any human use that nasty word to address a black cat?

As soon the blue Mustang zoomed away, we resumed our walk on the sidewalk. Brian didn't say anything. Meanwhile, his entire body was shivering. Brian appeared to be anxious and scared.

We were able to walk together for another five minutes. That's when the driver of the blue Mustang made his second attempt at running us over.

Unfortunately, this time it was a direct hit. Brian was struck really hard. The intensity and momentum of the impact caused Brian's body to be catapulted at least fifty feet into the air, to our right.

As soon as Brian was struck, the driver of the blue Mustang repeated the dreaded statement: get out of the way you freaking nigger!

The driver of the blue Mustang pulled over into the curb. Afterwards, two men and a woman exited the blue Mustang.

After gawking at Brian, they erupted into a group guffaw. When 'our tormentors' had their fill of laughing, they returned to the blue Mustang. The driver sped off, without even saying 'sorry'.

I ran to Brian as fast as I could! Upon reaching him, I noticed that he was engulfed in his own blood, disemboweled, and dizzy-eyed. He lethargically tried to focus his eyes on me, but couldn't.

Blood was dripping from Brian's mouth, and his speech was slurred. However, that didn't stop him from conveying an important story to me.

"Jody, shortly after the Civil War, a terrible tragedy occurred in America. Unfortunately, not too many American historians know about this incident. It happened at the Chambers Street Hospital (CSH), in New York.

There once was a black cat that was loved by the Administrator of the CSH. In essence, the cat was special. The cat gave out much love and companionship to its human friend.

Unfortunately, somebody gave this black cat the name 'Nigger'. Hospital staff used no other name to refer to the black cat.

Black cats are only black, hair deep. Otherwise, they're the same regardless of breed. Their skin isn't black. In fact, cats have never given a damn what color another cat or human was. Even during mating, coat color is totally irrelevant.

The day that the Administrator of the CSH died, the black cat fell into a deep depression. As a result, the black cat meowed, and whimpered all night long. Other cats joined the symphony. Although the cats were outdoors, CSH staff could still hear their meows all day and night long.

The sound of this symphony didn't sit well with the persons who had to sleep on the premises of the CSH, nor the residents of the area. In other words, they were pissed off!

Hospital personnel 'convinced' the butler to take care of the black cat. He did just that. He 'lynched' the poor kitty using a coat hanger, in front of note-taking physicians. The physicians had enjoyed the show.

The poor kitty struggled and squirmed like hell, until it died. I'm not sure, but, I think that black cat was a male. I apologize if I'm wrong. That's why I'm not using the pronouns 'he' or 'she'.

Sometimes, black cats are used in religious rituals. Often times, these rituals call for the torture and/or sacrifice of the black cat. Other wicked humans get-off on torturing cats.

In the olden days, even some religious scholars believed that black cats were somehow evil. It was believed that black cats had special 'evil powers' that were used to spread sin and bad luck. Also, that they were 'witch-like'.

Jody, if black cats had special powers the first thing they'd do is protect themselves from evil individuals. Then, they'd conquer the world. The first species to be conquered would be the humans. Thereafter the great apes, lesser apes then the monkeys would be conquered.

As soon as they got rid of the primates, the other species would be at their mercy.

Listen, the humans who were in the Chevy are ignorant of cat physiology, psychology, and culture. I don't hold a grudge against the driver, or any of the passengers. I forgive them, completely and wholeheartedly.

Cats, like me, don't like to hold grudges against anyone. Jody, I've lived a full life. I don't want to leave this world with a grudge, or a chip on my shoulder.

Jody, you must leave, immediately. I'm not going to make it. I'm bleeding from inside and out. And, as you can see, I've been disemboweled.

Please, wait at least one whole week before returning to Cynthia's home. This time around, be a kind/trustworthy cat. No betrayal, please!

Tell Cynthia that the 'b' word stood for brilliant. Also, tell her that I'd never call her a bitch. Finally, tell her that I've always loved her more than anyone in the whole world. That includes members of my own species.

If Cynthia doesn't listen to you, or if she kicks you out of her mini-mansion, go to New York. Find a cat named Sonny-Boy Catsby.

Sonny-Boy Catsby is one hell-of-a-cat. Be forewarned: he's a bit on the tough, criminal side. Tell him you're Brian's friend. He'll help you survive on the tough streets of a big city like New York.

New York's full of humans and skyscrapers. But, like many other cities, there are many rats and roaches therein. Stray cats and dogs need to be very careful. There are too many humans in New York. Remember, all it takes is just one tattle-tale.

New York's a city with plenty of food and crevices to hide in. Be careful, the City Government doesn't tolerate stray cats.

However, at the police level, they've got bigger problems to deal with then a stray kitty or two. You can get lost in the crowd. BUT DON'T YOU DARE FORGET ABOUT THE VCOs!

New York's a nice city for an alley cat to live in. Beautiful, countless skyscrapers, and many When confronting other animals, act tough, if you can. Don't show fear or cowardice. Walk away proudly, if you must. Mind you, never challenge a VCO. If you see one and he/she doesn't see you, stay put. If, on the other hand, the VCO sees you, get the hell out of there, fast! You have good protection with Sonny-Boy. He's an Al Capone, Rocky Balboa, Ben Casey, and Archie Bunker, all rolled up into one person.

"Jody, I'm at death's door. Please go, so you don't have to see me die," mumbled Brian.

"Although I don't want to leave you, I know that it's the right thing to do. I can't help you. Even if you had emergency surgery, it still wouldn't be enough. Brian, on my honor, I'll never forget you!" I promised.

I licked Brian's bloody face then rubbed the side of my head against his bloodied neck. In response, Brian told me that I was a very good friend. Those were the last words that I ever heard from him.

I turned, then 'galloped' away, until I entered Olson Street. I didn't want to take any chances with that dreaded driver of the blue Mustang, or any other creep, for that matter.

Olson Street was studded with beautiful trees, flowers, and homes.

Olson Street was located in a typical 'Leave it to Beaver' neighborhood. Since I was the only cat walking around, alertness was called for. Any creep behind a window could've called the VCOs. Jeepers, I had enough problems to deal with.

I roamed around for an hour. In the meantime, the streets filled with pedestrians. Many people gawked at me. They gave me the 'you're a freak' look.

On three occasions, I gawked back at those who were nasty to me. I was too hot and pissed off to give a damn about their feelings. As long as the VCOs weren't around, I was okay.

The image of Brian haunted me throughout my walk. Everywhere I went, Brian's memory was activated.

As the days passed, I began to lose weight as a result of extreme anxiety, depression, apprehension, and confusion.

Thankfully, I always found food, water, and a decent resting place. Otherwise, I would've collapsed. Maybe I would have died?

My energy reserves were being used up. It was like I was jogging around, all day long. Believe me running an entire marathon would've been easier.

I took Brian's advice. I decided to wait an entire week before returning to Cynthia's mini-mansion.

I made sure to watch out for crazy drivers, also. On the third day of my trek, I saw a squirrel get run over by a mad woman.

Apparently, the crazy woman had just gone through a bitter divorce. Naturally, the first male of any species had to be harmed. Why not an innocent squirrel? I know this because she shouted out her story to the whole world, after running over the poor squirrel. She pulled over near the curb then exited her car.

She shouted obscenities at everyone in sight then she conveyed her so-called sad story. Look what she just did to Brian? I asked myself.

If that crazy woman had stayed around for another minute, she would've been arrested. The police arrived at the scene a few moments after the crazy woman had driven off. Crazies shouldn't be allowed to drive.

## I SHALL RETURN

After living as a stray for a whole week, I decided to go back to Cynthia's mini-mansion. I made sure that it was nighttime, just in case she decided to throw me out, and call the VCOs.

Each individual has his/her own unique temperament. For example, Brian was 'all-forgiving' towards his killers. I wasn't!

Walking through numerous neighborhoods in the dark, all alone, increased my anxiety. Although I could see better than most other animals, it was still nighttime. That's when some of the nastiest creeps come out.

Barks, growls, snarls, and meows, were emanating from various homes. In addition, there were sounds emanating from creepy animals. Some were friendly, others were ferocious.

Lucky for me, most of them were locked away within escape-proof enclosures. Otherwise, I would've had to scram.

If a dog gets hold of a cat, the end result is a bloodbath. Unless the dog's a terrible fighter, the cat will almost always come out the loser. It's sad, but true.

I continued my walk back to Cynthia's mini-mansion. Every step of the way increased my apprehension. The apprehension reached my bone marrow.

Upon reaching Cynthia's yard, I slithered my way to her front door. Then, I placed myself on red alert. I wouldn't have been surprised if Cynthia had purchased a ferocious guard dog.

I scanned the area, looking for a 'sneaky' way in. After finding nothing promising, I walked to the back of the mini-mansion. There, I saw a window that was ajar; just enough space for a stream-lined/beautiful cat, like myself, to go through.

I leaped onto the window panel then descended onto the kitchen floor.

"Who is it?!" asked Cynthia.

I was shocked! How did she know someone was on the premises? I'd made a stealth-like entry. What's going on here? I asked myself.

Upon seeing me, Cynthia appeared anxious and confused. Sadly, she also looked like she'd been to hell and back.

The scent of puke, tears and blood filled the air. The scent of blood instantly doubled my anxiety. I knew very well that she'd been puking and dry-heaving. Not from medical illness, but from induced action.

Although Cynthia was still drop-dead-gorgeous, she looked like she hadn't been sleeping or resting well in days. She had bloodshot eyes, and that look that humans have when they're low on sleep. Believe me I was very worried about her.

Glancing over to my right, I noticed twenty empty boxes of tissue paper on the kitchen table. Someone had been crying her brains out. Yes, I had to help my dear friend, Cynthia. You'd do the same, if you were in my shoes.

Many humans have kind hearts. It's those 'others' I'm apprehensive about.

"Please, Cynthia. I must tell you something very important! You misunderstood what Brian was trying to say to you!" I exclaimed.

"I know. I'm delighted to see you, but also angry at myself for not pausing for a few seconds to listen to Brian.

In my haste, I jumped the gun. I'm sorry, but my problems, along with my weekly therapy sessions, are exhausting me. I'm sorry for not telling you or Brian, but, I feel a bit on the edge about the 'therapy thing'. You know, some humans still think that anyone who sees a therapist, psychologist, counselor, or psychiatrist, is crazy, or too weak to deal with his/her own problems; especially my kind of problems. Some people actually blamed me for the gang-rape. Jody, can you believe that?!" asked Cynthia.

Cynthia lost it. She began to weep like a little child. I could see the incredible pain, confusion, anger, and frustration, inside of her. As such, I waited until she calmed down a bit.

Cynthia started to shiver, but at least she stopped sobbing.

"Jody, shortly after the gang-rap, a former 'best girlfriend' of mine at Gramson called me a slutty-little-whore. The words didn't hurt me as much as her outright betrayal.

You see, one of the men who 'did me' was her husband. Naturally, she had to blame her friend for what had happened. Her husband couldn't have done something that terrible.

To make matters worse, she ended up having three children with this gang-rapist. In today's world, there's a sucker born every second. I should know, I'm one of them," said Cynthia.

"Cynthia you're being unfair to yourself. No way! Don't blame yourself for anything that those bastards did to you! Furthermore, you're not a sucker! You're a very beautiful woman, and my best friend in the whole world! I think you're a very intelligent person!" I exclaimed.

I lowered my head then crouched down, like my cat cousins on the Kalahari plains. I was waiting for Cynthia's response.

She waved me over, so I leaped onto her chest. We hugged and kissed. It was really nice! We'd become very close friends, again.

Afterwards, Cynthia and I went to the living room. We decided to rest for a while. Although my eyes were closed, I couldn't get to sleep. I was still a bit jittery.

Roughly an hour later, Cynthia opened her eyes then winked at me. Afterwards, she asked me to follow her to the kitchen. She must've suspected that I was hungry. Well, she was right.

As soon as we entered the kitchen, I began to slobber like a dog. Cynthia gagged then ran to the restroom.

She dry heaved several times. I didn't hear anything from her for the next minute, or so.

As soon as Cynthia returned, she tried to recompose herself.

"Cynthia, please tell me why you induced yourself to dry-heave inside the restroom? Also, why aren't you being honest with me? Don't you love me, as your best friend in the whole world?" I asked.

"Jody, please! Don't ... just let us enjoy our meal. You know what my problem is. I notice that you keep glancing at my knuckles. I promise I'll stop. But, not now!" exclaimed Cynthia.

I decided to hold off with my 'kitty psychotherapist routine'. I had other problems at hand. I was freaking hungry!

The scent of food and milk electrified me. Not to mention, my extreme thirst. I was hoping that Cynthia would offer me something nice to chew on, and drink. I didn't have to wait for long.

Cynthia poured some milk into a gray bowl then placed the bowl onto the kitchen floor, right in front of my slobbering mouth. I licked every single drop of milk my tongue could curl up.

As soon as I'd finished my milk, Cynthia placed the gray bowl in the sink. Then, she placed a gigantic bowl full of cat food beside me. As expected, I cleaned off the bowl.

After having my fill, Cynthia hoisted me up to her chest. For a moment, I felt like a human infant.

Cynthia carried me to her bedroom. Then, Cynthia dove onto her bed, causing us to crash out for several hours.

Apparently, Cynthia had given me a vanilla flavored protein powder drink.

I awakened on three separate occasions. Each time, I wondered if Cynthia was pulling my leg, or really did have an attitude change.

The third awakening was the final one. I was abruptly awakened by Cynthia's sobbing. Really, she was crying her brains out. I didn't know what to do. I stayed quiet until she explained to me what was on her mind.

"I don't believe you! I think you and Brian are conspiring against me! You guys want all of my money. You're just like those men who hurt me. No, you're worse! At least, they were wasted on booze and drugs. What's your excuse?!" shouted Cynthia.

"Well, Brian was . . .'" I said.

"No way, impossible! I refuse to believe you!" shouted Cynthia.

"Cynthia, please don't interrupt me until I finish what I need to say! It's unusual how you can say 'I don't want to believe you'. To me, these words clearly indicate that deep down inside, you refuse to believe that any male could ever be inherently good. Even if that male is Brian."

Now, listen-up: Brian wasn't trying to call you a bitch! Brian truly loved you. The 'b' stood for brilliant. Brian could never have said anything bad about you. He told me he loved you more than any other human being in the whole world! Including cats! This is the truth! You've must believe me! I'm here because of a promise I'd made to Brian," I said.

"Wait! Why are you speaking about Brian in the past tense? It's not like he moved to Mars, or anything? Or is it something else?" asked Cynthia.

"Cynthia, can't we talk a bit more first? I don't want to rush into this topic. Really, I don't think you're quite ready to hear about what happened to Brian. Maybe, in an hour, or so," I said.

"Where's Brian?! Where's my baby?! Is he coming back to his auntie?! I demand to know where Brian is!" shouted Cynthia.

"Cynthia! Please ... brace yourself! Brian's dead! He was 'deliberately' struck by a lunatic driver. SHE was driving a Chevy. Brian was catapulted into the air," I said.

Again, Cynthia cried her brains out then slowly recomposed herself. She wanted to say something very important to me. So, I erected my ears, and focused my attention.

"I apologize for behaving like a total bitch. I've been under so much pressure it's really driving me up the wall. I'm normally not a bitch, but, things happen. Hereafter, I'll try to be friendly.

Jody, don't tell anyone what I'm about to tell you ... please. I've been in constant pain since the gang-rape. Sometimes, I cry my brains for up to two hours. It's hard enough living with partially controlled anorexia nervosa and bulimia.

It seems like nobody in the whole world understands my pain. I feel like I'm the only one who's suffering like this. Sure, the individual and group therapy sessions helped for a while, but when I moved, I had to make new friends.

I don't want to go to any more group therapy sessions! Some of the other members always have that look on their faces. You know: what were you doing wasted on booze, with a bunch of guys? Even after I'd retold my story, over and over again, it still didn't make an iota of a difference to them.

Further back in time, when I moved to town, I made sure to choose a therapist who was a survivor. Unfortunately, she was engulfed in her own self-pity.

That little slut compared every single milligram of my pain, to hers. Furthermore, she persistently tried to prove to me that she was hurting more than I was. Well, I understood that she wasn't the norm in therapists. But, I'd had enough.

Later, I changed therapists. This time, it only lasted for three months. I had to quit her.

My new second therapist was an old hen, who was conservative, and ready to blame me for the gang-rape. I could tell by the expression on her face. Also, her eyes became 'mean-looking' whenever I cried," said Cynthia.

I really felt sorry for Cynthia. I think she was getting a little paranoid and may not have been all there. She needed a sympathetic cat friend to help her get back on her feet.

"Jody, I have to endure night terrors, nightmares, flashbacks, and a bunch of other creepy things. Why doesn't any human being show me the kind of love and empathy that I rightfully deserve? What did I do to deserve being so deprived?

Jody, I'm a professional victim! I've always been a victim!" shouted Cynthia.

Cynthia began to cry then she fell into a shivering routine. In fact, she was sweating profusely. I licked her cheeks then rubbed my face against her chin. Afterwards, I leaped onto the floor.

"Cynthia, you are not a bitch! That's not a nice thing to say. If you want to feel better, stop calling yourself terrible names. Also, never say bad or offensive things about yourself. You'll only increase your pain.

Cynthia, you're an incredible person! You'll get better. Just be patient and faithful," I said.

After the smoke cleared, Cynthia and I 'slowly' made up. We hugged and talked for a whole hour. Cynthia cried much, but, it was the good kind of crying. I mean, it's the 'I'm happy kind of crying'. We became best friends ... all over again.

Thereafter, Cynthia and I took two pleasant walks each day. On weekends, we'd sit near the fireplace and brainstorm much of the night away. Considering Cynthia's state of mind, I had to be a good friend, and a 'cat psychotherapist'. I had to keep counseling her. Otherwise, who knows what would've happened?

It took six whole months for Cynthia to get back to a semi-normal state. A woman who's been gang-raped may not be able to get back to a completely normal state.

Flashbacks, bad dreams, and having no guarantee that it won't happen again are aggravators. In addition, self-blame/pity/ and disrespect, are painful problems. Remember, 'it' really could happen again. Who says it won't?

At the six month mark, only I could tell that Cynthia wasn't all there. People on the outside didn't suspect anything.

Well, there was an occasional outburst and an illogical conclusion, once in a blue moon. Thankfully, all else was just fine.

As time passed, Cynthia and I became more and more attached. Now, Cynthia was 'externally normal'.

It was then, that Cynthia and I decided to take an extended vacation. Luckily, Cynthia had invested her money wisely.

After careful planning we decided to go due north; to Oregon, Washington, and then British Columbia. The latter intrigued me the most, because I'd never been to Canada before.

We decided to leave in the beginning of April. We didn't want to deal with a harsh winter. Leaving in early April would give us at least several months to enjoy our vacation.

I fantasized about beautiful trees, in vast forests. Maybe, we'd see someone like Paul Bunyan, deep in the forests of Oregon. Up in Canada, we'd probably see a bear or two, and perhaps Bigfoot.

Right before crossing the border into Canada, I'd have to hide deep 'within' our vacation gear. If I were to be spotted by

an Immigration Canada Officer, my deportation would be immediate. Cynthia, being Canadian-born, couldn't be deported. However, she'd definitely be humiliated, and placed on a black list for perhaps ten years.

Upon deportation, my head would be lowered close to the ground, in utter shame. I'd become a disgrace to my country, and to Canada. Cynthia wouldn't let me go back to the U.S. by myself. She'd follow me.

Sometimes, Customs Officers get personal. I'm not referring to any particular country. If one of these Customs Officers sees an 'undeclared animal' in a vehicle, all hell will break loose.

I once heard a story about a little kitty who was grabbed by the scruff, then thrown like a baseball to the other side of the border. The IO, along with his supervisor, laughed up a storm. I won't tell you which country this happened in.

## ON VACATION

Cynthia's alarm went off at 7:00 A.M. It was time to get ready for our extended vacation. It was April 1st and sunny outside. The alarm scared the crap out of me!

To ensure that both of us didn't oversleep, we decided to sleep together.

When the alarm went off, I felt like I was listening to an air raid! Cynthia used an antique 'Big Ben' alarm clock just for that morning. Gosh, that crazy thing could wake up the dead.

After Cynthia and I ate breakfast, we stuffed our vacation gear into their respective places. We were very excited about going up north.

By 9:00 A.M. we were ready to leave. Cynthia took one long look at her beautiful furniture, then closed the front door and locked it. Meanwhile, I was waiting inside a rented new blue van. Cynthia's van was very clean and shiny. The interior was very comfortable to sit in, and to look at. Cynthia had prepared well for our vacation.

Cynthia entered the van with a big smile on her face. After pausing for a moment, she turned on the ignition. She glanced at her well-trimmed lawn then drove off.

A short while later we arrived at Jim Bob's Gas Station. Cynthia paid the cashier, then came back and filled up her van. Now, we were officially on vacation.

Cynthia drove towards the highway, making sure to obey all traffic rules/regulations.

Cynthia was so excited she petted me between my ears. It felt really nice. So, I licked the back of her hand, as a sign of friendship and appreciation.

As soon as Cynthia stopped at the first red light, she gave me a kiss on the cheek. I blushed then purred.

"Cynthia, I figured you would've filled-up the van the night before our vacation," I said.

"I wanted to make sure that we were already on our way, first," responded Cynthia.

"Cynthia, please don't tell anyone that I was crying. You know, when we were discussing your problems. I really appreciate having you as a friend, but, I'm still a cat. If any other cat finds out that I was crying, they may call me a 'cry-baby-kitty'. Cats aren't supposed to cry; at least not in public. We show off a persona of non-attentiveness, and selfishness. It's often a cover," I said.

While Cynthia and I were chatting, a man driving a dark Trans Am pulled up behind Cynthia's van. He started honking his horn at us, like a maniac. He was trying to boot us out of his way.

Cynthia glanced at the rear view mirror, and then stuck her head out of the window.

"Sir, I'm sorry for being a slow poke. I will speed up a bit, right now," said Cynthia.

"Hey lady, I don't give a freaking cat's ass about your stinking apology! I don't care much for your cat, either. I just want to get home before humanity becomes extinct. In case you're wondering where I'm from, it's none of your freaking business!" shouted the driver.

What an unfriendly guy. He was probably having a caffeine/nicotine fit. Thankfully, Cynthia spoke to the driver in a very calm manner. I would've done the same thing. He was holding a gun in his right hand.

Cynthia's face turned 'redder' than a tomato. A few seconds later, her face paled out. She was pissed off at the thought of a stranger speaking to her in that manner. The nice girl routine wasn't out of kindness. It was out of utter fear. You don't mess with a guy who has a gun in his hand. Either hand, for that matter.

Cynthia kept her word. She accelerated, but didn't exceed the legal speed limit. I took one last look at that idiot driver. I certainly didn't want to see his ugly face again.

Cynthia continued her drive on Highway 190 North, coasting at a steady 60 mph. For the following fifteen minutes, she seemed a bit apprehensive. She frequently glanced at her rear view and side mirror. I guess she thought the driver was thinking about firing his gun at us.

Even at a steady speed of 60 mph, one automobile after another passed us. It was like we were walking on Highway 190 North. No wonder, America's got 'gasoline problems'. Not to mention, highway accident problems.

As soon as Cynthia gained her composure, she turned on the radio. She was in the mood for classical music. I certainly wasn't! After listening to five 'prehistoric songs', I started to get groggy.

As soon as I couldn't take it anymore, I fell onto my side then closed my eyes. Classical music's fine for short trips, not long ones.

Classical music's also good for sustained reading, or studying. 'Energetic' music's needed when performing physical activity or when on a long trip.

If you're on a long trip, classical music may over-sedate you. I mean, it may act as a mild tranquilizer. Be wise and choosy when you're at the helm.

I ended up dozing off for roughly an hour. As soon as I awakened, Cynthia spoke to me.

"Jody, please push the tuner button three times. You should arrive at GMFK FM 105. GFMK is a jazz station. I love jazz!" exclaimed Cynthia.

Now, we were listening to beautiful jazz music. Cat's honor, some jazz musicians know their stuff!

"Jody, I used to listen to jazz music every single day. Well, before the gang-rape. I think one of the things that I must do to get better is to 'reinstate' my previous behaviors. Except the drinking, partying, and the lowering of my guard," said Cynthia.

Cynthia and I talked our way through several subjects, until we reached the subject of bad politicians.

"Cynthia, the lowest of the low, is the 'bend-over politician'. He/she is a chicken in disguise," I said.

"What is a bend-over politician?" asked Cynthia.

"This is a person who sells his/her body, mind, soul, and dignity, to powerful lobbying groups. The politician literally bends over, backwards and forwards, to appease 'the master'.

The bend-over politician is a liar. He/she deceives the taxpaying, voting public: NO MORE TAXES! NO MORE SECRETS! NO MORE CONSPIRACIES! NO MORE AREA FIFTY-ONES! NO MORE UNJUSTIFIED WARS! NO MORE INTIMIDATION! NO MORE TORTURE! NO MORE ANIMAL ABUSE! NO MORE ENVIRONMENTAL MURDER! NO MORE WASTE! NO MORE

FORECLOSURES! NO MORE HIGH CRIME! NO MORE NON-AFFORDABLE MEDICAL CARE! NO MORE INJUSTICE! NO MORE BAD POLITICIANS! NO MORE LIES! NO MORE EVIL!" I shouted.

"Gosh Jody, you've got a lot on your mind. You're a very intelligent cat. Every single issue that you made reference to is a big problem, not just for your country, but for my native Canada.

On another issue, what about the National Rifle Association (NRA)?" asked Cynthia.

"Cynthia, every country has its own history and culture. We have a 'deeply ingrained gun culture'. In America, law-abiding citizens should have the right to own registered firearms. I'm not talking about M-16 Rifles or any war weapons such as explosive devices or any missile or rocket launchers.

I'm talking about regular pistols and hunting rifles. I mean, as long as those hunting rifles aren't aimed at us cats; yikes!

There are well over two hundred million firearms in my country. Actually two hundred million is totally outdated. The truth is nobody knows the exact number.

Firearms owners really should learn how to properly use, clean, and store their weapons. That's common sense.

Law-abiding citizens must have access to 'personal-protection-devices'. By personal, I also include property. There are too many criminals out there. Some criminals are extremely dangerous. I sure as hell wouldn't want one of those 'criminals' near me.

Regarding the NRA, they've got some good common sense guidelines pertaining to firearm ownership. I may not agree with everything they spurt out to the public, but, I sure as hell wouldn't want our government to take away the peoples' right to own firearms. The only way our government would ever be able to do this is to become a police/military state. If that ever happened, I'd search for the twilight zone then enter it. If not, I'd fight the freaking government!

Cynthia, keep this between the two of us: I think that in the last few years we've gotten a bit closer to becoming a police state. Luckily, we're still a long ways from there. But, don't take anything for granted. The brave ones amongst us must stop this trend before it's too late. When it gets to the 'too late stage', even peaceful protests will become illegal, or quite difficult. Cats have been living with and near humans for eons, "I said.

"Jody! I kind of agree with you, but ... you're a bit 'hypocritical' regarding firearms ownership. You want this world to be a safer and better place. Yet, you support gun-slinging-rights?" asked Cynthia.

This was one of the few issues where I couldn't control myself! I had to defend my gun ownership rights beliefs for law-abiding citizens! As a result, Cynthia and I had a major skirmish. I was too pissed off to hold myself back.

"Cynthia, I'm not a freaking hypocrite! Cynthia, you're too much of a softy!" I shouted.

"Jody, stop being a little harlot!" shouted Cynthia.

"What! I'm not a little harlot! How can I be a virgin and a little harlot at the same time? Cynthia, I've been nothing but kind to you! You should show me some freaking respect! Cynthia, sometimes you can be a freaking bitch!" I shouted.

Cynthia pulled over into the shoulder of the highway then she turned off the ignition. After a moment of quiet, we attacked each other like to lionesses fighting over a zebra carcass. We were swinging, clawing, biting, hissing, roaring, punching, slapping, pushing, shoving, and cursing.

Worst of all, we threw terrible insults at each other. So terrible, I can't tell you what we said.

After the smoke cleared, both of us were bloodied and bruised. It was our first big physical confrontation. I was fed up with Cynthia's attitude. I'm the kind of cat that likes to speak her mind. Freedom of speech is a fundamental right of each and every one of us.

As soon as I'd made up my mind to leap out of the window, Cynthia called me back.

For two whole hours, there was nothing in the van but dead silence. Each of us was giving the other the silent treatment.

I was pissed off as all hell. What hurt me the most was Cynthia's calling me a little harlot.

Cynthia continued her drive northwards. Thankfully, five minutes after the two hour mark we made up. Cynthia pulled over into the shoulder of the highway then we did our thing. It was all hugs, kisses, and smiles. Afterwards, it was kind words, compliments, laughing.

"Cynthia, each country has its own history and culture. Your country has a significantly lower rate of gun use than my country does. I'm including criminal-owned-guns.

Anyone who uses a firearm while committing a crime should have to serve a 'surcharge sentence'. He/she should serve a specified number of years in addition to the time allotted for the said crime/s. Gun-wielding criminals must be tolerated in any society.

Individuals that commit mass killings in schools or anywhere else are psychos to start with. Sure, the weapons in their hands make killing easier, but, you can't punish every single gun owner for the 'pathetic actions' of a minute number of psychos. Punish the psychos!

