

## Christmas story. - Calvin and Beaky Save Christmas. Written by Laura Jury

Hello there,  
Are you looking forward to Christmas? I am!

I have been so worried, my little kitten Calvin went missing for the past week, and he only came home today. I thought at first that he had run away and I was so glad to have him home safe..

It was the beginning of December. I had put my Christmas tree up in my living room, while Calvin was asleep, and I hung all my decorations on the tree.

Then, I went to start writing Christmas cards to my family, and have a cup of coffee.

While I was writing a card to my aunty, I heard a crash in the living room and when I looked, Calvin had climbed the tree and knocked it over.

Calvin knew he had been naughty and when he saw me, he ran, thinking he was in trouble. He ran past my legs, and jumped out of the window.

And that is where his story began.

Calvin ran down the garden path, and hid under the hedge. Then, seeing some winter leaves blowing down the road, Calvin chased them, playing as they blew and skipped down the street. Soon, Calvin was lost. He looked around. All the houses looked the same, and he didn't recognise his garden. He walked up to a couple of doors and meowed, but nobody answered.

An elderly lady walked by, he watched her from under a hedge as she went into her house, and wondered if he should meow at her door, but he didn't know her, and he didn't know how to tell her where he lived. He watched from under a garden bush, mesmerised by the Christmas lights sparkling in her window. He wished he could chase them..

After a little while, the door opened, and the lady came outside, with a large black shiny bag, which she left by her front gate. Calvin walked up and sniffed it curiously.

There was a big flutter of wings next to him, and a huge grey and white bird, much bigger than the sparrows he saw at home, flew down next to him. He jumped back as the bird turned and looked at him. He was ready to run; the bird was bigger than him.

The bird turned and laughed. "I'm Beaky" the bird cackled. "don't be scared, I'm not going to eat you!"

"Eat me?" poor Calvin was even more scared. He backed towards the hedge, there were deep branches to hide under. "what sort of bird are you?" he asked.

"I'm a seagull" the bird told him "and you look like a very young cat. What are you doing out here by yourself?"

"I went for a walk" Calvin said. He thought it best not to tell a stranger too much about himself.

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Beaky returned to the sack, walking around it. Then Beaky started pulling at the sack.

“What are you doing?” asked Calvin in surprise

Beaky chuckled. “Humans usually put food in these. Humans are very picky, and don't eat all their food. They throw some away and it is easy to steal. You have to be sneaky though. If a human sees you, they will chase you away. They don't like their rubbish bags being opened. They are very protective, even of their rubbish that they don't want.”

Beaky looked inside the sack through the hole he had made. “aha” he said and pulled out the remains of some fish and chips. Calvin sniffed, it smelled delicious.

Beaky gobbled down some chips, then paused and looked at Calvin.

“you look hungry, little cat. Go on, have a bit of that fish” Beaky said.

Calvin hesitated.

“Go on” said Beaky, stepping back.

Calvin ran forward, grabbed a piece of fish, and slipped back to the safety of the hedge, eating and watching Beaky cautiously.

Beaky dug into the sack again, scattering rubbish everywhere. Suddenly the front door opened, and the elderly lady came out, waving a stick at Beaky. Beaky stayed as long as he could before flying into the air and flying around screeching angrily as the lady waved her stick, then when she went back into her house, he landed again, and continued to look through the sack, this time, keeping the sack between him and the windows of the house.

Eventually, the streetlights came on, and the lights in the house were turned out. Beaky was now searching a rubbish sack outside a house over the road, and Calvin was hoping to get some more food, when a human appeared.

This human was wearing black, with a scarf across his face, and carrying a large sack. He was creeping by the hedge, and almost stood on Calvin's tail. He crept up the garden path, and went to a dark window, fiddling for a few minutes, and then opening it. The human crept inside. Calvin had never seen a human go in or out of a house through a window before. They always used doors.

Calvin crept closer to watch. The window was open. He wondered if he could go inside the house through the window and find a warm place to sleep, although the strange lady with the stick was a little frightening.

He heard a crash inside the house, and then a light came on at an upstairs window. He heard the lady call out

Then he heard running, and the human in black jumped out of the window, carrying a large bag, ran through the garden and away down the street. A few moments later, the lady came to the window, looking out.

It was the first time Calvin had seen a human cry, but he knew she was upset. He realised that this

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other strange human must have gone inside her house to steal something, a little like he had when he stole his humans cheese from the kitchen table the other day.

He wondered if the strange human had stolen some food from the lady. If the strange human was hungry.

The lady had picked up a box on a wire, and was talking into it.

“yes, hello? Police? I have just had a man break into my house, he stole the money we had raised for the christmas tree for the homeless shelter. I had the money at home because I was going to buy the tree tomorrow. Please help”.

Calvin looked around and saw Beaky watching.

“What did she mean, Homeless?” Calvin asked

“ah” Beaky tilted his head “most humans live in houses like these. But there are some humans who don't have houses. They sleep on the streets. They are always hungry – and they are often cold because they don't have warm feathers or fur like we do. Most humans ignore another human when they are “homeless” but a few are kind and do their best to help. There is a shelter for homeless humans down the road”.

Calvin couldn't imagine anything more awful. Nowhere to live. At least he had a home, though he needed to find it again. He couldn't imagine not having a warm place to live.

“we need to help” Calvin said.

“I knew you would say that” Beaky sighed. “alright, I can fly high and try to see the human. When the other humans come chasing the one who stole, they come with flashing lights and loud noise, and the bad human knows to hide. They don't think us birds and animals are smart enough to notice anything”

Calvin waited while Beaky flew around, and watched the lady. Suddenly he heard shouting, a human, sounding angry. Beaky flew back over and landed next to him. “the human is running back down the road, quickly, trip him up”, Beaky flew up again, and Calvin watched from the hedge, as the strange human appeared. Beaky flying down at him and screeching. The human was running, shielding his head. Calvin was scared but dived out as the human run by, and the human tripped and fell over, just as flashing lights and loud sirens appeared coming down the street.

The human dropped his bag, but looked back at the cars coming, and ran, leaving the bag. The lady was hurrying down the path. Calvin froze, staring at her, as Beaky flew up in the air.

The lady stared “Oh my goodness, thank you little kitten, you tripped him up – the burglar dropped the money”

She picked up the bag. “thank you little kitten. You are very small to be out by yourself”

Calvin stayed close to her heel, meowing plaintively, trying to explain that he was lost. She seemed to understand . She picked him up. “come inside” she said “we will find your home tomorrow.”.

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That night, he slept on the end of her bed, all warm and cosy. The next day, the lady went to buy the Christmas tree for the homeless shelter with the money he had saved. She put up posters all down the street to find Calvin's home. That same lunchtime, I saw a poster, and phoned her.

But before I took Calvin home, he had a very important visit.

We took Calvin to the homeless shelter. They were helping thirty local homeless people from the town over Christmas, with warm food, and a place to sleep, and a Christmas present. And it was all thanks to little Calvin, and to Beaky, that their Christmas had been saved. Beaky was watching from our roof, as I carried an exhausted Calvin home. And I made sure a little something extra was left out for Beaky, over Christmas too.

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