

Rusty's future looked bright

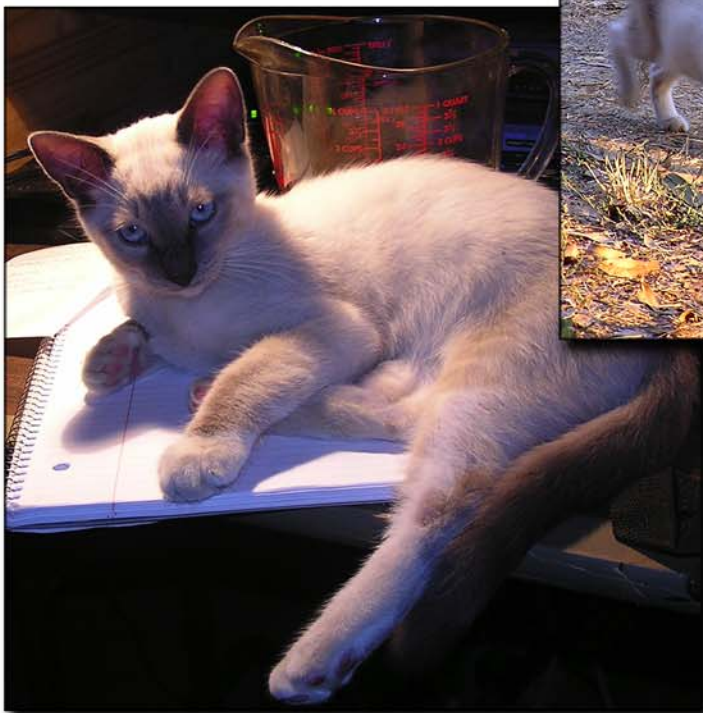


Rusty had aged gracefully for a cat. He was fit & trim. He had all his fur and all his teeth. He'd never smoked and now was glad because his lungs were so healthy.

Rusty enjoyed being the senior cat. The day to day hunting duties were being taken over by the young Siamese Dust Ball & her kid brother.



Rusty could bask in his past glories. Little Dust Ball and the kitten Cougar often lay at his tail listening to Rusty tell about dangerous hunting adventures with huge rats in the city called "Mountain View." He explained to the younger cats about the explosion of noise, humans, cars, and rodents back in "the city."



Rusty slept on the raised deck where he could watch the nocturnal sky filled with stars—something he'd never seen in Mountain View because of all the city lights. He drank in the beautiful stillness of nights punctuated by the rhythm of diesel freight trains marching across the fields to the east. Each morning a golden sun rose there to warm his fur.

Rusty felt peace. *He felt gratitude.*