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Date: May 26th

Time: 10:16 AM
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Peter impatiently paced back and forth outside of the hospital room. He rapidly tapped the side of his arm with one of his paws. He hated waiting, especially for something as nerve-racking as this!

What if they find something wrong with Sydney? Surely that type of heartbeat couldn't be good. When Peter had been studying to become a nurse *years* ago, they never explained anything about *that!*

Li'l Sydney, on the other hand- well, other paw- was also nervous, but *much* more happy. Her mama was alive. She didn't kill her, this is- this is wonderful news!

One of the nurses walked out from the room. The two felines eagerly turned towards them.

Nurse: She's alright, you're able to see her now

The nurse turned and let the two walk in. Li'l Sydney rushed into the room with Peter quickly following her. Sydney was sitting up in the bed, her eyes staring down at her paws.

Li'l Sydney: MAMA!

Sydney looked up as Li'l Sydney ran up to her and gave Sydney a giant hug. Sydney firmly wrapped her arms around the kitten, nuzzling the top of her head with her nose.

Sydney: Oh-oh my god, your- you're *okay*,

Sydney choked on her words, her eyes watering in relief. The two stayed locked together in the hug for the next moments. Their heart beats were out of sync, yet still played a harmony of drums.

Li'l Sydney: I made you some pictures, and I have something for you-

Li'l Sydney pulled away from the hug and quickly rushed to her backpack, which was laying in the hallway outside. Peter awkwardly stood at the foot of the bed near the doorway.

Peter: Um, are- are you okay?

Sydney, who was inspecting her wrists confusingly, looked up irritably.

Sydney: Well, I'm *alive*. So that's okay enough for me, I guess.

Li'l Sydney brought her backpack into the room and placed it on the bed. She set some drawings down next to it and rustled through the bag, trying to find whatever she was looking for.

Peter: *[continuing]* That- that's good, but I'm only asking be- Because, well, you um- you, well, died. Properly died, and, and somehow you're completely fine,

Sydney glanced over to the side. Her previous post-death moments dropped back into her head again, and she shivered earrily.

Li'l Sydney distracted her by telling her all about her art. She then pulled out a few crushed and dried flowers from one of the backpack pockets. She explained that she found them while in the woods, and the dark purple and blue colors made her think Sydney would like them.

The calico smiled warmly. Li'l Sydney was okay, she was safe. Both of them were okay.

Sydney: How long was I out for?

Sydney asked while Li'l Sydney continued searching in her bag. Peter looked to the side and silently counted on his paw.

Peter: Um, 9 days, I think. But, don't worry- ev- everything has been okay, Mascot and Zuzu have been helping out a- a lot

Sydney slowly nodded. For her, it had only felt like a few short minutes.

Sydney: My paws are perfectly normal. Why aren't they still scratched

Peter: The- the doctors don't a-actually know, they're just- just as confused as us,

As if on queue, one of the nurses steadily walked in.

Nurse: I'm sorry, but we have to run some more tests on you. The doctor's want to make sure you're all healthy, so you two are going to have to leave now,

Li'l Sydney (who has now learned to leave when told to by poe nurses and to not rudely argue with them) gave her mama a long, warm hug and gathered her things and ran outside the room.

Nurse: I assure you, Mr. Duckhat, that we will tell you when your wife is okay-

Sydney: *ex wife. We are not married.*

Peter stared at the tile floor. His ears twitched slightly while he stood there listening.

Nurse: Oh, my apologies, I didn't know. The files said-

Sydney: Then the files need *updating*. *[Takes a deep breath and sighs]* Thank you, sorry.

Nurse: *[turning towards Peter]* You're free to go now, sir

Peter's shoulders slumped and he nodded. He wearily walked out of the room, where Li'l Sydney was outside waiting for him. She took his paw and they walked towards the exit.

Li'l Sydney: Why aren't you happy?

Peter: *[looking down at her]* Hm?

Li'l Sydney: You look sad.

Peter: Well, um.. I don't know, I'm guess I'm just tired

Li'l Sydney: I think I'm tired, too, then.

The continued the rest of their walk in a pleasant silence.