Cynthia, in America, guns will always be available; until we run out of gunpowder, steel, or whatever else is needed to manufacture them. It's that simple," I said.

Cynthia and I conversed about several more topics. Time passed by like a rocket. It was nice being with a good friend. Maybe, 'our girlhood' made things a bit easier.

Cynthia and I were able to open up to each other. But, Cynthia still needed to open up to me, just a bit more. I wasn't trying to be a suspicious cat, but, I had to know what was going on inside of her.

At 3:45 P. M., Cynthia exited Highway 190 North. She headed east for several miles, until arriving at Dolby, California, just a few hops away from the Oregon border.

Cynthia slowed down to a measly 25 mph. We scanned the area, in hope of finding a restaurant or supermarket.

Thankfully, I spotted Chung's Supermarket. Although there were several restaurants in the vicinity, Cynthia told me that a supermarket would satisfy our needs better than a restaurant would.

"Cynthia, please bring me much milk! I know you've got some canned foods, water, and snacks in the van. I'm craving for milk! I want milk!" I exclaimed.

"Jody! You're so spoiled! I love you so much! If you were a human, I'd consider you my sister. Actually, you kind of are a little sister.

Jody, you'll get your milk soon. I'll park my van in front of Chung's Supermarket.

All Chung's Supermarkets contain a snack bar. They sell many delicious items. I'll go inside, have a burger, fries, high caffeine pop, and a dessert. Afterwards, I'll get your milk," said Cynthia.

"Cynthia, and what the hell am I supposed to do in the meanwhile?! I'll go stir crazy. I'll be all by myself, hungry, thirsty, and lonely! You need to let me out, so I can enjoy myself.

I'm not a little kitten anymore. Hell! I demand to be treated like an adult, not like a little baby! Otherwise, this trip will not be enjoyable!" I shouted.

Apparently, we'd had another skirmish. Luckily, it was short-lived. Cynthia's face reddened then paled. She began to sweat profusely. Shockingly, she clenched her fists.

After Cynthia parked her van in front of Chung's Supermarket, she lowered her head, pressing it against the steering wheel.

For a whole minute, there was nothing but silence. Then, Cynthia began to cry like a little child. Sniffles, sniffles, and many more sniffles.

"I'm sorry, Cynthia. I didn't mean to go ballistic on you. It's just that you were incredibly inconsiderate of my feelings. Next time, I'll try to speak to you calmly. But, you also have to do your part. I mean ... look ... you're extremely lucky to have a cat like me as a friend. Imagine what life would be like, if you were all alone? Your trip would totally suck," I said.

"Jody, I'm sorry for acting like a bi..., I mean, I'm sorry I mistreated you. Next time, I'll be kinder and more considerate. I should have known better," said Cynthia.

I agreed to Cynthia's purchase of groceries, then ordering a 'takeout meal' from the snack bar. This way, both of us would be happy. I could handle being alone in a van for a short while, but, absolutely no longer! Going stir crazy is not my cup of tea.

Another thing: I reminded Cynthia of her commitment not to call herself a bitch anymore. Apparently, she'd forgotten.

Cynthia exited her van, scanned the area for possible dangers then walked to Chung's Supermarket. I noticed a beautiful bird gawking at me from a distance. He was perched on a tiny branch. No doubt, he was impressed by what he saw.

In order to 'show off' my physique, I extended my forelegs, resting my paws on the steering wheel. I could see the bird's eyes light up. If he'd been a bit more bedazzled, he would've approached me. Certainly, that would've been nice!

Enough with the beautiful bird; I soon lost interest in him. I had more pressing matters to deal with.

Because Cynthia wasn't around, I had an idea. Why couldn't I just leap out of the van then do some exploring? I'd have to make sure that I returned to Cynthia's van before she did.

I did just that. As soon as my paws landed on the asphalt, I scanned the entire area. The last thing I wanted to see was a larger predator, or a hostile kid/s. I wasn't in the mood to play cat, or be tormented by a young sadist/s.

My eyes zoomed-in on a kid playing in the grass roughly a hundred yards away. Against my better judgment, I slowly approached the kid, without dropping my guard.

As soon as I was within leaping distance of the kid, he caught notice of me. Shockingly, he glared at me.

The kid couldn't have been more than five years-old. In retaliation, I hissed at him. Believe me I didn't want to 'terrify' him. But, he needed to understand that 'cats' have feelings too. After all, I hadn't done anything to him.

Unfortunately, I inadvertently went too far. The kid turned on his heels. I could hear him crying his brains out. It wasn't until he began to scream, that I got the super-jitters.

"Mommy, a ferocious cat is trying to kill me! Mommy! Daddy! Police! Adult!" shouted the kid.

I ran back to the nearest store then scaled it. I ended up on the roof of Amy's Toy Store. From my vantage point, I literally had a bird's-eye-view of the entire area. I'd be able to see the police from a good distance.

In the excitement of things, my adrenaline level shot up through the clouds. I felt extreme tightness in my stomach and musculature. I was worried that my adrenaline level would rise so much even moving would become impossible.

The kid's mother gave him a sucker, and a tiny carton of chocolate milk. Thankfully, it did the job. The kid wiped the 'streaming tears' from his cheeks, along with nasty snot then began to drink his delicious chocolate milk. What about my milk? I said to myself.

A short while later, my adrenaline level returned to normal. Although, I was still a bit apprehensive, it wasn't anything serious.

I leaped down onto the asphalt then headed straight for Cynthia's van. As soon as my paws landed on the interior of the van, I heard Cynthia call out my name. She had some goodies for me.

I can't tell you how lucky I felt. If Cynthia had found out what'd happened she would've bitched me out.

"Jody, look what I got. There's plenty of tasty food waiting to be eaten by my best friend in the whole world. I mean, a friend who I can trust with my life. Jody, now I feel like I can open up to you almost completely," said Cynthia.

Cynthia had three bags of ACME beef cat food, four cans of fish, a carton of milk, and two large bottles of filtered water. I just about fainted! Incredible cats, like myself, love beef, fish, milk, and bottled water! Gosh, come to think of it, I've always been a flesh-eater!

As soon as Cynthia entered her van, she asked me to have proper table manners while eating. That meant no spitting, roaring, hissing, or farting. I obliged her.

Cynthia placed some beef in a blue bowl. I slobbered like a hungry tigress! Then, I chomped down on my food, without any let-up.

Cynthia was the cream-of-the-crop of humanity. She was the absolute best human friend a cat could ever have. I admit, sometimes she got on my nerves, but then, she was only human. Maybe, our same gender relationship had something to do with it. Who knows?

Cynthia had a tuna sandwich, chips, chocolate milk, an orange, and some bottled water. She chomped down on her food, like a starving primate. Afterwards, she grinned at me. It was more of a sugar-high grin.

I kept a keen eye on Cynthia. Knowing that she'd had an eating disorder, a finger-down-the-throat was always a possibility.

I wasn't going to allow Cynthia to stick any of her fingers deep inside her mouth, or to take any drugs to alleviate her hunger. Around me, she had to behave normally.

Cynthia exited her van then walked to a nearby gas station. She purchased a 16 oz. bottle of high-caffeine diet pop then went to the restroom. After brushing, flossing, and washing, she returned to her van. I noticed that something was wrong with this picture.

As soon as Cynthia was within a few feet of the van, she raised her right index finger, then turned around and ran back to the restroom. She'd forgotten her diet pop.

After retrieving her diet pop, Cynthia returned to her van. She was panting like a cheetah that'd just chased-down a gazelle.

Wow! That was a close one! My heart almost dropped! I thought that Cynthia had induced a vomiting spell inside the restroom.

Cynthia placed the palms of her hands on her head then circled the van several times, slowing her pace after each completion. She was waiting until her pulse went back to normal.

It's quite dangerous for humans to suddenly sit down after a good run. Members of the cat family, especially cheetahs, don't have this problem. Isn't it nice being a cat?

If our 'cardiovascular-recuperative' ability had been like that of humans', several cat species would've died out ages ago. Can you imagine a cheetah walking around for several minutes, after a good kill?

As soon as I swallowed my last morsel of food and droplet of milk, I closed my eyes then crashed out for several hours. I wasn't in the mood for talk or play.

When I awakened, Cynthia pointed her finger at the beautiful scenery around us. My eyes lit up, like two giant light bulbs. Although Oregon still has beautiful forests, nothing matches the olden days.

Forests everywhere are literally being butchered. Trees and countless plant life are being chopped, or mercilessly polluted. That's humanity for you.

Humans are the only major tree choppers. They must understand that our planet can't keep on taking this brutal beating. For every tree that is chopped down, at least one should be planted.

Cynthia and I visited two beautiful parks. I was lucky to be on vacation with my best friend. The park patrons were kind

to us. However, whenever we spotted a ranger, or other park worker, I hid inside Cynthia's knapsack.

Going to a nice park is a very rewarding experience. While there, Cynthia and I felt our stress levels plummet.

I must admit there was plenty of tasty prey in the parks. I drooled whenever I saw one of them.

For example, there was a tasty squirrel limping around. If I hadn't been with Cynthia, my predatory instincts would've forced me to chase 'it' down. A weak, young, or sickly prey animal is almost always the first target of predators.

It was nice to get away from the hustle and bustle of everyday life. Even a cat has to leave the concrete jungle every once in a while.

In the concrete jungle, a cat living in the suburbs usually fares better than a city cat. Many city cats are strays. Most stray cats dream of living in suburbia: a large house, white picket fence, much food, tons of money, love, security, and shelter. Cats don't want much from humans.

After we'd had our fill of parks, Cynthia and I decided to drive to the nearest motel. She asked a park employee for directions. Sleepiness was creeping upon us, like a 'ton of blinks'.

The park employee gave Cynthia a tourist guide containing comprehensive information.

Cynthia thanked the park employee then returned to the van. Meanwhile, I was hiding inside her knapsack. I sensed that the park employee was aware of my presence. She was probably a cat lover.

We left Garland Park at 8:00 P.M., heading northwest. A few miles into our drive, we spotted The Vacation Motel.

By then, Cynthia and I were exhausted. Any living accommodations would've been sufficient. However, The Vacation Motel was 'officially' off limits to animals.

I hid underneath my seat, while Cynthia did her business with the front desk clerk. Some hotel/motel workers go ballistic whenever they see a cat on the premises. It's one of those things, I guess.

What could I have expected? Some humans will never become accustomed to cats. They ignore the beauty, intelligence, stamina, agility, cuddliness, and companionship, of cats. It's their loss, not ours.

While Cynthia was in the motel office, I looked out the window. I was very careful not to be seen. A short while later Cynthia exited the motel office with a scanning card in her hand. I was delighted!

Minutes later, Cynthia and I were sound asleep. Room number 8 was large, clean, and beautiful. Cynthia and I slept together on a beautiful bed.

Thankfully, everything was going just fine. Cynthia's alarm clock had been set to ring at 7:00 A.M., just in time for breakfast. The cleaning lady would begin work at 10:00 A.M.

During room cleaning, I'd have to be far away. I couldn't afford to be seen by any motel staff.

Cynthia and I ended up spending a week at The Vacation Motel. Thankfully, we encountered no problems. Good food, much play, television (tons of channels), and plenty of rest. The rest energized us.

We checked out on Thursday, exactly one week into our vacation. It was early mid-April, and the weather was mild.

Cynthia drove north on Nelly Street for seven blocks, then turned right. We were heading to Junction 145 North.

Cynthia and I were in the mood to drive on a junction. We wanted a view. Highway driving is fast, but dull. On highways, you see automobiles, and many more automobiles.

"Cynthia, we're going up to Washington, aren't we?" I asked.

"Jody, we'll spend some time in Washington then we'll go up to 'my country'. You can tell your friends that you saw beautiful Canada. You don't can't die without having visited a foreign country ... can you?" asked Cynthia.

"We mustn't forget. Undocumented cats, like me, must sneak across international borders. I'll have to hide in a 'special place', before entering Canada.

I don't want any trouble with the Canadian Government. But, I want to see Canada. I mean, I'm a cat. I have a right to see what the world has to offer," I said.

As soon as we entered Junction 145 North, a thunderstorm appeared out of nowhere. I must say, it seemed very odd. I'd looked up at the sky just a minute earlier. There wasn't a cloud in sight.

Suddenly, giant pellets of rain descended upon us. It continued for roughly fifteen minutes, before dying out.

"Let's bypass Washington. Instead, we can see it on our way back. We can swing around into Idaho then enter Washington at a later time. Actually, we can go up to Alberta after Idaho. This way, we can see an extra Canadian province and an American state," I said.

We resumed our drive to Canada. I wondered what Canadian cats were like. Would they treat me like a guest, or, like an intrusive foreigner? That was the 'gargantuan question'.

Cynthia continued driving until 9 P.M. Then, I demanded that we find a good place to rest. By now, both of us were groggy. Also, incoherence began to set in.

In fact, Cynthia's eyelids were closing too frequently, and for too long. 'Grogginess and driving' is extremely dangerous.

Any cat knows that driving while groggy can be just as dangerous as driving under the influence of alcohol or other drugs. All it takes is a split second for a terrible accident to occur. It can devastate the lives of everyone in the vehicle, and nearby. Worse yet, it could kill them!

"Cynthia, it's time to pull over into a rest area, or hit a nice motel. You can't keep driving in this state. This is extremely dangerous!" I exclaimed.

"Don't worry, Jody. When we get close to the Canadian border, you can hide underneath my packing gear. Then, as soon as we pass through the border patrol, I'll drive straight to a motel. Surely, I can hold off until then," said Cynthia.

I kept quiet against my better judgment. I figured it would be better to give Cynthia a long lecture about the dangers of driving while groggy, after we've rested-up in a nice motel room.

## THE WHIRLING TUNNEL

To aggravate matters, the thunderstorm that had previously shelled us, returned with a vengeance. This time, it was extremely ferocious. It felt like the thunderstorm was trying to attack us. Something wasn't right.

Suddenly, Cynthia and I noticed something quite strange. There were no other vehicles in the area.

Come to think of it, there was nothing around us but a gravel road and some dying trees. Unbelievably, Junction 145 N freaking disappeared!

Suddenly, torrential rains began to hit the ground like cluster bombs. Our grogginess disappeared. It was negated by terror and apprehension.

Cynthia appeared pale and confused. Visibility was steadily worsening, and there was no exit in sight.

As we continued our journey, a whirling tunnel appeared before us. It was large, menacing, and pulling Cynthia's van to its core.

The menacing rain drops bounced off of the whirling tunnel. This gave us a clear picture of where we were headed. Or, should I say, where we were being pulled to.

"Jody, what's happening?! It's like we're entering a different dimension, or something creepy! I'll try to veer off

the road. I'll floor the gas pedal, and turn right at the same time, "said Cynthia.

Cynthia's efforts were useless. In fact, it made no difference whatsoever. This 'whirling tunnel' was bent on pulling us inside it. It looked terrifyingly menacing.

By now, Cynthia and I were crying our brains out. We were terrified and confused. With no escape in sight, we accepted our fate.

"Cynthia, I think we are about to be catapulted into another dimension! We must brace ourselves for an incredible shock!" I shouted.

Cynthia's van began to shake violently. Then, it was lifted off the ground, perhaps a foot. Now, we got a glimpse of the interior of the whirling tunnel. It kind of looked like the inside of a whale's mouth, but much bigger, and more menacing.

As soon as Cynthia's van was pulled into the whirling tunnel, Cynthia and I froze in fear. We couldn't help it. You would've done the same thing.

Afterwards, Cynthia and I became dizzy and nauseous. Our ears popped. We understood that our lives had changed forever. Our main concern was mere survival.

Through this terrible ordeal, my love for Cynthia grew. I mean, it grew exponentially! It appeared to be reciprocal.

No doubt, the whirling tunnel was from another universe, or dimension. It was tubular-shaped, and longer than my eyes could perceive.

I glanced at the dashboard clock then got the shock of my life! The digits of the clock were moving so fast, I couldn't tell in which direction.

"Cynthia, I love you!" I exclaimed.

"Jody, I love you ... more!" responded Cynthia.

At least we had each other. I couldn't imagine what it would've been like if we'd been alone. Maybe, I would've died of shock.

Cynthia's van began to shake violently. It actually resembled a boat caught in the middle of an ocean storm.

To make matters worse, Cynthia's van was unceremoniously jettisoned deep into the whirling tunnel. Then, we were sucked into a mini-tunnel. There were countless of these mini-tunnels.

Cynthia and I were catapulted into a large lake. Thankfully, we were near land, and it was daytime. Otherwise, we would've been as blind as newborn kittens.

After splashing into the water, Cynthia's van began to wobble, then did an about face. As expected, it started to sink.

"Jody, slither out of your safety belt. You and I must get out of here, quickly. Otherwise, we'll drown! Afterwards, we can leap onto land," said Cynthia.

We exited Cynthia's van, with lightening speed. We ended up standing on the hood of the van. After bracing ourselves, we leaped onto land.

As soon as we began to walk away from the lake, a gargantuan creature, with razor-sharp teeth, leaped out of the water. It tried to snatch us. Thankfully, it was primarily a waterborne creature. Gosh, it was ugly-looking.

Up ahead, were grassy hills further than the eye could see. Beautiful trees dotted the landscape. To our right was the entrance to a deep valley.

Cynthia and I decided to walk through the grassy hills.

The sky was blue and beautiful. The sun appeared the same as that on earth. At this point, Cynthia and I weren't sure where we were.

While we continued our trek through the grassy hills, I took notice of the waterborne creature. It was still eying us. Cynthia and I got the creeps. We wondered how large and vicious the predators in our new home were.

When we were a safe distance from the waterborne creature, it made a Godzilla-like noise. It was drooling like a hungry dog. It measured us with concentrating eyes, but couldn't have us. Amen, for that!

As soon as we'd taken our minds off the waterborne creature, we felt the ground underneath us shake with a vengeance.

Cynthia and I got the shock of our lives! It was the same waterborne creature. It had slithered out of the water and was making an attempt at chasing us. Luckily, it was very slow and clumsy on land. However, it was air breathing. Lucky for us, we were far away.

Cynthia and I continued our walk through the valley, into grassy hills. Every so often, we saw beautiful birds fly overhead. They didn't notice us. I guess they were migrating.

Cynthia and I were weak, terrified, lost, and confused. In addition, we needed food, water, and rest.

"Jody, we must always stay together. Not just for 'femme-sake', but also because we're best friends.

Somehow, there must be a way back to our home. I don't know if we're on another planet, or if we're in another dimension. Jody, I love you so much! If I'd been alone, things would've been a lot worse.

Let's walk in a straight line, so we don't end up going around in circles. Maybe this valley leads to civilization. We must be patient and faithful," said Cynthia.

After walking for over an hour, we noticed that the terrain was beginning to change. Now, we were in a valley studded with large fruit trees.

The fruits were waiting to be snatched and eaten. Coming in various shapes, sizes, colors, and types, it made perfect sense to eat from them.

Cynthia and I feasted on a dozen different kinds of fruits. I can't tell you how tasty those fruits were.

After Cynthia and I ate our fill, we felt unusually strong and refreshed. Miraculously, our water and solid food needs were completely satisfied.

Later, Cynthia and I rested under a fruit tree for several hours. We were unable to fall asleep because of the enormous stress of being in a strange place. Our lives had been turned upside down.

"Jody, look at the grass behind us! Doesn't it look like our grass?" asked Cynthia.

"Well, I guess the texture and color are the same. Even the dirt underneath the grass is identical to ours. We must find out what happened to us."

I want to eat some of this grass. It might be very nutritious. As long as it's not poisonous, it won't be a problem," said Cynthia.

Cynthia and I tried several strands of grass. To our utter surprise, the grass tasted very good. We ended up having our fill.

Cynthia and I decided to change our path, a bit. We shifted slightly to our right then proceeded to walk in a straight line.

## THE GIANT MIDGET

Cynthia and I continued our walk, anxious and apprehensive. Slowly, the terrain began to flatten, with tiny forests far off on our left and right.

Suddenly, we heard shouting and the pounding of feet a few miles ahead of our position.

Wanting to know what was going on, we picked up our pace. As we got closer, we were able to see the silhouette of a large creature, helpless and on its back.

As Cynthia and I continued our approach, it became evident that the creature was a GIANT. Actually, it looked like a GIANT midget. I mean, 'he' was a giant in size, but he had the proportions and appearance of a midget. We could see that the GIANT midget was being viciously attacked by 'warriors' using machine guns, heavy artillery, and an air force. The 'warriors' were literally trying to kill their foe. There were well-over ten thousand warriors attacking the GIANT midget.

Cynthia and I decided to hide behind a large tree. Apparently, the fighting was going on in the center of an open field. This field was far away from the nearest forest.

Cynthia and I weren't about to take any chances with the warriors. If they'd decided to attack us, we wouldn't have been able to defend ourselves.

To our benefit, a short while later the warriors left the GIANT midget for dead. He was all bloodied, disemboweled, and sad-looking. When the warriors had completely disappeared from sight, Cynthia and I pondered about what to do next.

We decided to cautiously approach the GIANT midget. Maybe, he'd have something important to tell us about where we were.

Step-by-step, we got closer and closer to the GIANT midget. Although he was a humanoid, I wouldn't quite call him a full-fledged human. Perhaps, there was a subtle difference.

The GIANT midget was barely alive. He used up much of his reserves to wave us towards him. After barely waving us towards him, his arm came crashing onto the ground.

Initially, Cynthia and I froze in our tracks. We weren't sure what to make of the GIANT midget's gesture. He could've been deceiving us. Maybe, if we got too close to him, he'd try to grab us with his GIANT hands.

Cynthia and I decided to give the GIANT midget the benefit of the doubt. We were in a very desperate situation; in need of help from anyone; even a dying person.

"Please ... come here! Don't be afraid of me. I don't want to hurt you! Besides, I'm so weak and bloody, no one should fear me now. I'm no longer the GIANT that I used to be. Now, I'm just a chump," said the GIANT midget.

Cynthia and I were now within spitting distance of the GIANT midget. Still, we were a bit apprehensive.

"Where are you gals from?" asked the GIANT midget.

"We're from a planet called Earth. Perhaps we are on the same planet, in a different dimension or timeline. We're not sure."

"We were caught up in a horrific storm. It hit us like a ton-of-bricks. We were dragged into an incredible whirling tunnel. Afterwards, we were catapulted into this place," said Cynthia.

"Don't tell anyone what happened to you! You're still on earth. By entering the whirling tunnel, you inadvertently changed the time line. History, from A to Z, has changed. Every time you enter the whirling tunnel, something will change. I'd heard rumors about this phenomenon many years ago," said the GIANT midget.

"What's your name?" asked Cynthia.

"My name is Eric Blazer."

"What's your name?" asked Eric.

"My name is Cynthia Corbett, and this is my dear friend, Jody Wilson."

"We're sorry that we can't help you. But, we'd like to speak to you a bit," I said.

"You gals are lucky to be alive. The anomaly you went through must be extremely dangerous. You gals must always be best friends," said Eric.

"I hope that will always be the case. Now, please tell us something about yourself," I asked.

"People gawked as far back as I can remember. As you can see, I'm different-looking. It wasn't so much my physical stature, as my deformed face. You don't have to patronize me. Neither should you lie to me. I know that my face is abnormal-looking. Enough people have taunted me about it. I'm a freak of nature!"

Throughout my life, I was taunted, abused, and hardly had any friends. The other students, especially in high school, were too ashamed to even speak to me.

The only friend I ever had was a cat. But, even this friendship was conditional. Although we were best friends, I was told to keep our friendship a secret. No one could know about us. My friend, Kyle, was ashamed to be seen in public with me.

If his cat friends had ever seen us together, he would've been cast out of the cat community. Really!

Even my teachers barely tolerated me. Luckily, I graduated from UCLA. After graduation, I looked for work in every possible sector, city, state, and region of the country.

Although I had a degree in English Literature, with a minor in Library Science, nobody wanted to hire me. Gosh, I was kicked out of three of the libraries I tried to apply for work in. Apparently, I'd freaked-out the librarians with my ugly face.

This, compounded with my torment from the general public, caused me to take up writing. I became a ghost writer. The money was good, but I still had no friends. Nor could I find that sweet woman that I'd always dreamed of.

The word 'circus' kept ringing in my ears. If I'd known what a circus really was, the word would've disappeared from my mind. Unfortunately, I still had a lot to learn.

I tried moving to another city, but that didn't help any. People treated me the same, wherever I was.

One day, I was reading an interesting article in a health magazine, when I came across an article about cats. Although it wasn't about companion animals, I decided to purchase a cat. My previous best friend had recently died. He was hit by a truck. The truck driver didn't stop, or even slow down. He just kept on driving.

I purchased this beautiful cat from an overcrowded animal shelter. In effect, I was helping myself, the shelter workers, the cat, and the community that I'd lived in.

My beloved cat, Laura, never called me any derogatory names. In fact, she told me that I was very handsome and sweet.

Things went really nice between us for roughly two years. That's when the neighbors decided that they'd had enough of me as their neighbor.

On a rainy Thursday evening, I returned home to find a large crowd of people hanging around my property with torches and baseball bats in their hands. They were standing on the sidewalk and street. Gosh, I felt like Frankenstein! No the doctor ... the freak.

As soon as the crowd members took notice of me, they started to shout the worst obscenities at me. Out of sheer terror, I ran into my house.

Once inside, I got the shock of my life. Apparently, the crowd was in the 'hanging mood'. They'd hung my cat with a coat hanger. I was so pissed off at them!

I called the police. Unfortunately, the crowd dispersed before the police arrived at the scene.

The police ended up giving me the third degree. They interrogated me about my cat's hanging, and other crimes in the neighborhood.

Apparently, there'd been several break-ins in the area. Also, a little girl was gagged, drugged, sexually molested, and chopped up into slabs of steak. The brutal killing of the little girl was the last straw. Naturally, they needed a scapegoat.

I was middle-aged, single, disfigured, tiny, and I was a loner. The perpetrator timed his crimes with precision. He'd begun terrorizing the neighborhood just three months earlier; that's when I moved into my new house. I suspected that the perpetrator of the neighborhood crimes was one of my neighbors.

Naturally, the crowd returned to the scene the very next day. This time, they made sure that I'd leave the neighborhood, fast. My house was burned down.

All was not lost, however. Luckily, I had much money in the bank, and stocks and bonds.

Afterwards, I decided to move to a small town in Idaho. That didn't help.

From the moment that I entered Little Town, things didn't look good. People started to harass me. It only took a few days for the folks in Little Town to conjure up a nickname for me. Those bastards nicknamed me 'SWAMP THING'.

I knew very well that I was never going to have a normal life. Henceforth, I accepted my fate. At least, that's what I thought.

The incident that changed my life occurred just two weeks ago. After being humiliated, gawked at, and tormented on the subway train, I decided to take a very long walk through the Great Green Forest.

For one whole hour, I didn't see a single human being. Wow! Did it feel good! The tiny forest animals were very kind and sweet to me. In fact, some of them thought that I was cute.

As I continued my walk, I suddenly found myself encapsulated in a huge fog. I could barely see where I was going. For the next ten minutes, I watched my step very carefully. Finally, the fog dissipated.

Unfortunately, my life had changed for the worse. It only took me a few seconds to realize that something was terribly wrong.

"Somehow, the fog had chemically altered me," said Eric.

As soon as Cynthia heard the word chemically she dropped onto the ground then wept like a little child.

Eric appeared confused, baffled, and bewildered. He couldn't understand what'd happened to Cynthia.

It was up to me, a cat, to explain to Eric what was going on with Cynthia.

"Eric, please don't use the word chemically, or any derivative of the word. Cynthia was chemically immobilized back in college. Something very terrible ensued ... if you get what I mean," I said.

Eric apologized for using the dreaded word. He also promised never to use it around us again.

"Gals, I noticed that everything appeared smaller ... much small, for that matter. I'd become a freaking GIANT midget!"

Initially, I was shocked as all hell. Then, I slowly began to consider 'vengeance'. Vengeance upon the humanity who'd tormented me without any mercy whatsoever.

After returning to civilization, I began to systematically destroy one building after another. I couldn't have given a damn about the persons or properties I was destroying. I had no friends or allies! Therefore, it was only right for me to destroy much of this stinking planet.

Within an hour, I found myself destroying towns, and more towns. I couldn't have cared less about the screams and pleadings of the people that I'd crushed.

It didn't take long for the President of the United States and the Prime Minister of Canada to declare a state of emergency. In the next breath, they declared war against the SWAMP THING, who was made out of material as strong as steel.

I reserved my utmost cruelty to military personnel; especially the officer core. Some of them, I pulled apart, others I disemboweled.

As I approached Washington, D.C., I fantasized about defeating the entire earth. However, I had to demolish the American and Canadian capitals. Afterwards, the world would be mine!

Gals, please don't think that I'm crazy. I'm not! I had every freaking right to wreak havoc on this entire planet! No questions asked!

Unfortunately, I didn't seriously calculate the responsive measures to be taken against me. This would cause my downfall; literally.

Armies from numerous nations converged upon me with an extreme vengeance. They kept coming and coming, without any letup. This horrific assault upon me didn't occur immediately. It took many days for them to form their droves of armies.

The combined military war machines of Canada, the United States, Australia and New Zealand, Europe, the Middle East, Africa, Russia and the Slavic nations, were sent to destroy me.

