

JAZZMYN

...A Cat's Fair Tale



as told to
LorrieGay Marlow

Jazzmyn wishes to
thank Lilly H. for
inspiring LorrieGay
to tell her story.

Jazzmyn...A Cat's Fair-Tale

1. I Once Had a Family...Then I Didn't
2. Damsel in Distress or... How I Survived
3. Still An "Orphan of the Storm"
4. Out of the Darkness...Finding My Spiritual Parents
5. NameMeKeepMeNameMe ! Keep Me!!!!
6. Why Do Humans Want To Label Everything?
 - a. "How Old Is She?"
 - b. "But What Aaaaare You?" Minx, Manx, Schmanx!
7. Speaking of Anti-Cat Slogans...Curiosity Did *WHAT* to *WHO*!?
8. Mother & Child
9. Cat Nip? Yes Please!!!
10. Toys R Me
11. Myth: Real Men Don't Like Cats?!
12. "Just" a Cat? I Don't *Think* So!
13. "Why You Gotta Go and Make Things So Complicated?"
14. Cat on a (Barely) Hot Tin Roof
15. WHOOPS! Another Bird Bites the Dust!
16. Playmates or....Whoops! Preymates
17. Head Sitting
18. Which CAT-apults us to: Paparazzi!!
19. The **ACAT**emy Awards or...What Becomes a Legend Most?
20. I Can Hear Your Heart Purr
21. Cat Napping 101
22. (Very) Shaken & Stirred (Up)
23. Not Sit-Ins...Sit-ONS
24. Are You Serving Yet?...or Guilt-Tripping Daddy
25. Play With Me, Hug Me. Brush Me, Scraaaatch Meeeee
26. JAZZMYN: Warrior Princess... and Mugging Victim
27. The Good News: I'm Going to the Doctor.The Bad News: I'M GOING TO THE DOCTOR?!
28. Turning Poison into Medicine, or...How I *Finally* Became a Semi-House Cat Again
29. Jazz: A Member of the Hollywood Community
30. Still Sugar and Spice, Not Some Goody Two-Shoes
31. Does It Even Get More Real Than FACEBOOK?
32. Truly, All's Well That Ends Well

(Not even *close* to) **The End**

I Once Had a Family...Then I Didn't

My family moved away from home. They didn't even ask me how I felt about it! I mean, I'd put down roots there. Friends, closets, mouse burial grounds. These things have resonance for a girl. Yes, I know I wasn't the one paying the rent. But still! For days they tried all the tricks they'd read in cat manuals. Scenting my favorite objects. Trying to get me to feel like a "partner" in the move, and not a hostage! I wasn't buying it!

Then I did a stupid thing. I ran away. They hunted for me all during the moving process but I stayed hidden. All I'd wanted was to demonstrate my displeasure with them and, well, maaaaaybe get them to stay in the house that had been home to me all my life! But one day I glimpsed a big orange truck. That afternoon their familiar car was gone and a sign with big letters appeared on the front lawn that had been my playground. Finally I realized they weren't calling my name any more. I was alone. But it was too late. They had put a big container with dry food out for me. Bigger than I'd ever seen before. I gorged on it until it was all gone...even when I wasn't hungry. Somehow I knew it was the last time my family would feed me. It was like eating love. It was all I had left of them and I ate and ate until I was so exhausted I fell into a bad-dream sleep.



Somewhat like Scarlett O'Hara (my family had enjoyed watching old movies on TCM...Turner Classic Movies) I soothed myself by exclaiming, "*Fiddle dee dee! I'll think about it tomorrow.*" But when tomorrow came I woke up and I realized I needed to figure out what I was going to do. True, "my" house was still there. But without them "a house is not a home" as the song goes. Even the scents they'd left behind - faint and growing more faint - now made me sad instead of happy. I had miscalculated very badly.

Damsel in Distress or... How I Survived

I had been wandering around my old house for weeks. The weather was turning cold and sometimes rainy. I'm sure I looked as freezing, hungry and bedraggled as I felt. And vulnerable...which isn't a good thing for a girl on her own. To make matters worse, there was the constant prowling presence of a huge, tough looking tom cat. (Why they are called Tom I do not know. But I will research it and get back to you on that.) He was black and white, the black forming what looked like a foreboding pirate eye patch. And his nose was almost a snout, large and pink, like he had been in a lot of fights. When I used to glimpse him in the past I'd just scoot indoors. Now I didn't have that luxury and I felt scared.

