



The
True Story
Fabio and Frank

By Carolyn Wegner

Fabio Finds A Home

Fabio sat in his cold metal cage, looking out at a white plaster wall. In the morning, he would wake up, wait patiently for his morning meal, and then curled up again on his gray blanket. For hours on end, he would lay there, in the white room, curled up, until the glass door creaked open and people walked into the room. They would usually walk up and down the narrow room, pressing their faces against the cages, prodding their fingers through the bars. *Here, kitty, kitty. Well, aren't you just adorable!*

Fabio dreamed every day and every night that one time, a nice family would come, and out of all the cute, playful kittens, pick him. At the end of the day, after many rounds of people, usually with small eager children in tow, three or four more kittens would be gone, and Fabio would be left in the cold metal cage.

He was average right from the start. All of Fabio's brothers and sisters had either bright blue eyes, silky soft fur, or unusual colorings with a friendly personality, unlike Fabio, who was black and white with yellow eyes and was very shy and quiet. He had been born in the pound, and in another week, Fabio would have been there for one year. All of his brothers and sisters had been adopted by loving families, leaving Fabio all alone. No one wanted an average cat that wasn't a fluff-ball of a kitten with endless energy.

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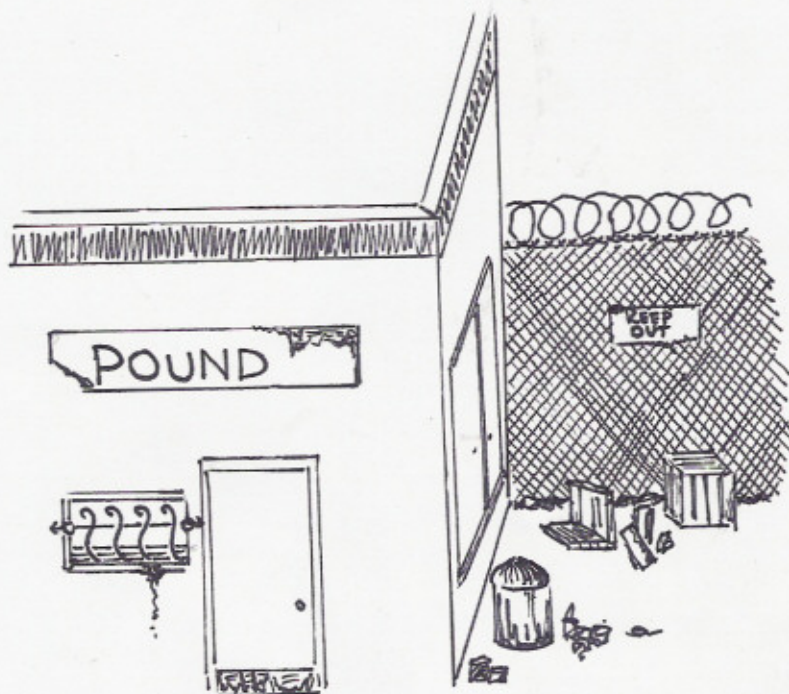
Fabio opened his left eye and squinted. The lights were on in the room. *It must be breakfast time* he thought. The glass door creaked open, but this time, instead of the woman with the food, in walked a man with his son. The man was tall, with graying hair and black-rimmed glasses. The boy must have been about nine, with unruly dark hair



and a splattering of freckles. Fabio sighed, and braced himself for the *Here, kitty, kitty. Well, aren't you just adorable!* He knew that the kitten in the cage next to him was the cutest and most friendly in the room, so Fabio hunkered down, and lay his head on his paws, waiting for his fears to be confirmed.

The man scanned the rows of cats. "Henry, do you want a nice kitten like this one? His orange fur looks so soft!"

"Maybe," Henry replied.



The man opened the cage next to him and pulled out the orange kitten. *Here we go, Fabio though. Love at first sight.* Henry held the kitten, rubbed its chin, picked it up, and watched it wobble around the room and flop on its belly. He didn't squeal with delight like all the other children who came in, and almost seemed disinterested. Henry stood up, and like his father, scanned the rows of cages. His eyes landed on Fabio. Fabio's heart gave a lurch. No one ever looked at him like that.

Henry turned to his father. "What about-" he leaned in and squinted at his name tag, "what about Fabio?"

