

The Therapy Cat

Each person has a secret.

They all tell me before they journey to the stars.

They can trust me. I can sense when they are ready for their journey ahead.

I look up at the starry sky. Each bright light shows someone I've helped. A pulling sensation begins. Someone is ready.

I fly along the corridor. I have to get there soon. Room 10, 11, 12, 13, 14...

Room 235.

I nudge the door open with my paw. I meow and leap up onto the bed. An old man.

He has pale green eyes and a fluffy white moustache. What a horrid shame. I love him very much. He glances up and sees me. A smile lights up his wrinkled old face. "Hallo, white-boots! Never felt happier to see you."

I purr as he scratches my black cheek. I gently lick my paws. He strokes my sleek black body to the white tip on my tail. This is very relaxing.

"You know what, White-boots? I've never told anyone this before but," he stares into the distance seeing something I can not see. "I've had a hard time. Life has been difficult, with the war and losing my brothers, sisters, cousins, parents, wife and all of them it's been hard on my own. But the world gives me things, like joy. And that is what makes me happy."

I look at him. He just smiles and says, "I love the world even though I've not seemed to get along with it. Well, I'm exhausted." He yawns. "Goodnight White-boots, I love you to."

His eyes close and he begins to breath slowly. He is ready. I purr gently as he rubs my fur.

I listen to his gentle breathing. Then I climb onto his chest and lie there. I can feel the steady beating of his ancient heart, the steady breathing of his ancient lungs and as I listen they slowly grow fainter and fainter. His heart comes to a stop, like a train, worn out by bad weather and hectic journeys. Then his breathing dies away like when you walk away from the sea.

His hand lies on my back. I crawl out from under his hand and leap off the bed.

As I go through the door, I look back.

I take a moment to remember him, and leave the room my heart filling up with an ocean of sadness. At least he will see his friends and family. I smile. What a peaceful parting.

By Chloe Oulahan