

Rescue Cat - Written By Will Snow

Chapter Eleven

The following morning, Bill felt bone-tired and cloudy-headed. He went through his morning ritual with Cosmo on automatic pilot and drove to the gym as usual. He parked the car and headed to the gym but stopped before entering and continued down the street. He gathered power with each step as he marched past the smoothie shop, down the street, across the highway, down the beach, and finally to the world's end before the sea. Bill glared at the ocean and felt the pressure build in his head again. He pointed out at the sea and growled, "OK. I'm here, and I know that you are, too. There are some things I want to get straight."

Bill paused momentarily and listened to the slow-rolling rhythm of the surf before beginning. "Good, you're listening for a change. That's wonderful because I am pissed off, and it's your fault!" He paused again, pacing back and forth and feeling his anger rise. "Do you know what I went through? How I have suffered? Do you even care? Of course, you don't care. Why should you care? I'm just this worthless little piece of trash discarded when your great purpose has been completed! She belonged to you, not me. That's what you said. Well, that's just perfect! But what about me? What was left for me? I'll tell you what was left! NOTHING! Nothing but pain!

Feeling like I was dying in every waking moment. Nothing but the unending torture of life without the one thing that made it worth doing. Empty, aching time without end or any hope of ending. That was my reward for my years of faithful service! That was MY happily ever after!

Bill paused again, panting, searching the skies, begging for a stray lightning bolt to strike him. The only sound was the slow-rolling rhythm of the surf. From the most bottomless, darkest well of icy black hatred, his voice now dripped with poisonous sarcasm. "Well, thanks so much for all of it. My life would have been so much less without all the agony. I've grown SO much. Thank you for the life lessons. You really showed me what a *loving God* is all about. It was all so ineffable!"

He paused again, defiantly waiting, answered with silence, his anger rising past the boiling point. "I hate you," he whispered softly. "I hate you," he said more loudly, pointing accusingly to the sky. "I HATE YOU!! WHY DID YOU DO THIS TO ME?" When he could no longer bear it, Bill fell to his knees, pounded his fists in the wet sand, threw his head back, hot tears and snot running down his face, and screamed in rage at the top of his lungs. "WHY?!"

His fury spent, Bill dropped his head and whispered quietly. "I need you. Where are you? I can't go on anymore. Please help me." He sobbed quietly for some time on his hands and knees, then head on the sand, until the waves rose and gently rinsed the tears from his face. He sat, wiped his stinging eyes, and saw a blindingly snow-white seabird with golden eyes standing before him on the shore. The bird pinned him into place with the gleam of one eye, opened his bill, and squealed.

Bill sat up straight, his breath caught in his chest, all his senses heightened, every cell in his body thrilling, and all his attention focused on the otherworldly bird. **"Good, you're listening for a change. That's wonderful because there are some things we need to get straight."** Startled by the powerful voice and sound of human language from an aquatic fowl, Bill attempted to scoot backward but found that his muscles were not attending to his commands. He was held in place by a soft and unyielding pressure.

The bird walked closer and cocked its head, keeping its golden eye fixed on Bill. **"You have the wrong idea about me. I am the Great Provider. All things emanate from me - good, bad, happy, sad, beautiful, hideous, bright, and dark. ALL things, EVERY moment of eternity, come from me. I can do nothing more and nothing less because I love you and will never cease loving you."** Though he

had heard these words in the past, Bill felt a more profound truth to this utterance that thrilled every atom of his being.

The bird continued its ungainly walk back and forth before Bill, never averting its gaze. **"The question you need to ask, my child, is what do YOU choose to attend to this day? That is always your choice, and I will always bless that choice because I can do nothing more and nothing less. This was my promise to you from the moment you chose to enter this life, and it will be so until the end of your time."**

The great white bird spread its wings wide and flapped them, rising slowly into the sky. **"What will you choose today?"** With that, the bird released his gaze and circled higher and higher into the bright blue sky until Bill could no longer see it. Bill sat on the beach for an unknown time, humbler and wiser.