

Rediscovery of Life -- a Short Story

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I Darkness

"Hello, Dawn," said a voice. Dawn Peterson a young woman of twenty-three stopped and listened. The wind shook the leaves on the trees, it whistled through the grass, and it ruffled the fur of tiny chipmunks and squirrels; yet nowhere did it touch another human being Dawn waited a moment and then continued walking through the park.

There was a fluttering of wings in a tree above and the chirping of baby birds fighting to receive a worm that their parents had brought. Then, very light splashes could be heard out in the lake as a mother duck took a parent. As you experience these three stages of love, your vision will begin to expand! It will begin to expand!"

There was a rustle in the grass, and Whitney was gone again.

"Whitney?" she called. "Come back! Don't be afraid!" There's nothing here but a little kitty cat! See? I'll show you! Here kitty kitty! Come here, kitty!"

High in a treetop a little gray squirrel named Whitney looked down and watched. A large golden tomcat walked through the grass and rubbed up against Dawn's outstretched hand. "Nice kitty," he heard her laugh. "Do you see, Whitney? It's just a nice little kitty cat!"

"... nice little kitty cat!" chirped a mockingbird, landing on the tree branch beside Whitney. "... nice little kitty cat!" "It's Golden Boy again, Zelda," said Whitney. "He's interfering again."

"Whenever I find someone I can work with and help, Golden Boy steps in and chases me away. But, it's not bad enough that he prevents me from helping them! He then feeds off their love like a leech and drains them of everything they have. Then, when they are beyond the point where I can help, he goes on to another victim, leaving them worse off than before!... and there is nothing that I can do unless they recognize what he is doing and get rid of him!"

"Too bad..." chirped the mockingbird. "... such a nice girl, too. Maybe the next human won't like cats."

"No!" said Whitney. "I won't let her go!"

That evening a small gray squirrel named Whitney sat on a tree limb outside the Pearson residence and waited for an opportunity when Dawn and the cat would be separated. Inside, with Golden Boy sleeping between them on the floor, Dawn and her father ate dinner in silence. Finishing the food on the plate, Dawn then began twisting her napkin around in her hands, and slowly a tear ran down her cheek.

"Papa," she whispered. "Papa, I want to be able to see, but I don't know how to begin." Bob Pearson laughed at what seemed to be a joke; but then he saw that his laugh had hurt Dawn's feelings.

"Papa," said Dawn, "how does a child know love?" Bob smiled. "Why, a child knows the love that he receives," he said.

Dawn stood in silence for a few moments. "But, there must be more than that," she said. "Does a child have any control of how someone loves him?"

"No" replied her father.

"Can a child do anything to make someone love him?" asked Dawn.

"No," she heard her father laugh. "That wouldn't be necessary."

Slowly Dawn walked up the stairs to her room. Then, very slowly and quietly she opened the door and walked through, closing it behind her. Again, all was silent.

Golden Boy leaned over against Bob Pearson's legs and began to snore. "Cat," he heard Bob Pearson say, "go chase mice!" The next thing he knew, Golden Boy found himself sitting in the middle of the front yard. High in the treetops a small gray squirrel chattered in delight!

Later that evening Bob Pearson heard Dawn crying in her sleep. Quietly he walked up the stairs to her room, opened the door, and walked over to her bed. There he looked down at his sleeping daughter. "Dawn," he whispered with tears coming to his eyes. "If I could only tell you how much I love you, and how much your sorrow causes sorrow for me."



He reached out to stroke her hair, but right then he heard a noise at the window. He looked out... but it was only a small gray squirrel. It was strange, but the squirrel seemed to be smiling. Seeing him there gave Bob great comfort, and leaning down he lightly kissed Dawn on the cheek.

"Pleasant dreams, my daughter," he whispered. He looked up again at the squirrel and winked, and the squirrel seemed to wink back. Smiling, Bob Pearson walked out of the room.

Suddenly Dawn turned over again and woke up. There was something in the room with her; something that she was unable to identify immediately.

"Who's there?" she called out sleepily.

"The stars are shining brightly," said a voice. "A beautiful golden moon is rising up from behind the horizon."

"Whitney, it's you," cried Dawn. "I'll never be able to see. You said that I would have to know love as a child knows it. But a child only knows the love he receives. I can't make someone give love to me!"

"You don't have to," said Whitney with a gentle laugh. "All you have to do is be open to love that is already there." He paused for a moment; then he continued. "Your father was just here. He's very sad and worried."