As I began to tire, I noticed the droves of armored vehicles, tanks, artillery, mortar launchers, flame throwers, SAM batteries, fighter and bomber aircraft; even the freaking navies were called in. Several aircraft carriers began to fire long range missiles at me from enormous distances.

Who the hell was I kidding? Did I really think that I could defeat the entire world? I wondered.

Also, I'd forgotten to pile up on food and water. Worse yet, I didn't have an escape route, or a good hiding place. Jeepers, I screwed up!

I began to feel hunger and thirst pangs. I had nowhere to go for a quick meal, or a thirst quencher. Regardless of how angry and hungry I was, cannibalism was out of the question! Later, I developed terrible wounds, and major fatigue.

Initially, my foes' shrapnel wasn't damaging my 'skin-armor'.

Later, my foes used specially made shrapnel to penetrate my skin armor.

How stupid of me! I'd expected a lightning-fast victory. I ended up getting knocked out. Once was all it took. I only had one fight in my entire life. I was knocked down and out just once.

I'd used up most of my energy reserves fighting the first onslaught. When I began to tire, I searched frivolessly for a hiding place. I was too damn gargantuan; even the waters weren't safe for me. Too many predatory creatures reside near the bottom of many of our lakes. The waters are terrifying places to swim in. For some reason, in the water, predators can reach incredible sizes and posses incredible weapons. For them, I'd be a large slab of flesh.

In the midst of battle, the armies made a sudden withdrawal. I thought they'd had enough. Boy was I wrong!

As I was limping away, I heard an incredible rumbling a few miles east of my position. As soon as I looked, I got the shock

of my life! The Defense Force of North America (DFNA) was converging on me! This army consists of the best soldiers and weaponry in the world. All of the soldiers are North Americans.

The DFNA soldiers are specially trained to be ruthless and unrelenting. They don't care whether they live or die. Victory is the only option!

Now, my life was at stake. There were to be no rules in this battle. Anyone, even an animal, associated with the enemy, would be killed! I had to go full-out!

Every time one of the enemies' shells landed, it made a thundering sound. Then, bullets and mortar rockets came at me like rain. Much shrapnel hit my body. Even the sky turned gray.

The shrapnel felt giant pin pricks on my skin armor. The improved shrapnel, however, penetrated deep into my new body.

As you can see, I am no longer a fleshy being. I was metamorphosed into a non-fleshy being. However, I still have internal organs, feel pain, and bleed. It takes a lot more punishment to hurt me.

I produced weapons out of dirt, stones, and whatever else. I put up a very good fight. Soon, the area surrounding our battle was destroyed.

It got so bad, I developed breathing problems. Those bastards fired chemical weapons at me! I left the area, but ended up here. I literally had no cover. Only a few tiny trees scattered in non-strategic areas.

I barely missed the swampy area a short distance away from us. I was so dazed, thinking straight became impossible.

Gals! Please! I'm not freaking crazy! I'm normal, really!

I know that I'd killed tens of thousands of soldiers and civilians. Too bad! I'd wanted to conquer the entire planet. After what I'd been through, those creeps deserved what they got. I certainly didn't!

In an act of desperation, I picked up tanks and armored vehicles, then threw them into the air. It was to no avail. The DFNA was too damn tough. It was like trying to fight a Rottweiler.

At least I went down swinging, kicking, punching, crushing, biting, spitting, shouting, and throwing. My doom came as soon as I fell. My defeat was eminent.

In effect, my first fall to the ground, was a knockout. I couldn't get up, or even defend myself afterwards.

Out gunned, out-maneuvered, and bloodied beyond repair, I awaited my death. I was hoping that my foe would have pity on me; if I'd only known.

They sure as hell didn't! The soldiers were on my like flies on a pile of shit!

A General Williams ordered that I die like a dog; without honor or pity. They left me here, to die all alone and in utter shame. General Williams referred to me as a 'creature thing'.

If I could go back in time, I would've developed a better game plan. The hell with them!" shouted Eric.

That shout took away used much of Eric's energy reserves. His death was only a minute or two away. Cynthia and I were extremely irritated by Eric's lack of remorse. He was a war criminal, who deserved nothing but death!

"Eric, I think that you're a pathetic little slime-ball! Having had a miserable life doesn't give you the right to wreak havoc on an entire planet! You could've helped the world immensely. Your size and strength would've been a remarkable asset. The people of this planet would've been very thankful for your services. Maybe, you would've become a modern day hero, or something.

I've had my horrors, too! Not to mention my childhood secrets which were even more painful than anything you could imagine. I never attempted to wreak havoc on innocent persons, just because I've had a 'suffering life'.

Eric, you are a very dangerous monster! I think you got what you deserved! Now, you lay here, dying and sobbing! What are we supposed to do? Are we to feel sorry for you? Murder is murder!" shouted Cynthia.

"Cynthia, I agree with you!" I said.

"Please, come closer to me. I want to tell you something very important. I'm so weak and dilapidated. Please, get close to my mouth," requested Eric.

Cynthia and I weren't about to fall for that trick. We took several steps backwards, turned then fled the area.

Even as we were fleeing, Eric took it upon himself to make a final attempt to stop us. He used up all of his energy reserves by grabbing a handful of dirt, and throwing it at us. Immediately afterwards, his head flopped to the ground, then his tongue dangled to the side. Thankfully, Eric would no longer be a menace to the world.

## WE COME FOR PEACE!

After running for several hundred yards, Cynthia and I slowed down our pace considerably. Now, we were searching for a decent town or city to live in. Hunger and thirst were now beginning to take their toll on us. It was only a matter of time before we felt our own mortality.

After an incredibly long walk, we came across a small town situated near a beautiful lake. We entered Stoneville, Ontario, desperate as all hell. Apparently, we'd crossed into Canada without knowing it.

As we were strolling through Stoneville, an elderly woman called us over to her porch. Cynthia and I could smell homemade apple pie emanating from her kitchen. Not to mention, the turkey, mashed potatoes, gravy, stuffing, cranberry sauce, milk, and ice cream.

"Kids, come here! I can't eat all of this food alone! It's Canada Day!" exclaimed the elderly woman.

I wanted to see how different 'this earth' was from our own earth. So, Cynthia and I asked her a few questions about Canada:

"Madam, what's today's date?" I asked.

"Kids, don't you know that Canada Day's on September 9th," responded the elderly woman.

"What's the population of Canada?" asked Cynthia.

"Kids, Canada has a population of two hundred million people, not included companion animals. Don't you know anything about our country?" asked the elderly woman.

"Madam, what year is it?" I asked.

"Kids, it's the year two thousand one hundred and five," responded the elderly woman,

Cynthia and I entered the elderly woman's home, in utter shock. We couldn't believe what we'd just heard. 'My neighbor' to the north was unidentifiable. It appeared as though Canada was now a superpower. When Cynthia and I left our time line, Canada's population was over 30 million, and steadily rising.

Cynthia and I ended up eating like hungry lions! The elderly woman stuffed us with stockpiles of food and drinks. I was under the impression that the elderly woman was very lonely. I noticed that she had a marriage ring on her finger, but there was no husband in sight.

After fourteen hours of eating, chatting, watching television, and listening to the radio, it was time for us to leave. I must admit, the three of us had tears in our eyes.

Somehow if things were a bit different, maybe we would've become a happy North American family.

We left the elderly woman's home late in the morning. The sun's light and powerful rays had already engulfed the sky.

It took us roughly an hour to find a good resting place. Thankfully, it was a large tree house in a gigantic national park.

Ranger Park was very beautiful and clean. Countless trees and walking paths were available to walkers and cyclists. Not to mention, numerous man-made bodies of water.

After spotting a drinking fountain, Cynthia and I rushed to it then had our fill.

The water tasted the same as that on our earth. Either way, Cynthia and I wanted to return home. We were intent on getting there, at all costs.

Cynthia and I rested in our temporary tree house for roughly an hour then Cynthia began to weep. Cynthia did that every so often. I mean, she never quite got over the gang-rape. We were lucky to have each other. I guess you could call us 'interspecies sisters'.

While Cynthia was weeping, a terrible thunderstorm engulfed the area. It was sudden, and worse than the thunderstorm that we'd endured when we were sucked into the whirling tunnel.

Although we were under the shade of countless trees, we could still hear and feel the incredible lightening which appeared to be a living and thinking entity. The lightening was zapping objects on the ground. Also, the rain was pounding the

ground and the trees with a vengeance. It was almost like there was a war between the ground and what was above.

Cynthia pulled me against her chest. In return, I clung onto her, tightly. Then, I licked her chin.

The thunderstorm intensified, to the point of rocking trees back and forth. Powerful winds made terrifying noises. It was at this point that 'Cynthia and I froze in fear. Not knowing what to do, we just looked at the other.

Tiny gaps within the countless leaves and twigs allowed us to see bits of the sky. It was gray-white, and very ugly-looking. Something was terribly wrong. We began to hear the screams of terror coming from all directions.

Cynthia and I had no choice but to descend to the underbrush. As soon as we descended from the tree house, we slowly walked towards the perimeter of the park. I don't have to tell you, visibility was poor. We were working on instinct and memory.

The open land beyond Ranger Park was enduring the brunt of the thunderstorm. They were in open land. Many of them were being hurled into the air without any mercy. Cynthia and I were in a no-win situation. Therefore, we decided to leave the park. There was a possibility that the whirling tunnel was nearby. If so, we'd enter it.

"Jody, we must keep going! Please, hold onto me as tightly as you can! Dig your claws deep into my flesh, if you have to. I can't leave 'this time line' without you! We're almost attached to each other!" shouted Cynthia.

"Cynthia, you're my best friend in the whole world. All worlds, for that matter! We've must stay together ... sisters in arms. I can't see any reason why we should stay here. This monster of a thunderstorm could be the tip of the iceberg. It's better to leave and live, than to stay and die!" I shouted.

We were forced to walk against strong winds and blinding rain.

"Eureka!" I exclaimed.

We spotted the whirling tunnel. It was almost like it followed us here. Anyhow, we did what we had to.

Although Cynthia also had my weight to carry, she was strong enough to enter her target.

As soon as we got close enough, the whirling tunnel sucked us in with incredible force. So much so, I was catapulted out of Cynthia's arms. Luckily, we were still together.

A short while later, Cynthia and I were catapulted into another time line. We landed in the middle of what appeared to be a baseball field, turned killing field. We were surrounded by the mutilated bodies of humans and animals, strewn across the entire field. Naturally, the field stunk like hell.

Cynthia and I noticed a white powder residue scattered throughout the killing field, and on the slabs of flesh. We were so shocked, our gag reflex was neutralized. There were countless maggots and other rotten-flesh-eaters on the bodies of the cadavers.

While walking through the killing field, Cynthia and I noticed a sign in front of the former announcer's booth: WE COME FOR PEACE! WE ARE THE ZORBANTANS!

Something wasn't right. I instinctively knew that the word 'peace' was some sort of a linguistic trick.

Eureka! I quickly figured out what was wrong with the word 'peace' under this context. It was deliberately misspelled! The real word should have been 'piece'. As in: WE COME FOR PIECE. OUR PIECE OF THE UNIVERSE!

The Zorbantans had conquered earth. No doubt, they were ruthless and technologically advanced.

"Cynthia, Zorbantans slaughter humans and animals. Any creature that slaughters humans and animals will do likewise to us. We must be extremely careful so long as we are in this time line," I said.

Cynthia and I were so terrified, we actually stopped to hug and kiss. Then, we began to cry like little kids. Somehow, it helped to relieve part of our anxiety and anxiety. A short distance away, Cynthia and I could see the remnants of a once prosperous city.

"Jody, use your incredible feline senses to determine if there are Zorbantans lurking in the shadows," said Cynthia.

"Yes, there are dangerous Zorbantans nearby. They smell different. One thing's for certain, they smell like monsters," I responded.

"What do you mean monsters?" asked Cynthia.

"Predators mainly eat prey, or perhaps, weaker predators. On the other hand, monsters eat anything just for the sake of being a monster."

"Furthermore, monsters can't love anyone else, except themselves. They're killing machines without a conscience. If we ever come across the Zorbantans, you'll understand," I responded.

We continued our walk through the vast killing field, stumbling over a slab of a former human or animal, here and there. Upon exiting the killing field, we headed for a residential area just ahead. This area was better off than the others.

Upon entering the neighborhood Cynthia and I took note of a dust-plated street sign. We were on Dunkirk Street. Dunkirk Street was wide, dotted with many dead trees, and abandoned homes. Luckily, the street names were in English. Die hard

Anglophones (native English speakers) like us; don't want to learn another language. Why the hell should we?

Cynthia and I had a sudden change of heart. We decided to head to the former downtown district. We could easily return to the residential area, because it was a straight path back to Dunkirk Street. The downtown district would tell us much about this time line, and the people that had lived here previously.

The sun was rapidly descending, making it urgent for us to find a good place to hide. Somehow, I felt like we were being watched. I couldn't pinpoint the exact location. For all I knew, this earth may have had vampires strewn across it. I don't have to tell you what they'd do to a cute little kitty ... like me.

During our walk towards the downtown district, Cynthia and I spotted a spaceship on the horizon. It looked exactly like those spaceships that George Noori often speaks about on Coast to Coast AM. I hope that our visitors on OUR EARTH are nothing like the Zorbantans. If they are, our earth is finished. If, it still exists. Believe me, this was no television spaceship. This was the real thing! Gosh, it was freaking real!

Cynthia and I instinctively ran for cover. We ended up hiding in a garage on Ballard Street, which runs parallel to Dunkirk Street. Not knowing what to do, we froze in fear.

Meanwhile, the spaceship hovered over us for a few minutes, before a beam of light shined upon us. We were spotted!

The spaceship slowly descended onto Ballard Street. The streets in this neighborhood were very wide, making it easy for spaceships to land in. Cynthia and I were terrified! We expected the worst.

"Jody, don't make a sound. This is not a movie! This is real! If aliens appear, they won't be benevolent. If they're much stronger than we us, we'll be forced to endure much brutality and sadism. To these Zorbantans, we may be nothing more than automatons. In the past, many earth scientists believed that animals were automatons. Do you get my picture?" said Cynthia.

"I'm too terrified to make a sound," I whispered.

One-by-one, three giant aliens exited the spaceship. They were over thirty feet tall, very strong, and scary-looking. But, I must say, they looked like the typical aliens that many people have seen on our earth. Except that they were much larger and menacing. This is a peculiar situation. Are the Zorbantans somehow related to the tiny grays that visit our earth?

The three Zorbantans were wearing military uniforms. The clothing material was manufactured in a different time line. However, I can tell you that their skin was gray, hairless, and bit on the ugly side. Also, their eyes were black and stationary. Also, their necks were skinny.

How can bipedal beings be that large? On our earth people that big would certainly be very clumsy. Falls would be extremely dangerous, even fatal.

After the Zorbantans exited their spaceship, one of them scanned the area with his terrifying eyes. His eyes were gigantic, almond-shaped, and very dark. It's like there were no whites in them. Terrifying-looking!

I was almost certain that they'd spotted us. Well, Cynthia and I had to stay put and see.

"Captain Shelley, I don't think there are any runaway humans or animals in this sector. We've successfully neutralized this sector.

It's now safe to say that the Zorbantans have conquered earth. Now, we will continue with our killing, enslaving, programming, and vivisecting spree. We mustn't listen to their cries of help, or agony. Otherwise, we'll become too soft," said one of the Zorbantans.

After hearing these terrifying words, Cynthia and I puked our brains out. Our heaving and the stench of our puke caught the attention of the Zorbantans. Also, I urinated and defecated.

One of three Zorbantans raised his head then sniffed the air around him. Although he didn't have a protruding nose, his sense of smell must've been acute.

Suddenly, the Zorbantans' looked in our direction. Gosh, their faces indicated no expression, whatsoever. That was the most terrifying thing about them.

Captain Shelley, can we re-enter our spaceship. We'll send for the VENATIONS (hunters of humans and animals). As for now, we have more important issues to deal with. Whoever is lurking in the shadows will certainly be captured, tried, tortured, then enslaved or executed.

Upon hearing this, Cynthia and I dashed out of the garage, jounced to the back of the house, and then ran like hell! We were in no mood to be captured, tortured, or what-not; by evil-looking aliens.

We ran several blocks before noticing a Zorbantan pursuing us. Whenever one of his feet pounded onto the ground, Cynthia and I felt the earth shake. This gave Cynthia and me more encouragement to continue running.

After running for seven blocks, the Zorbantan collapsed onto the ground. Apparently, Zorbantans lack endurance.

Cynthia and I were able to slow down to a walking pace. Either way, we had to leave this earth. We were sitting ducks, and had no future, whatsoever. Also, I couldn't imagine living without Cynthia. If one of us had been killed or captured, the other would have to live her life alone.

"Listen, we need to get to the downtown core, fast! No doubt, many VENATIONS will be here soon. We must go and never return. As soon as we get there, the survivors can tell us exactly what happened to the natives of this planet. I mean, there must be humans and animals out there ... somewhere," said Cynthia.

"Cynthia, I agree with you. Luckily, the day-to-night cycle is identical to our earth. Our circadian rhythms won't be screwed-up," I said.

It was now 1:00 A.M. A blistering siren engulfed the entire area. Resembling an air raid, it had a spooky aura to it. Cynthia and I took cover in an abandoned house. Instantly, we froze like giant icicles. Thankfully, the siren sounded for only a minute. Perhaps, it was only a drill.

Then, three spaceships appeared on the horizon. No doubt, there were VENATIONS inside. The Zorbantans were making a final sweep of the area. For all practical purposes, they'd already conquered this earth. What a terrible shame.

By 2:00 A.M. the sky had been cleared of spaceships. Cynthia and I were lucky. We decided to walk in a linear fashion, underneath trees. Although many of the trees were dead and without any leaves, we still got some overhead cover from the live ones.

While walking to the downtown sector, Cynthia and I became much closer. Our love for each other strengthened and blossomed. The love between a cat and a human can reach amazing levels. Sometimes, Mount Everest levels!

"Jody, let's stay on this street. It's very long and leads directly to the downtown sector. We mustn't take any chances switching streets.

As soon as we arrive, food, water, and shelter, will be our prime concerns. But for now, we must find a good place to rest and hide in. As usual, we must leave this earth; sooner or later.

As soon as we reached downtown sector, Cynthia and I felt a sigh of relief. The sign in front of us read: WELCOME TO WINDSAGE, ONTARIO. The sign was worn out. No doubt, the Zorbantans got their creepy hands on it.

Although much of Wingdale was dilapidated, we still had hoped that something good could be found. Buildings are good hiding and resting places. Also, we could find weapons and valuable information. No doubt, Wingdale was once a very prosperous city. A true asset to what was once Canada.

Unfortunately, Cynthia and I spotted a few scattered skeletons. No doubt, the vast majority of them had already been

disposed of. To us, this was another creepy reminder of the utter cruelty and barbarity of the Zorbantans.

Wingdale was probably one of the first cities to be destroyed. That's why there were no fleshy cadavers to be seen. Decomposition was at an advanced stage. Soon, the bones would crumble into a powdery substance. Once again, the signs were there. Many of the skeletons had broken bones and/or missing bones.

The humans and animals that had once encased these skeletons were brutalized by the Zorbantans, most likely while they were still alive and fully conscious.

One question kept ringing in my ears: how did the Zorbantans defeat the inhabitants of this earth? With billions of inhabitants (humans and animals) and much weaponry, it seemed a bit odd. I understood that the Zorbantans had superior military might, and used contagions as another formidable weapon, but, it still wasn't enough to satisfy my feline curiosity. I had to find the answer before leaving this earth.

No doubt, many of the natives put up a good fight. The 'innocents' were either killed or enslaved. Even those who were enslaved would only be used until their services were no longer needed.

The humans on our earth are experts at war and slaughter. Maybe, the Zorbantans studied the history of our earth?

What separated us from the downtown sector was a short, cobblestone bridge. The bridge was arched over a polluted canal that contained more than its share of rotten flesh and bones. No doubt, this canal was once a major tourist attraction. The Zorbantans put an end to that.

Cynthia and I slowly crossed the cobblestone bridge, making sure not to step into one of the numerous crevices. We couldn't afford any leg injuries.

Upon crossing the cobblestone bridge, we heard the rumbling of several armored vehicles. No doubt, they were Zorbantan occupiers.

As to their armored vehicles, they were 'confiscated' from the humans of this earth. That's how it goes in war: winner takes all! Loser loses all!

"Cynthia, we must run deep into the crevices between the buildings up ahead. Otherwise, we'll be captured!" I exclaimed.

Cynthia and I ran into a long alley, then into an abandoned warehouse. Meanwhile, three armored vehicles drove right by the warehouse. Luckily, they missed us by a hair.

Cynthia and I waited until the armored vehicles were long gone, before relaxing. It must've been a routine patrol. Otherwise, they would've driven slowly, and scanned the area with more scrutiny.

Wingdale's buildings were once an incredible sight to look at. Even with all of the destruction, many of the buildings still retained much of their infrastructure.

Buildings with very strong foundations were an incredible advantage for the Russians during World War 2. Their partially destroyed buildings became hideouts for well-trained snipers and resistance fighters. The German bombers couldn't 'crumble' the Russian buildings.

While catching our breath, Cynthia asked me a very important question.

"Jody who's your number one American hero?" asked Cynthia.

"Henry Bergh was born in New York. He was a really good guy. His father was well-ahead of his time when it came to supporting rights for Negroes.

Henry Bergh was also well-ahead of his time in the area of animal welfare. Although he wasn't well-trained in the animal sciences, he did try his hardest at helping animal kind. He endured a lot of suffering at the hands of animal abusers, and other creeps.

On quite a few occasions, Henry had fecal matter, and other filthy objects, thrown at him. Not to mention, the verbal insults and curses.

Unbelievably, Henry Bergh was a member of the elite. He was a rich and successful politician. In fact, Henry Bergh lived in Russia and Europe. He spoke fluent French. Furthermore, he did much of his work during the last third of the 20th century.

Henry Bergh helped more horses than perhaps anyone in his day. In his day, horse abuse was most visible and prevalent in New York. New York City's transportation system was made up primarily of working horses.

Lucky for horses, in 1910 their use was on the way to becoming obsolete. Today, you'll see a few horse carriages in New York, but these are remnants of the past.

Henry Bergh was able to help more stray dogs than cats. No problem," said Jody.

"Jody, thanks for the history lesson," responded Cynthia.

"Cynthia, don't you have a hero of sorts?" I asked.

"Jody, I HAVE A HEROINE, NOT A HERO!"

Her name was Martha Allen Carrier. She was profoundly courageous, incredible, and decent. She resisted sexism, slander, oppression, and humiliation, from both men and women. Mind you, it was the men who were in power.

The evil ones tried to RAPE her dignity, honor, innocence, trustworthiness, and humanity. She went down with high honors," said Cynthia.

"Cynthia, please don't take this personally. I don't want to get into another skirmish with you. Although I have the

utmost respect for Martha Allen Carrier, I don't understand your use of the word 'rape' in this context. Also, weren't 'some' her accusers WOMEN, like her?

, please don't go ballistic on me," I said.

"Jody, if you'd been a survivor of a gang-rape, you'd understand. Because you aren't, I don't take what you said personally! I know that there were little harlots who lied about Martha Allen Carrier. I'm not letting them off the hook.

But, it was the MEN who held all of the cards. Those little 'bimbo-sluts' were envious of Martha Allen Carrier. Also, they couldn't have done anything to her without those old ugly men helping her!" shouted Cynthia.

After our brief 'skirmish', Cynthia and I decided to scan the interior of the warehouse. We wanted to make sure that there were no creatures lurking inside.

Therein, we saw countless articles of furniture, and home appliances. Everything was encrusted in dust. Some articles had been destroyed, while others were fine, but dusty. No doubt, the destruction was performed by the Zorbantans. Their intent was to demolish everything that could sustain humankind and animal kind.

The Zorbantans were the 'destroyers'. They wanted the inhabitants of this earth to die, or be enslaved.

"It appeared as though this earth had been conquered many years earlier. Comprehensive conquests of planets take time. Sure, the Zorbantans could've nuked this entire planet. But, then they'd have no slaves. Also, this earth would've been uninhabitable. Do you understand what I'm getting at?" asked Cynthia.

"Jody, let's roam around. This warehouse is very spacious. Maybe we can find something of value. There's so much 'stuff' strewn around. We may be able to return an article of value back to our earth," said Cynthia.

Gosh, I wasn't as optimistic as Cynthia. I mean, what were our chances of being catapulted back to our earth? I mean, back to our time period and to the same city? Most likely, very slim. At least, it looked that way for the time being.

"Look, over there! There are dusty firearms on the floor. I guess this must've been a secret operations base for resistance fighters. Too bad, they lost the war. This earth is under comprehensive occupation.

Hereafter, we need to be very careful. There's no telling what we'll find in Wingdale. It's a bit spooky here," I said.

"Cynthia, I know this isn't the real Canada, but ... it's close. Isn't it? I mean, we're in Wingdale, Ontario. Aren't we?" I asked.

"This isn't the real Canada. This is a bogus Canada. The real Canada is still alive and well. We must keep our faith. Otherwise, we'll go nuts.

When we do return, visiting the real Canada is a must. It'll be enjoyable. Especially for me, since it's my country," answered Cynthia.

We approached what appeared to be a firearms cache', not knowing if the weapons were operational or defective. Normally, cats are suspicious about firearms. We know that countless humans and animals have been wounded, maimed, and killed, by some irresponsible, gun-wielding individuals. In gun ownership, responsibility is mandatory!

Cats have their arsenal of weapons attached to their bodies. Maybe that's why we're much more responsible, regarding this matter.

Cynthia picked up a machine gun. She fiddled with it, but made sure to keep her finger off the trigger.

"Jody, this is a super machine gun. I estimate that it can fire over two thousand rounds per minute. The weapons that we see before our eyes are top grade. No doubt, these were used for resistance by the humanoids. I wonder what kind of weapons the Zorbantans have.

The Zorbantans must be a very ferocious and powerful species. Sooner or later, we must return to our earth. Leaving this earth is a top priority that can't be delayed.

There had to have been numerous pogroms and serious cleansing operations to completely occupy this earth. I estimate that billions of people and animals have already perished. Soon, the Zorbantans will import their own animals. Our lives are in jeopardy!" exclaimed Cynthia.

"Who knows? In a hundred years time, things might change for the better," I said.

"I guess the Zorbantans could fight each other off, to the point of destruction. That would be nice. Their civil war must happen before the humans and animals of this earth are totally wiped out. Otherwise, this place will become a hell-hole," said Cynthia.

We resumed our search through the interior of the warehouse, hoping to find something valuable.

Later, I began to cat around in a far off corner. Leaping onto articles of furniture, and doing flips in the air. On one of my leaps, I inadvertently knocked over a cabinet. The 'knock-over' exposed a secret passage. It was in the shape of a door.

"Cynthia, come here, now!" I yelled.

"What is it?" asked Cynthia.

"I found a hidden door. Maybe, it'll lead us to a secret passage, or something," I responded.

We entered the passageway which was a somewhat dark corridor. My incredible feline vision enabled me to get a partial glimpse of the long corridor. It appeared to be miles long. With Cynthia's terrible night vision, it would've been unfair to proceed through the corridor.

Then, I spotted a large light switch lever.

"Cynthia, help me pull this lever up. I think it's the light switch for the entire corridor. If so, it'll illuminate our pathway," I said.

Cynthia and I 'laboriously' pulled the lever up. As soon as we heard a click, the entire corridor lit up. I noticed that Cynthia was a bit scared. Actually, both of us were scared.

As we walked through the corridor, it became apparent that each light bulb was powerful enough to 'enlighten' a quarter of a mile of corridor space. No doubt, the Zorbantans had placed the light bulbs in the corridor.

As Cynthia and I continued our walk, we took more notice of the wooden doors aligned on both sides of the corridor. Each door had a square opening, containing parallel bars. Each bar was two inches away from the next bar. Like those in prisons or jails. Something seemed kind of weird.

"Jody, I'm will open that door. Don't be afraid. We'll both enter together," said Cynthia.

Cynthia opened the door leading into a creepy room. As soon as we entered the room, we got the shock of our lives. Before our eyes were three vivisected humans!

Although the facility was run-down, most of the cadavers appeared to be somewhat fresh. Countless flies, maggots, and other creepy insects, were having a happy meal.

It looked like Zorbantan scientists returned in order to inflict a terrible punishment on some humans. Maybe, these humans were resistance fighters? Who knows?

Cynthia and I decided not to get too close to the cadavers. The cadavers may have been deliberately infected with a dangerous contagion.

Indeed, the cadavers were deliberately left on the operating tables as a reminder to people like us.

The cadavers had neatly cut amputations and incisions. The chest cavity of one of the cadavers had been emptied out. In addition, its eyes and ears had been removed. Although it was a terrible site, Cynthia and I had to find out more about this facility. Our curiosity was getting the best of us.

On our earth, vivisection is performed on animals only. Millions of animals on our earth must endure the horrors of vivisection; every single year! Vivisection is a hit-and-miss art. Sometimes the scientist scores a big hit, often times he/she doesn't.

There were rusty surgical instruments placed on dirty silver trays and basins. One instrument looked like a modified Stryker saw. It had dried up blood, and crusty flesh on it. It really looked gruesome and terrifying.

