

**ONCE UPON A TIME...**A tiny grey kitten was streaking across the road being chased by four dogs. She stopped to catch her breath, her chest heaving in and out, her heart pumping rapidly. Then, WHAM! The little kitten lay motionless on the road as a speeding car went round a corner and out of sight. The four dogs that had witnessed this scene shrank away back to their owners, not wanting the same to befall themselves.

This kitten was a really brave kitten. Maybe a little too brave. Earlier that day this kitten was trying to steal some meat from one of the dogs while he was sleeping because she was hungry. This cat was a stray, with no owner and she didn't care.

An eight year old girl was paddling down the road on her bicycle when her eyes fell upon that grey kitten. She gasped in horror. Without hesitation this girl picked up the kitten and ever so gently lowered her down into the pink basket of her bicycle. Drops of blood dripped through the gaps of the basket as the girl struggled to ride back home.

"Chrissy!" the girl's mother shrieked. "How dare you bring that filthy thing into the house?"

"Mum!" said Chrissy between sobs. "The poor creature is dying! sh-she was j-j-just lying there on th-the road. We have to take her to the hospital." Chrissy was screaming at the top of her lungs before her parents agreed to drive her and the kitten to the animal hospital.

"The kitten's broken two legs, one front leg and one back leg and her jawbone's broken too," said the Vet.

"Dad!" Chrissy wailed. "is she going t-to live?" Her dad didn't answer. They had to leave the kitten at the hospital for six days and on the seventh day the vet had to perform an operation on her. It was painful and her chances weren't high. They gave a kitten a shot to make her go under so she wouldn't feel the pain.

When they next visited the hospital the vet brought the grey kitten out and handed her to Chrissy saying: "This cat will not be the same anymore. From now on she will be scared of many, many things—rat, birds, and maybe even her own shadow. But she will live."

Chrissy brought the kitten home and took loving care of her. Her parents had agreed to let Chrissy keep the kitten until her wounds healed, but only if Chrissy took care of it, fed it and cleaned up after it. Chrissy named the kitten Scaredy-Cat.

By the time Scaredy-Cat was better the whole family had fallen in love with her. Her sweet gaze made them happy and her constant purring made them smile and she was great company. The whole family was by now helping to care for the cat.

Scaredy-Cat grew up to be almost as normal as any other cat except for the " Scaredy" part. She gave birth to the most adorable kitten Chrissy had ever seen. Her kitten was black with a grey patch on her stomach that looked almost like a heart. Scaredy-Cat gave birth to that kitten about one week after Chrissy's ninth birthday.

One day, about a month after "Patch" was born, a girl of about ten came across Patch. She lifted Patch up and carried her home, ignoring the collar dangling on Patch's neck. Scaredy-Cat was the only living creature that witnessed this evil crime.

Scaredy-Cat was furious. She jumped up and down and ran in circles trying to tell Chrissy and her parents what had happened. Then Scaredy-Cat realized that these humans would never understand her.

Scaredy-Cat wished that she weren't always so afraid of everything. If she were braver, she could go save her baby on her own, she wouldn't let that horrible girl take her in the first place.

Minutes flashed by as Scaredy-Cat grew more and more worried about Patch. What if the girl hurts Patch, what if she's mean to Patch, Scaredy-Cat worried. Then Scaredy-Cat made up her mind. She would have to just overcome her fears.

Scaredy-Cat followed Patch's scent until she had to cross the road. She hesitated. She had never crossed a road since that accident. She had never forgotten the painful experience. Her eyes narrowed. She looked to her right and then her left and moved one paw forward. A car came speeding by as she quickly moved her paw back. She looked to her left and right again and this time she ran across the road as fast as she could. She had made it!

She continued to follow Patch's scent. She crossed two more roads. She ran into a cat that wouldn't let her pass. Scaredy-Cat scratched that cat with her sharp claws and ran past it.

After a while she found the house that the cat-napper lived in. She was about to go inside when a Dalmatian came out! She tried to fight it, but she knew that she couldn't win. She ran to the other side of the house and was about to climb up a tree when she remembered that the last time she had tried climbing a tree she had fallen and broken her leg that left her limping for days. But she thought about Patch again and found the courage to climb the tree.

She climbed till she was level with the second floor of the house. She went onto a branch, jumped through a window and landed right on the girl's head!

The girl screamed. Scaredy-Cat jumped off her head and landed on the floor and ran out of her room. As soon as she spied Patch, she picked her up by the scruff of her neck, jumped back out of the window, down the tree and across the road. Scaredy-Cat went back home with Patch, feeling brave and proud of what she had done: overcome her fears and saved her kitten.

This rescue took several hours, not quite long enough for Chrissy and her parents to notice Scaredy-Cat or Patch missing and so they never knew about the heroic deed that Scaredy-Cat had accomplished.

The End.

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