

Skeeter
Bug
Loves
Sarah

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JANET LEE YATES



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God Created You

By Janet Lee Yates

On the day you were born,
The angels oohed in awe.
From the top of your head to the tips of your toes,
They couldn't believe what they saw.

It was plain to see you were heaven sent
And nothing could compare
To the love we felt since that day
We counted each new hair.

Your face was so adoring.
Your smile was oh-so-cute.
I know you were a blessing,
For God created you!

Dedication



To our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Thank you, Lord, for this precious story you have given me to share with the world.

To children of all ages, races, and abilities.

And to my brother, John Michael Lee, affectionately known as Mike. His acceptance and sense of humor during his courageous battle with cancer were a testament to his faith in Jesus Christ. One day I will see him again in his brand new, pain-free, miracle body sporting that adorable, megawatt smile.

In honor of:

Heaven's littlest angels, children who spent only a short time here on earth.

Steven and Kelly Hicks for their words of encouragement. Their daughter Sarah, for her bravery and strength during two-and-a-half years of chemotherapy. You go, girl! To little sister Emma for holding her big sister's hand through it all.

Alexandra Davila Bakker, founder and president of Makeachildsmile.org for her positive feedback and for allowing me to use the name of her website. Keep up the good work, Alex.

Ashley and April Yates for their laughter during the first, second, and third readings.

“Life cheerleaders”: My mother, Carolyn Lee; my aunt, Gertie Yeargan; and dear friends Myra Campbell, Linda Hammond, Renee Sanford, Kai Weekley, and Beth Yates.

Kristen Niner for rescuing Skeetie as an orphan from the side of the road.

And to my husband, Rusty, for falling in love with a little bob-tailed kitten.

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Preface



Skeeter Bug the kitten believes his small size makes him less than perfect. Skeetie soon realizes the world doesn't revolve around a bob-tailed kitten when he finds out about a Web site for sick children. Skeetie may be lacking in size, but he makes up for it in the heart department when he begins writing to one very special little girl named Sarah. Somewhere along the way, Skeetie learns to accept himself just the way God made him. Skeetie's dreams come true when he meets Sarah and it dawns on him he's made a difference in her life. Skeetie and his friends are sure to leave paw prints all over your heart.

Chapter 1

Just the Way You Are



... You are precious and honored in my sight, and... I love you.

—Isaiah 43:4 NIV

I was being followed. Galloping cats of every color chased after me all over the barnyard. I ran as fast as I could, but my short, stubby legs seemed to be running in slow motion. I quickly glanced over my shoulder and Cricket was in the lead. Moonlight glinted off teeth that were long and shark-like. I darted left and dove under a wheelbarrow that was lying upside down beside the barn. Cricket dashed past, looking straight ahead. Before I could breathe a sigh of relief, someone tapped me on the shoulder. My eyes popped open immediately.

“Skeeter Bug, wake up,” Mom urged in a soothing voice.

“Oh, Mom, thank goodness,” I gasped. “Oh, it was awful. I dreamed that all the other cats were bigger than I am.”

“Skeetie, all the other cats *are* bigger than you are.”

“And they were all chasing me around and around. Oh, it was just horrible!”

“Well, it’s a good thing you were safe and sound on my bed, huh, Skeetie?” Mom teased and tweaked me on the nose.

I should have noticed Mom’s knowing smile, but all I could think about was the frightful dream. I shuddered at the thought of one cat in particular. Cricket was the brother kitty to my friend Tuggy, and they both lived up the hill from me. Tuggy and Cricket were as different as night and day. Tuggy was pure black with beautiful green eyes. Cricket was fluffy and white, and his piercing blue eyes gave him a ghostly quality. Cricket’s favorite hobby was making sure I wasn’t in his line of vision at any time. I spent my days shying away from everything that happened to be white.

“I just wish Cricket would like me, Mom,” I grumbled softly. “Do you think he’ll ever stop chasing me?”

“Sure I do, Skeetie,” Mom replied confidently.

“When, Mom?”

“When you stop running from him.”

“Stop running from him?” I gasped in protest. “That doesn’t make sense. Cricket chases me and I run, Mom.”

“Stand your ground one day and see what he does. Nothing ever gets solved by running away, Skeetie.”

“Whew, all this talk about running is making me hungry,” I declared as I headed toward my food dish.

“Don’t forget you have to go to the vet tomorrow.”

The vet! One paw froze in midair and my heart skipped a beat.

“I’m not so hungry anymore,” I announced gloomily. “I think I’ll go down to the barn.”

“There’s nothing to worry about, Skeetie. Everything will be all right, you’ll see,” Mom informed me cheerfully.

“That’s easy for you to say,” I whispered to myself.

I had already been informed about vets by Bunni, Mom’s other bob-tailed cat in the black-and-white tuxedo. According to Bunni there was plenty to worry about. Cold tables and closed doors came to mind, but the thought of those long shot needles were my biggest fear.

I hung my head as I padded down to the barn. I had found a couple of friends in the family horses and I was counting on them to cheer me up. I looked in every stall, but Blaze and Tex appeared to be missing in action.

“Hmm, I might as well wait on those two to get back,” I reasoned, admiring a cozy spot in the hay.

I jumped onto a fresh bale and made a beeline for the sunbeams streaming in through the lone window. There was nothing to do but lie down and wait on the horses to get back.