"About what?" asked Dawn.

"About you," he whispered.

"He loves you very, very, very deeply."

"But how do I know that?" cried Dawn.

"Love is not something that you can see or touch," said Whitney. "It must be felt with one's heart. Your father's love is very real, and you should have no doubt about this."

"Papa," whispered Dawn. Then she called out loud, "Papa!" She heard his footsteps downstairs; then they were rushing up the stairs themselves. "Oh, Papa!" she cried. "Please hold me!"

Then Dawn was in his arms sobbing, and he was stroking her hair and whispering, "Dawn, my darling. What's wrong?"

"Papa," she cried, "do you love me?"

"Oh, my darling daughter. I love you more than life itself!"

"Oh, Papa," cried Dawn, putting her arms around him.

"Oh, Papa... Papa..." and he held her close, stroking her hair and comforting her.

Then, opening her eyes and looking through the tears, Dawn could see! She held her hand in front of her face and... Yes! She could see it!

"Dawn, what's wrong?" asked her father.

Dawn put her arms around him again and pressed close to him. "Oh, Papa! I can see! I can see!"

She heard him laugh; it was a troubled laugh. "All right... if you say so," he said, and they sat in the moonlit room holding each other in silence.

Outside on a tree limb a small gray squirrel looked in and smiled. Even though there was much yet to do, things had gotten off to a good start.

II Light

Light! Blinding light! Color! Color so brilliant that you could hear it! Shapes towering high into the air!

The room exploded with light! It vibrated and shook and burned like fire! Dawn screamed and threw her hands over her face and began to cry.

But then, a comforting voice spoke close by. "It's all right, Dawn," said her father. "It's morning..." and Dawn could tell from the tone of his voice that he had been sitting up with her all night. Slowly she lowered her hands from her eyes. The light didn't seem as brilliant now.

Everything seemed so strange yet so familiar. The sunlight streamed into the open window illuminating everything with a bright golden glow. There was her desk where she worked, her favorite chair, and her books, all of which were written in braille. Now she would be able to see the letters and words in them as well as touch them.

Dawn closed her eyes.

Everything around seemed to be vibrating. "Papa," she said. "My eyes hurt. It hurts to see!" She felt her father's hand stroking her hair and she heard his comforting voice saying, "It's all right, Dawn. It's all right."

Opening her eyes, Dawn looked up into her father's eyes. He sat straight and tall next to her. His eyes were as cool as the sea, and his hair was the color of the sunlight that shone into her room, and his face was lined, not with age, but with knowledge.

"Papa," she said. "I never imagined that it would be like this. Why does it hurt to see?"

"I don't know," she heard her father say. "I don't know."

Later that same day, a young doctor by the name of James Sloan received two visitors. Dr. Sloan had been a friend of the Pearson family for many years and was familiar with Dawn's sightless condition. He had examined her many times but had found that there was no way to cure her blindness. This time the situation was different; Dawn was complaining that her eyes hurt.

"I see," said Dr. Sloan.

"When did your eyes begin troubling you?"

"This morning," said Dawn.

"Whenever I open my eyes and look around, things begin to vibrate. It hurts to look at things.

"When I looked around my room... and especially when I saw Papa.... " "You saw your father?" interrupted Dr. Sloan. "But you're blind!"

Bob Pearson laughed, "No, Jim. Something happened last night. She can see now. She can see."

The doctor sat in silence for a full minute, and when he spoke again it was with a disbelieving tone. "Just what did happen?" he asked.

"I don't know," said Dawn.

"It was Whitney. He told me that I could see, and I can."

"I'd like to meet this Mr. Whitney. He must be a real man of miracles."

Thus another examination began, and after an hour it was concluded. "It's physically impossible for you to be able to see." Dr. Sloan said.

"Nevertheless, I must admit that you can see. Come back again tomorrow, and I'll conduct further tests."

"Whitney," said Dawn, sitting on the front porch with her father. "I wonder what he's like?"

"I'll bet that he's tall, with dark hair. No, I'll bet that he has golden hair like the sun." Whitney looked down from the tree. "People," he thought, "really have strange ideas about beauty. Anyone ought to know that the most beautiful things you can have are smooth fur, a big bushy tail, and big beautiful buck teeth!"

It was then that Whitney noticed Golden Boy creeping around the side of the house toward Dawn.

