

Cats were his comfort, or at least that's what it seemed like. The old man was alone in a house fit for two. Two chairs were facing the television, but one was collecting dust. He slowly walked over to his tiny kitchen that was full of memories that haunted him. He could sense her presence, but he ignored her as his eyes began to water. He dragged his feet against the floor and slowly melted into his chair. The only conversations that were heard in that house were from movies and baseball games.

One day he heard a knock at the door. He let out a small sigh and his legs, like jello, wobbled over to the door. He expected to see the mailman but instead he saw a small girl.

“Hi grandpa!”

She excitedly rushed into his house. His lips started to turn upward as the room seemed to get brighter. He quickly rummaged through his cabinets finding a box of cookies for her. As she took a bite, she saw an old photograph hung on the wall and for a while they both suffocated in the silence while he stood up and adjusted the empty chair to face the tv.

“Now she can watch with us.”

The young girl was about to speak but she heard a small noise coming from the outside. She quickly rushed over to the door and saw a small ball of fur with big eyes staring up at her.

“Grandpa, come here!”

He went over to her and bent down and his eyes seemed to light up. He quickly ran to grab a bowl and cat food. Within a blink of an eye he appeared at the door. He didn't want to scare the poor creature so he gently placed the bowl down. The tiny cat looked at him with approval and her tiny body screamed with delight. For the whole day, their minds couldn't leave the cat alone.

As days went by the cat seemed to be his best friend. He would always have food ready for her. Overtime they became inseparable but he forgot one important thing, she was a stray.

He woke up and followed his routine of making two bowls of breakfast. One for him and one for his best friend. As he went to the front door, he dropped the bowl and it shattered.

The little girl visited him again to see the cat but to her surprise his eyes seemed empty and his movements were sluggish.

“Grandpa, where’s the cat?”

“They poisoned her. They killed her. ”

“Why? Why? She wasn’t hurting anyone. How could a person be so cruel!”

Though strays might seem like an inconvenience to a community, some of them can be the hope and light to a person’s life. They took the light out of his life and once again it was dark. All that was left was an empty chair and a broken bowl.