Other instruments included cutters, choppers, pullers, breakers, twisters, peelers, and crushers. One lone instrument was a sucker. Probably used to suck out the eyeballs, and may also have been used on the orifices of the body.

Because of the utter shock of what Cynthia and I had seen, it took a few minutes for our bodies to 'encode' the horrific stench of the room.

Then, we ran out of the room and puked our brains out! It was a disgusting sight.

After I finished doing my thing, I noticed that Cynthia resumed walking away from the room, for a good thirty yards. Then, she bent over and dry-heaved, until she could no longer perform.

When Cynthia returned, I told her what was on my mind.

"Cynthia, I saw you stick your finger down your throat! You must control your feelings and urges. I understand that whenever you feel anxious or nervous, your urge to stick your finger deep inside your mouth returns. Please try talking to me, instead," I said.

"Jody! I didn't stick my finger in my mouth! Besides, stop being a little snot!" shouted Cynthia.

"Cynthia, you have saliva and bits of food on your index finger. You did stick your finger in your mouth. That's shame on you for lying to your best friend!" I shouted.

Cynthia broke down ... completely. She fell onto her knees then cried like a little child. I leaped onto her chest, causing her to pull me hard.

After I licked Cynthia's neck, she built up the strength and confidence to put a smile on her face.

After making up, we decided to return to the room. This time, our stay would be much shorter.

Upon entering the room, I noticed a letter on the ground. Actually, it was in a far corner.

"Cynthia please read what's written on that piece of paper. There may be an important message on it. Maybe, it can be of use to us," I said.

Cynthia took the letter then read the contents without moving her lips. She didn't like what she'd read.

"Jody, the contents of this letter describe in detail, horrific experiments on hundreds of thousands of humans and animals who'd been experimented on, in this facility alone.

"Unfortunately, it says here that there are other facilities on this earth that are still in operation. What kind of monsters could do this?" asked Cynthia.

I leaped onto a wooden desk then I asked Cynthia to place the piece of paper beside me.

The seal of The Zorbantan Medical Association was stamped on the bottom of the letter.

"Cynthia, read this! We must leave this earth, immediately! The Zorbantans are ferocious monsters! How many hints do we need?!" I shouted.

We galloped through the corridor until reaching its end. A 'NO EXIT' sign was printed on the wall. Luckily, there was a hole the size of a basketball in the wall. No doubt, others had been through the wall.

Cynthia and I decided that we had to go through the wall. I slithered through the hole. Cynthia was unable to. I gave her some good advice.

"Cynthia, try to find something to smash the wall with. Honey, I think you can do it," I said.

"Jody! Don't you call me honey!" shouted Cynthia.

"Gosh Cynthia, we're best friends! I'm a cat! I love you dearly! I'd give up everything that I have to save your life! What the hell else do I have to do for you?!" I shouted.

"Jody, just don't call me honey! I'm not ready for that, just yet. I'm still in too much pain and agony to accept that description of me," said Cynthia.

As soon as Cynthia and I calmed down, she searched for something that could help her smash the wall. I slithered back into the corridor. Four eyes are better than two.

I noticed that one of the doors looked different. The words MAINTENANCE ROOM were posted on it.

Cynthia and I entered the maintenance room. Just to our left was a rusty old pipe. Indeed, it was still harder than cement.

Cynthia carried the pipe to the opening in the wall. After pausing for a moment, she began to 'pile-drive' the pipe onto the edge of the opening. Bits and pieces of the wall began to crumble and spatter in the air. Apparently, the wall was old and quite dilapidated. Cement particles in the air caused Cynthia and I to sneeze.

Thankfully, the foundation of the wall around the hole collapsed relatively quickly. Cynthia and I were intent on getting through.

As soon as our opening became as large as a manhole, we entered into what looked like a former air traffic control center.

We saw fully operational advanced computers, everywhere. Also, there was a large window which gave us a birds-eye-view of the landing platforms for the spaceships.

We saw several spaceships stationed on what was once a tarmac used by the natives of this planet. Now, it belonged to the Zorbantans.

This would be a valuable lesson to the people of our earth:  
NEVER ALLOW ALIENS TO CONQUER OUR PLANET!

Apparently, one of the 'parked' spaceships was in operation. No doubt, someone was inside operating the controls.

This spaceship was about as large as the USS Enterprise. It was saucer-shaped, gray-colored, and looked menacing. Just like the menacing UFOs that countless humans on our earth have seen.

Cynthia and I were awed by the size and beauty of the spaceship. As such, we decided to leave the air traffic control center, and head straight to the spaceship.

As we stepped out into the open, we noticed that the area was bland; no buildings or trees, anywhere in sight.

Suddenly, Cynthia and I heard the rumblings of an incredible battle raging on the horizon. The fighting was intense and unrelenting. Who were the Zorbantans fighting? We wondered.

Cynthia and I froze in fear. We didn't know what to do. Then, an opening formed leading into the spaceship. Actually, it looked like a tiny slit before it enlarged.

Then, a Zorbantan wearing a uniform exited the spaceship. He looked like a big shot in the Zorbantan military.

The Zorbantan approached us with full confidence. Meanwhile, Cynthia and I froze like two giant pop sickles.

"Greetings, I'm Dr. Denney. Please come with me. It's too dangerous for you to stand out here. The ongoing battle is only a few miles away. It'll soon engulf this area."

"Will you harm us, if we follow you into your spaceship? Or, will you try to deceive us? We've seen more than enough horrors for a woman and a cat," I said.

"Please, you must come with me, quickly! Otherwise, the Zorbantans will take you away. I mean you well and no harm. Trust me," said Dr. Denney.

We followed Dr. Denney into the spaceship, terrified and confused.

What we saw inside the spaceship was literally out of this world! Therein, a complex network of computers, that would make the crew of the Voyager cry in envy. Really! It was like Star Trek Voyager, plus a thousand years of technology.

"Gals, this spaceship has touch, telepathic, and audio controls. I can do just about anything that I want to. It only

takes an instant. In addition, I can fly this spaceship in every direction. Even while moving at 'flash speed'.

In addition, the depths of the oceans are fair game. No creature on this planet is safe from the Zorbantans.

The Zorbantan Federation is very dangerous. You must leave this planet, immediately! I know that you gals are from another dimension, or planet. Somehow, you look out of place.

Furthermore, you don't quite smell like the other humans and animals on this planet

## OUR TROJAN HORSES

The Zorbantans have already conquered dozens of planets. We used the 'OUR TROJAN HORSES' to get our 'feet' in the door," said Dr. Denney.

"Please, what do you mean by our Trojan horse? It sounds very cunning, but sophisticated?" I asked.

"We sent our infants to make first contact with the inhabitants of each planet. Our infants look non-threatening. I mean, they almost look like weaklings. They're short, skinny, hairless, have big black eyes, tiny teeth, and gray skin.

We have them make contact with the inhabitants, and then they give them some harmless technology to use.

As soon as they're fully accepted into society, we increase their numbers, dramatically. They're all spies, infiltrating all sectors of the work and defense forces.

We make sure that none of the infants stay on the planet for too long. They must always appear small and harmless. We replace them before they grow up. Nobody on the planet notices a difference. We've forged fingerprints and personal biographies.

As soon as the Zorbantan Colonization Council is confident that we can make our move, they give the command to begin sending military spaceships to the particular planet. These spaceships contain thousands of battle-ready giants; fully

armed, and ready to kill and destroy. Our military spaceships are unbeatable. Not to mention, the die-hard warriors inside them," said Dr. Denney.

"Dr. Denney, Cynthia and I entered a whirling tunnel to get here. Can we do anything to stop this universal conquest?" asked Cynthia

"This is exactly what I want you to do! For this to happen, you must re-enter the whirling tunnel!"

Look, every time you enter the whirling tunnel, you change the entire time line of the universe. I mean, the history of the entire universe is wiped out. It is then replaced by another history. How much change occurs, is unknown.

I want you to re-enter the whirling tunnel in hopes of completely erasing the Zorbantans from history. You will most likely alter other histories, too. Rest assured it'll be well worth it. The Zorbantan Federation must be destroyed! Even if I have to be erased, also!

The fighting on the horizon is a civil war! Our race is so violent we crave war and destruction the way a vampire craves for blood.

Soon, this planet will be destroyed. There will be nothing left! Please, tell me how and when the whirling tunnel appears?" asked Dr. Denney.

"It appears during severe thunderstorms," I responded.

"You gals are in luck. We get incredible amounts of rain on this planet. Thunderstorms occur whenever it rains.

Our scientists have 'chemically infested' the entire area. We used chemical and biological warfare methods to help our defeat the enemy. Believe me, I was dead against it. However, I was also afraid to speak out. There are other voices of morality within the Zorbantan Federation. Unfortunately, all of the voices are mute," said Dr. Denney.

Immediately, Cynthia fell onto the floor of the spaceship then began to cry like a baby. She heard that dreaded word 'chemically' once more.

After explaining to Dr. Denney what the problem was, he immediately apologized to Cynthia then hoisted her up.

"The Zorbantan Federation is run by a ruthless council. In Zorbanta, the council says it all. No protest, debate, or negation ... period.

Technically, the Zorbantan people are also under occupation. We shouldn't be surprised.

Some of our great scientists have written theories about this whirling tunnel phenomenon. Thankfully, they've never been able to find the whirling tunnel. If you want to go back in time, enter the whirling tunnel backwards. You may be able to go back and correct a problem. Be advised, the end result may be

dangerous to the entire universe. You're dealing with the time line.

"Now, I must inject you with the BRN-475 serum, to destroy the chemical and biological agents in your bodies. You're lucky that the levels have shrunk considerably since the initial polluting. However, I don't want to take any chances. Of course, Zorbantans are immune to this atrocious nightmare," said Dr. Denney.

Cynthia and I permitted Dr. Denney to inject us with the BRN-475 serum. He seemed like a trustworthy guy. Anyway, he could've easily crushed us with his powerful hands, if he'd wanted to. So, there was no reason to believe that he'd willingly give us poison.

Dr. Denney injected a blue jell-like substance into our skin then he asked us to rest on a special couch for a few of minutes. He wanted to see if we'd have an allergic reaction to the BRN-475 serum. Thankfully, we didn't.

"Dr. Denney, you're an incredible Zorbantan! I wish there were many others like you around!" I exclaimed.

"Thanks little kitty," replied Dr. Denney.

Look, the weather detector indicates that a thunderstorm is quickly approaching our position. You must re-enter the whirling tunnel as soon as it appears. You'll find your planet a bit different every time you revisit it. Always enter the whirling tunnel with extreme caution, and only after you've determined that it is absolutely necessary. Enter it at your own risk.

Cynthia and I embraced Dr. Denney's right leg. Then, we said our goodbyes.

As we were exiting the spaceship, we glanced back at Dr. Denney then gave him a final goodbye. Dr. Denney's eyes were tearing. Wow! Zorbantans could cry; and a male, at that.

Cynthia and I searched for the whirling tunnel. After spotting it, we ran towards it as fast as we could. When we go close enough, Cynthia and I turned around. By now, the whirling tunnel began to pull us into its interior. It was like a giant magnet.

"Jody, I'm scared!" exclaimed Cynthia.

"Jeepers Cynthia, tell me about it later! Please! We can barely maintain our balance. The whirling tunnel's slowly sucking us into its interior!" I shouted.

"Good thing we're entering the whirling tunnel, backwards! Perhaps there will be good in that!" shouted Cynthia.

A short while later, Cynthia and I landed on a brown sofa in her living room. We were happy to be home. We were also apprehensive; not knowing what changes were made in the new time line.

Cynthia and I spent the next several months trying to re-adapt to being 'dimensional travelers'.

When Cynthia went to the bank to see how much money she had, she got the shock of her life! She was still wealthy. In fact, she was wealthier in this time line, than in the others.

Economically, Cynthia and I lived a very comfortable life. Although Cynthia sometimes awoke screaming, she 'kind of' managed to bounce back.

I kept an eye on Cynthia. I knew that she still had a dual eating disorder. Anorexia and bulimia are very tough to tackle. Either one is tough to cure let alone both of them. Thankfully, the fields of medicine and psychology have come a long way

#### BOBBY WIDMORE

As weeks turned into months, Cynthia became more outgoing. She began to go out late at night ... without me. At first, I felt left out. Then, I realized that something wasn't quite right.

Cynthia's behavior changed for the worse. It almost looked like she had a mild case of bipolar disorder. Sometimes, she'd be in an incredible mood. Then, she'd fall into a deep depression. There were a few times when she behaved like a raging lioness.

I only confronted Cynthia once about her unusual behavior. As expected, she went ballistic on me. So, I decided to keep my mouth shut.

Then, on a warm July evening, Cynthia dropped a bombshell on me.

"Jody, I'm officially engaged! 'My man' is incredible! His name's Bobby Whitmore! I've never met a man like him before. I knew he was 'Mr. Right' as soon as we met. We've been going out for six months now. I wanted to keep it a surprise. Would you give us your blessing?" asked Cynthia.

"I certainly won't! I don't even know this Bobby fellow. I have to get to know him first. Afterwards, I'll give him a

conditional blessing, if he passes my personality test," I responded.

"Jody, you're being a party-pooper! Give me your freaking blessing! Damn it!" shouted Cynthia.

I didn't budge a single millimeter. However, Cynthia did. She continued her story, as though she was sure I'd change my mind.

"When Bobby asked me to marry him, my jaw locked. I was so excited the words YES I WILL couldn't come out of my mouth.

Initially, Bobby thought that I'd rejected him. He turned around then proceeded to walk away. This caused me to muster up all of my energy reserves, in order to speak to him.

I called Bobby back. As soon as he was close enough to me, I gave him an affirmative response to his question. Instantly, his face lit up like a candle. Afterwards, he got down on one knee, removed the engagement ring from its casing then slid it onto my finger.

Tears of joy streamed down my cheeks. I was absolutely in LOVE! I'd finally found my man.

Tonight, I'm taking Bobby to Beck's Steakhouse. They've got the best steaks in town. At twenty five dollars a plate, I freaking demand it!

Tomorrow, I'll take him out to another restaurant. Afterwards, I'll take him to the movies. If he wants more, he'll get it. He loves me so much! I'm ready to open up my heart to him. He's the man of my dreams!" exclaimed Cynthia.

"What else are you willing to open up for him?" I asked.

"Jody stopped being a little witch! Wish me well, or shut your freaking trap!" shouted Cynthia.

Well, that was it for my suspicions. Once again, I shut my trap.

"From now on, I'm doing all of the spending. Bobby told me that he's about to strike it big with his investments. He'll soon be a millionaire.

Jody, there's another thing: Bobby's not very fond of cats," said Cynthia.

I couldn't hold back. I had to speak up!

"Cynthia, I think something is quite unusual here. You're telling me that you're taking Bobby out to this-and-that restaurant, and maybe a movie, here and there.

Bobby told you that he's about to strike it big with his investment?

No way! I don't buy that! If he's a decent man, he'll take you out on his expense, every single time. He should do this for a whole month if necessary.

Now, please let me see your engagement ring. How much did he say he got it for?" I asked.

"Here, take a close look at it. Bobby told me he got it for two thousand dollars! Take as many looks as you want. I'm telling you, it's genuine!" exclaimed Cynthia.

After careful examination of the ring, I determined that it belonged on a street peddler's table. As soon as I bit the ring, it split in half. Indeed, it was a dime store ring.

"Why did you break my ring? Jody, don't be an envious cat! You're angry because I found Mr. Right, while you're still here, all alone by yourself. You've got 'love envy'.

Jody, Bobby and I are getting married next Friday. I'm sure that I can convince him to tolerate you," said Cynthia.

Tolerate me? I'd had enough garbage talk for the day. I turned to my right then walked to the kitchen. After finding an isolated corner, I fell over onto my side then closed my eyes. I awakened at 2:30 A.M. Surprisingly Cynthia was also in the kitchen. She was teary-eyed.

"Bobby said he can't make it for dinner tonight. But, he did say that he'd make it for dinner tomorrow night. I accepted.

Actually, the change will give me an extra day to prepare a nice dinner for the three of us. I'll give him the meal of his life," said Cynthia.

Somehow, I felt that something wasn't quite right with what Cynthia had told me. Or, maybe she was hiding something from me. I decided to dig into the matter.

"Cynthia, what else do you want to tell me? Don't be afraid. If there's something wrong, just ask for help," I said.

"Nothing is wrong! I mean, it's no big deal. Who said that I was hiding something?

Gosh, I can't lie to you. Last night, when I was speaking to Bobby on my cell phone, I heard the voice of a woman. She sounded like she was flirting with Bobby. No doubt, she was standing next to Bobby," said Cynthia.

"Where did Bobby call you from?" I asked.

"He called me from his home," answered Cynthia.

"A woman, who may have been flirting with Bobby, was in his home. And, he was speaking to you while she was standing next to him? Does Bobby have a sister?" I asked.

"Well, maybe he was watching television. Maybe, I jumped the gun. I mean, she could've been his cat," said Cynthia.

"I take it he's a lone child. Also, his parents have passed away. Therefore, the woman he was with was not blood kin. Do you agree?" I asked.

"Gosh Jody, you're a very intelligent cat!" exclaimed Cynthia.

"Cynthia," no I'm absolutely certain that something's terribly wrong here," I said.

"Jody, you're acting like a snotty-little-bitch; inserting evil thoughts and suspicions into my mind," said Cynthia.

Cynthia broke my heart. After all we'd been through, how could she have called me a snotty little bitch? She was madly in love with none other than 'Mr. Wrong'. She was going to get hurt, for the umpteenth time.

I leaped onto Cynthia's chest then gently pawed her left cheek, several times. My pawing put a semi-smile on her face. She still looked like she was pissed at me.

I braced myself for the rendezvous with Bobby. As far as I was concerned, he was a cheating-thug. Out to bamboozle Cynthia of her money. I'd have to stay on the alert, not to allow the creep to harm my best friend in the whole world.

The next day, Bobby called Cynthia to confirm their dinner date. While speaking to Bobby on her cell phone, Cynthia's face lit-up like a candle. I'd never seen her this way. But, it was a false happiness.

I needed a break. So, I went to my bedroom and crashed out for several hours. Upon awakening, I pondered about my options were. I had to protect my best friend in the whole world.

Unfortunately, I couldn't come up with a solid/comprehensive game plan.

Bobby came by the following day at 7:00 P.M. I'm certain that Cynthia would've performed cartwheels on broken glass, just to please him.

Bobby Whitmore was tall, handsome, and athletic. He looked like a movie star. Gosh, if he'd been a cat, I would've fallen for him.

Before I knew it, Bobby held Cynthia's hand, and then kissed it. Afterwards, he told her that he loved her more than anyone else in the whole world. No doubt, he wasn't including her money in that statement.

Bobby was feeding Cynthia a load of crap. The quivering in his voice indicated that he was being deceitful. In fact, I sensed hatred, deceit, and envy, underneath his skin. He was a serpent, indeed.

Bobby glared at me, with an extreme wickedness and ferocity. It was like he was warning me to not to enter his home turf. I didn't like that!

"Cynthia, dinner smells really nice! I can't wait until we eat. Please, keep your cat away from us during mealtime. I want us to have some 'alone time'. Humans must eat with other humans. There's no room for little kitties on the dinner table. Besides, I don't want your kitty to watch us make love," said Bobby.

"Wait a minute! Didn't we agree to wait until we got married? You're backtracking. You'd never pressure me into doing something against my will. Right?" asked Cynthia.

Bobby grinned, then gently kissed Cynthia's thumb. He threw her one sweet line after another until Cynthia was infatuated with him.

I knew exactly what Bobby wanted. He wanted exactly what a lion does from a lioness: food, sex, and progeny. And may I add, not necessarily in that order.

I could see the rage in Bobby's eyes. He was probably like Jeff. I'd have to be on yellow alert at all times. Not quite on red alert, but close.

"Fine, let's go to my bedroom. I want you to see my beautiful wedding dress. I'm sure you'll love it. If you'd feel uncomfortable with Jody around, I'll ask her to stay out of my bedroom," said Cynthia.

"Jody, come here! I want you to stay clear of my bedroom! I don't care what you do just stay away from my freaking bedroom! You can only enter only after I give you permission to. For now, my room's an off-limits-zone!" shouted Cynthia.

"Please, Cynthia. We're best friends. I sense that something terribly wrong is about to happen to you," I said.

I leaped onto Cynthia's chest, hung on tightly then told her that Bobby seemed like a very dangerous person. Also, I requested that she allow me unfettered access into her bedroom. I'd stay crouched down in a neutral corner.

"Jody, I don't want you in my bedroom! Bobby's my man! Don't be a snoopy little harlot! Stay put! In the kitchen! Otherwise, there'll be big trouble!" shouted Cynthia.

I went to the kitchen, all dazed and bummed-out. I lowered my head and placed my tail between my legs. Tears streamed down my face. I felt so awful!

Cynthia and Bobby entered the bedroom. After I heard the door close, I slithered towards Cynthia's bedroom, as quietly as possible.

I cropped up my ears, pressed the side of my head against the door then tuned into the conversation at hand. I wasn't trying to be a suspicious cat. I was only looking out for my best friend in the whole world. I was ready for combat, if necessary.

"Cynthia, I want you to wear your wedding dress. But first, you must change in front of me. I mean, could you strip down, so you can put on your wedding dress? Also, I demand to see what my wife-to-be really looks like. I'm not asking for the world. I'm only asking for something that I will eventually conquer, I mean ... have as soon as we're married," said Bobby.

Cynthia's pulse rose dramatically. It sounded like she was sprinting a hundred yard dash. As soon as Cynthia began to undress, Bobby's breathing became more pronounced. He sounded like a horny gorilla.

"Stop, I want you to stay frozen in that position, half naked and beautiful. You don't mind if I 'download' your beautiful body? Do you? Come here, Ellen," said Bobby.

"Ellen? Who the freaking hell is Ellen? No, I don't want you to 'download' any part of my body. Put your damn 'gadget' away! We made a deal; no funny stuff until after the wedding!" shouted Cynthia.

"Look, I'm your freaking BOSS! I demand that you disrobe! Do you think that I'm just a little boy? I've got 'lion-like' desires. Do as I say ... or else!" shouted Bobby.

I placed myself on red alert. With my ears cropped up, canines showing, and claws extended nothing could've stopped me from protecting Cynthia.

"Please, what are you doing? Don't touch me like that! I want you to back off!" shouted Cynthia.

Although Cynthia was capable of defending herself, she didn't put up a fight. Maybe, she loved Bobby so much she couldn't get herself to knee him in the groin.

Now, a physical assault was in progress. Upon maturity, it would transform into a sexual assault.

I pounced on the door, causing it to open wide. I was now in a position to see everything that was going on.

MMMPHHH..... MMMPHHH.....MMMPHHH!" mumbled Cynthia.

Bobby's hand was firmly pressed on Cynthia's mouth. She couldn't speak, and was barely able to breathe. With one quick stroke, Bobby threw Cynthia onto her bed then forcefully covered her mouth again. At that moment, I understood that I'd have to be Cynthia's protector for life. She couldn't live alone.

Another "Jeff-like-character" would soon come along and give her the same old line: ROSES ARE RED, VIOLETS ARE BLUE, IF YOU DO EXACTLY AS I SAY, I'LL KINDA LOVE YOU!

As soon as Bobby released his hand from Cynthia's mouth, she began to hyper ventilate and cry; like a little girl. No doubt, she was regressing to an earlier time in her troubled life.

Immediately, I leaped onto the table lamp beside Cynthia's bed. Then, I hissed, bared my canines, extended my claws, arched my back, and stared-down Bobby. I made it clear that I was ready for combat, if need be.

Bobby backed off from Cynthia then he stood up. He too, was ready for combat.

Meanwhile, Cynthia stood up then proceeded to put her clothes on. Tears were streaming down her cheeks.

Expectedly, Cynthia began to shiver. I could actually see her goose bumps. They were huge.

"Listen, you little harlot! I'm a very tough guy! If you try to mess with me, it'll be your last moment in this world! Back off ... now!" shouted Bobby.

In a show of outright hostility, Bobby brandished a switchblade. The blade was menacing and a good six inches long. The blade shined as Bobby turned it against the overhead light. Indeed, Bobby held the switchblade like a professional.

I figured Bobby was a hit man back in his prime. Now he was relegating himself to sweet-talking a rich and desperate woman.

"Jody, please go away! What's happening here is none of your damn business! Bobby's a really nice guy!" shouted Cynthia.

My adrenaline level shot up to the sky. I was 'pumped' and pissed off. Nothing in this world could've stopped me.

For the moment, I ignored what Cynthia said to me. I didn't have any time to waste. There were more important matters at hand.

I decided to scare Bobby off, in order to avert a massacre. In a physical confrontation, there'd be much bloodshed.

Cynthia hadn't moved on. Apparently, the gang-rape had distorted her ability to find or properly define who Mr. Right is.

Cats are good at measuring another person's pain. Cynthia was full of it.

"Jody, this is my man! I know for a fact that you're jealous! Keep it to yourself! Tough cookies! I want you out of my house ... now!" shouted Cynthia.

"Cynthia, I'm only trying to protect you from this monster! Please, ask your little harlot-kitty to leave! I want us to be happily married, without this little bimbo in our midst!" said Bobby.

"Jody, I need a nice man like Bobby. Why can't you understand that? Bobby's here to stay! You are out!" shouted Cynthia.

After hearing Cynthia's menacing words for the second time, Bobby became more fearsome. He re-brandished his switchblade, this time jabbing it in my direction.

Bobby circled Cynthia's bed then headed straight for me. I positioned myself for an attacking leap then hissed at him.

Then, Bobby withdrew three steps, paused and continued his approach. When he got to within a foot of me, he raised his switchblade over his head to achieve maximum momentum for a serious downward plunge.

But, before Bobby could send his switchblade down for the kill, I hissed at him like a mountain lion. Bobby was so startled, he dropped his switchblade. Instantly, I leaped onto Bobby's chest. The momentum of the leap caused him to fall backwards onto the carpet.

Without any delay, I bit and scratched Bobby's right hand. I wanted to neutralize it, at least for the time being.

Afterwards, I gave Bobby several smacks across the face then I leaped off of his tanned/muscular body. To be on the safe side, I glanced back at him. It was still possible for Bobby to have launched a surprise counter strike against me.

Cynthia tried to comfort Bobby with sweet words, to no avail. Bobby slowly got up, pushed Cynthia onto her bed then glared at both of us.

I realized that there was no way out of the situation, except through a knockout. I was fighting for two individuals. Even if I had to beat Bobby to a pulp, it was worth protecting Cynthia.

As soon as Bobby picked up his switchblade, I positioned myself for an incredible onslaught. To my utter shock, Bobby tossed the switchblade onto the carpet.

Afterwards, Bobby smirked at me then pulled out an article from his pocket. It was encased in leather. I waited patiently to see what it was.

It was a carpet cutter! Carpet cutters are much more 'fearsome' and 'terrifying' than any knife. Carpet cutters are designed to cut through strong fibers. What would one of those gizmos do to feline flesh? I wondered.

"Kitty, you're dead meat! You're will now taste the strength of a fully-grown man. I shall tenderize you, like a slab of steak. Then, I shall shred you into pieces.

After I'm finished with you, I'll resume what I was doing before you interrupted me!" shouted Bobby.

I leaped onto Bobby's chest then launched an incredible series of combination punches. I can't tell you how many times I smacked him across his face and body. Not to mention, the bites and scratches that I'd inflicted upon him. I'll just say 'it was many'.

After finishing my assault, I noticed something quite unusual. Bobby was on his back, stiff as a board. Apparently, he'd stopped breathing.

In addition, much blood was scattered on his body and the carpet. To my utter surprise, I'd scored a permanent knockout.

I re-checked Bobby for signs of life. There weren't any. Bobby was dead! I'd inadvertently killed a human being. I was shocked beyond belief. I didn't want to kill Bobby Widmore!

Cynthia called 911. I couldn't believe what she told the dispatcher: POLICE! I WANNA REPORT A MURDER at 2080 DENVER BOULEVARD! A CAT NAMED JODY WILSON JUST MURDERED THE MAN THAT I WAS GONNA MARRY! MY FIANCE'! PLEASE, ARREST THIS HARLOT BEFORE SHE KILLS ANYONE ELSE! OH, I'M CYNTHIA CORBETT!"

I could hear the dispatcher on the other end of the line.

"Right now, are you safe? Is Jody Wilson near you?" asked the dispatcher.

"She's right here! I'm terrified of her! Please, don't let her attack me!" shouted Cynthia.

Cynthia turned her cell phone off, and then tossed it onto her bed. She began to weep like a little child. I had to get some sense into her. Otherwise, both of us would be screwed.

"Cynthia, honey ... I was only trying to protect you. I risked my life in order to shield you from harm," I said.

## THE FUGITIVE CAT

My explanation was worthless. I took one last look at Cynthia then quickly ran to the kitchen. I snatched two beef jerky pouches that were on the kitchen table then leaped onto the kitchen counter.

After ripping the plastic covering off of both beef jerky I 'gorged' them as quickly as I could. Afterwards, I gently turned on the faucet then licked off as much water as I could.

Right before I was about to leave Cynthia's mini-mansion, I had a sudden change of plans. I leaped onto the kitchen floor then ran to the fridge.

I ended up having my fill of 2 percent milk. I understood that I was now on the streets.

