

CATWOMAN™

It all started on the day that Patience Philips died. That day was also the day that she started to live. This is her story.



CHAPTER 1

The cat with golden eyes

It was four o'clock in the morning and Patience couldn't sleep.

Thump, thump, thump, thump, thump.

What a terrible noise! The loud music went on and on and on. Her neighbour in the flat opposite was having an all-night party.

Thump, thump, thump, thump, thump.

Patience had gone to bed at ten o'clock because she had to get up at six. Today was really important. She had to show her boss her designs for the new beauty cream adverts.

Patience got out of bed and went across the room to the window of her third-floor flat. She looked out and saw her neighbour and his friends. They were dancing and laughing and having lots of fun ... and making lots of noise.

'I don't want to be difficult, but I need to sleep,' she thought as she opened the window.

'Hello?' she called. 'Excuse me? Could you please ...?' But she didn't finish her question because no one could hear her.

Just then she heard a miaow. She looked down. There, sitting on the seat of her neighbour's motorbike, was the largest cat that Patience had ever seen. It was grey and black, with huge golden eyes. The cat was watching her.

'Hi, cat!' Patience called. 'Some people are having a good time, aren't they?'

'But I'm having a very bad time,' she thought. She shut the window and went back to bed.

Thump, thump, thump, thump, thump.

The music continued and Patience still couldn't sleep. Finally she got up and began to paint. Patience loved painting. She worked as a designer but she really wanted to be an artist. She used lots of colours on the paper: reds, blues, yellows, purples ... She started to feel better.

Suddenly the music stopped. The party was over.

'At last!' Patience thought.

Then she heard an unhappy miaow from outside the window. She opened the window and looked up. The cat with the huge golden eyes was on a window-sill above the window next door. It miaowed again. It looked frightened.

'Hello again, cat,' said Patience. 'Can't you get down?'

'Poor thing!' she thought. 'It's too scared to move.'

'Come on, kitty, kitty, kitty. You can do it!' she said. The cat miaowed again and stayed where it was.

'Oh OK, cat,' Patience said. 'I'll come and get you. Wait a minute. One, two, three ...'

She climbed out of her window onto her window-sill. She looked down and suddenly felt very frightened. It was a long way down to the street below. She counted to three

again and moved closer to the cat.

‘Come on, kitty,’ she said. But the cat didn’t move.

There was a metal box on the wall near the cat. Patience put one foot on the box and then the other. It seemed safe. She reached for the cat.

‘Don’t do it!’ called a voice from the street below.

‘Don’t jump!’

Patience looked down and saw a tall, slim man with dark hair. The driver’s door of his car was open behind him.

‘It’s going to be OK,’ the man continued. ‘I’m a policeman. Maybe I can help you.’

‘Oh no! He thinks I’m trying to jump out of the window!’ thought Patience. She tried not to laugh – a laugh was dangerous up here. She reached for the cat again but it had disappeared. Suddenly the metal box began to come loose. It started to fall away from the wall and Patience almost fell. ‘Help!’ she shouted.

‘What’s your flat number?’ shouted the man.

Patience held onto the window-sill. ‘Twenty-three!’ she called.

The man ran into the building and up the stairs. The metal box moved again. ‘Oh no!’ thought Patience. ‘I’m going to fall. Hurry, hurry!’

A moment later the man crashed through the door into her flat. The metal box fell to the ground and Patience started to fall. Suddenly the man was at the open window. He caught her and pulled her back into the room. ‘I’ve got you, I’ve got you,’ he shouted. He fell onto the floor next to Patience.

‘Oh thank you,’ she said. She looked into his dark eyes and handsome face. ‘What am I doing?’ she thought suddenly. She stood up quickly.

‘Are you OK?’ the man asked as he stood up.

‘Fine,’ Patience said. Her face was going red. ‘Never better. And you?’

‘Is that all that you can say, Patience?’ she thought to herself. ‘This man’s just saved your life!’

At that moment the cat with the golden eyes came through the window and jumped onto the floor.

‘I went out there to rescue that cat,’ Patience told the man.

He was amazed. ‘You went out there to rescue your cat? What a mad thing to do!’

‘No,’ Patience said. ‘I mean yes, but it’s not *my* cat.’

The man laughed. ‘So you went out there to rescue *someone else’s* cat?’

‘Well you came out to rescue *me!*’ said Patience. She smiled at him, and he smiled back. He had nice white teeth. He really was very handsome. Patience quickly looked at her watch.

‘Oh no! Is that the time?’ she cried. ‘I’m going to be late. I’ve got to go.’

She ran to the table and picked up all her designs. She had worked really hard on them for the past four weeks. She couldn’t be late for the meeting with her boss.

‘I’ve got an important meeting today,’ she explained as they left the flat.

‘Good luck,’ he said. ‘I hope it goes well.’

‘Thank you,’ she said. She wanted to say more but instead she just stood there.

‘Go,’ he ordered.

Patience smiled. She turned to go, but she dropped her handbag. She picked it up quickly and left.

The policeman watched Patience as she went. Then he looked down and saw her purse lying on the ground.

He picked it up and smiled.

‘Today is getting very interesting,’ he thought.