This is when I started to learn "not to judge a book/cat by its cover." I'd decided he was an insensitive brute who I'd deemed was (I'm not proud to admit this) a bit below me. After all, he was a street dweller, whereas I was a well loved and fed feline princess. But now I realized that if you're gonna survive on the streets you needed to look tough like him. I looked like exactly what I was; a scared girl in a scary, untamed world.

One night I saw him seeing me huddled in a doorway...wet, shivering, looking like Audrey Hepburn's soaking wet cat at the end of "Breakfast at Tiffanys." (Of course the difference here is that after Audrey/Holly Golightly tosses her feline out of a New York taxi cab and into the pouring rain, she then chases through streets and alleys until she finds Cat huddled and shivering near a dumpster. Cue closing shot of Holly cradling her cat, both of them looking bedraggled in a glamorous, emaciated-chic Hollywood kind of way. (I, on the other hand, was *not* having that sort of luck, my parents apparently gone for good.) Just as I was about to skoot away to hide, The Big Cat reappeared and blocked my path.



I was trembling with fear and cold when...he laid in front of me a piece of turkey, pushing it delicately toward me with his paw! I could not have been more surprised if he had pulled up in a Kitty Spa Truck and started grooming me! And that's now

Pete (that's how I called him, and he was kind enough to allow me to continue) became my hero. He took me under his wing/paw.

I guess it was a "Lady and the Tramp" kind of thing. Early on he could tell that I didn't have the heart to scavenge around in the dumpsters and boxes behind the many neighborhood restaurants. I'm not a snob or anything; although I do have pride, I'm not saddled with "foolish pride." But even though I was near to starving, I just couldn't bring myself to pick through garbage, unearthing people's leftovers. I wouldn't say I'd rather starve, but that's pretty much what might have happened to me if not for Pete. He always managed to find something I could bear to eat.

But I was hungering for more than food. I was lonely for a human, their touch and affection, the silly sounds they make. I'm not stupid or unaware. I know that we cats have a reputation for not caring about our people...at least not the way dogs do. It's just that we respect them too much to smother or patronize them. (And truth be told, we don't want to be crowded either because we have fascinating inner lives that keep us pretty occupied.) We love our humans. It's just that our aristocratic demeanor misleads people into thinking we are cool and aloof. Think of it as a litmus test. It's sort of like dogs are Jennifer Aniston and cats are Angelina Jolie. One must be secure within themselves to choose the latter.

Still An "Orphan of the Storm"

Way past when I'd stopped fantasizing that my family might come back I remained on "my block." Pete continued to forage for and protect me. But I still longed for some humans of my own.

Then one day I noticed that an older couple who lived down from "my house" had been leaving food out in their yard pretty regularly. At first I thought, "Who? Me?" I didn't want to take someone else's, but I was so hungry for something clean. I'd nibble invisibly (I thought) just in case. This went on for a while, until I realized it really *was* meant for me! Although Pete wasn't all that partial to "cat" food any more, late at night I made sure to offer him some anyway. I now understood what it was to "rely on the kindness of strangers" and I was really happy to finally be able to offer him something too.

After a while I met the couple. They spoke differently, with some kind of language I had never heard before. It sounded foreign and loud. I don't think it was angry yelling, though it sort of hurt my sensitive ears. I got the impression it was a warm language...like it was from a warm country or something. The woman liked to sit outdoors and stroke me. I seemed to soothe her. Plus, it was sooooo good to finally be touched again. And the man spoke gruffly but warmly when he saw me. But they didn't give me a name or anything. That deeply concerned me. I had heard somewhere how in some countries beings like me were looked at as "just animals" without personalities and relationships. Sure, they might like me. But if they weren't going to name me, that meant I could be dismissed at any time. And that's exactly what happened.

Suddenly the food became sparse. I didn't hear the couple. There was a younger woman who used to visit them with her daughter and their dogs. Sometimes she would show up and leave some dry food in a bowl...until she didn't. It had been weeks. (I overheard later that it was actually *months!* That they went back to "the old country" for the whole summer.) Although I went back to the yard over and over, there was never anything more there for me. This went on and on. Pete tried to help as much as he could but...I was starving. I hate to put it into words but...I think I was dying. There! I said it! I didn't know if I was expiring from lack of food or lack of love, but something inside me was finally giving up...giving in. I could feel my life getting fainter every day. Oh, I am crying little tears inside.