"Do you want an older cat like that? He doesn't seem to be particularly distinguished," the father said. Fabio's hopes fell. He didn't know why he would have even dreamed that the boy would have wanted him.

"Yes," Henry answered. He opened Fabio's cage, picked him up, and placed him on the floor. *Maybe he still wants me!* he thought. Henry scratched his head, threw a stuffed mouse for him, and said to his father, "This is the one."

Fabio Meets Frank

Fabio loved his new home. He loved waking up to a warm bowl of milk and going to sleep curled up at the foot of Henry's bed. Most of all, Fabio loved being loved, and having a family all to himself. After several months, he had grown accustomed to the life of a pampered house cat. He had forgotten the dull ways of the shelter; not being wanted and expecting nothing from the people that shuffled in and out of the white-washed room everyday.



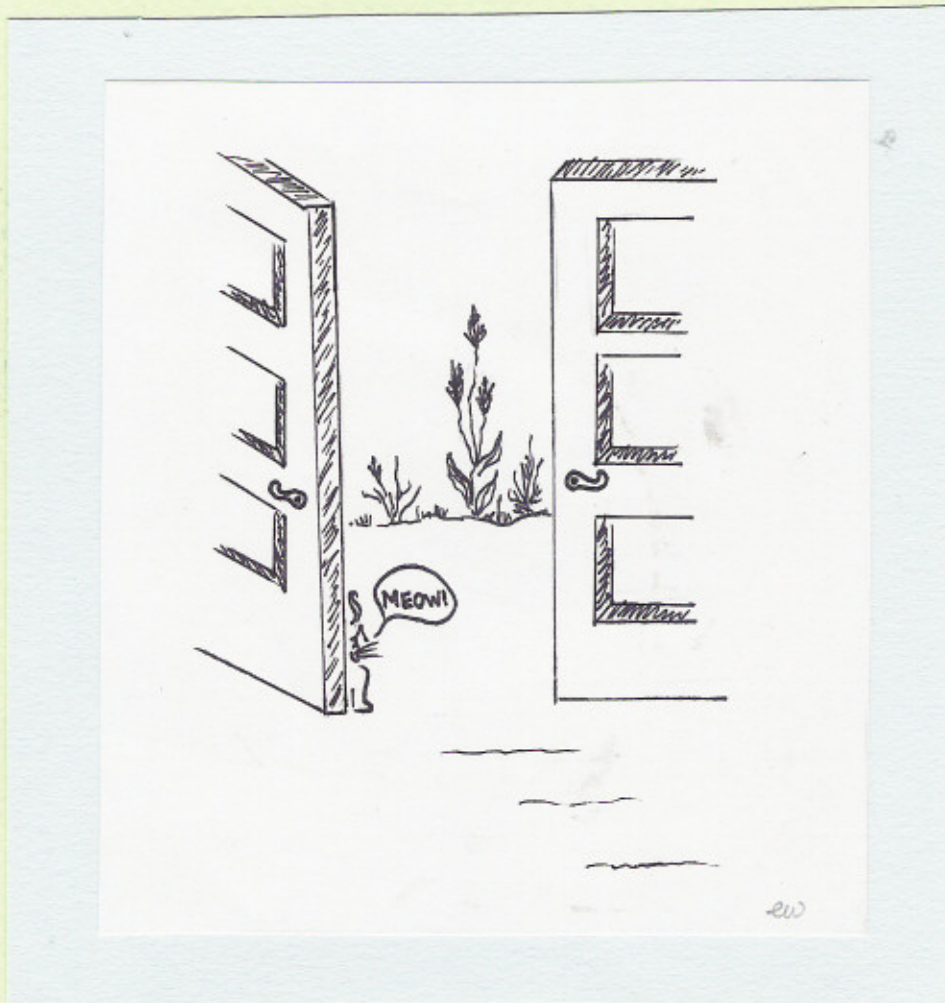
One day, everything changed. A small meow was coming from outside, and a small whiskered face could be seen peeping through the back door. *What was this? An intruder?* Fabio was confused. He had never seen another cat around the house. This was his house. *That cat better find a place of its own!*

Then, when the little black cat spotted Fabio watching him from inside, the cat disappeared in a flash. The next day the cat was back again, and once more disappeared at the sight of Fabio. On the third day, the back door was ajar, and just as Fabio was waking up from his afternoon nap, he caught a glimpse of the little black cat peeking his head around the corner of the back door. At that moment, Henry came into the room and spotted the black cat. Fabio's heart sank as Henry, with an excited exclamation, ran to the door and picked up the meowing cat.