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Date: May 30th, 2006

Time: 2:17 PM

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Sydney finished putting on her blue coat while the doctor happily strolled into the room.

The Doctor: Well, Sydney, I'm really glad you're doing better, now! Remember, you have your medicine to pick up at the front desk, and then you're all ready to go!

Sydney: Thank you, Dr. Atherton,

The doctor smiled and paced out of the room. When Sydney took a few steps out of the door, Peter and Li'l Sydney were walking down the hallway.

Li'l Sydney was happily talking to Peter about one of her drawings. When the kitten looked forward and saw Sydney, she hopped towards her joyfully.

Li'l Sydney: *[hugging Sydney]* Mama!

Sydney: Hey, kid,

Sydney softly patted the top of the kitten's head. Li'l Sydney soon pulled back from the hug and hurried over to Peter, and the two started walking down the hall. Sydney followed.

Li'l Sydney continued chatting to Peter about one of her drawings while her mom walked behind her. Sydney's brows furrowed. She cleared her throat and called out to the kitten.

Sydney: Hey, how about you come back here and talk with me, kid,

Li'l Sydney: *[turns behind to Sydney while still walking]* Oh, uh, but I'm just finishing up talking to Peter! I just have a little more to say and then I can tell you about it,

Sydney: You've had all this time to talk to him, you should spend some time with *me* and come back here

Li'l Sydney: *[looking between Sydney and Peter]* Oh, um. Uh, okay!

She slowed her walking until she was walking beside Sydney. Peter awkwardly walked in front and led them to the front office.

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Mascot was driving them all home in his truck. Peter was in the passenger seat, while Sydney and Li'l Sydney were in the back.

Sydney held her prescription with one of her paws and looked out the window. The different vehicles and scenery passed by, the moving truck making it look like an oil painting. They soon made it to Sydney's house.

The truck came to a stop and Li'l Sydney opened the door. Peter got out second, and the kitten gave him a goodbye hug before rushing to the house. When she realized the door was locked, she stood there while bouncing her legs up and down.

Mascot and Sydney opened and closed their doors in unison. The two hugged for a good moment and pulled away.

Sydney: Thank you, a lot, for driving. The buses are *hell* and I don't know who else could take me

Mascot: Of course, and if there's anything else you need, then please call. I can make baby sit or get groceries, and I can even cook if you need it!

**Sydney: As long as it's not that *horrendous* tomato soup you made a few months ago.
Gods- the whole jail *hated* it,**

The two lightly laughed and quickly hugged a second time. When Sydney started walking to the front door, Mascot waved from inside the driver's seat of his truck.

Before Sydney could make it to the door and unlock it, a weary voice made her turn back around.

Peter: Um- I'm, I'm really glad your-you're doing better,

Sydney: Um. Thank you.

Peter: I can, I can also help, if you need anything! Um, just like Mascot said, y- you can just- just call!

Sydney: I think I'll be fine. Thanks, again

Sydney opened her door and quickly shut it behind her and Li'l Sydney before she could see Peter's wave goodbye. The tabby sighed defeatedly and wearily walked back to the car.

When he closed the door and buckled his seat belt, he put his face in his paws and sighed again.

Mascot: It'll be okay, just give her a lot of space

Peter: But- but it *won't* be okay- I screwed *everything* up, I had a perfect life and a perfect family and I absolutely *ruined* it because of how much of a *coward* I was!

Peter face-planted on the dashboard and sighed for a third time. He sat back up and sniffled while scratching his arm.

Peter: I'm- I'm really sorry for- for bursting out like that. I can take th- the bus if you want me to, *[placing his paw on the door handle]*

Mascot shook his head and turned back to the steering wheel.

Mascot: No, no. It's okay. And I'll take you home, I'm not gonna hate you for needing to get some stuff out. It's alright

Peter softly smiled as the truck started driving off to his apartment.

Inside Sydney's house, Li'l Sydney was turning on the TV while Sydney put her medicine away in the cabinets.

She looked throughout the pantry and fridge, and thankfully nothing needed or good was expired. She poked her head through the doorframe connecting the living room and kitchen.

