

Nevins 2:
Saving the Junk Yard

By

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Chapter 1

Midnight Visitors

Nevins Davenport, a proper British domesticated cat, yawned and curled up at the foot of his bed where he liked to rest. It was midnight. Time for a long sleep. He closed his eyes and counted tuna jumping. Ah, how relaxing.

This night was like any other. Life had settled into a pleasant routine after winning the court battle for custody of Clay. The annoying newsmen had stopped coming around, and Clay was doing well in school.

As each tuna jumped, Nevins felt calmer and soon he dozed off. Nothing could rouse him from his peaceful slumber.

Except for that persistent scratching at the front door.

“Scr...scr...scratch!”

One eye popped open. What was that?

“Enough!” he whispered annoyed, jumping off the bed. His tail swished vigorously left to right as he briskly padded into the living room being careful not to wake up Clay. His claws lightly tapped the wood floors. *I wonder if I should call Robert? No, there's no time! I will deal with this myself! I can't understand why my house is always the target of a burglar! The last time I had to fight an intruder was after the hurricane. I clawed that guy. I am so annoyed with this that I may bring on a full cat fight! Doesn't anyone know you should always let a sleeping cat Purr?!*

He crept up to his cat door, carefully unlatched it, and peeked out. A gust of wind blew in his face. The smell of cedar trees mixed with rain filled the air. He saw two black, furry legs and a bushy silver and black tail.

It was Reginald the Raccoon with Pearl the cat standing on his shoulders trying to ring the doorbell!

“What are you two doing?”

Pearl gingerly hopped down landing on all four legs with a *thump*.

“We were trying to ring your doorbell,” Reginald explained. “But Pearl kept clawing over it.”

Nevins's whiskers twitched. “Are you serious?! It is midnight. I know you both stay up at night, but this is ridiculous.”



Reginald took a deep breath and let it out slowly before saying, “Nevins, we have a big problem, and we need your help.”

Figuring he needed a comfy chair to hear their problem, Nevins hopped out of his cat door onto the porch of his white bungalow house. The cool wind blew in bursts; scents of oak and cedar trees mixed with green grass and a refreshing hint of rain. The smell comforted Nevins as he jumped up on his old, white rocker that belonged to his late human, Walter. It was at times like these that he missed him the most. “O.k. What is the problem?”

“They’re going to sell The Junk Yard.”

Both Reginald and Pearl lived there.

“The old man who owns it has decided to move into The Nice Nursing Home. That means his son, Jack, will have *control* of The Junk Yard. He plans to sell it.”

“So? That fits in with our plans to buy The Junk Yard. How does that warrant waking me from my peaceful slumber?”

Pearl, who never, ever said a word, exclaimed, “Listen!”

Reginald continued. “Jack wants a quick sale, and he doesn’t want to wait for you to get the money together. He called the city. Two men came over. One wore a suit. He kept barking orders to this other guy who wore a shirt with ‘City of Corpus Christi’ written on it.”

Nevins interrupted. “Now, I get it! The city is going to the dogs! And they want The Junk Yard so they can be *junk yard dogs!*”

Reginald’s eyes widened. “What?!”

Nevins continued. “You said the guy in the suit was barking. That’s a dog!”

Reginald shook his head, “Nevins, I can’t deal with your prejudice about dogs. No! He was human. *Barking orders* is just an expression.” Reginald rolled his eyes and took a deep breath. “As you know, I sleep in the old, rusty light-blue 1969 Volkswagen van. Pearl sleeps in the office. Well, I was lying down, and suit-guy said he wanted the van. Jack told him he could have it for free if he agreed to the deal. Suit-guy opened the back where I sleep. This startled me. I screamed, he screamed, the uniform-guy dropped his clip board and Jack fainted!”

Nevins nodded. “That sounds like humans. Typical. They always faint.”

“I jumped over Jack, who was sprawled out eagle-like.” Reginald acted this part by lying flat in the chair. Pearl had to jump

up on the top of the chair so that he could create the full effect. Then, he sat up and continued gesturing as he spoke. “I dove under a pile of rusted truck parts and peeked out. Suit-guy and uniform-guy helped Jack get up. Suit-guy said, ‘This entire junk yard must go—the stray cat in the office and especially the vermin!’ He called me *vermin*. I’m losing everything—my van, my life in The Junk Yard, possibly losing my best friend, Pearl. It’s too much. My world fell apart. And I was so sure things were going to work out with you buying The Junk Yard.”

Nevins leaned back in his rocker taking in the gravity of the situation. Ever since his victory in court, people had been turning to him to fix their problems. What would he do?

Suddenly, footsteps crept up the grass toward them, and a large grey shadow loomed closer, closer carrying something huge and menacing. “Jumping tuna!” Nevins exclaimed.

Chapter 2 One More Visitor



“Robert!” Nevins belted out so loudly his voice echoed against the neighboring brick houses. Standing before them, dressed in a pair of pajamas and clutching a pillow was indeed Robert. “You look so different with your beard shaved off, I thought you were an intruder!”

“What is going on?!”

“The Junk Yard is going to be sold, because the old man is going to The Nice Nursing Home.”

He dragged a chair from the far end of the porch with a loud thumping sound, and then sat with a squeaky sound. Humans were so clumsy.

They explained what had happened.

“We’ll have to get our bid for The Junk Yard ready fast,” Robert said. “We’ll outbid the city.”

Pearl interrupted. “There are a lot of very powerful people wanting this. I live in the office, and I overheard everything. They are going to give Jack extra money under the table, so he won’t pay extra taxes. And they’re going to put up a plaque for the old man.” She curled her tail around her small body. “The city wants The Junk Yard to turn it into a tourist attraction. It is going to have a water fountain for children to play in, an art museum, street vendors, and musicians. And a lot of people are going to get rich off it. They’re going to evict us and get rid of all the junk. They say it will be family friendly, but it’s all about making money.”

“What could be more family friendly than a junk yard?” Reginald asked.

Nevins realized this was a big problem. “We will do everything we can. If things don’t work out, you and Pearl can live here with us. You can have the garage which has an attic with tons of old stuff that you might like, Reginald. You would especially like climbing the ladder to get to the attic. It’s a whole extra room!” Nevins gestured with both paws in the air. “And, Pearl, you could have the small room in the garage. It is a lot like the office you are in now. Walter used it for his tools and woodworking. The room is empty now except for an old, comfortable brown wing-back chair with a feather pillow on it. Walter loved that chair. And there is a window that looks out into the backyard.”

Reginald slumped out of the wicker chair and landed on his hind legs. His head hung low. “That is a generous offer, but I go where The Junk Yard goes. And if all the junk is scattered, I don’t

know where I'll go.”

He padded softly down the porch steps into the moonlit evening, and Pearl followed.

“What do you think we should do?” Robert asked Nevins.

“Talk to Mrs. Peabody first thing in the morning. We'll see if she's able to put up her share of the money to buy The Junk Yard.”