"You know," said Dawn taking notice of the cat, "my eyes don't hurt as much now that I'm home again." But now Dawn stopped and watched the cat who had raised up and was balancing himself on his hind legs. Then, as if nothing strange had happened, the cat lowered himself, walked over to Dawn, and rubbed up against her.

"Papa," said Dawn stroking the cat. "Where did this cat come from?"

"You brought him home from the park yesterday," replied her father.



"I don't like him, this morning I watched him as he killed a young squirrel outside your window. He then held the body up in his teeth and looked at me as if he was proud of what he had done."

"Oh, I don't believe it," said Dawn nervously. "He's a nice kitty."

Golden Boy purred and looked up at the girl. During the next few days, Dawn visited Dr. Sloan many times for further examinations. At first they spent long hours in the medical center and there Dr.

Sloan tested Dawn's eyes for color perception, sharpness of vision, and other important things. Then he took her out in the country and into the mountains. It was here, out in natural outdoor surroundings that Dawn's vision improved far above what it was in the city. It was here that Dr. Sloan began discovering the nature of Dawn's sight.

Yet now there was a new presence that went with them wherever they went, the presence of the cat. Dawn had fallen in love with Golden Boy and now refused to part with him. It was to the cat that she devoted all of her attention.

"Do you hear that, kitty?" she said. "The doctor says that I'm really not seeing with my eyes, because my eyes are physically unable to transmit light impulses to my mind... whatever that means."

"In other words," said Dr. Sloan to the cat, "your mistress here is not seeing light; she's seeing something else. Now, Sir Kitty, would you please tell her to devote more attention to the fact that I am here also?"

"Oh, doctor," said Dawn angrily. "I'm listening to you."

"Yes, you're listening to paying attention to me. Now, look at this flower and tell me what you see."

"Yes Sir, Mister Doctor!" said Dawn, putting the cat down on the grass. "Let's see... that flower is... blue! You see? I'm learning my colors!"

"Yes, that's fine," he said.

"... and this blue flower," continued Dawn, "is surrounded by a red halo... and this red halo has currents in it which are flowing in and out of the flower like water."

The doctor frowned. "It's almost like you're seeing the plants exchange oxygen for carbon dioxide. But, I don't think that's what it really is. It's more like you're seeing an exchange of energy instead."

"Do you hear that, kitty?" exclaimed Dawn.

Dr. Sloan frowned again.

That night a storm started moving across the sky from the east, and as it passed overhead the moon and the stars grew dim and disappeared. Every now and then the sky would light up with a flash of lightning.

Inside her room Dawn lay in her bed, with the cat lying beside her. She listened and heard voices coming from the living room downstairs; one voice was that of her father, and the other was that of Dr. Jim Sloan who had come by after Dawn had gone to bed.

"I didn't mean to be insulting to either you or your daughter," she heard the doctor say. "I only wanted to

tell you why I won't be working on her case any longer.

She's unresponsive, troublesome, and inconsiderate. In short, I find it impractical to continue working with her." "I understand," she heard her father say. "However, I wish that you would stay on just a little longer. After all, you have been our family doctor for several years.

"Mr. Pearson," said Dr. Sloan, "I'm not breaking our friendship off. I'm just transferring the case to another doctor who can work better with your daughter... "

As Dawn listened, anger began building up inside of her. "Who do they think they are?" she said to the cat. "What gives them the right to talk about me like that? Unresponsive?

Troublesome? Inconsiderate?" She began to cry. "Why don't they love me?"

Suddenly a gust of wind blew in the open window, and in the darkness Dawn saw the cat stand up in the bed beside her. His eyes seemed to be burning like fire!

"Kitty?" she whispered.... and the cat seemed to whisper an answer. "Let me teach you about the lies and hatred of your fellow man, and yes, of your family too!"

"Kitty?" Dawn cried. But the voice continued on, "Let me teach you about greed, about war and about death, about pain and about sorrow, about... " Dawn screamed and threw her fist at the cat, sending him sprawling across the floor. Then, another sound was heard in the room; a small animal was scratching around under the bookshelf.

"Who's there?" cried Dawn.

The laugh continued, and with it came a familiar voice.

"Didn't I say that you had to experience three stages of love in order to see?"

"Whitney?" asked Dawn. "Is that you? Why can't I see you?" On the floor the cat darted across the room and grabbed at some invisible object hidden under the bookshelf.

"I told you that you had to know love as a child knows it," continued Whitney's voice. "Now, you passed through that stage beautifully! What we're working for is for you to develop the unconditional love of a parent. That's our ultimate goal!" Golden Boy sprang at something hidden under the bookshelf.

