It's all about ascension (I guess)

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It's all about ascension (I guess)

by DragonWolf

Summary

Don't put me to rest

Lynne knows weird when she sees it. This black cat is weird.

Notes

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See the end of the work for more notes

The kitten was exactly the same as the day she first found him in the grass.

That was weird, Lynne thought. He was at least 10 years old at this point, yet he was still tiny, stuck at the stage of kitten where they just stop being potato shaped but still haven't grown into their proper cat form. Limbs just a tad too short, ears just a tad too big to be a proper elegant cat.

He was still a cutie, and looked quite happy, as much as a cat could. His fur was shiny, his eyes glowed, just a bit, when they caught the light at the right angle.

He narrowed his eyes at her when he met her. She just grinned back at him. Smile for a smile.

He was smart too, or at least made an impression as such. The look on his face, though hard to discern, seemed to suggest he was listening and understanding the conversations he was present for.

Weird, right?

Though that may be just what his face looks like. That's a tight right, some cats just look like they're judging you? She could swear she's heard of that before.

Though that didn't account for the fact that Lynne was pretty sure Sissel could read.

She couldn't prove it, but there were times. Times where she'd be relaxing with a book and caught the black cat staring over her shoulder, seemingly following the lines of text with his eyes. He'd flee as soon as he realized he was caught but she saw it. She just couldn't explain it to anyone.

Jowd had laughed at the proposition that his cat could read. She didn't appreciate it.

There was also the fact that Sissel and Missie got along like old friends from day one. That one was a sweet sight to see, if an odd one, how the kitten just took all the over-excited affection the little dog dished out. Normally cats would swat the doggie away after a few seconds, if it even got that far, but not this one.

Even his name. Sissel. The name sounded weirdly familiar. It brought back fuzzy visions, not quite memories, like they were fragments of a dream. A dark night, rain. Someone's voice, audible but not, reassuring but determined. Presence of… someone who wasn't actually there.

It didn't feel like anything. And it felt like everything all at once.

So the kitten, this un-ageing, tiny black kitten with a name that brought back something she couldn't actually grasp, was a mystery.

And she fully expected it to continue to be just that. A small pet mystery that she could tinker with In her mind when she was bored, or when the kitten in question settled in her lap, rendering her immobile for at least 10 minutes at a time because what kind of monster would move when they had a cat in their lap, all cozy and warm?

But then there she was. Thinking about it in more detail, because it'd gotten rapidly more weird.

There was a cat bed in the living room of the family's house, set up on a shorter bookshelf. Sissel frequently made use of it, napping there or watching his humans go about their day.

When Lynne came in, a bit early for the dinner she was invited to, he was asleep there, not reacting to her calling his name. That in itself wasn't unusual, he did that often, whether because he was a deep sleeper or because he just couldn't be bothered interacting with humans at the moment. She could get that, and usually she would just give him a few pets and leave him to it.

This time, when she ran her hand from his shoulder blades and down his back, what met her was a chill running through her fingers. The kitten was cold, contrasting his usual space heater temperature, and it made her pause.

Maybe he was laying under a breeze and so his fur just cooled down? No, the window was closed, and the room was a pleasant kinda warm.

She ran her hand through his fur again experimentally. No, this wasn't just his fur being cold, this was his whole body. Definitely not a misplaced breeze.

He seemed awfully unbothered by her over petting him, continuing to lie still in his cat bed. A bit too still.

She froze for a moment and watched intently.

He wasn't breathing.

The thought seized her painfully and she shook the little body a bit, slightly at first and then more desperately, finally picking him up, but he just hung limply from her hands, completely unmoving and lifeless.

This can't be happening.

"No no no, come on" She muttered to herself and attempted to pinch the kitten on the flank, just a bit, just to wake him up, that's worked before, she could take a grumbly annoyed cat over… over…

He wasn't waking up.

Shit, God dammit.

She held the little body gently, the small black limbs hanging bonelessly out of her hands. Her vision blurred slightly.

Fuck.

"Fuck!" She cursed, just holding herself back from yelling it. Kamila might not have been home, but she knew better than to make a habit of cursing in this house.

Kamilla. Kamilla was coming home soon.

And there Lynne was, holding the family cat, who was dead and cold in her grasp.

Her thoughts turned to Missile before she could stop them. Her little doggie, safe at home, happy and excited and waiting for her right this moment.

More tears welled up, stinging her eyes.

"Oh Sissel, no… " She trailed off.

She couldn't let Kamila see. Not like this. She knew Kamila was strong, but not… not dead pet strong. Not out of the blue.

Poor little Sissel. She'd managed to forget, but 10 years was probably old for a cat, wasn't it.

She had to do something. She had to call Jowd. Tell him about it. Maybe ask him what to do.

She settled the tiny body back in its place. It looked just like before, like he was just asleep. She steeled herself and blinked the tears out of her eyes. She'd go home and hug Missile so tight tonight.

She turned back to the rest of the room, sighed, and took out her flip phone. It was a glitchy little thing but she hoped it wouldn't decide to be a bother just then. Time was of the essence.

It was a bit slow for her liking, taking its sweet time to react to her button presses, but soon enough she was listening to the dial tone as the call went through.

