

Lonely

I turned the key in the lock and opened the front door and pushed aside the cascade of junk mail that had flowed through the letterbox and made my way to the kitchen. The silence was total. No welcoming call or smell of roast beef and cabbage cooking for the Sunday dinner. No switching off lights that Mum kept turning on before she left a room. Apart from her photos and knick knacks that adorned every surface no-one would know that such a glorious spirit had lived here. Had it really been three weeks since I last entered the house. Mum had taken a tumble and been rushed off to hospital. Now in her eighth decade time had taken its toll, and where she would have bounced back in her youth, now she had to have an operation to fix her broken bones. As soon as I finished work I rushed over to sit with her but as the days passed she faded away before my eyes. My friend George was ever so good and arranged the funeral and dealt with the paperwork but I told him I would clear the house of her personal items. He wanted to help but I said no this was something I had to do myself. Memories came flooding back as I went through the photos and tears coursed down my cheeks as I packed her clothes into bin bags for the charity shops. As I shut the door behind me for the last time I turned and, for a moment, I saw Mum's face in the window as she looked out for me. The image faded away and I was alone.

As I sat at my kitchen table lost in thought I heard a scratching sound at the back door. The noise persisted and I turned to see a face staring in at me. A face that only a mother could love. This cat looked so pathetic I opened the door, it rubbed against my legs and started purring. This stray gave me comfort in my loneliness

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