I leaped through an opening through the kitchen window, landing onto the grass. I was now a fugitive cat. Even my own kindred would now turn me in for a reward. Not to mention, what my natural enemies would do to me.

I ran across the street into a neighbor's yard then I hid behind a large hedge. I wanted to get a birds' eye view of what was happening.

Lucky for me, the night was still young. Indeed, darkness is often a cat's best protector, from humans.

I decided that elevation would give me an even better view of what was happening. Thankfully, there was a large tree located about twenty feet to my right.

I scaled it, all the way up into a beautifully built tree house. Now, I had the perfect cover and vantage point.

I crouched down then partially closed my eyes. Felines have a 'reflector' on each eye. This is the result of our incredible night vision. Any human with normal vision can see a cat's reflectors at night.

As soon as I was firmly entrenched inside the tree house, sirens began to blast the entire neighborhood. Four patrol cars and an ambulance were sent to the scene of the so-called -crime.

I'd lost all hope of getting back with Cynthia. Furthermore, it was apparent that Cynthia, my best friend, would never 'accept' what really happened to her. I saw what happened! That Bobby creep tried to attack Cynthia. In more than one way, I must say.

No doubt, Cynthia was mentally unstable. She'd had more than her share of abuse.

The police were about to hear a terrible story about a murderous cat. A cat named Jody Wilson, who's from Missouri.

Afterwards, they'd put out an APB on me. Also, a handsome bounty would be placed on my head; dead or alive. My not being a human would make it all the more satisfying for animal haters. Believe me, there are plenty of them around.

As soon as the patrol cars and the ambulance were parked in front of Cynthia's mini-mansion, Cynthia dashed out of her home, with clothes that were wrinkled and bloody. Her hair was disheveled, and tears were streaming down her cheeks. Worst of all, she was intent on blaming me for Bobby's death.

As soon as Cynthia was near the police and paramedics, she collapsed onto the sidewalk.

Instantly, the paramedics attended to Cynthia, while several police officers entered her mini-mansion. Their guns were drawn, and it looked like they were intent on shooting to kill.

After the paramedics had attended to Cynthia, a policewoman approached her.

"Cynthia, I'm Officer Laura Gentry. Rest assured your home is being thoroughly searched. Furthermore, we're going to put out an APB out on the 'murderous cat'. Do you have any relatives whom we can call?"

Cynthia was pissed off as hell! She gave Officer Gentry a very intense answer.

"Please, arrest that little harlot! That Jody Wilson slit! She's a danger to the community! In fact, she's a danger to the entire country! This country will be a much better place without

her! Jody Wilson's tough, intelligent, mobile, and extremely cunning.

That little harlot murdered the love of my life! I want you to catch that little harlot, then to place her inside a dilapidated shelter. Please, put that little cougar on death row!" shouted Cynthia.

Cynthia broke down and cried. Officer Gentry gave Cynthia a woman's embrace. Then, she placed the palm of her left hand on Cynthia's shoulder. It was a despicable sight. Cynthia's crying and sniffling made her statement appear more accurate and intense.

The paramedics tried to convince Cynthia that she should be taken to the hospital for observation. Cynthia looked like she'd been in a giant brawl. Understandably, the paramedics wanted to ensure that Cynthia had not sustained any internal injuries.

Cynthia refused to be taken to the hospital. She insisted on going to a motel for a few nights. As a result, the paramedics left the scene a short while later. Apparently, Cynthia had no broken bones.

At 6:00 A.M., the coast became clear. Everyone had left the scene. Yellow police tape was placed on the perimeter of Cynthia's mini-mansion. Also, a sign reading: DO NOT ENTER BY ORDER OF THE POLICE was posted on Cynthia's front door. Officially, it was a crime scene.

I slowly crept out of my tree house then cautiously descended onto the lawn. Then, I ran across the street until I reached Cynthia's back door. I scanned the area then leaped onto the kitchen window panel. I forcefully yanked the window open then leaped onto the kitchen floor.

I was 'devastatingly hungry', thirsty, and anxious. I had to eat, drink then sit around until I could think of an effective game plan. My whole life had been turned upside down.

I went to the fridge, opened it then took everything that I needed.

I carried a carton of milk to a neutral corner. Then, I 'jabbed' two holes into the side of the carton. This caused milk to sputter out of the carton. I quickly took advantage of the situation, licking every single drop that I possibly could.

After having my fill of milk, I dragged a bag of ACME cat food to the same neutral corner. I ate my fill then returned to the spot where I'd placed the bottle of cold water. Once again, I dragged the bottle to the neutral corner then jabbed two holes into it. I had my fill.

Thankfully, I was able to remove a large slab of steak from the fridge. I had to get that bloody flesh!

I began to drool like a dog. Instantly, I ripped off the foil wrap then dragged the plastic container encasing the steak to the same neutral corner.

I gorged on the steak, like a Bengal tiger. What an awesome feeling! I'd consumed a meal that would've filled the stomach of a Bengal tiger.

I decided to sleep for several hours. I was hoping that a solution to my problems would appear in a dream.

A few hours later, I was awakened by the sound of a mouse running nearby. I was relieved that he wasn't a giant sewer rat who was bent on killing a cat.

After getting up, I walked to the kitchen closet. Then, I opened the door entered it in search of more food to eat. I understood that I had to exit Cynthia's mini-mansion, soon.

As a calculated measure, I decided to leave fully satiated. Thereafter, good meals were likely to be difficult to come by.

After taking notice of a large bag of ACME cat food. I leaped onto the shelf, pulled down the bag then ripped it open with my incredible teeth claws.

I pulled apart the rips, so I could shove my head inside the bag. I ended up re-stuffing myself with tasty food. The food pellets dropped into my stomach ever so beautifully. They went straight down, really fast, and without any let-up. With each pellet that dropped to my stomach, I felt an 'explosion' of satisfaction.

I exited the closet then looked up at the kitchen clock. It was 9:30 A.M. Sooner or later I'd have to leave the area.

The police crime scene unit workers and detectives would no doubt return for another sweep of Cynthia's mini-mansion.

I strolled to the living room then leaped onto a brown sofa that was beside the coffee table. After ensuring myself that the coast was clear, I positioned myself for a flying leap. But first, I took one last look at the interior of Cynthia's home. It was sad to know that I'd never see it again.

After taking my last look I leaped out of an open window. As soon as I landed on the lawn, a patrol car suddenly appeared at the end of the block. I quickly scaled a tree that was only a few feet from me, then waited anxiously for the patrol car to leave the area.

Luckily, the fat police officer driving the patrol car was eating a jelly donut. His eyes were preoccupied with the jelly donut and other traffic. Otherwise, I would've been a dead goose.

The sun's rays began to come down on me with a sickening vengeance. In other words, it was hot and humid. It was now 10:00 A.M.; too late to stay around. I had to leave the city for good. Indeed, I was a fugitive cat.

Maybe, things would turn out much better in the end; like the television show: The Fugitive.

I walked for thirty minutes; not knowing exactly where I was going. As soon as I got to Belmont Boulevard, I took a right.

While walking on Belmont Boulevard, I noticed an elderly woman peering through her window. She was eying me. I crooked up my ears, to find out what her problem was. Apparently, it wasn't she who had the problem, it was I!

"Police, I see Jody Wilson! The cat that killed Cynthia Corbett's man! She looks tough, creepy, and a bit apprehensive. She's walking by my house!"

"Oh, I live at 1801 Belmont Boulevard. Yes, she's alone. One more thing: please, catch that little tart and hang her by her tail until she dies twice!" shouted the elderly woman.

I was devastated! Another person had called me a little harlot. No doubt, the word got around. In this time line, I was labeled a 'little harlot'. What had I done? Nothing!

Part of me wanted to leap through that old hen's living room window then scare her brains out! I opted for inaction. I was innocent. As such it would've been counterproductive to harm anyone who was old, ugly, feeble minded, female, and had nothing to do but watch people and animals walk by her house.

I took off, like a cheetah on a chase! I ran for fourteen blocks, before gradually slowing down to a walking pace. I stopped near The Addison Secondary School. I was tempted to sneak inside, and just roam around for a while. School was off that day. In effect, I would've had the entire school to myself. I decided not to do anything rash.

As long as I was in this time line, I had to think about my actions before performing them. Mind you, I was still on the same earth. Maybe, the police were expecting me to hit the Addison Secondary School. Either way, I had to be careful.

I took shade and rest under a large tree. The tree became my temporary canopy. This time, I stayed on the ground. I didn't feel like scaling any more trees. I had to wait until dark.

As soon as the sun set, I decided to walk through residential areas, in order to stay clear of heavy traffic. Being a wanted cat, I'd certainly be noticed. I entered Weston Street.

After walking for roughly ten minutes, I received another shocker. This time, it was at 1865 Weston Street. An elderly man came rushing out of his house brandishing a sawed-off shotgun. He snarled then pointed his shotgun at me.

"Hey, I saw sketch on television! I also heard about you on the radio! Kitty, you're even on the freaking World Wide Web! You're a wanted killer!"

Kitty, I won't shoot you between the ears. Nor will I call the police. I'm a down-to-earth guy who doesn't want any trouble with anyone. I just want to be left alone! Now, get off my freaking property!

Kitty, you best not stay here! Just don't stay here! Live as a fugitive cat, rather than do hard time, or be killed in a slimy animal shelter. Hell, hardly anyone in the human community will take pity on you. They'll love to see you get the ax on television.

Kitty, the police are diligently searching for you. With a ten thousand dollar reward for your capture, (dead or alive), you 'best' be careful!" shouted the old man.

I knew the old man's advice didn't come from his heart. My incredible feline intuition alerted me to this very important fact.

Judging from his accent, he wasn't like me. He had a fading southern twang. I figured he'd moved to California many years earlier.

Where's the southern hospitality at? I asked myself.

"Thanks for the good advice. I guess I'll have to leave town. I now understand that the cops will be on me like flies on a pile of shit. I'll go east, first stopping in New Mexico for a good breather.

Grandpa, please don't tell anyone that you saw me," I said.

I wasn't quite ready for the shock of re-entering the whirling tunnel. There'd be no telling what type of earth I'd be catapulted into.

I ended up running for several blocks then slowing down to a walking pace. I had to be certain that the old man couldn't see me anymore. I'd had more than enough problems with 'peeping Toms' and other unfriendly 'residents'.

I scanned the entire area, before entering Junction 106 East. Here I was, in my own country, unable to live the American dream.

I walked on the shoulder of Junction 106 East. I cropped up my ears, to ensure that there were no tragic surprises. Also, I kept a steady eye on each house that I passed.

After walking for several miles, I came across a news broadcast emanating from an old house on my right. I tuned into what was being said.

As expected, there was an APB out for me. The television anchor indicated that the 'fugitive cat' was said to be heading towards New Mexico. The old man had deceived me. Right to my beautiful face!

Thankfully, it was nighttime. Unfortunately, I had several close calls with speeding drivers, drunks, and just plain 'Ole cat haters.

I continued my walk until I noticed an abandoned on my right. It looked like it hadn't been occupied for several years. Most of the paint on the house was chipped off. Much dirt was pasted on the house and surrounding area. Most of the grass was dead. Luckily, my feline night vision aided me in seeing what was necessary.

Immediately, I sensed the presence of rats, countless bugs, and three nesting birds.

Indeed, I had to hide from the world, and get a breather. If the house rats tried to mess with me, a terrible fight would ensue. I certainly wasn't in the mood to be pushed around by creepy rats.

I cautiously approached the abandoned house, scanning the area as I walked.

Meanwhile, I noticed the clouds beginning to engulfing the sky. I could hear 'trembling' and 'thunder' approaching at top speed. This time, I'd stay indoors. I was too tired and perplexed to re-enter the whirling tunnel.

I leaped onto the porch, watching my step along the way. Sometimes, abandoned homes have feces, urine, broken glass, and wood splinters, strewn across the premises. I admit there was a slight stench in the area. However, I wasn't in a position to be picky.

I entered the abandoned house through the pet door. Immediately, I took notice of antiquated articles scattered in the living room. Although some of the articles partially covered in white bed sheets, others were bare. There was dust everywhere. Come to think of it, the entire house was dusty. I wondered why anyone would leave so many valuable articles behind. Property is money!

Thankfully, there was no glass in sight. I began my walk to the kitchen, in search of something usable, or eatable.

In order to get to the kitchen, I had to walk through a dark, dusty, spooky hallway. On my way to the kitchen, I passed several rooms. One of the rooms contained a skeleton on a rusted-out old bed.

The rooms were numbered. The skeleton was in room number 3. I figured that the rooms had once been rented out. The place looked like it'd once been a motel.

The sight of the skeleton gave me the jitters. At that moment, I decided to leave. As soon as I turned around, I heard the treading of two rats. They were coming towards me. I leaped into room number nine.

The rats were now walking through the long corridor. Gosh, they were getting closer and closer to 'my room'. With nowhere to go, I leaped onto a dusty desk, then braced myself for the fight of my life.

The rats' breathing became more 'pronounced' and audible. Cats and rats have always been natural enemies. As I pondered about what to do, one of the rats peered into my room. After spotting me, he motioned the other rat come. He arrived in a jiffy.

Now, I was face-to-face with two large rats! They were built like raccoons. I carefully checked them out then waited anxiously.

"Hey kitty, are you Jody Wilson? I mean, you sure as hell look like the artist's sketch we saw on one of the countless WANTED POSTERS that are scattered throughout the state," said one of the rats.

"What if I am Jody Wilson? Would that make cause you to become my staunch enemies?" I asked.

"Look, we don't need any money. Rats like us can get by anywhere in North America, except in Alberta, Canada. Besides, if we say anything to the cops, they'll bust us, too.

I'm Spencer Ratty, and this is my wife, Sharon Ratty. Sharon's maiden name is Rodentsky.

We've known each other since we were 'junior rats', learning how to snatch food from establishments, without getting caught. We're a happily married couple.

Sharon and I want you to be our friend. We want to help you. We're also fugitives. Sharon and I 'snatched' surplus foods from homes in this city for roughly two years.

At first, we only took what we needed. Sadly, our 'almost end' came when we decided to go 'BIG TIMES'. We wanted to be like our heroes who live deep down in the sewers of big cities.

Actually, city rats that live in big cities like Montreal, Toronto, Vancouver, Los Angeles, New York and Chicago, are respected by non-city/non-sewer rats.

City rats are usually the toughest, meanest, and best 'food snatchers' in 'our community'. Amongst them, sewer rats are of the highest rank and grade. Within the rat community, living in the sewer for three months or more, is a sign of honor, dignity, and self-respect.

As time passed, Sharon and I became so cock-sure of ourselves we hit Harold's Supermarket for ten straight days. We thought we'd had it made. We made the fatal mistake of taking too much food, from the same place, in a short period of time.

Mayor Ellington, the entire city council, and the owner of Harold's Supermarket, had had enough of our snatching. In fact, the people of California were also fed up with us. They understood that the 'snatchers' were rats.

Unbelievably, the FBI and the CBI (California Bureau of Investigation) was requested to aid in my apprehension. Not to

mention, the local police, and numerous citizens' vigilante groups.

The peoples' rage warranted special action. Immediate action, that is.

One thing led to another, until Sharon and I found ourselves fleeing a California State Trooper. Luckily, we crossed several train tracks, right before a long cargo train came by. Our pursuer had to wait a very long time before he could resume his chase. By then, we were long gone.

Thereafter, we resorted to low-key snatching. We simply had no choice in the matter.

Sharon and I were born in California. Although this is our home, and we're content living in this abandoned house, we'll have to leave soon. It's only a matter of time before the authorities discover our hideout.

When it's time to leave, Sharon and I will leap onto an east-bound train. I've got relatives in New York. New York's a beautiful city with countless skyscrapers, dark alleys, and like countless other big cities, many hideouts for rats.

"Kitty, we're not asking for sympathy. We snatch food because we enjoy eating. Gnawing food on the premises is often too dangerous. We take what we want, then leave. What's wrong with that?" asked Spencer.

"You're absolutely right! I mean, most humans think that rats are ugly. Cats, on the other hand, are considered very cute, cuddly, and nice to be around. However, this hasn't curbed the terrible 'feline catastrophes' from recurring over and over again. Sure, there are many cats living it up in human households. Unfortunately, many cats have suffered at the hands of some humans.

My big cat brethren have stories that are similar to yours regarding the end result. Just a few centuries ago, lions were everywhere in Africa. When the 'super hunters' first arrived, Africa was a 'Paradise of Animals'.

Billions of animals, predator and prey, were scattered throughout the continent. Unfortunately, even lions aren't bullet proof. Even a mediocre hunter, like the late Teddy Roosevelt, shot and killed his share of 'wild animals'.

Tiger species have been exterminated, or decimated by sport hunting, trade in 'body parts', and use for entertainment (zoos, roadside menageries, circuses)," I said.

I couldn't help it. I just broke down and cried. I couldn't continue with the feline catastrophes story.

"Rats don't owe humanity anything. We have many relatives who are 'incarcerated' at the ACME Lab in Franklin, California. Virtually none of them will get out alive. The 'feds' don't

offer lab rats any protection, whatsoever. Birds and mice are in the same boat.

Thankfully, Sharon and I have taken up residence in this abandoned house. Contrary to popular belief, most rats aren't treacherous, mean-spirited, tough, back-stabbing, sickly, ugly, pompous, untrustworthy, dishonest, and extremely dangerous. We're not! Just leave us freaking alone!

Rats have been there to see, hear, taste, and smell, the horrific human wars. We're usually there to eat-up the countless cadavers strewn on the battlefields, and in the cities, towns, and villages. Not to mention, the areas in between.

From what I know heard, World War 1 was a 'battlefield smorgasbord'. World War 2, on the other hand, was a 'comprehensive smorgasbord'. Stalingrad and Leningrad were terrifying, however. In famine conditions, rats can eat humans, and/or humans can eat rats. It all depends on the situation.

The inhabitants of Leningrad ate all of the 'normal food animals'. They were forced to move onto horses, dogs, cats, birds, rats, and 'whatever else'. It's understandable. They were in a state of incredible starvation. Famines in the colder regions tend to bring about cannibalism more often than in the warmer regions.

Humans in a state of extreme famine will eat rodents, even 'ugly rats', as a second to last resort. Human flesh is the last resort. It all depends on the circumstances," said Spencer.

"That's all yucky stuff! Please, let's change the subject. Or else, I'm out of here, for good!" I exclaimed.

"I apologize for being so graphic. I was only trying to educate you about a few of the horrors that have occurred on this planet," said Spencer.

"Your apology is accepted," I said.

"Would you like to have supper with us? Spencer and I are going to pull off one more snatch. We will hit Harold's Supermarket, again. Nobody will suspect that we could ever regain the audacity to pull another job," said Sharon.

At Harold's Supermarket, we'll do most of the physical labor. You can be our lookout. Even proud rats must admit that cats have incredible senses.

However, we've got the smarts when it comes to surviving in putrid environments. Sharon and I can teach you how to be self-sufficient. You'll be able to snatch food from all sorts of establishments," said Spencer.

"Jeepers, you guys sound like real mobsters; especially you, Spencer. Were you ever a 'rat boss'?" I asked.

"I can't answer that question because I don't like to boast about my accomplishments," replied Spencer.

"Rats are flexible and resilient. We're able to endure incredible hardships. I repeat, hardships, not just one hardship.

Do you know how long we've been living in this hemisphere? Well, just think of Columbus and Cortes. Rats and roaches were on their ships. As soon as 'we' landed ashore, the entire hemisphere was ours for the taking.

However, recently rats have had some minor problems in Alberta, Canada. Albertan officials, along with 'their citizenry', have no tolerance for rats. They've got an incredible program for keeping 'our kind' at bay," said Sharon.

After our long chat, we decided to go to sleep. Food and water could wait until later. A few winks never hurt anyone.

As I closed my beautiful eyes, it really dawned on me that I was a fugitive cat. It was only a matter of time before the cops would find me.

There was probably a cop out there who'd make it his/her life's ambition to catch me; dead or alive. Like the show The Fugitive.

I was the cat who killed a human. There'd be no mercy upon me in any human court of law.

That's why I was ready to use deadly force against anyone who tried to take me in. A cat has a right to defend him/herself.

After awakening, we went to Harold's Supermarket then hit it really hard! It was fun and somewhat spooky. We had a feast, without any interruptions, whatsoever.

After we came back to the abandoned house, I convinced my new 'rat friends' to move on. We said our goodbyes inside the abandoned house then I left.

Although I'd originally intended to stay in the abandoned house for a few weeks, Spencer and Sharon were too thug-like for me. I suspected that one day, they'd turn against me. Perhaps, while I was sound asleep. Maybe, they'd eat me. Yikes!

The moment I exited the abandoned house, a California State Trooper (CST) zoomed his vehicle nearby. Instantly, I leaped back into the abandoned house then stayed put until the coast was clear. Unfortunately, I was dead wrong.

As soon as I crept out of the abandoned house the maniacal CST pulled into the driveway, rolled down his window, then stared in my direction. I think he suspected that there were fugitives in the abandoned house.

I froze like a Popsicle then fell onto my side. I guess I was out for a while. I came to at 6:30 A.M.

The sun began to engulf the area with its brightness, rays, and outright heat. Shockingly, the CST had returned for another sweep. He parked his vehicle in front of the abandoned house

then ate his breakfast, while sweat was dripping down his armpits. Indeed, it was a disgusting sight.

After the CST drove off, I decided to scram; this time for good. Luckily, I had much food, water, and milk reserves in my system.

For some unknown reason, Sharon and Spencer weren't around. I think that they took my advice and moved on.

Before leaving, I took one last look at the interior of the abandoned house. Although I was saddened to leave, it was something that had to be done.

I walked on Junction 106 East for over two hours. I endured several taunts and a catapulted broken beer bottle.

At 9:00 A.M., I reached Danes City limits; population seventy thousand and growing. I decided to enter the city, find a good resting place, then wait until dark.

I entered Danes City nervous wreck. Not to mention, hungry, tired, and dying of thirst.

Suddenly, I felt a very sharp pain in my bones. Even my spine was hurting. Also, I began to feel incredible mental strain. As long as I was in California, my senses were on yellow alert. That's not a good way to live.

While strolling through Danes City I spotted a large middle class neighborhood. The sight was medicine for my sore eyes. I walked to the closest house.

Thankfully, the sprinkler was on. I dove into an avalanche of water. I licked much water then washed off all the dirt and stinky stuff from my beautiful body.

Somehow, entering the whirling tunnel had changed my biochemistry and personality. I wasn't complaining about the rush of water. I loved it!

While I was 'enjoying' my free shower, a skinny, gray-haired man, exited the front door of his house. For some reason, he was holding a piece of paper in his left hand.

I leaped out of the gush of water then ran towards the skinny man. I stopped within a three feet of him. Then, I waited patiently.

The skinny man turned the piece of paper around then shoved it in my face. It was a wanted poster! I was the individual who was wanted. Worse yet, the poster read:

WANTED: JODY WILSON FOR THE MURDER OF BOBBY 'CUTIE-PIE' WIDMORE. WILSON IS FROM MISSOURI. SHE'S EXTREMELY DANGEROUS, TREACHEROUS, AND DISHONEST. SHE'LL STAB YOU IN THE BACK AFTER SHE GETS WHAT SHE WANTS FROM YOU. THERE IS A ONE HUNDRED THOUSAND DOLLAR REWARD FOR INFORMATION LEADING TO THE ARREST AND CONVICTION OF THIS LITTLE HARLOT. ABSOLUTELY NO QUESTIONS ASKED!

"Hey! You're the fugitive cat! I mean ... you're Jody Wilson! There's a gargantuan reward for your capture. Dead or

Alive! Personally, I couldn't care less if I turn you in dead or alive. I need the cash! Besides, I'm the kind of human who totally despises, hates, and is disgusted by cats! I've got two Mastiffs who always obey my commands. They're in the shed.

"Rufus! Bongo! Come and get' it! It's Jody Wilson time! She's the cat who killed Bobby Whitmore!" yelled the skinny man.

As soon as the skinny man gave the command, both Mastiffs exited the shed. They snarled then growled at me. Their eyes were fixated on their target ... me! Ugly saliva was dangling from their mouths. If it was any thicker, I would've called it pizza cheese.

I stared them down. Then, in a show of incredible bravery and fortitude, I took several steps towards them. Initially, they were taken aback. Then, they approached me.

I had to land multiple combinations on the two 'killer dogs'. I had to be lightning-fast in my assault. Including the skinny man, it was three against one.

I charged both dogs then leaped onto the alpha dog. I struck him across the face repeatedly.

Shockingly, he went down like a ton of bricks. Afterwards, I attacked the second dog. He also went down like a ton of bricks.

I was proud of myself. I'd become an incredible fighter. In fact, I'd just beaten up two males of a traditionally more powerful species.

I approached the skinny man. Pitiful man; he 'peed' and 'pooped' in his overalls.

Afterwards, he got knock-kneed then his knees buckled. Finally, he fell onto his lawn. Part of me wanted to beat him senseless.

I leaped onto the skinny man's chest then hissed. Lucky for him, I didn't follow-up with a barrage of punches. The last thing that I needed was an assault charge, in addition to the murder charge.

"Look, I'm just a cute little kitty! I don't want to hurt you. You started an offensive maneuver against me. Self-defense is a cat's natural right," I said.

The skinny man turned blue, then croaked. Although I was saddened by his death, I was also relieved that the police weren't going to be involved. Could anyone have blamed me?

I waited attentively until my two canine adversaries regained consciousness. Immediately, I smacked each dog across his face. Just in case. Both dogs went down, this time for the permanent count.

I'd inadvertently killed a human, and his two dogs. If the police had been called to the scene, and they'd found me there,

I would've been shot on the spot. Anyway, no court of law would have mercy on me.

After pondering about my predicament, I took off like a stallion. I ran east for five miles. Cars were passing me without taking notice. This time, I was just another cat running on the shoulder of Junction 106 East.

After running for five miles, I was forced to slow down to a walking pace.

You see, running cats are noticed by drivers more so than walking cats. The last thing that I wanted to be was noticed by numerous drivers.

As I was beginning to catch my breath, a blue van pulled up beside me. The driver kept his van parallel to me. Naturally, I became anxious. As far as I knew, he could've been a serial killer, or an undercover VCO.

Beep! Beep! Beep! Beep! Beep!

The driver of the van blasted his horn with full force. I certainly didn't know why. I was lucky I wasn't a human child. If so, I would've been terrified.

As shocking as this may sound, I went ahead and tried to befriend the driver of the van. I was too desperate to be picky about my rides.

However, I kept my guard up just in case. Incredible cats, like me, have the street smarts to survive.

As soon as the driver of the van rolled down his window, he asked me the question that I wanted to hear.

"Kitty, are you going to Kansas? If you are, I'll give you a free ride. Don't worry I'm not one of those serial killers who keeps cadavers inside his van. I've never killed, raped, or mutilated anyone. Rest assured I'm a good man."

Instantly, I had reservations about the driver. He appeared to be concealing something from me. I took a good whiff.

I 'scented' the presence of a child between the ages of four and six.

I pictured her as having been brutally raped and murdered in the back of the van. I was also certain that my presence near a mysoped (child killer) would be disastrous for any future defense I could ever have.

No judge, jury, or prosecuting attorney, would show me any mercy. You see, I had my own problems to deal with. Maybe, this creep would finger me for the brutal slaying of the little girl/s.

As I was planning to turn and run, I felt a sudden rush of guilt. How could I allow a monster to continue in his ways, without even slowing him down?

I asked the driver to pull over into the shoulder of the road. Luckily, he obliged me.

As soon as the driver turned off the ignition, I leaped into the van, onto the passenger's seat next to him. Before launching a massive assault on the driver, I carefully studied the interior of the van.

Surprisingly, there was no cadaver. However, I did see a physician's kit, two white trench coats, a package of surgical masks, and three rolls of gauze. My feline intuition was dead wrong!

I felt awful about suspecting that the driver, whom I didn't even know, was a mysoped/rapist.

In fact, the driver was a Samaritan and a physician. Most physicians are well-off. This 'chump' was my new meal ticket. I mean, this sweet man was my meal ticket.

I rolled over onto my back then played cute-pie. Afterwards, I righted myself then sat next to my new friend.

"Kitty, you probably 'scented' death emanating from the inside of my van. Rest assured. Here's my physician's identification card. I'm a surgeon at The Hindenburg General Hospital.

Hindenburg is two hundred miles west of Wichita, Kansas.

The instruments I have in my surgical kit were stolen from our hospital. One of our janitors took them along, when he moved to California. You see, he liked to play surgeon. He used our surgical instruments to slice up innocent dogs and cats in his neighborhood.

When he got sick of slicing up cats and dogs, he started slicing up humans. That's when the big boys made it their number one goal to capture the 'killer janitor'.

The beast's name was Karl Karaganda. Unfortunately, he committed suicide while awaiting trial. We'll never know how many living beings he'd murdered. Dead victims can't testify; at least not in this world. As for the relatives of the victims, they'll be forced to live a life of extreme pain and agony.

I recently placed a little girl in the back of my van. She'd been shot in the stomach. The 'shooter' was in the process of holding up a candy store. Things went from bad to worse. Thankfully, I was in the candy store.