"You're now at the second stage," said Whitney, "where you must grow to share love by giving it out as well as receiving it! Have you ever thought that Jim Sloan might need love?"

Have you ever considered that he may have come from a difficult family life and that your love could fill the needs that he has?"

Suddenly Golden Boy leaped and threw his body as far under the bookshelf as it would go. Squirring and clawing at his prey, Golden Boy backed out from under the bookshelf clutching a small gray squirrel in his claws. Then, picking up the squirrel in his teeth, the cat started shaking it violently.

Dawn heard the battle continuing on the floor before her, and picking up a pillow, she threw it at the spot where she had last seen the two figures. There was a yowl of surprise from the cat and a chatter as the squirrel fell to the floor and darted across the room to the open window.

Suddenly the light went on in the room and Dawn's father walked in. "What are you doing up here that causes so much noise?" he said laughing. "You are really a lively person when you're asleep."

Dawn shook her head and thought about what had just happened; had it been real, or was it just a dream? "You're now at the second stage," Whitney had said, "when you must grow to share love by giving it out as well as receiving it!"

"Papa," she said, "is Jim Sloan still here?"

"Yes," he said. "But he's just getting ready to leave."

"Papa," said Dawn, "could you please tell him to wait a few minutes while I get dressed? I want to speak with him before he goes."

Rain was now falling lightly outside. In the distance lightning still lit up the sky occasionally; but it was far off now. The minutes elapsed, and soon Dawn Pearson joined Jim Sloan on the front porch.

"I'm sorry to keep you waiting," she said.

"That's quite all right," he said. "You know, in my line of work one doesn't get much of a chance to just stand and look at the weather. This is really a beautiful night, and that's really an unusual sky up there."

"Would you like me to tell you what I see?" asked Dawn. "I see..." continued Dawn. "I see energy in the clouds darting back and forth like electrical charges."

Jim Sloan was silent.

"... and each raindrop," Dawn continued, "has a red halo around it... and when each raindrop hits the ground, its halo explodes into thousands of tiny bits of light which are absorbed by the plants... and each plant in turn sends thousands of tiny golden light rays back to the sky."

Jim Sloan was still silent.

Slowly Dawn turned and walked back to the door. "Jim," she finally said. "I'm still a child. I don't yet know how to give love out; I guess I'm still too concerned with taking it in." She turned now and faced the doctor. "I want very much to show my love for you; but I just don't know how! Please help me!"

Very slowly, Jim Sloan turned around, and when he spoke, he spoke not as a doctor but as himself. "I guess that I don't know how to give love, either," he said. "Maybe we can both learn."

The next few days were glorious! Jim and Dawn climbed to the top of the mountains and there shared their dreams of accomplishments; they marched through the valleys and talked of what they were doing to reach these dreams; and then they sat on the foothills and shared each other's past.

"I remember when my mother died," said Jim. "Father really grieved her loss. He felt that he should have been able to save her... his being a doctor and all."

"It's hard living without a mother, isn't it?" said Dawn. Jim looked silently at the girl.

"My mother died when I was born," she said.

Then came the day on the top of the highest mountain around, when Jim Sloan turned doctor once more... a different doctor than before.

"Do you remember me telling you that you're not seeing light?" he asked. "Well, I've figured out what it is you are seeing and how you are seeing it. You're seeing vibrations of love!" He looked at Dawn. "And what's even more fantastic is that you're not seeing with your eyes... you're seeing with your heart!"

Late in the evening, Dawn sat by the window of her room pondering these things. At her feet lay the cat who was again slowly beginning to receive her love.

Suddenly the cat sat up and let out a low yowling sound. Dawn quickly grabbed him and held him still. "No!" she said. "I don't know what connection you and squirrels have with Whitney; but you're not going to interfere this time."

Outside the window a tree branch rustled. "Hello, Dawn," said a voice out of the darkness.

"Hello, Whitney," said Dawn.

"I'm leaving for a while," he said. "But I will return soon. You won't need me for a while," he said. "But one day not too far off now, you will need me, and I will be here. On your wedding day!" The leaves of the tree rustled again and Whitney was gone.

"Good-bye, Whitney," she called out. "...whoever you are... "



III Rebirth

Two years passed, and then one day a cry rang out through the park. "Hey, Whitney?" cried a voice. "Whitney T. Squirrel!"

Birds stopped singing; chipmunks looked around in surprise; and the entire park fell into silence.

