



## **Pat the Friendly Neighbour**

**A Pat the Cat Adventure, by Robert Wrate © 2014**

### **Chapter One: A mystery in the garden**

Pat the black and white kitten stood up and stretched his back. He was in a fine mood. It had been a good few weeks since he'd arrived to live with his new pal Frankie and his family, and things were going well. He had made friends with the cats that lived in the houses next door (though the family did not know how he had a secret way out of the house), and had got to play with Frankie (and occasionally his mum) every single day. Frankie, who was eight, had just gone out with his mum and dad for the afternoon, and as a result his new pet cat had found himself alone. This being the case, Pat eventually decided to have a little look around... 'After all', he thought, 'I never get the place to myself, and there are loads of corners in this place I've not explored!' So slowly – after all, there was no rush – little Pat rolled out of his basket and prepared for his first attempt at climbing the stairs.

This posed a problem: they were so high! Pat however, was no quitter; one step at a time, he slowly made his way up the staircase to see what he could see. He had actually been upstairs a few times before of course. Frankie had bundled him up in his jumper and sneaked him upstairs whenever he could, but officially he wasn't supposed to go upstairs, and so this was a secret mission.

After finally getting to the top, Pat took another little run-up and scrambled up the wall to settle at his favourite spot on Frankie's bedroom window sill. From there he felt like he was the king of the street. Cats, you see, love to be able to see everybody but not be seen themselves; it makes a cat feel very important, and they do like to feel important. Happily, he looked through the window to survey his new kingdom below, which was made up of twelve gardens as the street had been laid down in a horseshoe shape: six on his side of the big wall, and another six which also backed onto the wall from the other side. Pat was not yet big enough to climb up the wall himself, (which was almost as tall as Frankie's Dad), but it was very important for all the animals in the area, because it was a bit like a motorway. Four of the

street's twelve houses had at least one cat living in them, and they all used the wall to go and visit their friends, and of course the squirrels and others animals used it too... well, all apart from Pat.

He stared out. The house opposite them was unusual in that it didn't have any animal friends for Pat to play with; in fact he wasn't actually sure who lived there. He'd met or seen all the other people in the street, but nobody from there. 'Who might it be?' he thought. As luck would have it, at that precise moment the ginger cats Nicky and Goldie sauntered into their own garden next door, and so Pat decided he would go down and ask them if they knew anything that might help. Quick as a flash, he scampered back down the stairs, under the gap in the floorboards and through the cellar into the garden.

## **Chapter Two: Nicky and Goldie**

It was actually quite a nice day outside; summer was just giving way to autumn and so there was a warm feeling in the air and a fair amount of sun, but the earlier heat wave of July had now passed. Only Nicky was actually there to greet the kitten when arrived; his brother Goldie had back gone inside for a saucer of something cool.

'Hello, young Pat', said Nicky as he saw him approaching. Nicky was four, and was a young friendly cat. He had golden eyes and was ginger all over apart from his breast and the tip of his tail, which were both white. Slowly, as only a cat can, he got up from where he'd been sunbathing and sat next to his new friend. 'How are you today?' he asked.

'Fine, thank you Nicky,' said Pat as he looked up at the big ginger Tom. 'What have you and Goldie been up to? I saw you from the window upstairs.'

'Oh, just messing around looking for mice', he replied as he looked down at Pat. 'I'll have to teach you to hunt soon!'

'Oh no!' Pat squeaked. He did not really like the idea of chasing mice, and all the bigger cats knew. Cheeky Nicky liked to tease him about it.

'Seriously though, young'un, mice are a pest, and Frankie's mum will be very cross with you if she finds one in her kitchen because you've not chased him away. It's your job as a cat, it's what we do!'

'Oh no,' Pat said again sadly. Then he blinked and suddenly pulled a funny face. 'Silly me, I've come all this way to ask a question, and I almost forgot!'

'Then ask,' said Nicky, smiling.

'Thank you,' said Pat, smiling back. 'I was wondering, do you know who lives in the house over the wall there, the one opposite mine?'

'It used to be a nice old tabby called Hilda' said a new voice, 'but she died before you came here, and now nobody has been seen there for ages.'

The voice belonged to Goldie, Nicky's brother. Though he wasn't rude as such, he certainly had a shorter temper than Nicky, and so the two constantly argued. He eyed Pat in an unimpressed way, and then sighed. 'I'm up and down the wall a lot, and I've not seen any people or animals in that house for years.' He was ginger all over and didn't really like talking to younger cats if truth be told. He padded back towards his kitchen. 'Come on Nicky, it's supper time. Goodbye young Pat.' The two brothers slowly wandered back into their house.

This was a mystery. After all, somebody must live there, but who could it be?