The little girl had to be taken to the hospital, immediately. I had no time to wait for an ambulance. I took it upon myself to drive her to the nearest hospital

I'm telling you this story because of the expression on your face. Not now, but when I first offered to give you a ride. Being a cat, you knew that a bleeding little girl had been in my van. Rest assured you're in good hands.

Now, you're probably wondering why I have these instruments in my possession.

Kitty, please don't lose any respect for me. I bribed a member of the Los Angeles Police Department to give me the surgical kit and instruments. You see, this woman worked in the evidence room. I gave her two thousand dollars for the surgical kit and instruments.

Kitty, Karl Propaganda was dead. Furthermore, he was acting alone. It's not like these surgical instruments were needed by anyone. Besides, I drove all the way to California to retrieve these surgical instruments.

These surgical instruments will be returned to The Hindenburg General Hospital Surgical Supplies Room," said the surgeon.

"But, like, umm ... how will you 'integrate' these surgical instruments into The Hindenburg General Hospital?" I asked.

"Let me backtrack. I also bribed a hospital technician who works in The Hindenburg General Hospital surgical supplies room. He was the department supervisor. I wanted to make sure that everything went just fine.

Is there's anything else that needs to be clarified?" asked the physician.

"No, I'm assured. I'm the kind of cat who likes to give a person the benefit of the doubt, when it's warranted. I'm usually careful around humans, especially strangers. No offense intended but the worst people are the evil humans. However, many humans are kind hearted," I said.

"Now, let me formally introduce myself: I'm Dr. Michael Von Hauser. You can call me Mike, when we're alone.

I've been a general surgeon for over twenty five years. I enjoy operating on people, especially when everything goes well. Seeing a patient improve is enough to make my day.

When I was in premed, I did much volunteer work in hospitals. I loved it very much. Originally, I'd intended to be a medical examiner. I changed my mind after my uncle Stanley died in a car accident.

The paramedics took him to The Hindenburg General Hospital Emergency Room. I happened to be in the emergency room doing volunteer work at the time.

I followed the paramedics as far as I was allowed to. Roughly two hours into the surgery, my uncle died. He was too badly injured to have had a chance of surviving.

Apparently, my uncle was driving while groggy.

I think the surgeon and medical staff knew that my uncle was at death's door. Thankfully, they gave it all they had. Believe me it's very important to have medical staff that are hard-working and care about their patients.

Kitty, the ride to Hindenburg, Kansas will be quite long. I never exceed the speed limit, no matter what the circumstances.

Mike drove his van for several hours, before entering a rest stop in Arizona. It was nighttime, calm, and the sky was sparkled with twinkling stars. I wanted to ask Mike to find a good motel.

But, I was a bit shy. I mean, we'd just met only hours earlier. I had enough decency and tact to keep my mouth shut about this issue. After all, Mike was the one who was paying the entire tab.

"I'll buy some food for us. Please stay put for a few minutes. I've purchased food items from this grocery store before. Don't worry, they sell cat food.

Gosh, I almost forgot. What's your name?" asked Mike.

"My name is Jody Wilson."

Mike exited his van after our formal introduction. I stayed put until Mike returned with 'our' food. He returned carrying two grocery bags. Instantly, I began to slobber like a hungry lion.

Mike and I ate like princes. Everything that I'd ever dreamed of eating was right before my beautiful eyes. It began to look like Mike was my ticket to riches. Free room and board, comprehensive veterinary medical care, play areas, love, baths, vacations, white picket fence, mansion, bottled water, and overall security.

After finishing our meal, Mike resumed his drive back to Kansas. A couple of hours later, I began to notice that Mike was blinking more frequently, and closing his eyes longer. He was groggy. I couldn't allow him to drive in this condition. Not on the highway! So, I gave him some good advice.

"Mike, it's very dangerous to drive while groggy (DWG). Many people around the world die every year because they fall asleep behind the wheel. Not to mention the countless animals who are bulldozed and flattened by road kill.

Please pull over, so we can get some safe shut-eye," I said.

"Jody, you're an incredible cat! I appreciate your concern for me," said Mike.

As a fugitive cat, I'd need a secure hiding place. Why not with a surgeon? I mean, a cat has a right to look after him/herself, right?

Mike exited the highway, in search of a decent motel. Now, we were both groggy. The more Mike drove, the more likely an accident would occur.

Thankfully, it didn't take long for Mike to find a decent motel. A sign up ahead read: BLUE SKY MOTEL: ABSOLUTELY NO ANIMALS ALLOWED! ESPECIALLY CATS!

As Mike entered the motel premises, I instinctively hid under my seat. I certainly didn't want any motel worker to see me.

Somehow, I felt like the owner intended to use the 'F' word after the 'NO' word. I knew how to play the game. No pooping or peeing on the premises. Also, I won't claw any of the furniture or fixtures.

Mike paid for a week's stay. As soon as Mike returned from the Motel Office, I slithered into his duffel bag then gave him a grin. We were on our way to room number 26. Living on the second floor would be a lot safer than living on the ground floor.

Mike and I slept for several hours, awakening early in the morning. We were hungry and thirsty. Mike decided to go out to get some food. I re-slithered into his duffel bag.

Knowing that the maid would be cleaning the room shortly afterwards, I didn't want to be inside our motel room.

Mike and I ate at Pancake Island. We had pancakes, eggs, milk, juice, toast, jam, margarine, and coffee. It was a meal that I could never forget.

Things went fine for the entire week. We checked out of the Blue Sky Motel at 11:00 A.M., Kansas bound.

As soon as we entered the highway, Mike turned on the radio, adjusting the tuner to KDSA FM 1000. We were now in northeastern Arizona. Mike was taking the scenic route back to Kansas. Otherwise, we would've reached Colorado by then.

KDSA's a soft music station calmed me down considerably. For several hours, Mike and I stayed silent. With a long drive, soft music, and exhaustion, what could we have said?

Mike continued driving until we reached eastern Colorado. He exited the highway then headed for the nearest town.

Napping, Colorado was a somewhat sleepy town. It was exactly what we needed.

Mike and I slept like babies, until we were abruptly awakened by a policeman. He gave Mike a stern warning then advised us to 'move on'.

Mike did just that. He turned on the ignition then drove his van out of Napping city limits.

Somehow, I felt like Mike was hiding something from me. I suspected that it was a dark secret.

Because of my gut feeling, I changed my mind about staying with Mike. Now, I planned to stay with him for only a week. Afterwards, I'd have to continue my trek. Of course, under no circumstances would I tell Mike where I really planned on going.

Suddenly, a shocker just about made me defecate in my seat. I took notice of a freaking roadblock just ahead. In an instant, my pulse and blood pressure shot up through the clouds! I could

see some of the participants clearly. Others were more or less silhouettes. Lucky for me, I had feline vision.

As we got closer to the roadblock, I was certain that it wasn't a 'drunk driver check'. Seven of the Colorado State Troopers (CSTs) were holding their firearms in their hands.

Furthermore, the expression on their faces indicated that they were searching for a very dangerous fugitive, like a cat?

It looked like I was about to be taken in by CSTs. Indeed, they had a composite sketch of me.

"Mike if they see me in this van, you may be arrested for aiding and abetting, or maybe as an accomplice to murder. Who knows? Maybe you'll be charged with multiple counts.

Mike! They may ask you a dozen sensitive questions! Please be alert and ready to lie, if need be!" I exclaimed.

"Jody, you're absolutely right. Quickly, hide underneath your seat. Don't move, sneeze, scratch, or bite anything, especially me!" ordered Mike.

Mike slowly inched his van towards the roadblock. By now, there were only six vehicles in front of us.

I had a gut feeling that something was seriously wrong. I was hoping that 'my gut feeling' was unfounded. Otherwise, a fight or flight response would be called for. Until then, patience was my only virtue.

When Mike's turn came, he stopped his van then waited attentively. For a few seconds, there was nothing but dead silence. Then, a fat CST circled Mike's van.

Although I couldn't see him, I sure-as-hell felt his flabby feet pounding onto the gravel. I wondered why he'd circled the van.

Then, another CST approached Mike's van. This guy pounded Mike with aggressive questions, one-after-another, without any let-up.

After six aggressive questions, the CST began to ease up. "Sir, give me your driver's license and registration. It's imperative that you don't make any sudden moves.

Furthermore, if your cell phone rings, turn the damn thing off! In fact, turn it off, right now! Also, remove your keys from the ignition!" commanded the CST.

"State Trooper, I promise ... I'm a good physician," replied Mike.

"You're a physician? Dr. Michael Von Hauser? I'll tell you what's going on here.

Dr. Von Hauser, we're searching for a 'ferocious' serial killer. She's already brutally murdered eight people in California, beginning with her best friend's man.

Thereafter, she left a trail of blood, sweat, and tears. We've received numerous calls from concerned citizens claiming that they saw Jody Wilson enter a van," said the CST.

"Is that so?" asked Mike.

"That little harlot should be hanged by her ugly tail. Then, she should be skinned alive and left unattended to. Finally, she should be beaten to death. Hardly anyone in this country will shed a tear," said another CST.

"We believe that Jody Wilson's going back to Missouri. We must capture her before she decides to hurt anyone else."

In fact, she's a threat to our entire country. But then, she may decide to go up to Canada and wreak havoc upon our 'northern neighbors'.

By the way, I'm Kansas State Trooper McNabb. My daughter and I are taking a mini-vacation here in Colorado. Although I'm officially off-duty, and not a law man in Colorado, Governor Tally has given me special permission to work with the Colorado Authorities in capturing Jody Wilson.

Governor Tally heard about what'd happened to my daughter. That's probably why he gave me permission to help find that little jezebel, Jody Wilson.

My daughter and I recently had a run-in with Jody Wilson. She needs to be captured, pronto!"

"Come on, daddy! Let's find that little harlot! She harmed me once, never again! I don't want that little harlot to kill any more HUMANS! I don't want her to steal anyone's food, either!" shouted Agnes.

What?! I felt like tearing the van apart from the inside out, then destroying that little geek. Her only friend in the whole world was her father. What a joke!

I bit the bullet. There was no use in dragging Mike into my personal vendettas. Also, any move on my part would've caused an incredible stir. It would guarantee my immediate arrest.

I don't want Jody Wilson to attack me, or anyone else. I just want to get back home in one piece," said Mike.

Agnes approached Mike's van. She had mustard, onion, garlic, mayo, chips, cookies, and pop, on her breath. No doubt, she'd just finished eating a large meal.

I think that she may have had mild suspicions about my presence in the van. She thought that the scent of food on her person would drive me up the wall.

"I was victimized by that little cougar! She snatched my food, from my beautiful hands then brutally mauled me. I'm still having nightmares about the incident!"

If you see her, tell her that I hope she rots in hell!" shouted Agnes.

Mike paused for a moment, said goodbye then drove off. I was now certain that if the authorities ever got their hands on me, they'd burn me at the stake. Like many of my ancestors.

Mike drove for two hours without saying a word. I didn't know what to make of it. Mike knew that I was the 'little harlot' the police searching for.

When Mike broke his silence, I braced myself for a possible verbal confrontation; worse yet, an expulsion from his van.

Would Mike believe my version of what'd really happened? I wondered.

"Jody, I kept my mouth shut about you because I heard a one-sided story. I can't presume you're guilt without knowing the facts. Isn't that right?

I think deep down inside, you're a good cat. You wouldn't kill a human being without a justifiable reason. I just can't believe that you'd kill a human being in cold blood.

I will drive you back to Missouri. In all honesty, I don't think the authorities are expecting you to return to your home state. I think they were just trying to appear 'comprehensive' in their search for you. It may have been a strategy; to confuse you about where they're searching.

One thing's for certain: you can't stay here, or ever go back to the southwest," said Mike.

I placed my forelegs on Mike's right thigh then grinned at him. He glanced at me then sent me a sweet smile. All seemed good.

"Listen, I'll pull over into the next rest stop. You and I should take a long talk. We can clear our heads. Afterwards, I'll take you to Missouri.

I brushed the side of my head against Mike's right bicep, indicating that I was in full agreement. I had to tell him more about myself. After all, he'd treated me so well. I mean, he didn't snitch on me.

Mike turned right at the first exit then drove straight to a rest stop. Thankfully, it only took a few minutes to get there.

Mike entered the rest stop then parked his van in a far off corner. As soon as we exited the van, I pointed my paw in the direction of a mini-park roughly fifty yards away from our position.

Mike and I walked to the park, scanned the area then entered it. We sat on a nearby bench, then I opened-up.

I narrated my whole life's story to Mike, beginning with my birth to the present. I didn't leave anything important out.

It took me three hours to finish the job. Mike interrupted me a few times, for clarification purposes. Aside from that, he was all ears.

"Jody, I think there's something 'fishy' about your life. I think you're a very special cat. I also think that you're destined to enter other timelines and dimensions. Maybe, some of your close friends are like you. I mean it!"

Mike asked me to follow him back to his van, so we could talk freely.

"Jody, I think that the whirling tunnel will always be part of your life. Unless the whirling tunnel is somehow destroyed or vanishes when after you change the timeline."

It almost sounds like the whirling tunnel seeks you! I can't believe that your intimate friends are part of your life by chance.

"Just look back at your life. I'm sure you can find a thing or two that supports what I'm saying," said Mike.

"But, I remember back when I was a little kitty. My mommy and I were inside a cage in a filthy puppy mill. Damn it! I'm from Missouri. I'm an American cat! My siblings were snatched from our cage! I remember this perfectly well!" I shouted.

"Wait! Did you actually see your siblings 'get snatched' from the cage? Do you remember what your mother looked like? Did you ever see your father?" asked Mike.

"No, as you're well-aware, cats don't open their eyes immediately after birth. Naturally, I was blind at the time the incident occurred," I responded.

"No, you weren't blind. You were most likely blindfolded, or maybe you had something pasted in your eyes," said Mike.

I was shocked! Mike was right. I never quite remembered the things that supposedly happened to me. I only remember what my supposed mother had told me. The memories of my mother were inserted into my mind.

"However, this doesn't negate the horrific ordeal that your sweet and loving mother had to endure. There are too many bunchers around! I hate those damn bastards! They can't understand the love that's between a human and an animal!"

Jody, I know that you've heard of the Amber alert. Now, I think that there should be a Mandy alert.

A Mandy alert can be the animal equivalent of the Amber alert. However, I would limit its use to dogs and cats.

Because there are a large number of companion animal thefts each year, I would place the Mandy alert primarily on a national website. Other outlets can also be used," said Mike.

"Mike, you are a genius, and I love you very much! I think that a Mandy alert is long overdue.

"Getting back to my life's story, what about my barfing episodes, and my exhaustion after strenuous activity?" I asked.

"Of course you barfed. You're made out of flesh. Just because you are a timeline/inter dimensional traveler does not make you an iron cat.

Also, I do believe that you did hard time in a stinking puppy mill. But, don't let that bum you out. You hadn't committed any crime/s that justified your being there.

Regarding the whirling tunnel, every single time that you enter it, something in the universe time line will change. Be it small, medium, or large. Or, there could be countless changes. This is an absolute fact.

Mike insisted on examining me. Although he wasn't a veterinarian, he did have a medical degree.

We arrived at Mike's mansion deep into the night. We were exhausted. I couldn't take my beautiful eyes off of Mike's mansion.

It was very large, white, sparkling, and had a well-trimmed lawn, with a three car garage. Best of all there was a white picket fence outlining the perimeter of the front lawn.

Incredibly, there was a gazebo in a far corner of the lawn. This was the mansion that all cats dream of living in.

Mike parked his van inside his garage, turned off the ignition, then sat silent for a minute.

Afterwards, Mike turned to face me then extended his hand in friendship. I raised my right foreleg then placed it on the palm of his hand.

After our hand-paw shake I play-bit Mike's neck. My actions caused Mike to laugh. I wished that all humans were like him.

Sometimes, when a cat play-bites a human, the response is outright aggression. I could never quite understand this peculiar/violent behavior of humans.

After our play-biting routine, Mike petted me between the ears, then on my side. I in turn, rubbed his bicep with the side of my head.

After Mike and I exited the van, he escorted me to a large tree located next to his garage.

Although I couldn't understand why Mike wanted me to go there, he was paying for all of my expenses. So, I went along with it.

Mike motioned me to stay put, while he entered his mansion. He kept me waiting for fifteen minutes. For a brief moment, I contemplated leaving. Thankfully, I decided to stay put.

Mike and a very attractive woman exited the mansion. He'd changed into casual wear; a blue pocket T-shirt, jeans, and black leather shoes. The attractive woman was wearing a beautiful brown dress. Back in her prime, she could've had any man in the whole world. I'm glad that she chose Mike.

As Mike and the attractive woman approached the tree, I detected an abnormality in Mike's pulse; his heart was beating irregularly. In addition, his face appeared pale and gaunt. Sweat was dripping from his forehead at an alarming rate.

I sensed that Mike was about to have a heart attack. I leaped towards Mike, in order to warn him of the oncoming horror.

Unfortunately, as soon as I opened my mouth to speak, Mike fell onto the lawn. His heart and blood circulation had stopped. Mike was dead! There was nothing we could do for Mike.

I'd lost another dear friend. Perhaps, Mike could never be replaced. I'd have to wait and see.

What followed was a depressing spectacle. I'd never forget it! Never!

"Mike, please don't die on me! I think I kind of love you! I need you to be with me! I'm sorry for being an unfaithful wife! I'm sorry I married you for your money! I'm sorry I was impregnated by another man! I'm sorry for brutally killing our parrot! I'm sorry for being such an insensitive bitch! Please, honey, don't die on me!" shouted Mike's widow.

After Mike's widow opened-up, she ran around the lawn, like a wild chicken.

A short while later she finally came to her senses. After pulling out her cell phone, she called 911. But, with all the depression and tension in the air, I couldn't get myself to tell her that Mike had passed away.

A short while later I heard the faint sound of an ambulance siren. Then the dreaded sounds; sirens emanating from two patrol cars.

Yikes, it was time to scram! I slowly crept away, never to be seen by Mike's widow again.

As I was creeping away, I heard another act of treachery. Mike's widow told the police that 'Jody Wilson' had scared her husband to death. I figured she'd had a life insurance policy on her husband. I ended up with another murder charge on my 'rap sheet'.

In addition to becoming a more desperate fugitive, I was now homeless, again. However, I did learn one important lesson: anyone could turn against me, even total strangers. To them, I was a large gold bullion bar.

Because there was a bounty on my head, the best person to trust was Jody Wilson. Just about everyone else was a potential back stabber.

I continued my walk through Kansas without incident. I snatched food, water, and milk, from here and there. Thankfully, on three separate occasions, I was given free food by a few good

Samaritans. I wished there were more of them in the human community.

Not all was good, however. I was burning off too much energy from all the moving and worrying. I needed to consume larger quantities of solids and liquids. I entered Missouri slim and slightly gaunt.

I also developed red eyes. The kind a human gets during jet lag, or after a big night of partying. I took notice of my eyes 'serendipitously' while strolling past a shop window.

Although the earth had changed from the time that I was a resident at Camp Puppy Mill, I was sure that it was still there. I had to return and help the inmates!

I trekked towards the dreaded puppy mill, with the intent on causing some major changes. Somebody had to be punished severely.

I recalled that the puppy mill was somewhere in northwestern Missouri. I walked north for an hour, then due east for several hours.

As I walked through Missouri, I got 'flash memories' from particular places. The terrain, homes, trees, and overall scent of the area, was giving me goose bumps.

As soon as I entered a dirt road off Junction 21 North, I knew that the puppy mill was a short distance away.

I scanned the area then sprinted to the puppy mill, like a cheetah. A mile later, I slowed down to a walking pace. I wasn't a 'SUPERCAT'. What a bummer!

As soon as I began to hear the faint cries of dogs and cats, excitement engulfed my senses.

Indeed, I could now smell the stench and sickness emanating from Camp Puppy Mill. My adrenaline level shot through the clouds. Also, an incredible quantity of blood rushed to my muscles.

I entered the forested area that hid the puppy mill from society. Instead of charging my target, I decided to have something to eat, first. My morals wouldn't be tested in this dreaded puppy mill.

Taking food from this hell-hole was my absolute right and duty! After what I'd endured here? Yes! I deserved countless free meals.

I walked through a treaded path, which cut through the forested area like a scalpel. Now, I could also smell traces of cocaine, crack, heroin, and dope, scattered around the path. No doubt, the puppy mill was only one enterprise for 'the Administrator'. The other was a drug processing and smuggling ring.

As soon as I was within spitting distance of the perimeter fence, the stench of fecal matter, urine, infection, blood,

disinfectant, and rotting flesh, almost overtook me. I turned back then briefly walked away. I almost puked my brains out.

The 'vomit scent' brought back bitter memories. So bitter, I had to hide behind a tree so I could cry my brains out.

I cried for fifteen minutes, before recuperating. I had a very important mission to accomplish.

I scaled a large tree that 'canopied' into the puppy mill. I saw the incredible pain on the faces of many dogs and a few cats that were being punished by a PMW. Indeed, I expected to see much more.

Going through the whirling tunnel had altered the appearance of the puppy mill. It was now considerably larger and a lot smellier.

As I was planning my entry into the puppy mill, I took notice of a 'fatso' security guard eating a jelly donut. She was sitting inside the security booth of the main gate. She was holding her jelly donut in one hand, and a mug of coffee in the other. I could also see a carton of 'goodies' on a round table beside her. I needed to eat, but not a one hundred percent junk food meal.

I leaped into the puppy mill premises, landing next to the security booth. If the security guard had stuck her head out of the window and looked down, she would've seen me.

Many of the puppy mill animals took notice of me. They began to shout in joy. Instantly, I leaped onto the roof of the security booth then squatted down.

The raucous caused the security guard to exit her booth then scan the area. After seeing nothing, she took several steps towards the rowdy animals.

Then she pulled out a canister of mace. After pointing the canister in the general direction of the rowdiest of the animals, they shut their mouths, instantly.

After the raucous died down, I waited patiently for thirty minutes. My first priority was to feed myself.

The security guard exited her booth then walked to the main office building. No doubt, she had to relieve herself. As soon as she was out of sight, I leaped onto the ground then quickly entered the security booth. There, I found a beautiful fridge waiting to be opened.

Suddenly, I froze like a pop sickle, unable to move any of my muscles. The shock of seeing a free-for-all buffet was too much for me.

After recovering from the shock, I crept towards the fridge. Then, I slowly opened the fridge door. I couldn't believe my eyes! There must've been a ton of food inside!

I took out everything that I needed, even a slice of apple pie. I wasn't about to let any good food slip by me.

I enjoyed every single morsel and drop that entered my body, especially the two jelly donuts that I had for dessert.

After finishing my meal, I resumed my mission. But, I had to tell the puppy mill animals not to make a raucous while I was preparing for their escape.

I ran towards a group of caged animals that were placed in front of Shed C. I told them what they needed to know.

"Please, listen to me! I don't want you to alert any of the PMWs of my presence. I'm here to get you out! But, you must be patient with me. I must remove the threat then you can all be free!"

As I was explaining my strategy to the puppy mill animals, four PMWs exited the main office building.

A skinny, ugly man who was wearing a navy blue suit appeared to be in charge. He was walking like a proud peacock. The other men followed him like puppies.

"Hey, I need to sell that dummy cat over there to one of my special clients; someone who'll pay a hundred bucks for her. She's a prize purebred!"

On the 'official market', I could easily get a thousand bucks for her.

Listen, I've got money coming out of my ass. I can retire soon. But, I need to go to Asia first. I can make a good killing.

I want to purchase many exotic animals. I'll sell them to my special clients. Afterwards, I'll retire up in Canada," said the man in charge.

"Mr. Administrator, you are one hell of a guy! I love you because you're so freaking cool," said a PMW.

"Tubs thanks a lot for the 'reality statement'.

In these parts, I've got a 'secret pal' who tips me off every time the authorities prepare for a sting operation against me.

Look, I absolutely love my country. I'm giving my fellow citizens an opportunity to purchase companion animals at an incredible discount.

Damn it! I'm not a freaking 'animal pimp'! I hate it when people call me that!" shouted the Administrator.

"Yes, Mr. Administrator. Whatever you say is always correct. Also, anything that we say that contradicts what you say is always wrong.

We'll have to get rid of these puppy mill creatures in the near future.

Maybe, we should have a super sale? Like fifty percent off for three consecutive days. The rest of the animals can be poisoned, burned, then scattered throughout the forested area," said Tubs.

"Tubs, you're close to being my favorite bunker. You're right. I want you guys to sell off as many of the puppy mill animals as you can, before I return from my trip to Asia.

I'm leaving tomorrow evening, and I'll be back in three weeks. Once again, I want this place to be empty and devoid of all animal life.

If any animal puts up a fight or becomes too defiant, use physical force to repulse him/her. Lethal force, if need be.

You guys know where the firearms are. Right?" asked the Administrator.

"Yes, we certainly do," answered Tubs.

I had a change of heart. Although my primary intent was to liberate all of the puppy mill animals, I decided to play it safe. I was a wanted cat. If I destroyed the puppy mill, beat-up several workers, then allowed the animals to escape, the authorities would make it their number one priority to capture me, dead or alive, with even more tenacity.

Even the scumbag Administrator was 'less wanted' than I was.

As I was beginning to leave the puppy mill, I yet had another change of heart.

However, my new game plan called for one 'offensive action' against the puppy mill. Then, I'd be on my way.

I cautiously approached Shed G. After ensuring that the coast was clear, I slowly entered the shed. I figured that one escaped animal from this hell-hole was a loss to the Administrator. Good enough for me!

#### 'PRETTY BOY' RATOS

Instantly, I got the shock of my life! In a cage that was located in a neutral corner was a rat feasting on a canine carcass.

The rat had somehow squeezed his body through the cage bars. He looked like he was really enjoying himself. Too much for his own good.

You see, he'd eaten so much 'carcass flesh' squeezing out through the cage bars was now impossible, unless he was helped by a beautiful kitty.

I slowly approached the rat, making sure not to appear overly aggressive, or angry. I only wanted to converse with him. Although I'd never accepted the idea of a rat chomping down on a dog, I had important things to say.

As soon as I was within spitting distance of the cage, I began to converse with the rat.

"You must be very hungry in order to risk your life by eating that dog. If a PMW were to enter this shed, it'll be curtains for you.

Indeed, rats can eat almost anything. This is one of the main reasons why your species has survived through countless horrific ordeals.

Rats are almost as resilient as roaches. In fact, some cats believe that rats are actually 'fleshy roaches'.

Just a few words of advice: don't plan on moving up to Alberta, Canada. The Provincial Government of Alberta has done an incredible job of 'controlling' its rat population.

I don't want you to eat too much. You may end up looking like a snake that'd swallowed a cow. You'll be bulging all over. In addition, you'll be too big to run away from the PMWs.

Even now, you're too big to squeeze through the cage bars. Don't worry, I'll help you.

I shall liberate at least one animal from this stinking Camp. This puppy mill should be erased, permanently! It's an insult to the concept of mercy and compassion. No animal should serve time in this place.

Any animal who serves time in this puppy mill will have lifelong scars; physical and mental. Now, 'Mr. Rat', please tell me your story," I requested.

"My name is Pretty-Boy Ramos. In the rat world, I'm a pretty boy. I'm not ashamed of being so good looking. Actually, it's an asset. After all, who wants to be ugly?

Listen the rat empire is enormous. Wherever there's food, rats and roaches are there. Rats and roaches were there when Columbus and Cortes landed on the shores of this hemisphere.

Rats and roaches slithered off the ships with the humans, animals, and cargo. As soon we landed ashore, the entire hemisphere was ours. In essence, we became permanent residents.

Thereafter, we proceeded to colonize this hemisphere, as our forefathers and foremothers had colonized other parts of the world.

Nobody can defeat us! We're still around in Alberta, but fewer in numbers. That is, compared to the recent past. You see, we're waiting. One day, we shall return to Alberta in full force!"

"You really think so?" I asked.

"Come on, kitty! We're just taking a breather. As soon as an opportunity arises, we'll return," said Pretty-Boy.

"By the way, I'm Jody Wilson. I apologize for interrupting your meal. I would like to get to know you. Where are you from?" I asked.

"I'm from New York. I'm a big city rat. Don't forget that. From the moment that I was born other rats sensed that I was special. Also, they could see that I was good looking.

You know the story. I lived a rough-and-tumble life on the tough streets of New York; competing with internal and external enemies. Not knowing when or where my next meal was going to come from, or if I was going to be knocked off by a rat exterminator.

Exterminators are of our worst enemies. Rats hate their guts! They enter our 'hood' in order to kill us off. Other kinds of exterminators destroy roaches. If roaches go, we'll fill the vacuum.

To put it into perspective, rat exterminators are the equivalent of your VCOs. No stray animal should ever trust, or befriend a VCO.

VCOs are paid to capture and/or kill animals. It depends on the jurisdiction, the species of the animal/s, and the general circumstances. In some regions, animals may be spayed or neutered. But don't count on it.

During my prime, I hit many grocery stores, supermarkets, hotels, motels, homes, and malls. Although malls were my favorite targets, security's a bit tight therein.

Whenever I spotted a nice place, I'd sneak inside then wait for the right moment. Usually, I had to wait until after hours.

Unfortunately, as time passed, I became more ambitious, pompous, and overconfident. I began to 'hit' establishments during working hours. I'd wait until the chef wasn't looking, before making my move.

In the beginning, I was batting a thousand. Unfortunately, as time passed, the authorities and business owners became aware of my activities.