Sydney: Hey, kid, have you eaten lunch yet?

Li'l Sydney: *[turning towards Sydney]* **No, but I've had a few snacks.**

Sydney: Is it alright if I just make us some sandwiches?

Li'l Sydney: Yeah, and can mine be peanut butter and jelly but not the crunchy kind and only a little bit of jelly?

Sydney nodded and opened the pantry to get the ingredients.

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Date: June 3rd, 2006

Time: 12:37 AM
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Sydney was sitting at one of her desks in her work room. It was Saturday, which meant Li'l Sydney was staying at Zuzu's right now. The calico had her safety goggles on and was trying to sophisticatedly build one of her smaller types of machinery.

She took the goggles off of her eyes and placed them onto her forehead. She rubbed her eyes and let out a small yawn. Sydney glanced at the digital clock beside her and winced.

She set her tools and the goggles down onto her desk. Before she stood up from the chair, Sydney spotted the business card she had gotten earlier in the day.



It was for the lawyer she was given for the court case with Mrs. Lawson. It would be soon, so she had been stressing over it recently.

She wouldn't be able to talk about Petey during the case, because there wasn't enough evidence that Mrs. Lawson had killed him- let alone that Petey was murdered in the first place.

The calico released her hard grip on the card and put it in her coat pocket to take upstairs. She didn't want to lose it, even if she could just ask for a new one. She headed towards the stairs and started walking up to get ready for bed.

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Meanwhile.
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Li'l Sydney was in the woods. Well, not actually in the woods. If she had to guess, this was one of those dreams where you actually knew you were dreaming. This was quite interesting.

She walked around and soon realized she had been here before. It was the same area she was in during the forest where she found that strange stone.

The feeling returned again. Even in her dream, it seemed to haunted her like a poltergeist.

Li'l Sydney turned and saw the orange cat. He was facing her, but was standing on the grass instead of floating. The two distantly stared at each other until Li'l Sydney broke the silence.

Li'l Sydney: Are you real?

: Why wouldn't I be real?

Li'l Sydney: You're in my dream, I think I'm just making you up. I don't think you're real.

: Don't worry, I'm real. Well, as real as any of us get

The silence came back again. Because this wasn't a real forest, there weren't any sounds. No bugs, no wind, no water. Only the sound of space.

Li'l Sydney: Are we friends?

: Why wouldn't we be?

Li'l Sydney: We don't act like friends. I don't know who you are. You never even told me your name.

: You don't know what it's like to have a friend, how would you even know if we aren't?

Li'l Sydney stayed silent at that remark. She glanced to the side at the trees and bushes and fiddled with her paws.

: I don't think I'll see you after this. They won't let me.

Li'l Sydney: Do you mean your parents?

: No

Li'l Sydney: [blurting out] Are you imaginary?

: What makes you say that?

Li'l Sydney: I dunno. I feel like only I can see you, and I don't think it's normal for a cat to have wings and to float.

: ..Well, even if I am imaginary, I don't care. I don't care anymore. Just- nothing even matters anymore, no matter what I try to do this story never changes- I JUST-

He stomped on the ground, but took a deep breath to calm down. He turned around and sighed.

He contemplated for a moment. Soon, a look of stunned realization came upon his face.

: I know whose fault this is. I need to go

Before Li'l Sydney could say goodbye, the tabby kitten vanished. All he left behind was a few black and white feathers, and a sorrowful emotion in Li'l Sydney's eyes.

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The kitten's eyes slowly opened. She weakly sat up and her eyes adjusted to the darkness around her.

She was in her soft kitten bed while Auto-ism and Zuzu slept beside her. So it *did* turn out that it had been a dream. She yawned and layed back down in her cozy bed.

When she snuggled under the blankets and into the softness of her bed, an uneasy feeling washed over her. It felt like something bad was coming, like the frightening calm before a hurricane. They were in the eye of it now, and they would be for a very long time.

But that is a continuation for a different story.

As Li'l Sydney tried and eventually drifted off to sleep, the future soon made its way into the storm. Its waves would be crashing in soon, and no being would be able to change it.

Words: 2,464

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