



Pumpkin and the Kitten



Pumpkin was a pet cat. He had orange stripes and sharp teeth like a tiger, but there was not a wild bone in him.

Pumpkin did not have to hunt for his supper, and he never felt a twinge of hunger. He did not have to hide from dogs or live in a barn. He had a safe home and lots of snacks. Nick and Kate met his needs.

Pumpkin was glad to be a pet cat.

Pumpkin had the best places to sleep.

He slept on the porch in the sun.

He slept in a basket in the shade.

He slept in square boxes.

He slept in soft laps.

No place was off limits.



Pumpkin had catnip to find and fake mice to chase. He had yarn to shred. Pumpkin made up fun games for himself like “Hide and Seek,” “Bat the Bed Fringe,” and “Swing on the Drapes.”



He had time to push paperclips and pencils off the desk and see them roll. And he did not have to share a thing.

Life was sweet ...

... until the morning that Pumpkin woke up from a nap and Nick had a kitten in his arms. It was a big shock to Pumpkin. Nick put the kitten in a box with a blanket, and Kate put a dish of milk by her.



Kate said, "Pumpkin, she can be your sister! She is a cute kitten."

But Pumpkin did not think that was true. A plan came into his mind to rid himself of the kitten.

I will just pretend she is not here.

Then I will hiss at her and make her see that I am in charge.

I will bare my large teeth at her.

I will chase her and make her run fast.

I will scare her until she hides.

I will bite her and make her cry. I will make her wish she never came. Then, at last, I will be rid of her.



Nick said, “Pumpkin, stop it! I see your glare! You be kind to the kitten! Understand?”

Pumpkin did not understand.

“You will like her after a while,”
Kate said.

Pumpkin stared at her.

Kate gave Pumpkin a pat. “Give it
time. And remember that we are
still your pals.”

On stiff legs, Pumpkin left to take a
nap on the porch.



It got cold on the porch after a while,
but Pumpkin still sat there. His legs
felt like ice, but he didn't even go in
for supper.

Pumpkin did not forgive Nick and
Kate. He gave himself a short bath
and then went back to sleep, still mad.



In his sleep, Pumpkin began to feel less cold. It was like he had a thick blanket on his back. It felt nice!



Then he woke up with a jolt. The kitten was in bed with him. It was the kitten that made him feel less cold.

Pumpkin was torn. *Do I scold her for this, or do I act like she is not here?*

OK. The kitten can share the bed with me for a short time.

Pumpkin forgot to be mad.

He even gave the kitten a lick.

The kitten woke up and gave him a lick back.



And Pumpkin forgave Nick and
Kate and the kitten.



The End



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