In fact, NYPD, FBI, and the NYBI (New York Bureau of Investigation), developed composite sketches of me.

Jeepers, they posted my composite sketches on their official websites and in U.S. Post Offices across the country. Not to mention, the countless window shops, telephone poles, and whatever else.

It took two whole years for the governors of the fifty states to place a reward for my capture: DEAD OR ALIVE. Absolutely no questions asked.

The 'dreaded day' occurred on a cold Tuesday morning, in early January. I entered a Greek restaurant from the back door, thinking about my free meal. What was I going to eat? I wondered.

As soon as I entered Victor's Gyros House, I leaped onto the nearest counter then snatched a large slice of Greek-style pizza.

I ended up hiding underneath a large table. Nearby, a pudgy chef was preparing a gigantic bowl of Greek Salad.

By some strange coincidence, the pudgy chef accidentally dropped a utensil onto the floor. As he leaned over to pick up the utensil, he took 'immediate notice' of my presence. We locked eyes for a few seconds.

To make matters worse, a large slab of pizza cheese was dangling from the side of my mouth. Furthermore, I was chewing on a large swath of pizza.

The chef went ballistic! I still can't understand why he cursed me, my ancestors, and my entire species. I stood there with a mouthful of food, clutched between my powerful incisors and jaws. While he was cursing me, I was chomping down on tasty pizza.

"You freaking bastard! How dare you come into my kitchen then help yourself to my delicious food! I curse you! You and your entire freaking family! You! I know that you're like me! You're from the 'Greek Isles'! How dare you insult our Greek heritage and culture!" shouted the pudgy chef.

Without warning, the pudgy chef reached for a hatchet, then began to swing it at me. I hauled-ass! The pudgy chef chased me, like an enraged rhino.

The pudgy chef chased me through the busy streets of downtown New York. I ran like hell, trying my best evade him.

Meanwhile, the pudgy chef continued his pursuit. I was so terrified, I ended-up running in a zigzag pattern, like an antelope evading a predator.

Shockingly, after running for five full blocks, the chef began to call on fellow New Yorkers to chase me down. He informed him that I was the 'real McCoy'. That was the nickname the FBI had given me.

Instantly, every John, Dick, Harry, and Sally, joined in the pursuit. I found myself being chased down by a large swarm of humans. I guess they'd had their own problems with rats.

We've got a terrible reputation in the human community; in case you didn't notice. To them, we look ugly, scary, and cunning. Well, they look the same to us.

I ended up running a total of twenty five blocks, before ditching the swarm of humans. I ended up taking shelter inside an abandoned building that smelled as sweet as a sewer. It already had residents inside; animals only. Their 'scents' were quite noticeable.

I spent several days inside the abandoned building, making sure to evade the other residents. I was demoted to eating measly scraps, and licking droplets of water, from leaky pipes. The water was 'infested' with rust.

Soon, my appetite grew exponentially. I was alone, tired, confused, and wanted to leave New York. In fact, I had to leave the east coast.

It wasn't like I didn't love my home town. Jody, I was born in New York! In addition to my being wanted by the local, state, and federal authorities, Officer Carey became a big thorn in my side.

Officer Carey was a cop on the beat who had a 'snoopy personality'. He knew what was going on in the entire downtown district of New York. His number one mission in life was to capture me: DEAD OR ALIVE.

Officer Carey was the typical old time cop on the beat. He had a pot belly, and carried a big gun, mace, and a night stick. I'd seen him use his night stick on humans and rats.

By late January, I became incredibly desperate for some real food and drink. My hunger became quite unbearable.

Venturing out of the abandoned building became an unbearable necessity. Deep down, I knew that the game was over. It was only a matter of time before I had to leave New York.

I started creeping through the countless New York alleyways, in search of something to eat and drink. Luckily, I chose a Saturday night to make my biggest move.

The neighborhood was swarming with humans. There was much partying and eating. With the dining came much food tossing. Areas near the dumpsters were full of goodies. However, I still wanted to eat fresh foods.

While creeping through one specific alley, I took notice of puke on the ground. Puke is something that I could never eat. I walked around it then wished that I was never hungry enough to eat it, or anything similar to it, for that matter.

As I continued my search for food, a sudden jolt hit my olfactory senses. I 'scented' vanilla cake emanating from Stanley Harper's Steakhouse.

Although Harper's is famous for its steaks, that vanilla cake was driving me nuts!

I planned on having steak, fries, salad, and a drink. Then, I'd have a gigantic slice of vanilla cake for dessert.

Jody, I love my steak medium, with lots of ketchup. Absolutely, no steak sauce!

I crept into the alley behind Harper's Steakhouse, searching for a way inside. Although there was plenty of 'garbage food' nearby, I completely ignored it. Back in those days, I only ate uppity foods, if the circumstances permitted. Only when I had no other choice in the matter, did I resort to lowering my standards.

Thankfully, the kitchen door was slightly ajar. As I approached it, my heartbeat began to flutter. If I'd been a dog, the foam and drool in my mouth would've dangled to the ground.

Taking advantage of the moment, I entered through the opening then headed straight to my food source. I felt like a grizzly bear following a scent.

After carefully scanning the kitchen, I zoomed-in on a slab of steak that had been placed on a large white plate. I couldn't have cared less about who'd ordered the steak. Now, it was mine!

The two chefs and the assistant in the kitchen were very busy preparing the orders.

I quickly scaled the food counter. Then, with calculated precision, I bit into my steak, one bite after another. It was so nice!

Unfortunately, I made the fatal mistake of taking my eyes off the kitchen staff. Once again, I'd become too pompous and too overconfident for my own good. I should have known better.

Shockingly, my arch nemesis Officer Carey entered the kitchen. Apparently, he'd been tipped off about my presence.

I knew who'd tipped off Officer Carey. It was that creep Vincent 'The Snitch' Rodentsky.

Rodentsky was a no-good, nothing! He'd tried to take over my turf on five separate occasions. I beat him senseless each time. Now, he had a very strong ally.

"Ratos, freeze, don't freaking move! Or try anything stupid! If you do, I'll kill you where you stand!" shouted Officer Carey.

After I froze, Officer Carey gave me a boring lecture about the horror and sin of terrorizing the citizens of New York. He'd made it clear to me that I was finished. I wasn't going to be an incredible rat anymore.

Then, I moved. After wolfing down what was left of my steak, I leaped onto the kitchen floor.

Afterwards, I cautiously approached Officer Carey. As soon as I got to within an inch of the tips of his shoes, I stopped dead in my tracks. After looking up at him straight in the face, I waited patiently for a response.

Officer Carey's face turned red, then chalky white. He was shocked at my audacity and boldness. He couldn't quite understand why I was a proud rat. The food that I'd snatched was 'mine' for the eating. Didn't he know that I was one of New York's proudest rats?

Officer Carey began to jab his finger in my head. Then, he systematically insulted me.

"You, you're an insult to this country! You're an insult to New York! You're an insult ... period!"

You're a two-bit sewer rat, who's got no real friends! You're finished!" shouted Officer Carey.

That was the last straw. I was just about to launch an attack against Officer Carey, when a mean-spirited German shepherd entered the kitchen.

Like other 'sell-outs', he was a no-good sell-out. NYPD made this dog think that he was a VIP of some sort.

Some retired police dogs spend the rest of their lives in utter disgrace and boredom. One retired police dog in Alaska was holed-up inside a pen. A concrete pen ... indefinitely.

The 'sell-out' snarled at me then looked up at Officer Carey for reassurance. Indeed, it was a despicable sight.

A short while later three police officers entered the kitchen. One of the police officers was carrying written orders from Mayor Hank Richards. The orders were for me: LEAVE THE EAST COAST, OR YOU'LL BE EXECUTED! IMMEDIATELY!

Officer Carey grinned then gave 'his buddies' thumbs up. Then, he waved me over to the double doors leading out of the kitchen.

I left the kitchen, a sad and lonely rat. I couldn't understand the mayor's spastic reaction. For me, it meant a one way trip to the Midwest.

Jody, I was utterly shocked! After all, I was born in this country! Forced transfer was an act of cruelty.

As soon as I exited Harper's Steakhouse it started to rain heavily. Then, it 'metamorphosed' into a terrible thunderstorm. I had to keep moving.

As soon as I was out of New York City limits, I ran to Reinhold's Gas Station. Because the thunderstorm was so horrific, many of the stores and businesses closed early. Hardly anyone was out driving. That's very surprising, considering what part of the country I was in.

I entered the premises of Reinhold's Gas Station then hid behind a dumpster for close to an hour. I decided to do one last job, for 'goodbye-New York's Sake'.

Jody, I'd burned off countless calories from my long walk. I needed nourishment!

I cautiously crept around 'the establishment', looking for a way in. Luckily there was a hole in the snack shop window. It looked like someone had thrown a big rock into the window.

As soon as I entered the snack shop, I searched for food. Thankfully, I found strips of beef jerky, chips, juice, milk, pop, water bottles, and pastries on numerous shelves and in the glass fridge. Naturally, I pigged out until I was completely sated.

After finishing my extravagant meal I glanced at a brown clock on the wall. It was 7:30 P.M.

Surprisingly, it was still pouring outside. In effect, I had to stay inside Reinhold's Gas Station snack shop until the sky cleared. Regardless, I had to keep an eye out for cops, and 'Mr. Reynolds'.

I goofed around till 9:00 P.M. Then, I closed my eyes. Believe me, I slept like a baby.

I was awakened at midnight by a night terror! The night terror caused me to run around like a terrified mouse. I was screaming my head off! Luckily, I came to my senses.

In my night terror, Officer Carey, who was the monster, was chasing me around New York City. Thank GOD, he only got to within a foot of me. That's when I awakened.

After eating my second meal, I exited Reinhold's Gas Station. I wasn't taking any chances. If I'd been seen by an officer of the law, every available FBI agent, along with state and local officers, would've converged upon me, like flies on a pile of dung.

I continued my trek for several miles, before spotting a nice 24-hour restaurant. I crept towards it then hid behind a large tree adjacent to the restaurant parking lot.

After waiting for twenty five minutes, a man driving a blue Pontiac pulled into a parking space just a few feet away from me. It was my golden opportunity!

As soon as the driver exited his Pontiac, I leaped inside the narrow opening in one of the windows. Although it was still raining, the intensity had diminished considerably.

Luckily, the blue Pontiac had Missouri license plates. It was my lucky day. The Midwest was far enough from New York to give me a needed rest.

The driver returned to his blue Pontiac thirty minutes later, satiated and smelling like burgers, fries, ice cream, pop, and beer. What drove me crazy was that he brought back extra food with him.

After entering his vehicle, the driver reached over to the back of the Pontiac, then opened his mini-fridge. Then, he put a tuna sandwich, carton of milk, bag of chips, pop bottle, and several fruits inside the mini-fridge. Afterwards, he closed the door. Indeed, the driver was saving his food for a rainy day.

Unfortunately, the driver re-opened his mini-fridge then removed a 'hazardous substance' from his mini-fridge. He'd removed a large bottle of beer.

If the driver had been sober, he would've taken notice of me. The driver ended up guzzling one beer after another.

Although he kind of swerved his Pontiac a few times, I was too famished to stop him.

I slithered towards the mini-fridge then slowly opened its door. I proceeded to remove what I wanted to consume. Thank goodness, there was more than enough food to satisfy my hunger.

This game went on for two days, until we finally arrived at 'my final destination'. Luckily, it happened right after I chomped down on my last morsel.

As soon as the driver rolled down his window, I snick a quick peek to determine exactly where we were. I got the shock of my life! The sign in front of the security gate summed it all up: WELCOME TO CAMP PUPPY MILL.

There was another shocker to come.

"Mr. Administrator, welcome back to Camp Puppy Mill," said the security guard.

Instantly, I placed myself on red alert! If the Administrator had found out that I was inside his car, I would've been hanged! On the spot!

Jody, the scent of death had encased itself around Camp Puppy Mill. Many animals therein had already died; others would die later. I didn't want to be one of those poor creatures.

The Administrator exited his Pontiac, then 'commanded' a PMW to carefully drive 'the vehicle' to the camp garage.

A short while later I found myself inside the puppy mill garage. I slithered out of the Pontiac then cautiously exited the garage. There were two mechanics nearby, stripping a Mercedes. Thankfully, they didn't take notice of me.

Jody, my first week at Camp Puppy Mill was extremely difficult. I didn't feel at home. I was still a city rat at heart.

Jody, I had to sneak inside the 'slop kitchen', snatch some food then scram. I had to do this whenever I felt hungry and/or thirsty. The food was 'below par' even for a tough city rat. The slop kitchen contained food that was to be given to the puppy mill animals.

The good food was padlocked inside the executive kitchen. The executive kitchen was protected by four surveillance cameras. Also, a stern warning that was written on a big sign in front of the porch: ANY ANIMAL CAUGHT INSIDE THE EXECUTIVE KITCHEN WILL BE BEATEN TO DEATH! ESPECIALLY, IF IT'S YOU!

I dared not sneak inside the executive kitchen for many weeks. Then, I broke! I couldn't eat slop anymore.

It took me several days of diligent thinking to form a game plan for entering the executive kitchen. I believed that the stern warning on the sign was true and would be enforced, without exception.

Indeed, the Administrator would've set a terrifying example to the other animals in the puppy mill. In addition, I wasn't an official resident of the facility. Pleading for mercy would only cause more pain and suffering. I'd seen acts of cruelty and guffaws go hand in hand. The PMWs would enjoy watching a city rat being tortured. Jeepers, they'd probably eat popcorn while watching the spectacle. I mean, I'd be like the black cat that was named Nigger.

The water given to puppy mill animals had tiny creatures floating in it. The Administrator never gave a damn about any of the puppy mill animals.

Just look at the sorry spectacles in this puppy mill. They're so out of it. The stench alone tells a million stories. Even a tough city rat has his limits.

HUMANS DON'T UNDERSTAND WHAT IT'S LIKE TO BE AN ANIMAL,  
UNDER HUMAN DOMINATION!

Jody, we're both animals. It's easy for you to know where I'm coming from," said Pretty-Boy.

I ended up telling Pretty-Boy my life's story, too. I opened-up to a city rat.

"Jody, I want you to leave this hell-hole, immediately! As soon as a storm approaches, enter the whirling tunnel, then leave! I'm dead serious! I know that every time you enter the whirling tunnel, the time line will change.

Jody you are an extremely beautiful cat. And, I think that deep down inside, you have a beautiful heart.

As such, I think that you should go back in time and try to correct some of the errors that you know about. Think about the terrible event/s that changed Cynthia Corbett's life, forever. Of course, you must enter the whirling tunnel backwards, and think really hard about the past. Remember, you're going back in time.

Thinking about the gang-rape very hard will most likely help you get back to that time period, and to that general location. Then, you can help save Cynthia, Corey, and even Jeff. Maybe, the next time around, Jeff will be a sweet guy. Maybe, he and Cynthia will tie the knot.

Cynthia Corbett's an incredible woman. You mustn't let her get away from you.

Jody, Cynthia's calling you a 'little harlot' was only a response to incredible physical and psychological pain, and turmoil. I'm sure she didn't mean it from the bottom of her heart.

We don't know how Cynthia really feels about her ordeal. There are certain secrets that are too painful to be told to others. That's the painful truth of life.

I think deep down inside Cynthia Corbett is a kind-hearted person. She perceived you as hurting her, and deceiving her; just like those creeps who 'did her' back in college.

You and Cynthia have an 'electrical bond'. You gals belong together, always.

Jody, I must finish off this carcass. Oh, regarding the executive kitchen, I never built up enough courage to enter it.

As soon as I finish my meal, I'll enter the forested area. Then, I'll try to develop a game plan to live elsewhere. I've had a change of heart; I plan to go out west.

Jody, I'd like to give you a stern warning: last week, the Administrator had a motion detector and several new 'hidden cameras' installed on the Perimeter fence of the puppy mill. The Administrator probably saw you enter 'his territory'.

No doubt, the Administrator knows about the reward for your capture. He'll want to apprehend you at the best possible moment. He and his associates are forming a game plan for this occasion.

Jody, I'm glad that we're friends. Under other circumstances we'd probably be at each other's throats. In fact, some elderly rats refer to cats as backstabbing carnivores, who never say thank you after they've gotten what they can off of another person.

But, if we (rats and cats) ever united, life would be much easier. There'd be much more food to go around, and we'd be one step closer to dominating this world. Now, wouldn't that be nice?" asked Pretty-Boy.

"Jeepers, that sure as hell would!" I exclaimed.

I took a very long look at the emaciated animals in our shed. They were so pathetic-looking. Also, they were disgusted by Pretty-Boy's eating of the canine carcass.

Well, Pretty-Boy ended up consuming most of the carcass. As a result, Pretty-Boy was too bloated to fit through the cage bars.

For a brief moment, I forgot about Pretty-Boy's bloating.

Pretty-Boy, let's go to the water fountain located near the Administrator's office. I'm very thirsty! Please, let's go.

Remember, we must be careful. The drinking fountain is for human use only," I said.

As soon as Pretty-Boy tried to squeeze through the cage bars, it became apparent to us that he was simply too 'inflated' to squeeze through.

We decided to join forces. We used all of our strength to slowly pull apart two cage bars, bending each one away from the other. Afterwards, I motioned Pretty-Boy to exit through the opening.

Thankfully, Pretty-Boy was able to leave the cage without scraping his body against either cage bar.

"We shall stroll through this puppy mill, without making a sound. Warning: beware of sell-outs! They're placed in strategic areas.

Also, if the incarcerated animals are excited by our presence, pandemonium will ensue. Then, you can kiss our fresh water goodbye," said Pretty-Boy.

Pretty-Boy gave me a piggy-back ride, on the condition that if we we're spotted, I had to immediately leap off of his back, then each of us would flee the area. I agreed.

Pretty-Boy carried me to the water fountain. Pretty-Boy knew exactly where each of the cameras was located. Therefore, he walked zigzag, in the path of the blind spots.

Sadly, Pretty-Boy and I knew that we'd have to go our own separate ways. H

He'd convinced me to prevent the gang-rape of Cynthia. She was too precious to lose. My urge to pounce on the evil Administrator, and his lieutenants, would have to be thwarted. There would be not physical confrontations.

Anyhow, Pretty-Boy and I had our fill of fresh, cool water. I'd never tasted anything so nice before.

Luckily, the canine sentries were sleeping on the job. Also, a technician was servicing the motion detectors. I had to leave soon!

We said our goodbyes, cried, then parted ways. It was truly a very depressing scene. Deep down inside, I knew that things had to be that way. Pretty-Boy was from one earth, while I was from another.

My insides were almost drowning in water. Perhaps I drank two liter's worth. No wonder, I felt like a snake that'd just swallowed a zebra calf.

I was able to walk out of the puppy mill without being noticed. The security guard at the Main Gate was sound asleep.

Thankfully, water goes down the system really fast. Unlike food which takes considerably more time.

## ON THE RUN

As soon as I reached the forested area, I urinated until my bladder was completely emptied.

Meanwhile, a Doberman sentry had already taken notice of me leaving Camp Puppy Mill. First, he shouted terrible obscenities at me. Then, he sounded the alarm. Before I realized what was happening, a siren went off. It sounded like a bomb drill.

For the moment, I couldn't move. I was urinating on a tree. As soon as my bladder had been emptied, I entered ever so deeper into the forested area. It wasn't enough.

Two Bloodhounds, a Terrier, and that dreaded Doberman, were let loose. Their orders were to bring me back to the Administrator, alive, but mauled.

I became extremely anxious and apprehensive. Even my muscles began to twitch.

As I continued running ever so deeply into the forested area, I began to pant heavily. For a second, I thought that my pursuers were going to catch me.

Why was I so tired? Maybe, it was because I was under extraordinary stress.

A short while later I lost consciousness. Fortunately, it began to rain. The rain obliterated my tracks and my scent.

Upon awakening, I puked my brains out. The utter anxiety, shock, fear, and intense chase, was too much for me.

I understood how terribly difficult it would be for an animal to escape Camp Puppy Mill. I escaped out of sheer luck.

If I'd been captured, lynching would've been the end result. Just like many of my ancestors.

The extreme anger and rage I felt for the PMWs was never going to fade away. As such, I decided to knock one head in; the Administrator's.

I retraced my steps back into the puppy mill then headed straight to the Administrator's residence. It took me about ten minutes to arrive at his porch.

After determining that the Administrator was alone, I scanned the puppy mill grounds then leaped through a window opening.

I landed inside the Administrator's living room. The blue carpet I was treading on was very soft and beautiful.

The Administrator was in the television room. I crept towards him until I reached the entrance of the television room. The Administrator was seated on his reclining chair, eating a full-course meal: salmon, fries, pop, garden salad, and dessert.

I leaped onto the Administrator's neck then proceeded to take him down. The Administrator fell onto the blue carpet. For a few seconds, there was nothing but absolute silence. I released my grip on the Administrator's neck then rolled him over onto his back.

Standing on his sternum, I cursed him, mercilessly. In turn, the Administrator snarled at me. Then, he told me that his 'friends' in the underworld knew exactly how to take care of a little kitty. I took his statement as a direct threat.

After thinking about my options, I decided to 'hamburger eyes' the Administrator. 'Hamburger eye/s' is an old boxing term that refers to a puffy-black eye caused by being punched.

After beating up the Administrator, I dashed out of his residence then exited Camp Puppy Mill, heading straight to the forested area.

I decided to cut through the forested area, without any delay. It took a good twenty minutes for me to get to the perimeter of Junction 47 East.

Upon entering Junction 47 East, I trekked on the shoulder of the road.

Honestly, I was hoping that a Samaritan would come to my rescue. However, if there was any trouble, I'd leap to my right, then escape. The last thing I needed was to bring more attention unto myself. Any fighting incurred would do just that.

I continued walking for an hour, until a driver of a huge semi pulled over into the shoulder of the road, fifty feet ahead of me.

I slowed down then approached the semi with extreme caution. I wanted to believe that the driver of the semi was a Samaritan

"Hey kitty, do you happen to need a ride to Kentucky?" the driver asked.

I was utterly exhausted. I couldn't say no. I even had to strain myself just to get into the semi. Luckily, my tenacity paid off. Kentucky, here we come!

"Kitty, you look like you've been recently chased by a pack of hyenas. By golly, you're shivering. Don't be afraid, kitty.

I'm going to remove a breakfast bar from my glove compartment," said the driver.

"Please, 'Billy-Bob', or whatever your name is! Put your semi into drive then move on!" I exclaimed.

"All right, kitty. Whatever you say," responded the driver. The driver did as I asked him to do.

"I appreciate your southern hospitality," I said.

"I'm Chuck Granger. I'm from Funstone, Alabama. For now, I'm heading to Stormville, Kentucky. This is my last haul. You see, I just turned sixty five. Well, I've got to retire.

Folks in Stormville are friendly to humans. I don't think they'll take too kindly to a stray cat, like you. Family cats are another matter, altogether.

After I make this haul, I'll drive back to my sweet home of Alabama. I must retire in the Deep South. You see, I'm a closet Confederate."

"I've seen open Confederates before, but not too many closet ones. Jeepers, I've seen them all!" I exclaimed.

At 9:00 P.M., Chuck exited Junction 47 East then entered a dirt road. Fifteen minutes later, we reached Stormville, Kentucky; POPULATION FIVE THOUSAND.

Chuck entered Rawlings Street then pulled over near the curb. He turned off the ignition then opened his icebox. He removed a carton of milk then poured its contents into a large green bowl.

After placing bowl beside me, he motioned me to drink up a storm. I did just that.

Meanwhile, Chuck pulled out a cold-cut sandwich, orange juice, and several fruits. He placed the food on his thighs, and the orange juice in a bottle rack.

Chuck ate his meal and drank his orange juice, with a grin on his face. Chuck enjoyed my company; at least for the time being.

After Chuck burped, I leaped onto his right thigh then gently pawed his face. After each pawing, I glanced over at the ice box, signifying that I needed more nourishment. Chuck, being a kind-hearted man, instantly got the message.

Chuck re-opened the ice box then reached deep inside, in order to remove a roast beef sandwich, chips, and some candy. I ate all three with delight.

After I finished my meal, Chuck turned on the ignition then continued his drive through Stormville.

After clearing the food particles from my mouth, I thanked Chuck for being such a kind human. He, in turn, thanked me for being a well-behaved passenger.

"Chuck, you've been so kind to me. I thank you from the bottom of my heart. Please, when you finish your assignment, go back to Alabama and enjoy your retirement.

But don't forget the name Jody Wilson," I said.

"Jody, I'll neither forget you, nor your beautiful name. I've got three cats at home. Unfortunately, they pale in comparison to you. Jeepers, you're a 'goody cat', " said Chuck.

A short while later, Chuck pulled over into a deserted area, then slept. I did likewise.

Upon awakening, we said our goodbyes then I exited the semi. I fell into a temporary state of depression. It was so painful leaving Chuck, I couldn't even glance back at him. I wanted to forget him; once and for all.

Being a fugitive will make it hard to make trustworthy friends. A bounty can turn a family member or a friend into a snitch. Hell, I'd probably turn into a snitch, if the circumstances were a bit different.

I continued my walk with a scorching sun hitting me like a ton of bricks. Maybe, I suspected that the sun had a personal vendetta against me.

Maybe, it was punishing me for my ill-deeds. Either way, I had to find cover.

Thankfully, I spotted a large tree located on an extravagant piece of real estate. Indeed, the owners were millionaires. I had no time to ponder about the morality of shading under 'their tree'. I just went ahead and did it.

I was so 'bummed-out' and depressed, it seemed like the only thing to do was sleep. Furthermore, the scorching sun was something I did not want to take notice of.

I closed eyes, falling into a deep sleep, consisting of one dream after another. For the time being, I was free from the troubles of this world. Often times, good dreams are hard to come by.

As they say, all good things must come to an end. I was awakened by the chatting of a large contingent of humans. Yikes! They were converging upon my resting place.

Worse yet, I knew at least two of them! And, they weren't friendly, either.

The worst thing that could've happened to me did happen. My two worst enemies in the whole world were right there, before my very own eyes.

"Look, daddy! There's that little cougar again. This time we'll do it right! I don't want that little cougar to get away. I want her behind bars, in shackles. For the rest of her miserable, cougar-life!"

Daddy, let's send her to a run-down, dingy, stinky shelter. A shelter that has the death penalty! Indeed, a place where the workers are cruel and uncaring to the animals in their care.

Daddy, this shelter must be overpopulated, understaffed, dirty, and located in a dilapidated, high-crime, neighborhood.

After that little cougar has been tormented enough, she'll be put to sleep. Daddy, I'd really like it if things worked out that way," said Agnes.

Before I knew it, one hundred officers of the law descended upon me. How the hell did they find me? Was it Chuck? I wondered.

Agnes put some bubble gum into her mouth then blew a big bubble. Afterwards, she grinned at me. Thankfully, the bubble became so large, it burst in her face.

I couldn't help but 'guffaw' my brains out. Well, that was a fatal error!

Agnes charged my tree, like a bull charges a mortal enemy. Shockingly, she pulled out a large kitchen knife from her panties then brandished it in my face.

If that wasn't enough, Agnes started ranting about how evil I was.

Although, she was next to my tree, her tree scaling abilities were pathetic.

Afterwards, the 'entire group' charged me like bison on the run. Three officers removed their firearms from their holsters. In response, I fled!

I leaped onto the grass, did a U-turn then hauled ass! I kept on running and running, without any let-up.

Indeed, it was a close call. Bullets zoomed by me like hail from the sky. I was incredibly lucky not to have been shot. Otherwise, I would've been a dead goose.

I kept glancing back to see where my pursuers were. Those creeps called-in for backup. Sirens were going off in all directions. Thankfully, there were no Bloodhounds in the area. Bloodhounds would've sniffed me out.

After running a full twenty blocks, it appeared as though I was finally in the clear. Instantly, I slowed down to a walking pace. Panting my brains out, I had to find a good hiding place. Honestly, if I had to run another block or two, I would've puked my brains out. Really!

Thankfully, I spotted a tiny opening underneath a house. As soon as I was within a few inches of the opening, I squeezed my beautiful body through it.

I found myself in a large basement that contained a fridge and a faucet. I dashed to the fridge, yanked open the door, then tossed 'my food' and 'my liquids' onto the floor.

After engulfing my meal, I poked several holes into a carton of 2 percent milk. Then, I consumed the contents, entirely.

Lastly, I jabbed several holes into a plastic water bottle. Thankfully, I was able to finish off the contents.

Afterwards, I turned over onto my side, and played cat games with an imaginary friend. I looked like a miniature lion that'd just eaten a large slab of meat.

I stayed put for many hours, eating and drinking to the point of satiation.

As soon as I was sure that it was safe to exit the basement, I did just that.

Shockingly, three shots were fired at me! I ran left, then right, then, in a semi-circle. I was confused!

Before my beautiful eyes were hundreds of national guardsmen and officers of the law. Somehow, I'd lost consciousness for a few seconds. I awakened in a state of utter daze. Also, my eyes were glazed. Luckily, my senses returned to normal a short while later.

To my utter shock, four FBI agents charged me. They looked like crazy bulls. Instantly, I mustered up all of my strength then leaped onto the roof of the house.

As soon as my paws landed on the roof, I ran to the other side. After scanning the area, I leaped onto the lawn. Now, I found myself in the back yard of the house.