"He's up here," called a squirrel from high up in a treetop. "But he's involved with something urgent. Give me the message and I'll pass it on to him."

"It's about Dawn Pearson," called up the cottontail. "She's getting married the day after tomorrow!"

"Well, I'll be..." called down the squirrel. "Who's the lucky guy?"

Dr. James Sloan, "shouted the cottontail.

Suddenly voices could be heard cheering high up in the tree. "Ah yes," called down the squirrel. "That makes two blessed happenings. I'll give the message to Whitney as soon as I can!" The squirrel disappeared from sight.

The next morning, a voice passed through Dawn's mind as she slept. "Beautiful morning, Dawn," it said. "Mmm..." said Dawn rolling over in her sleep.

"Nice blue sky!" said the voice.

"Dawn opened her eyes. "Who?" she asked.

"Whitney," he answered.

"See you on your morning walk through the park."

"Whitney?" she called, sitting up in her bed.

But the only answer she received was a low yowling sound from Golden Boy. Swiftly the cat leaped onto the floor and began moving toward the window. But Dawn was swifter. Throwing her covers aside she grabbed the cat, and lifted him up in the air.

"No, kitty!" she said taking a leash from a nearby table and attaching it to a collar that the cat now wore. "You're not going anywhere!" She watched as the cat struggled and pulled at the leash, trying to reach the window. But she didn't worry; the leash would hold. Then, after taking a final look at herself in the mirror, Dawn walked out the door and down the stairs.

Golden Boy sat silently looking at the open window. Looking over the situation very carefully the cat began backing up, and when he had backed up far enough he sat down, took the leash in his teeth, and began chewing on it.

At first the leash held together. But then, after five minutes, it began to fray. The wind brought the song of a sparrow to Dawn's ears as she walked through the park. It was strange; but the sparrow seemed to be singing, "Hello!

Hello, Dawn!" But Dawn shook her head. She had to be hearing wrong!

Then, a small gray squirrel ran up to her through the grass and stopped. He watched intently as she walked by and then began to follow her. At first Dawn ignored the little squirrel; but it became more and more evident that he was following her. There was something familiar in the way the squirrel seemed to act; it was like suddenly finding yourself walking next to an old friend that you hadn't seen for some time. She refused to accept the feeling that had just passed through her mind; for the squirrel's mannerisms had suddenly reminded her of Whitney! Then, a voice called out, "Hello, Dawn!"

Dawn stopped and looked around. There was nothing there but the squirrel! "Beautiful morning, Dawn," said the squirrel. "Nice day for a walk." Dawn looked down in amazement. "No!" she cried.

"It's impossible! You can't be Whitney!"

"Dawn?" cried Whitney.

"No!" she shouted. "How could you be Whitney? He spoke of love! He spoke of the love of a child, and of a giving type of love.

He spoke of the love of a parent! How could you, a mere squirrel, know that much about love? "Dawn, please..." pleaded Whitney.

Finally in a very low whisper she said, "No, it just isn't possible for you to know that much about love!" She then opened her eyes... and she couldn't see. She was blind again!

"Dawn, please..." Whitney cried.

Dawn screamed, and began to cry. For a long time all that she could hear were thousands of her own tears. Then, a loving voice spoke.

"I want you to meet someone," said Whitney.

"What?" sobbed Dawn.

"Reach out to the bottom of the tree," said Whitney.

"Dawn reached out into the grass, and as she did her hand came in contact with three small bundles of fur. They were alive!

"Gently now," said Whitney. "They're still very small."

"Whitney?" asked Dawn. "What are these?"

"They're my children," he said proudly. "Let's see now."

That one you are touching now is Sally. Yes, and that one is Jenny... and that one is my son, Whitney Junior! They were born yesterday, at the same moment that I received the news about your wedding."

Dawn was speechless. Suddenly a new voice spoke; it was a female voice. "Hello, Dawn," it said. "I've heard so much about you." "And this," said Whitney, "is my mate, Twinkle."

Dawn was silent for a minute and then she spoke. "Now I understand how you know so much about love. I really do see!"

The world burst into existence before her eyes, and there on the grass in front of her sat Whitney and Twinkle, and between them were three little furry things huddling close and crawling over each other. Dawn laughed, "Why, their eyes aren't open yet. Oh, they're so cute!"

But now, in the distance, the chattering of other squirrels could be heard. "It's an alarm!" said Whitney. "There's danger! The cat!"

