

The Nice Lady

By Marilyn Reeves

I pat her three times gently on the cheek. "Come on, lady, wake up! Can't you see it's morning? So get up and feed me already. I'm hungry." To my great annoyance she shoves me away with her hand and mumbles something, then rolls over to go back to sleep. Well, I'm not having that! It's time for breakfast and she needs to get up. If she doesn't respond soon I'm bringing out the claws. Oh, no. I forgot. I lost my claws. I try again: Pat, pat. Pat, pat, pat. This time she rolls back over and opens one eye. Then she smiles and strokes my head and says, "Oh, alright, Kitty. I'm up."

She shuffles into the little room and shuts the door. I hear water. Then bigger water. She finally comes back out and, tail held high, I lead her into the kitchen. I rub my silky fur against her ankles. She thinks I want to be petted. No, at the moment I just want breakfast, thank you.

She pulls a small can out of the fridge and spoons some food out on a plate. Yesterday's tuna. It's cold and I'm not in the mood for tuna. Today I think I want kidney stew. On the third try she gets it right. I've trained her to bring home the little cans with all the different flavors. Those other people just got the tall cans of the same ol'- same ol' that didn't taste all that great. But even that was better than those *pebbles* they fed me in that ... other place. Pebbles. Crunchy pebbles! Can you believe that? Yuck! Don't they know I'm a carnivore?

She goes back to the bedroom and then returns, having changed her fur. She pets me again and then goes out the door and leaves me alone for the day. I don't mind so much as long as she gets back by supper time. I can take naps and look out the window. I sure do wish she'd let me go outside, though. That other family – the one with the rough boys and the silly little dog – at least they let me play outside.

But one night I was feeling a strange kind of lonely and started calling out to every Tom, Dick and Harry in the neighborhood. Next thing I knew I had a belly full of kittens. Once they arrived, they were absolutely adorable! But then, one by one, they were taken away. I was heart-broken!

After they were gone I was taken to the hospital and came back home with a dull pain in my tummy. That put me in a bad mood so when one of those rowdy boys started tossing me in the air, I came down on his face – all claws!

Next stop: PRISON. They locked me in a cage where I could hear all the dogs barking and crying for their people. Worst of all, they took away my claws! My toes hurt something awful. And all I got to eat was those pebbles. I figured the next thing would be the big 'night-night' needle. I thought I was a goner.

But then this nice lady came and took me home with her. You know, the one I was telling you about? The one I have to wake up in the morning so she'll feed me some breakfast?

Let's see, I think tomorrow I'll ask for the chicken.