

Pat the Naughty Kitten

by Robert Wrate ©2014

Chapter One: A new friend

Frankie was bored. He looked up again at the time; no, still just past two o'clock... Ugh. 'Why won't it just be home-time?' he thought, and he wasn't the only one. It was a maths lesson after all... Wow. Great. It just wouldn't end! The lazy kids had already fallen asleep, the ones in the middle were just staring at the wall and even the kids who actually knew their square roots and all that were now getting a bit restless and Frankie was no exception. Today though, all this would change... Today he was going to meet Pat.

Pat the cat was to be Frankie's new friend. The boy had just moved into the area with his mum and dad and so he didn't have any friends, nor any brothers or sisters. He was very lonely, and so the boy's parents had bought a kitten to keep him company. Pat was nearly two months old, half black and half white with blue eyes that were turning green. He had a white mouth and chest and ears, and the top of his head and most of his body were black apart from his paws, which made him look like he had little white socks on! Frankie had always loved cats, and so it was really excited when three hours later Pat the kitten, the most eagerly awaited guest in the history of guests, crawled out of his little box for the first time.

Now, you may not know this, but just because cats don't speak when people are around, that doesn't mean that they can't. In fact, I strongly suspect that all animals can understand every word we say, they just don't let us know! This being the case, when the boy said 'Hello little kitty' Pat didn't know what to do at first. He peered out at the three giants looking down at him. To him, they were enormous, and strange looking. A little nervously, squeaked a reply in Catish, which meant 'nice to meet you too, but where's my dinner?' Pat had come from the animal shelter and was happy to have a new home and family, but on the other hand, he was very hungry!

Chapter Two: Dinner for Two

A little later Frankie and Pat found themselves in the family kitchen. Everything in it was old and worn and used looking, just like the house itself, which was falling to bits. The faded yellow curtains didn't meet in the middle when they were drawn shut, and they were always blowing as the window frames were rotten and draughty. Ignoring the breeze, Frankie had another try at working the tin opener. He was having trouble. To begin with, she'd made to

feed Pat herself, but when she started to fill a saucer of milk, Frankie had panicked...

‘No Mum, don’t give him milk, it will be bad for him!’

‘Don’t be silly Frankie’ she said, ‘everybody know cats like milk’.

‘But it’s bad for them! Look it up!’ Sighing, Frankie’s mum went over to their computer under the stairs and looked up milk and cats and a few minutes later, she came back with a sheepish look on her face.

‘Well bless my soul, son. You’re right! No milk for Pat’. Frankie beamed, he was happy that he’d been proven right, but that wasn’t to last. While they’d been talking, Pat had gotten so hungry he’d taken matters into his own paws and crept into the fridge (which had been left open when Frankie’s mum had gone for the milk). There he found the tuna.

‘Mmmm’, Pat thought, ‘this is nice, much better than that nasty old cat food I had at the animal shelter!’

‘Oh no!’ said Frankie’s mum. ‘Go on! Naughty cat! Shoo! Shoo!’ Poor Pat was filled with terror. He didn’t know what was going on. How was he to know which bowl to eat and drink from...? he was only 8 weeks old! His mouth still full of tasty tuna, he bolted out of the fridge, through Frankie’s mum’s legs and into the pile of junk under the stairs. Feeling safe at last from these new scary people, he curled up and went to sleep.

Chapter Three: The Escape

The three members of the family stood at the bottom of the stairs by the junk pile. ‘Pat, Pat, come on boy!’ Frankie was beside himself with worry. He’d only known his new friend for a few minutes and already he’d managed to lose him! After waiting for what seemed like an eternity for Pat to come out, Frankie and his mum and dad began the laborious process of moving out all the bits and pieces from under the stairs to find their new pussy cat. As the amount of hiding places began to shrink, the three of them began to worry. No matter where they looked, there was just no cat. Finally, the very last old tin bucket was lifted away to leave a corner that was completely empty.

‘I don’t understand it’, said Frankie’s mum. ‘Where can he have gone?’

‘That bloomin’ cat’ replied his dad. ‘He’s going to be trouble. Didn’t I say he was going to be trouble! We should have got that puppy instead!’

‘No!’ cried poor Frankie. ‘I love Pat, he’s my friend.’ But where was he?

The mystery deepened as the afternoon turned into evening. The sun earlier in the day had given way to clouds and then rain. As the drops patted against the old wooden window sill, Frankie sank deeper into his chair in the corner and stared sadly at the little basket he’d bought for his new friend. His mum had been minded to send him up to his room, but she realised it wasn’t going to happen without a war. Finally, in the middle of the night, Frankie’s dad carried him upstairs to bed.

Chapter Four: Home at last

It was a long night for Frankie. All he could do was think about his friend and what might have happened to him. Slowly, he went down to the kitchen and sat at the table. His mum seemed very happy, which just didn't seem right.

'Mum' he cried, 'how can you be smiling when poor little Pat has disappeared!'

'But...' she began, but he interrupted...

'I can't believe you could be so cruel and nasty! Think about poor little Pat! Oh I miss him so much,' he squealed.

'But Frankie...' she interrupted, but he was in no mood to listen.

'You're awful, smiling away when our new kitty has gone missing, I'm not going to school today, I'm going to run away forever!'

'But son...'

'Oh, please, leave me alone! I've got to find my cat,' Frankie wailed.

'WILL YOU JUST SHUT UP A MINUTE!!!' screamed Frankie's mum. He stared at her in shock. 'I've been trying to tell you, he's here! Follow me.' And with that she led her son into the front room where a little black and white pussy cat was curled up and snoozing in his basket as if nothing had happened.

'I don't understand!' said Frankie. 'Where has he been?'

'Honestly, we don't know', said his mum. 'While you were in your room last night, your father and me looked through the whole house and he was nowhere to be seen, and then I came down this morning and he was in his basket. He seems to like it there.'

Crying with joy, Frankie ran across the room to say hello to his friend. As he knelt down, Pat opened one eye, and looked up at him, in that way that only a cat can do.

'What's all the fuss about?' he squeaked in Catish. 'I was just exploring. I've found a nice way out of the house under the floor board, so you won't need to bother with a catflap, and I've meet all the other cats in the street too! What a nice bunch.' But of course Frankie couldn't speak Catish, so didn't understand a word he was saying! He was just happy to have his new friend back safe and well, but I'm sure he would have enjoyed hearing about Pat meeting his new kitty neighbours, and how they'd told him what a nice family he was going to be living with, and how Frankie loved cats and was always nice to them. 'Yep,' thought Pat as Frankie tickled him behind the ear, 'I'm going to like it here'.

Meanwhile, Pat was exploring the outside world. The fact is, Frankie's house was very old, and draughty. Floorboards were loose, drainpipes were unattached, and most importantly of all, the old grating that covered the entrance to the coal hole was cracked. Many years before a branch had dropped from the neighbours' tree and hit the grating