"Oh, it's all right," said Dawn. "I put the cat on a leash and tied him to my bed. He can't escape."

But the chattering of the squirrels was getting closer and more urgent. "The children!" screamed Twinkle. "We've got to get the children to safety!"

Looking around Dawn saw Golden Boy running through the grass, and dangling from his collar was the chewed and broken leash. With an insane cry, the cat pounced on the squirrels, and with one swipe of his paw he sent Whitney and Twinkle sprawling across the ground. Then, before they could recover he had picked up one of the babies in his teeth.

"No, kitty!" screamed Dawn, getting up and reaching for the cat; but before she could reach him he leaped up onto the side of the tree and began climbing upward.

By now Whitney had gotten back to his feet and with Twinkle following close behind he darted up the opposite side of the tree. As Golden Boy walked out onto a limb, Whitney leaped onto a higher branch and dropped down to the lower limb and began advancing toward the cat.



Seeing Whitney ahead of him, Golden Boy turned around, but here he found Twinkle waiting and chattering in anger. The baby squirrel had now begun to cry in fear. Whitney leaped and landed on the cat's back. In surprise and anger Golden Boy raised up on his hind legs, struggled to shake off the squirrel. Then he fell.

Unable to hold on, Whitney let go of the cat and watched the earth rise up to meet him. Then, with a deafening thud, he hit! .. But Golden Boy was used to falling. Twisting and turning in mid-air he landed in an upright position and let his legs absorb the shock. He now dropped the baby squirrel from his mouth and watched it crawl around, frightened but unhurt. There before him lay the motionless body of Whitney. Slowly the cat

crouched close to the ground, and then he sprang.

But Golden Boy never reached his target; suddenly he found himself squirming in Dawn's hands. He felt a blow on his back, and then another and another. "Devil cat!" he heard her scream. "Devil cat!" He squirmed and clawed at her trying to escape; but she held him tight.

Golden Boy now went wild! Twisting and clawing in every direction he wrenched himself out of Dawn's

grasp and fell to the ground. Frantically he scrambled to his feet and started running.

Slowly now, Dawn knelt down beside the motionless body of Whitney. "I'm sorry," she cried, picking up his limp body in her hands. "I should have gotten rid of the cat! I'm sorry! Please forgive me!"

The music of the Wedding March filled the church, and Dawn began slowly walking down the aisle. Her eyes moved from one side of the church to the other and she saw friends and relatives from all over the country. Then her eyes moved back to the center of the church and she saw Jim Sloan standing at the other end of the aisle. "I can't believe it," she whispered, closing her eyes. "It's actually happening. I'm getting married!"

Dawn looked down and saw her father smiling up at her, and as she walked forward she saw that he held a brightly colored basket in his lap. Tears came to her eyes; for there in the basket sat Twinkle and her three baby squirrels.

She continued walking forward, and as she did she saw another figure smiling up at her from inside the basket. Whitney sat there tall and proud, and was dignified looking, even with a bandage wrapped around his head.

"Thank you," she whispered softly now, walking up beside her husband to be. "Oh Jim, thank you for taking care of Whitney."

"He's going to be all right," whispered Jim. Then he chuckled. "It's the first time that I ever treated a squirrel for a concussion!"

It wasn't until she had a son of her own that Dawn saw Whitney again. She was sitting, holding her baby in her arms and rocking him to sleep when Whitney came to her window.

"That's really a fine son that you have," he whispered. "I'll bet that you're really proud of him."

"Oh yes," she whispered. "He's so wonderful. Thank you for teaching me how to see and experience love," she said. "I learned so much from you!"

Whitney chuckled and sat upright, shaking his tail. "Why you're only beginning to learn," he said. "I've only been able to teach you the beginnings of love. The rest is up to you. You and Jim have a son now, and through him and his children you will experience vast worlds of love that you never dreamed existed.

Your vision of love will continue to grow; it will never stop growing! I only showed you how important love is. The rest you will learn from life. You see, Dawn, love is life, and life is full of love!"

He looked out of the window as if he had just heard a voice calling to him.

"Whitney," cried Dawn, sitting up in her chair. "Don't go!"

Then Whitney smiled. "I'll still be here for guidance and encouragement. But now you will be giving to me. You will be giving me love and joy through your life and your children's lives, and together we will grow. So, live your life to its fullest extent."

Getting up, Dawn went to the window and saw Whitney leaping happily from one tree to another.

Then, very softly she whispered, "Hello, world! I'm glad to see you!"