Ether Tales

by Jinxie

Sometimes grief has a funny way of bringing people together.

2011 – Afterlife Challenge

Oneshot Drabble

Chapter 1 of 1

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Her soft caresses reassuring and reaffirming her love for him as she cradles him in her arms. The years, though there were many, were too short and the time left is not enough. Her tears are falling, beating a gentle and steady staccato out of synch with his breaths as they are drawing slower and slower.

Jaundice-yellowed eyes reflecting adoration and love back up to her warm brown eyes. Words unspoken as he takes his last breath. Her grief-stricken body never noticed as he leapt from her arms, purred and walked into the Ether as she sobbed his name – "*Crookshanks*."

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The Ether was a lovely place. She wasn't there with him, but he thought of her often. Her wild and unruly fur, off-key singing and the way she would pet him for ages. She would be immensely lonely without him, if he hadn't arranged for a new familiar for her.

Before the Ether, there was one, unattached familiar he knew of, who would allow her to care for him and she could care for in turn. It wouldn't be easy for either of them instantly, but in time they could come to understand how much he loved each of them.

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On his nightly prowls of the school, he would regularly be joined by a squat-faced ginger fur ball – a tom to rival Mrs. Norris. On even rarer occasions, he would join him in his rooms for company.

He never realised just how much he looked forward to, accepted and missed the cat's company until she returned as a member of staff after furthering her education. She captured his attention and senses the moment she returned. However, when he found the ailing cat in his rooms and returned him to her, he found a companion in grief and so much more.

For the GS100 'afterlife' challenge.