The voice that picked up was cheery.

"Hello, Lynne. How is my favorite young detective's day going?"

"Good day, Detective Jowd, uh" She paused, ordering herself to calm down and just speak. Easier said than done "I'm… I'm at your house. I had free time so I swung by early, cuz I thought I could hang out with Kamila, and it's… It's… it's Sissel, he's…" She choked on the words.

"Did something happen?" His tone was serious now, clearly hearing her distress "what's wrong?"

She tried to steady her breath, which only half worked, and was just about to force herself to talk further when her train of thought was interrupted by something. A sensation, a small soft thump against her leg.

She looked down. Two bright yellow eyes looked back at her, the cat's head pressed into the side of her leg as he rubbed his forehead against it after a headbutt.

He blinked up at her innocently. She was opening and closing her mouth soundlessly as a fish gasping for water.

"Lynne?" Came Jowd's voice in her ear "You there?"

She snapped out of it and took a deep breath "it's fine, false alarm!" She probably sounded hysterical, but could you blame her? "Everything's ok now, nothing to worry about"

".. If you say so" He didn't seem too convinced but didn't press her on it "see you in the evening, Lynne"

"See you then Detective Jowd"

She shut the flip phone with a resounding click. Took a moment to breathe in and out. Then again for good measure. Then finally she looked back down, to meet eyes with the black cat, now leaning into her leg with his whole body.

"There's something going on with you" She told the kitten, very seriously. He continued to stare, feigning obliviousness "there's something up and don't you think you can get away with it"

He narrowed his eyes at her, a feline smile, smugness rolling off him in waves. Her brows furrowed.

"I'll get to the bottom of this, I promise you that" She wagged a finger at him. Then, after a second, bent down to scratch him behind the ears. The customary warmth met her fingers as she did "Welcome back though, Sissel. Try not to scare me like that again, Ok?"

"Eeem" He told her, as if saying 'sure'.

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The shot went wide. Mostly because the man shooting at her got hit in the face with a tomato. That got catapulted from somewhere within the depth of the kitchen of the restaurant they were in.

Lucky.

While the man attempted to regain his senses (because the tomato exploded on impact with his face) she had time to close the gap and swat the gun out of his hand. It was all easy from there.

Suspect apprehended. Job well done.

But.. Huh.

There was a little basket, not quite overflowing with tomatoes, one a taller counter in the semi-open concept kitchen, and while it seemed stable she could kinda see how a piece of fruit could fall out of it.

There was a little bit of clutter around, and it seemed almost like there was a pattern to it, though she couldn't find it.

Maybe she was overthinking it.

A wooden spoon fell off the counter, the hollow sound of it hitting the floor echoing around the room for just a moment.

She could swear she could hear something else though. Kinda like a mewl of a laugh.

Weird.

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There was a red void spinning before her eyes.

It took her a little bit to figure out what was even happening. Her head was swimming but didn't hurt as such. Her body didn't feel entirely present. She couldn't remember what'd just happened, her brain filled with tv static.

Also there was a red void. That should be a concern. It spun slowly, almost languidly, and seemed to howl, but not in the way she could hear with her ears. It was more of a feeling than a sound.

It felt familiar, in a distant half forgotten sorta way. Almost safe.

Maybe she ought to have been more freaked out but she really wasn't.

There was something else in front of her, if she focused hard enough and looked through the swirling red. A figure, laying prone on the ground, face down and unmoving. Just glancing at them she knew they were dead. Call it a hunch, a detective sense, or maybe just prior knowledge she wasn't fully aware of. This person wouldn't be getting up.

A puddle of blood slowly creeping from under the silhouette only made her more convinced. This was a corpse.

There was something about it. Red hair, light yellow coat, knee-high boots.

Ah. So she was dead. That was her corpse.

That didn't feel like the soul crushing realisation it should have been.

She just. Didn't feel much about it. Annoyed maybe. But not that concerned.

She wondered why that was. Something itched at the back of her mind.

Her answer came to her in the form of a flash of something brief and then suddenly she wasn't alone in the swirling red.

She blinked. "Sissel?"

The cat seemed surprised at her "Oh, you're awake"

Huh.

"I knew you'd come for me" She said before she really knew what she was saying "What took you so long?"

He looked vaguely confused "You remember me?"

"I saw you the other day, didn't I? You're Jowd's cat, i see you all the time"

"That's…" He narrowed his eyes and furrowed what could be called eyebrows in a more human looking expression than a cat would usually make. It felt familiar. "That's not what I meant"

But she knew that already. Didn't she.

"Lynne" His voice echoed in her head. The kitten seemed to weave his way closer to her, moving but not walking, his eyes boring into her soul.

She blinked and, for a moment, saw someone else.

"I told you I would never forget you, didn't I, Sissel?" She smiled at the man cat "After the night we had, how could I ever" She smiled at him "Though I didn't know you were a cat. How'd that happen?"

The kitten smiled at her in his feline way "A case of mistaken identity, all sorted years ago now" He practically purred at her "it's really nice to talk to you again, even if it's under these… unfortunate circumstances."

She chuckled "But that's what you're here for, right?"

"Of course"

End Notes

Title and summary from "Oh klahoma" by Jack Stauber

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