“Maybe I’ll rest my eyes for a minute,” I murmured drowsily.

The barn slowly disappeared and daylight faded into darkness. Several hours later, Blaze and Tex ambled into the barn.

“Check Skeetie out, Blaze. He’s sawing some logs, huh?” Tex chuckled merrily. “How in the world does he sleep upside down like that?”

“Heh, heh! I don’t know, man, but he sure looks comfortable,” Blaze giggled with delight.

“Wake up, little buddy, or you’ll sleep your life away,” Tex urged with a wink at Blaze.

“Oh, hey guys,” I greeted with a yawn. “Aw, yuck. Yuck, yuck, yuck!”

“Whoa there, little buddy! Why so sad?” Tex whinnied with a nuzzle of his velvety nose.

“I have to go to the vet tomorrow and I’m really nervous about it,” I explained sadly.

“Can I tell you a secret, little buddy, straight from the horse’s mouth?” Tex asked, trying to help his friend. “Don’t worry about tomorrow because tomorrow will take care of itself. Today has enough troubles of its own.”

“That was beautiful, Tex. Bravo!” teased Blaze.

“Leaping lizards! Did you say beautiful?” I blurted out enthusiastically. “You guys are not going to believe the dream I just had!”

Tex and Blaze exchanged a look of amazement.

“Well, don’t keep us in suspense, buddy. Tell us all about it,” Blaze pleaded.

“I was hiking through this beautiful, lush, green forest. Overhead, the birds were singing and to my left I could hear the tinkling sounds of a waterfall. As I walked

through the lane of trees, a band of mice lined up to salute me. The woods opened into a clearing, and there stood the most beautiful angel I have ever seen.

“Hello there, Skeeter Bug!’ the angel announced in a musical voice as if she’d known me all my life.

“Who are you?’ I asked cautiously.

“I am your guardian angel, Emerald, at your service,’ the angel replied, gracefully taking a bow.

“I didn’t know kitties had guardian angels,’ I gulped in astonishment.

“I have to admit to you it’s not the norm, but I’ve cleared it with God, and he’s given it his stamp of approval,’ the angel declared. ‘Besides, I come from a long line of animal lovers.’

“For several long minutes we stared into each other’s eyes. Emerald was so beautiful I could hardly believe my eyes. She loved me so much I could feel it from the top of my head to the tips of my toes. It was awesome!

“How has life been treating you?’ Emerald asked affectionately.

“I said the first thing that popped into my mind.

“My life would be absolutely perfect if everybody was smaller than I am.’

“Are you saying you would like to be bigger, Skeeter Bug?’

“I would like to be *much* bigger. Can you help me?’ I inquired eagerly.

“Sure, I will give you some words of wisdom,’ Emerald replied with a dimpled smile.

“Words of wisdom? Is that some sort of growth fertilizer or something?’ I wondered out loud, cocking my head to one side.

“Emerald smiled and shook her head.

“You’re special just the way you are, Skeetie.’

“Bravely I braced myself on the solid ground, eagerly awaiting my transformation from pint-sized kitten to towering tiger, but nothing happened. Meanwhile, Emerald smiled radiantly at me as if she had handed me leg of lizard on a silver platter.

“That’s it? I’m special?’ I complained pitifully.

“The angel nodded and continued to smile back at me.

“Yeah, right, if I want to look like a baby all my life,’ I groaned in disbelief.

“Glittery gold dust filled the air as Emerald clapped her hands and pointed to a huge rock. There I was in living color on rock TV, but there was no trace of a kitten. Instead, there was a handsome, muscular fellow with a very dignified-looking bobbed tail.

“Is that me?’ I whispered, hardly believing my eyes.

“In the flesh,’ Emerald nodded gaily.

“The most amazing thing was that sitting right beside me was none other than Cricket, and I wasn’t running from him,” I informed my two friends with a smile.

Blaze and Tex started hooting and hollering with laughter at the thought of this.

“Let me get this straight. Heh, heh! You were sitting beside Cricket and he wasn’t chasing you?” Blaze asked

as he wiped tears of laughter from his eyes. "Boy, that's a good one, little buddy. What happened next?"

"Then Tex called my name and I woke up in this cozy pile of hay," I gently reminded him.

"Emerald's right, Skeetie," Tex declared. "You're special just the way you are."

"How can I be special if I'm little?" I asked curiously.

"Help someone else, then you'll feel ten feet tall," Tex replied wisely.

"You can believe that," agreed Blaze.

"I sure am lucky to have a couple of friends like you. I love you guys, you know," I told them with a slight sniff. "*By the way, what is that smell?*"

"*I don't smell anything,*" Blaze insisted with a toss of his silky mane. Both horses carefully avoided glancing at the steaming pile of manure, which spread its unpleasant aroma throughout the barn.

Tex abruptly wandered over to the water trough to get a cool drink of water.

"*Do you smell it, Tex?*" I complained loudly, pinning my nose with one paw.

"Don't you have to get ready to go to the vet or something, Skeetie?" Tex grumbled, water dripping from his mouth.

"Don't remind me, I hate needles!" I cried out, plugging both ears with my paws.

"You ought to see the needles they use on horses," Tex snorted as he rolled his eyes at Blaze.

"Right on, brother!" laughed Blaze.