### **Chapter Three: The noise over the wall**

Three hours later, Pat was curled up in his basket when the sound of keys being turned in the lock made him open one eye. Frankie, the little boy who was Pat's best friend, came through the front door with his mum and dad, and knelt down to say hello. Pat was surprised at the time; it must have been a longer shopping trip than his new family had planned. Outside, the sun had now disappeared almost entirely, and it was starting to get dark. Pat wanted his dinner! Happily, and making a point of rubbing against Frankie's legs as he walked to be friendly, he followed Frankie out to the kitchen where the smells of various tasty things were beginning to waft through the air. It was a nice dinner. He had salmon flavour cat food and a nice fish finger that Frankie had saved for him, but despite the yummy nosh, Pat found himself uneasy; he just could not stop thinking about the house over the wall, and who might live there. Irritatingly, his curiosity seemed to deepen with time, and later, after Frankie had sneaked him upstairs and popped on his favourite spot on the window sill, Pat found himself again staring over into the opposite window

Then he noticed it. There was a dim light in one of the windows in the other house; not the one directly opposite (which would have been the small bedroom) but the next one over, opposite the room where Frankie's mum and dad slept. As quickly as he had noticed it, the light went out again. There was definitely somebody there! It was at that moment that Pat made a momentous decision. A little later, after Frankie and his parents had gone to sleep, he would sneak out of the house to go and see what was going on in the old place at the bottom of his garden. He'd quite forgotten that he couldn't get over the wall.

As the full moon lit the gardens of the street with a pale and eerie light, Pat, feeling very brave, crawled through the long grass and up to the red brick barrier. He stopped to think. He'd had seen many other cats (and squirrels and even one dog) trot along the wall many times, and he knew that there must be many methods of getting up there. He'd seen some of the bigger stronger cats simply speed across the garden and run up the wall to the top, but he knew he couldn't do that. Others climbed up one of the wooden

fences which were lower than the wall and divided the gardens, this was little easier.

In the end, he managed to climb up through the ruins of the old shed that had been built years ago, by the people who lived in the house before Frankie, and got onto the fence. With a little leap he managed to get onto the wall and jumped down to the garden of the mysterious house. It loomed above him, dark and ominous, with little sign of life. He looked up at the window; the light glowed dimly in the upstairs room and Pat could hear the faint noise of a radio inside, but saw neither people nor animals. To his surprise, there was an old cat-flap in the kitchen door. He crawled through it and into the house. 'It must have belonged to the old cat who used to live here' Pat thought as he crept along the hall way, into the unknown.

### **Chapter Four: A happy ending**

The old place really was a very strange place to be. It looked very much like his own house, but the walls were a different colour and it smelt very, very different. Pat was just about to make an attempt on the stairs when he heard somebody move on the upper floor. He froze with terror. As he heard the person coming down the stairs he desperately thought what he could do. The kitchen was right up the other end of the hallway and he would have to go past the bottom of the stairs and he would be caught. He looked left and right for someplace to hide, but could find none.

'Who's there?' said a sharp voice. 'I warn you, I have a stick and I'll use it if I have to!' A human would have recognised the voice as belonging to a little old lady, but sadly Pat had never met a little old lady before, and so he didn't know what to make of it. As the owner of the voice got nearer, he retreated into the corner of the hallway. Poor Pat! He squeaked and meowed pitifully as the strange old woman reached the bottom of the stairs and slowly walked over to him. As she reached down he feared the worst!

'Well, what do we have here?' asked the old lady of nobody in particular.

'I'm Pat, and I live over the wall, and I only wanted to say hello!' he desperately replied in Catish. But sadly this just sounded like 'meow meow meow' to the old lady's ears.

'Poor little thing!' she said. 'I bet you'd like a nice saucer of milk.' Now Pat knew that Frankie didn't like him to have milk, and so he rarely did. But here and now he needed a little something to steady his nerves, and so he let the old lady pick him up and take him back into her kitchen, where she warmed some milk in a saucepan and then poured it into a little dish for him.

That was it. From that point on, Pat and Mrs. Brown (as she was called) became friends. He told all the other cats that she was actually a nice old lady, and hadn't eaten her old cat Hilda as Goldie had suspected, and she was very lonely and was actually glad of some kitty company. When, a few

days later, Pat was finally given his own cat-flap, the first thing he did was lead Frankie and his mum down to the wall at the bottom of the garden, where Mrs. Brown happened to be, fixing her old lawn mower. Frankie's mum and Mrs. Brown started talking, and the very next day Mrs. Brown came to have a nice cup of tea with her new neighbour.

'This is the first time I've been out of the house for years' said Mrs. Brown as she took a biscuit. Pat smiled as he looked at the happy scene from his basket. 'Aww isn't that nice?' he thought.