

# Rescue Cat - Written By Will Snow

## Chapter Three

Bill searched for Cosmo all over the house for the next hour. Upstairs, main living area, downstairs with not even a wisp of fur or whisker visible. "Where in the hell did that cat go?" Bill screamed out loud. He couldn't have escaped again. All the windows and doors were shut tightly. Bill searched every closet, cabinet, and under the furniture with no luck. What kind of nightmare was this? Did Cosmo slip into some interdimensional rift? No, the stench that filled the house indicated he was still somewhere inside.

After more fruitless searching, he decided to call it quits. If Cosmo found a way to escape, he would find his way back - or not. Either way, this was way more effort than Bill was prepared to deliver on a warm afternoon. He needed to settle his nerves, soothe his aching head, and get to work. He poured himself a well-deserved glass of single malt scotch on the rocks and fired up his ancient computer. He swirled the amber liquid in his Waterford cocktail glass while his computer loudly chugged to life. Interesting that he chose these as the sole remnants from his previous life. The first and last things they had acquired. All the rest was dispensable—years of work to acquire material possessions that ended up valueless. Much like the words of comfort that people offered during those dark times, they all were imposters. Meaningless.

In the midst of his brooding, the light of his monitor flashed on, and he quickly went online to search for a solution to his most pressing problem - the eye-watering smell that Cosmo was currently sharing with him. He saw that he needed 1 quart of 3-percent hydrogen peroxide, 1/4 cup of baking soda, one teaspoon of liquid dishwashing soap, a bucket, and rubber gloves. After a quick search through his cabinets, he was entirely unsurprised to find that he was missing over half the necessary ingredients but amused to find the rubber gloves. When did he get those?

After a quick trip to the grocery store, he mixed all the components in a bucket and was about to begin his search for Cosmo in earnest when he nearly tripped over the ball of fur at his feet, covered head to toe in lint. "Hey, Cosmo! How long have you been sitting there? I didn't even hear you. I guess I know where you are hiding now. How did you find a space behind the dryer?" Bill laughed at his bedraggled appearance. "You are a fine sight. Why don't we get you cleaned up?" Bill reached out to pull the cat over but was met with a swift slash of his claw. "Fine! Have it your way! I've got better things to do." Bill pretended to walk past the cat and then quickly turned to capture him in a beach towel. After a titanic 30-minute battle, Bill released the now deodorized cat, who immediately bolted to his hiding place behind the dryer. "You're welcome, you ungrateful little shit!" Bill shouted at his back and went upstairs to attend to his wounded hands and arms.

After the morning's excitement, Bill gratefully focused on his daily work. Only 200 emails and 30 files to review since last night. A light day. He abandoned any other thoughts as he dove into the pile. He remained glued to his screen for several hours, stopping only to refill his scotch glass and relieve himself. When the final conversation was through and all demands satisfied, he pushed his chair from the desk, stood up to stretch, and headed downstairs to get some food. Cosmo was waiting on the kitchen table and stared up at him as Bill took a package from the freezer and punched a few buttons on the microwave.

Bill saw Cosmo watching him as he wolfed down his pasta. "Are you hungry again? How many times does a cat need to eat a day anyway?" He got up from the table, walked to the kitchen, opened a can of smelly, gray-colored mush, spooned it into a bowl, and set it down on the floor. "Honestly, I don't know how you eat that stuff. It's totally disgusting!" He walked back to the table and continued digging into his microwave dinner as Cosmo stared at him and wrinkled his nose in disgust. *"Bastet only knows how humans can eat that horrible-smelling trash."*

After dinner, Bill sat on the couch with another drink and turned on the television. "What do you say, Cosmo? Want to watch some TV with me? There's a new episode of *Naruto* on tonight." He patted the couch next to him, looking hopefully at Cosmo. *"I think you must be mistaking me for a dog. I don't do television with the master,"* Cosmo sauntered disinterestedly past Bill and began exploring his new

domicile. Hours later, Bill turned off the TV and headed upstairs. "Well, this has been an interesting day. Goodnight Cosmo. See you in the morning if you are still around." He shut out the lights, ambled drunkenly up the stairs to his bedroom, and shut the door behind him. Cosmo mewed sadly as he sat alone in the pitch darkness of the house.