"Fabio! I've found you a friend! Don't you want a friend to play with?!" *No not really*, Fabio thought sadly. "Dad, can we keep him? He's perfect, and he'll keep Fabio company during the day while I'm at school," Henry pleaded.

"As long as you are responsible and can take care of him, its perfectly alright with me," his father responded.

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The little black cat, who Henry named Frank, had been living with Fabio and *his* family for three weeks now. Fabio had retreated into his old, shy self, and avoided the little black cat as much as possible. Frank was friendly as ever with Henry and his father, and even tried to befriend Fabio, who would have none of it. Frank made Fabio angry. Frank had no right to barge in and become the cat of the house.







Weeks passed, and Fabio continued to grow more and more sad. One night, just before Fabio was about to slink to the couch where he now slept, Frank came up to him and asked if he wanted to share the foot of Henry's bed with him. Reluctantly, Fabio agreed. He was lonely sleeping on the couch by himself. The next morning, Frank asked Fabio if he wanted to bird-watch with him in the living room window. Fabio once again reluctantly agreed and watched birds flit from tree to tree in the backyard with Frank at his side.

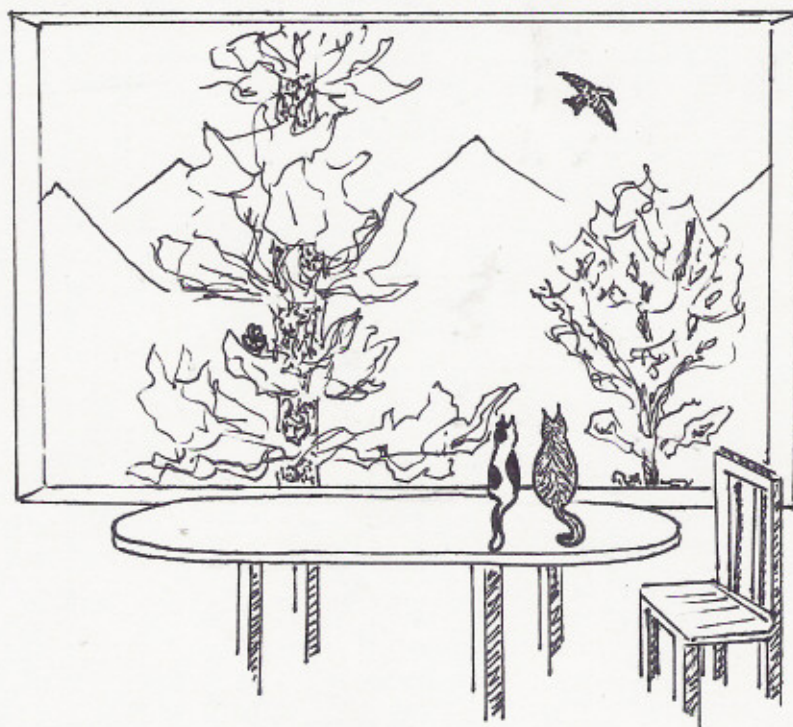
Frank turned to Fabio and asked, "So where were you from, before you came here?"

"The pound. I was born there, too. My brothers and sisters all were adopted right away, but I lived there one year before Henry found me," he explained. "Did you come from a pound too?"

"No, I had a family once. I thought they loved me, but then one day, I came back from my daily walk around the block to find a moving truck pulling away from the house. I never saw them again. I wandered the streets for awhile, until I found this house. All I want is to have a loving family that cares about me." *Maybe Frank isn't so bad after all, Fabio thought. He went through the same thing I did.*



From that day on, Frank and Fabio were best friends. They ate meals together, watched birds in the living room window, shared the foot of Henry's bed, and played in the garden. Fabio was much happier now that he had Frank, even though he was no longer the only cat in the house. He realized that he didn't mind sharing the love and attention of Henry. There was more than enough love for both of them.



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To: Michelle ♡