With absolutely no time to waste, I fled the area, but not before more officers arrived at the scene. That's not all that arrived, however. A terrible storm hit the entire area like a ton of bricks. The clouds were dark and terrifying. I could sense that other animals in the area knew that something terrible was about to happen.

## CORRECTING A TRAGEDY?

A few seconds later, the whirling tunnel made its appearance.

This time around, I thought very intently of the past. I wanted to go back and do one good deed: PREVENT THE GANG-RAPE OF CYNTHIA CORBETT.

I understood that by doing this, the entire time line of the universe would change. Perhaps, the whirling tunnel would be obliterated. Anyway, I had to take the chance.

Although I was very disappointed with Cynthia for calling me a little cougar, she was right about one thing: I 'couldn't understand or feel' how she felt like. After what she'd been through, I owed her another chance. I was ready to do anything in order to prevent the dreaded act from ever happening.

As I locked in on the whirling tunnel, shots were fired at me. The authorities hadn't given up their pursuit. Glancing back, I noticed that they were quickly approaching me. There was no time to waste!

I ran to the whirling tunnel as fast as I could. As soon as I got close enough, I quickly did a one hundred and eighty degree turn.

In effect, I'd entered the whirling tunnel backwards, and thinking about a specific time frame. I was hoping for a bulls-eye.

I landed in the middle of a suburb of a small city. I could see buildings on the horizon. Which city, I certainly didn't know.

It was a nice morning, with a beautiful blue sky, and a mild breeze. Thankfully, the humidity was low.

There weren't many people walking around. It was probably Sunday morning. Many people were sleeping off their hangovers, or eating brunch.

I walked to the downtown core. There were no sky scrapers; only small-sized buildings.

Scanning the area, I judged the city had a population of roughly a seventy thousand inhabitants.

A short while later I spotted a city sign. I could barely see two of the letters on the sign. The excitement gave me a temporary burst of energy. Like a caffeine high. Like caffeine, my burst of energy didn't last long.

As soon as I was able to read the sign, I almost collapsed. It was a shocker! The sign read: WELCOME TO GRAMSON.

I continued walking until I reached Second Avenue. A large digital clock nearby indicated that the time was 9:30 A.M. Also indicated was the date: December 29, 2005.

Cynthia was gang-raped in 2004, and about the same day. Considering the time line was slightly altered, I became anxious. I was still hoping for a bulls-eye.

I'd gone back to the past. I knew that I'd have to get down to business fast. Cynthia had to be saved!

Thankfully, I was no longer a fugitive. I was now a normal everyday cat. But, how was I to prevent Cynthia from being gang-raped? I wondered.

After a brief moment of intense concentration, I noticed an elderly woman walking alone on the other side of Second Avenue.

Taking advantage of the opportunity, I ran across the street then made my inquiry.

"Madam, please tell me where Gramson State College's dorms are located?" I asked.

"Honey, Gramson's not a state college. We don't have 'states' in Canada. We have 'provinces' and 'territories'. Gramson is a university."

The dorms begin at 1200 Guthrie Street. The fraternities and sororities are located a bit further down the street.

Be careful! I graduated from Gramson 60 years ago. Even back then, the students were party animals, especially the jocks.

Sometimes, they can get a bit violent. A cat should always be careful around Gramson's jocks."

I was utterly shocked! Now, I was in Canada! Finally, I got to go up north!

After thanking the elderly woman, I began my earnest walk to my target.

After walking for five minutes I spotted the sign that I was searching for: WELCOME TO GRAMSON UNIVERSITY.

The main entrance to Gramson was guarded by a lone security guard. He didn't appear to be too interested in his job. To be honest, he was swatting flies. I figured he was there for show only. As such, I casually walked by the security booth then headed to the housing section.

The Gramson University Administration Building was just ahead, at the apex of a steep incline. I walked up the incline, until I reached the apex.

I anxiously waited for help. Thankfully, it arrived in a jiffy. Three students walked by me. I hesitated then I called out to them.

"Girls, do you know a beautiful young woman named Cynthia Corbett? She's a very good friend of mine. I need to see her! Pronto! Please, it's a matter of life and death!" I exclaimed.

"Oh-my-gosh, Cynthia went to a fraternity party located at 1350 Guthrie Street. They're starting early.

Guthrie Street's over there," said one of the girls.

"Thanks a lot!" I exclaimed.

Gosh, I was famished! With a possible fight to the death coming up, I had to be well nourished beforehand.

As soon as I took my first step, one of the girls spoke some sweet words to me.

"Kitty, you look like you're hungry and thirsty. Rest assured there's plenty of food at the fraternity party. Just go there and eat up a storm.

Remember to be careful around the evil ones. Thankfully, most of our party animals like cats," said the girl.

Another girl asked me a very silly question. I hadn't needed directions she would've felt the wrath of a cat.

I'm just wondering do cats drink beer?" asked another girl.

"Cats drink milk, water, and sometimes pop!" I responded.

I continued my trek in utter disarray. Some humans are so ignorant, it irritates me!

That thought didn't last too long, because I had more urgent matters at hand. I'd gone back to the past to correct a terrible wrong. Was it worth it? I mean, what else had changed in the time line? I wondered.

For a moment, I had some doubts about the matter. Luckily, I shook it off and continued with my important mission.

As soon as I was within spitting distance of the fraternity house lawn, I scanned the area for hostiles.

The fraternity brothers and sorority sisters were having a gigantic barbecue on the front lawn. I took notice of pop, beer, wine coolers, juice, and hard liquor scattered on tables and in the hands of some of the students.

I could feel my blood pressure rise, and my pulse increase. Also, I began to drool like a hungry lion. Much tasty food was nearby. Unfortunately, I had to take the 'legitimate' path towards its acquisition.

Upon entering the lawn I glanced up at the sky, then down again. I hadn't done that in a while.

Somehow, things appeared a bit different. The people on the lawn spoke English with a different dialect/accident.

I had to investigate into this matter before proceeding any further. So, I zoomed in on a lone fraternity brother.

"Excuse me sir, I'm from out of town. You see, my owners and I have been driving for several days now.

Their van is parked a few blocks away. What part of North America are we in?" I asked.

"Gosh, you guys must've been driving really fast!

Kitty, we're in Quebec, Canada. As far as I know, there's only one Gramson; it's in Quebec," said the fraternity brother.

I thanked the fraternity brother for his help then resumed my walk through the lawn to the front door.

I took notice of fresh slabs of hamburger on a table nearby, causing me to cautiously approach the table.

A fraternity brother wearing a Montreal, Canada cap was flame broiling hamburger patties. There were twelve of them right there before my beautiful eyes. In addition, there were at least fifty frozen hamburger patties just waiting to be flame broiled.

Didn't 'they' understand that kitties need their meat? As for the hamburger guy, even he began to smell tasty. His hands were smothered in gooey blood.

I meowed several times before he took notice of me. Then, I rolled onto my back, thereby exposing my belly. I'm happy to say, it worked. The 'hamburger guy' put a hamburger patty on a paper plate then placed it underneath the table. Afterwards, he motioned me to the hamburger patty.

I ran to my food then gorged on its contents. The hamburger guy told me to wait a minute for seconds.

A minute later, the hamburger guy placed another patty on the paper plate. Then, he placed a bowl of milk and a bowl of water beside me.

Naturally, I ate the hamburger patty then licked every single drop of milk in the bowl. Although I was expecting thirds, the milk filled me to the rim.

As I was about to leave, the hamburger guy placed a bowl of water beside my forepaws. Understandably I 'consumed' every last drop.

"Jeepers, guy! I thank you from the bottom of my pretty heart for the incredible meal that you handed me! It is what I needed and wanted most; meat, milk, and water," I said.

"Don't be too fast at thanking me. There are strings attached to this favor. I'll get back to you later," said the hamburger guy.

There was no way in hell I was going to allow him or anyone else, to make me a 'fraternity cat mascot'! I walked away from the hamburger guy without drawing any suspicion.

I cautiously entered the fraternity house, searching for Cynthia. The place was packed with party animals. I must say animals in the human sense, not in the animal sense.

Three couples were making out, oblivious to their surroundings. A forth couple was making love on a brown sofa, in the game room.

A few feet ahead were a congregation of five young women standing at the edge of the living room.

One of them, a red-haired, green eyed beauty, eyed me. She smiled then motioned me to come. I obliged her. After all, who was I to be picky?

I approached the five young women cautiously. When you're a cat, you must be careful in this type of situation. Humans can often be unpredictable and nasty; like a domesticated wolf/dog hybrid, in the house.

A human can be cuddly one minute, but a monster the next. In the latter case a cat may be unceremoniously punched or kicked.

"Hey kitty ... do you belong to anyone? I mean, are you being taken care of? I'm not trying to insult you. I just want to know.

Our sorority's in desperate need of a kitty mascot. Our chapter's the only one in Canada that doesn't have a kitty. We're the laughing stalk of Canadian chapters.

Kitty, on my woman's honor, we'll make you one of our own. We'll give you much love, good food, clean accommodations, and veterinary care," said the redhead.

"How would you like it if my cat friends and I wanted to use you as a 'human mascot'?" I don't think you'd like that! I don't mind being someone's companion animal, or 'family pet,' but a mascot, no freaking way!

Cook me in a frying pan, but don't make me a freaking mascot! I know what my big cat brethren mascots must endure. You make it sound like you're not trying to insult me. No, you're doing much worse.

Listen ' Madam Rouge ', you're degrading me! You're ignoring my inherent right to self-respect and dignity. I take insult to your question!" I shouted.

Thereafter, I quieted down considerably. I was in the fraternity house for one purpose: TO PREVENT A TRAGEDY!

I walked away from the young women in utter disgust. I could hear the redhead sobbing. I didn't take pity on her. She had to feel the painful truth.

I continued my stroll on the ground floor. Then, I spotted a group of seven young men and women. I decided to approach them. Somehow, they seemed like a friendly bunch.

As soon as they took notice of me, an ugly blond amongst them waved me over. Indeed, they were my next information booth. I had to save Cynthia!

"Please, I'm looking for Cynthia Corbett. Do you know where she is?" I asked.

"Yes, I saw her about ten minutes ago. She went upstairs with Jeff and several of his buddies. Actually, they 'carried' her upstairs. She was zonked out.

Jeff's a very caring guy. He didn't want anyone to harm Cynthia. He made sure that she got upstairs in one piece. And also, he's really cute," said the ugly blond.

After thanking the ugly blond for the valuable information, I scaled the staircase, one floor up.

Upon reaching the second floor, I scanned the area intently then cropped my ears. I understood that room number 26 was the place to go.

I became extremely jittery and anxious. I felt like I was about to blow up from the inside out.

Suddenly, I saw a cat exiting one of the fraternity rooms. He looked like he was searching for someone. There was something peculiar about him.

Eureka! He was the real 'McCoy'. It was Corey Jameson! Incredible as it may sound 'I' was repeating history all over again. Not precisely, but close enough. I was aware that Corey couldn't be part of the rescue plan. He'd already failed once.

For this problem, there'd be no second chance. Never again! Cynthia wasn't to be 'gang-anything', by anyone! Pure and simple!

I approached Corey directly, and with earnest. As soon as I was close enough, I rubbed the side of my head against his head. Then, I rubbed my side against his side.

Corey seemed to welcome my presence. He knew that Jeff and his buddies were up to no good. Cats are very intelligent beings.

"Corey, I appreciate your presence. But I must tell you that something terrible is about to happen in room number 26. Someone therein may be harmed, mercilessly! Unless I can stop it!

"Just making sure: are you Corey Jameson?" I asked.

"Yes, I sure am."

After making a formally introduction and fully explaining to Corey the entire story, he reluctantly walked away. I'd made it clear to him that he'd failed the first time around, and was severely injured in the process.

For any chance of a victory, the time line had to be altered, again. I'd assumed that there were no more chances. A loss in my attempted rescue would not only alter the time line, but it would also permanently end my friendship with Cynthia. Once and for all!

As soon as Corey walked away, I dashed to room number 26. Luckily, the door was slightly ajar. So, I slithered through the opening, as stealthily as a jaguar. Inside the room I had a birds-eye view of what was going on.

This time, things were going to turn out for the better. There was to be no gang-rape. Over my dead body, if necessary!

Hovering over a semi-conscious Cynthia were six 'horny lions'. They weren't in the mood for any kind of a rejection from their prey.

Indeed, Cynthia was young and very beautiful. The scent of alcohol and drugs was in the air. As expected, Cynthia had been drugged. Animals call this drug the 'capitulation drug'. Even a lion 'capitulates' after being 'overwhelmed' by this drug.

I approached the offenders then hissed at them. They were so preoccupied with Cynthia's body, I was duly ignored. I may as well have hissed at a wall.

"Hey, stop what you're doing! I mean it! You can't harm Cynthia! Attacking Cynthia, especially while she's unconscious, means that you creeps are nothing but a bunch of dirty cowards!"

Guys, behave like real men! Walk away, and don't ever try this again!

Which one of you guys slipped Cynthia the 'capitulation drug'? Just tell me! You seriously can't be afraid of a lone cat!" I shouted.

"Kitty, I did it! Too bad, you can't stop me. I'm Jeff. I'm Jeff 'Carnivore' Borland. I'm the 'stud' on campus. I always get my girl, whether she wants me or not. As for my walking away from Cynthia ... dream on kitty!"

Cynthia Corbett was trying to ruin my perfect batting average.

That harlot-tease refused my legitimate advances! I've got to correct her behavior. I want her to be my special little kitty. I know for certain that deep down inside, Cynthia wants me. She wants me really badly! Look at her. She's not even putting up a fight. She's waiting for my advances."

I cautiously approached Jeff then gave him a final warning. I waited for a reply.

Unfortunately, Jeff snarled at me. Indeed, there was no sorrow or guilt in his heart. The other offenders were gawking at Cynthia.

"I command each and every one of you to end this monstrosity! Please leave this room, immediately! This is your final warning! No excuses! I mean it!" I shouted.

The offenders grinned at me. Then, they began to disrobe.

A physical confrontation was imminent. The offenders needed to be physically 'cat-handled'.

I waited until the offenders were naked. This was a calculated move on my part.

In a naked state, each of the offenders would be more vulnerable. I wasn't about to pull any punches; low blows, scratching, and biting, were acceptable.

Jeff was the alpha gang-rapist. I could tell that he was very aroused, because his cannon had been erect. As soon as he turned to face Cynthia, I began my Blitzkrieg attack.

I leaped onto Jeff's neck then began a massive bite-scratch, bite-scratch, routine. This lasted for a whole minute.

While I was preoccupied attacking Jeff, another offender grabbed me by the scruff of the neck. After dangling me in mid-air, he brutally tossed me into a nearby waste basket.

The force of the landing hurt me terribly! Luckily, I managed to pull myself out of the waste basket.

Meanwhile, Jeff was getting ready to 'enter' Cynthia. I couldn't allow that to happen.

Unfortunately, I had other problems at hand. Yet another offender tried to kick me in the face. Luckily, it was only a glancing kick.

I feigned then leaped onto the offender's knee. I bit the flesh as hard as I could then leaped onto the carpet.

The offender was now bleeding profusely. Mind you, I didn't use my most formidable attack. That would be performed on Jeff. I wanted to surprise him.

The offender pressed the palm of his hand against the wound then swore at me. Instantly, I leaped onto his face then pounced on it with full ferocity.

Although I was punched twice, I still managed to neutralize one of the offenders. Unfortunately, there was much more trouble to come.

Another offender brandished a switchblade at me. I quickly scanned the bedroom for a formidable weapon.

Eureka! I found it!

I leaped onto a table then violently hurled a large table lamp at the offender. I pushed it so hard, the cord ripped apart. Thankfully, the table lamp went flying into the face of the offender.

Also, the light bulb shattered in the offender's face, neutralizing him, immediately.

Meanwhile, Jeff had pulled out a 'ferocious-looking' hunting knife. I understood that our fight may be to the death.

I opted for a strike-retreat, strike-retreat game plan. Jeff's hunting knife was most useful on a stationary object. That's not what I was.

As soon as I leaped towards Jeff, he caught me with a tomahawk strike to the side of my head. I was now bleeding from the head. The blood was dribbling down my face. This caused a significant reduction in my field of vision.

Luckily Jeff's hunting knife only went skin deep. Otherwise, I would've literally been a dead goose.

I quickly wiped my face on the wall, removing the blood away from my field of vision. Luckily, the bleeding had stopped.

I decided that my next attack would have to be extremely vicious. There was to be absolutely no mercy upon Jeff, or any part of his body.

Jeff and I squared off in the center of the room, not knowing what was going to happen next.

Meanwhile, Cynthia had regained some of her composure. In this time line, Jeff and his buddies didn't give Cynthia the full dosage of the capitulation drug.

Although there was a vile of the drug on the bed, Jeff couldn't get to it. He was too preoccupied with his problem at hand; me.

Jeff cautiously approached me with the hunting knife held above his head. While my attention was on the hunting knife, Jeff kicked me in the face.

The force of the kick caused me to flip into the air. For a brief moment, I was defenseless. Jeff could've easily killed me. Thankfully, help was on its way.

Thankfully, Corey entered the room. He leaped onto Jeff's back then bit him with full ferocity. Marvelously, Corey looked like a lion taking down a zebra.

The ferocity of Corey's sneak attack caused Jeff to drop his hunting knife. Now, he had two cats, and a recovering young woman to fight. Also, he was unarmed.

Meanwhile, his buddies were nowhere to be seen. They showed their true faces; chickens.

Cynthia lethargically got out of bed then stood beside her two protectors.

Without his hunting knife, Jeff was just another wimp. The three of us were now head-to-head against Jeff.

Jeff flashed his palms at us, indicating that he'd had enough. In response, Corey and I held our position. We wanted Jeff to leave the room, without further incident.

With three witnesses to an attempted rape, the law would certainly be on our side.

As soon as Jeff exited the room, we leaped onto the bed then rested.

Cynthia closed her eyes then fell asleep. She still had too much of the capitulation drug in her system. In other words, she needed more time for a sufficient recovery.

When Cynthia came to, Corey and I asked her to relax while we checked her pulse and breathing.

As soon as I was certain that the creeps wouldn't return to the room, I explained to Cynthia and Corey the entire whirling tunnel story.

This time I gave them a step-by-step analysis. Surprisingly both Cynthia and Corey regained their memories of living in the other time line. After all, we were connected to each other.

"Cynthia, you're the most incredible woman in the whole world! I'm so happy that Jody and I were able to come to your rescue.

We love you so much! As soon as the smoke clears, we can plan to be a happy North American family; like the Cleavers.

Having lived through yet another time line has made me come to the conclusion that we're from a long-gone dimension, or another planet. We're extra-terrestrial beings. Our DNA may differ from any species on earth. For some reason, we don't know where we're from. Why? That's the million dollar question.

We must always respect each other. There aren't too many of our kind around," said Corey.

Cynthia steadily regained her composure. Shortly afterwards, the shock of the event hit her like a ton of bricks.

Cynthia fell into a state of shock, then disbelief. Afterwards, she cried like a little girl. In the end, she demanded revenge!

"Now, we must call the police! On Monday, I'll speak to Dr. Stephen Lance, Dean of Students at Gramson!" said Cynthia.

We left the 'rape room' then headed for the kitchen. As soon as we got to the end of the hall, Corey and I noticed that Cynthia was naked! In all the confusion, Corey and I forgot to dress her.

A short while later Cynthia was fully dressed and walking down the hallway with us. She was a bit jittery and all shook-up about the incident. That's understandable.

Our walk to the kitchen was long and stressful. Cynthia had the jittery jumps.

Although Corey and I insisted that Cynthia call the police, she declined. Cynthia wanted to confront Jeff before calling the police.

The kitchen was all lit up, containing over a dozen Gramson students drinking or eating. Jeff was amongst them. In fact, he was the only guy there. He was sweet-talking a virgin-looking Gramson girl.

We figured that Jeff had to score big, before leaving the party. He had that type of personality.

Apparently, the beating he got wasn't enough to change his behavior. Jeff was still the same creep as before. Maybe he'd become worse.

When Jeff took notice of us, he snarled, then turned back to face the Gramson girl. In an act of utter disgust, he kissed her on the cheek. Then, the ultimate shocker: they left the kitchen together, holding hands.

The three of us were in pissed off. We decided not to say anything. Calling the police was the best and safest action. If you don't believe me, ask any police officer in North America.

Cynthia had lost her cell phone that night. So, she asked a 'heavily obese' woman to call the police.

The obese woman had tears in her eyes. That's probably why Cynthia asked her. No doubt, the obese woman had been hurt by someone that night. My feline intuition and instinct alerted me that Jeff was the perpetrator.

As soon as the obese woman pulled out her cell phone to call the police, the other women in the kitchen ordered her to turn her cell phone off. They appeared to be angry.

"Lois, if an alleged rape, or so-called rape, is reported in one of our 'houses', it'll be a disaster for every single fraternity and sorority on campus! We'll be deprived of having all-nighters on campus!"

Turn your freaking cell phone off!" shouted a cute cheerleader.

Afterwards, the cute cheerleader re-directed her aggression at Cynthia.

"I heard that you drank your brains out then pulled your thighs apart. It was done while you were in bed, on your back,

with thirty naked jocks hovering over you like vultures. Certainly women like you are 'slime a dozen'.

Cynthia, when a girl flirts with a guy, she must be in control at all times. Otherwise, she may end up swallowing more than she can chew. I mean, she may end up 'done' and with a reputation ... like you!

Cynthia, accept your losses and forget what supposedly happened to you. Please, don't ruin it for us!" shouted the cheerleader.

Cynthia took five steps towards the cheerleader then threw a barrage of punches at her.

It seemed like all of Cynthia's anger, frustration, confusion, depression, apprehension, and hatred were somehow injected into her punches.

The cheerleader went down for the long count, resulting in the other women fading away into a far corner of the kitchen. Somehow, Cynthia seemed too 'instinctive' in her response.

Cynthia finished off her counter-assault with a verbal reprimand.

"Ellen, in addition to being creepy Jeff's sister, you're also a first class harlot! I don't need your freaking permission to call the police! The police are here to protect and serve ... us!"

Ellen, you certainly can't understand what it feels like to be gang-raped. In fact, it's impossible to rape someone like you. You always say YES, to every man who asks for it!" Sometimes you say yes, before the question is even asked!" shouted Cynthia.

Lois stood beside us in mind and body. She agreed with everything that Cynthia had said. Apparently, Jeff's sister was a real bitch.

Lois, on the other hand, was a beautiful princess. Why can't humans see fat women as beautiful? Cats can.

"Cynthia, I know what kind of a person Jeff really is. He pulled 'that stunt' on me back in high school.

Now, I can't be expected to sit here and do nothing. Just look at me. I've gained a hundred pounds of blubber. All because of what Jeff did to me in high school!

You see, Jeff had the audacity to tell the women in the kitchen that he'd just conquered Cynthia Corbett; you. Sadly, I was the only woman who sympathized with you. I think the other women had envy in their hearts.

Cynthia, you're the smartest and most beautiful girl on campus. Even I'm envious of you. In a good way, that is," said Lois.

Lois handed her cell phone to Cynthia. I must say, this was probably the most important call that she'd ever made.

"Police, please send someone over to 1350 Guthrie Street. We're in the fraternity house near the Edward Wilcox Library.

There was an attempted gang-rape on me, a Gramson State College student. It happened in room number 26.

Please, send someone over, immediately! Fast, too!" exclaimed Cynthia.

"What's your name?" asked the dispatcher.

"I'm Cynthia Corbett! Damn it! Just send someone over!" shouted Cynthia.

"When did this alleged incident happen, again?" asked the dispatcher.

"A freaking short while ago! Please just send someone over!" shouted Cynthia.

Are you absolutely certain that it was an attempted gang-rape? Maybe, it was an attempted train, or something of that nature," said the dispatcher.

"Look, don't go trying to blame me for the attack! Please, just do your job!" shouted Cynthia.

"Listen, 'Miss' Corbett, did you say 'yes' even once? Did you try to struggle, or put up a good fight? Where there any witnesses to this 'alleged gang-rape'? You also said that it was attempted. How far did they go?" asked the dispatcher.

"Damn it! Grandma you old freaking hen! I'm the freaking victim! I wasn't freaking 'trained'! I was almost brutally freaking gang-raped! If you don't send someone here, immediately, I'll sue the crap out of the entire freaking Gramson Police Department! I'll sue the mayor! I'll sue Premier Henderson! I'll sue Prime Minister Gatsby!"

Now, do your freaking job!" shouted Cynthia.

"Consider the police on their way.

Wait ... don't hang up on me! Are you in any kind of danger at the present moment? Do you know where the alleged assailants are?" asked the dispatcher.

"No, I don't exactly know where the 'alleged assailants' are! Thankfully, I'm with three trustworthy friends.

Most of the party animals have already left the fraternity house. It's late, even by their standard," responded Cynthia.

In a flash, three patrol cars arrived at the scene. With sirens and flashing lights everywhere, we felt reassured.

The police have an aura of strength and authority. It looked like Jeff, and his creepy friends were finished; rightfully so!

We exited the fraternity house from the front door. After eying the police officers, we approached them directly.

I also had the jitters. I understood that there were to be many questions to come. We would certainly be drilled by the police.

Cynthia and Lois started crying. Both women had a similar history of abuse. I think they'd had enough! You see, Corey and I loved Cynthia as though she was our blood kin.

Sure, Cynthia and I had gotten into a skirmish or two, but, we never stopped loving each other. I think this is true: A CAT IS A VICTIM'S BEST FRIEND.

Finally, we felt like justice was within our reach.

"Officers my name is Lois Carport. This is Cynthia Corbett, and these two cutie pies are Corey Jameson, and Jody Wilson.

Cynthia Corbett demands to file a criminal complaint against six Gramson students. I demand to file a criminal complaint for another gang-rape that occurred two years ago. One of the assailants, a Jeff Borland, was also involved in the attempted gang-rape of Cynthia.

You see, I was brutally gang-raped. The dreaded incident happened while I was a student at Gramson High.

After seeing how brave and steadfast Cynthia and her friends are, I have now become courageous enough to follow through with my official complaint, and a long trial. If need be."

Suddenly, two of the offenders slithered out from behind a van that was parked across the street.

Both offenders had tears in their eyes, and a 'puppy dog' expression.

Within a minute, the police had gotten two full confessions to the attempted gang-rape.

Both offenders asked for a good plea bargain agreement, if they'd come clean about Jeff. Yes, Jeff was the boss, conspirator, and alpha rapist.

Sadly, within their confession was a sign of their inherent evil. They didn't seem to understand why they were in trouble. It was like they were looking out for themselves and then stabbed their former boss in the back.

"Officer, we're sorry if we hurt anyone's feelings. Come on, we were just having fun. It was a big party. It's not like we were all strangers to each other. We've been friends with Jeff for over fifteen years. We're also very close to Cynthia. She's kind of our friend," said an offender.

Before the police officer could respond, Cynthia jumped into the conversation.

"Too late, you will soon be long-term residents of the penitentiary! You two jerks will be marked as rapists. That means you'll become little harlots for the other inmates. I can't wait till that happens!"

You'll 'understand' what it feels like to be utterly used. Used like an inanimate object, an automaton. You guys are pretty-boys just waiting to be mounted," said Cynthia.

I thought that Cynthia went overboard, a bit. She didn't have to torment those guys. After all, they were going to the slammer.

As soon as a policewoman read the 'suspects' their rights, both of them fled the scene. As shocking as it may sound, they really did flee!

I think what spooked them was Cynthia's dire prediction. She should've kept her mouth shut.

Immediately, police officers gave chase, while another called for backup. There were another four police officers inside the fraternity house searching for Jeff.

The composites of both fugitives would be posted everywhere. Sooner or later, the police would find out their real identities then offer a handsome reward for any information leading to their arrest and conviction.

Regardless, Jeff was the alpha rapist. He deserved the most severe punishment. His buddies were 'following orders'. They hardly had a mind of their own.

Soon, there was pandemonium! Several more patrol cars arrived at the scene.

I braced myself for more questions and an all-night crime scene investigation. No doubt, it was worth it.

Two female detectives arrived at the scene. One of them approached us, while the other entered the fraternity house.

"Guys, I'm Detective Meg Hayes. I need to ask you a few important questions.

What room did the 'alleged incident' happen in?"

"It wasn't a freaking alleged incident! I was about to be freaking gang-raped! Please, don't make a mockery of my pain and suffering!"

Cynthia couldn't tell Officer Hayes about the time line or being gang-raped there.

It happened in room number 26!" shouted Cynthia.

"Cynthia, please don't shout. I apologize for using the phrase 'alleged incident'. All suspects are presumed innocent until proven guilty. Our justice system must be fair. We can't convict every suspect, without due process," said Detective Hayes.

Cynthia fell onto the ground, curled up into a ball then began another one of her horrendous crying sprees.

She began to shiver, almost to the point of going into convulsions.

We comforted Cynthia then waited until she improved.

As soon as Cynthia was ready, we entered the fraternity house then headed to room number 26.

Upon entering the 'rape room', we began to answer Officer Hayes questions. She spoke softly, and slowly.

After the questioning process ended, Officer Hayes asked Cynthia if she wanted to go to the emergency room of the Gramson General Hospital.

Cynthia answered in the negative.

While exiting the fraternity house, we felt a sigh of relief.

Finally, Jeff was finished!

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