

# The Cowboys' Cat

One day some cowboys were under a tree. Suddenly, a little black kitten walked up to one of the men.

The kitten was very thin and very tired. She looked as if she had walked a long way. No one knew where the kitten had come from because there was not another house for ten miles.

“A black cat is good luck,” said Jimmy, one of the cowboys.

“A black cat is bad luck,” said another cowboy. “Mrs. Jones will never let a black cat stay on the ranch.”

“The little kitten wants to eat,” said Jimmy. “I know that Mrs. Jones will give her some food.”

Jimmy took the little black kitten to the kitchen where Mrs. Jones made food for the cowboys. Mrs. Jones did not like cats, but the kitten was so little and so thin that Mrs. Jones said she would give her some food.

“She can stay in my kitchen for now,” said Mrs. Jones, “but then you must take her away.”

“Mrs. Jones,” said Jimmy, “don’t you know that a black cat brings good luck?”

“I don’t think that is so,” said Mrs. Jones.

But Mrs. Jones let the kitten stay in her kitchen. The kitten stayed in the box Jimmy had made for her. She did not get in the way.



The little black kitten grew to be a black cat with no white on her at all. And all the cowboys loved Cat. They said Cat would bring good luck to the ranch.

Every week Mrs. Jones told the cowboys that Cat must go because she never liked cats. Then Cat would catch a mouse in the kitchen, and Mrs. Jones would say that Cat could stay a little longer.

One day Cat went away from the ranch. The cowboys hunted for her, but they could not find her. No one knew where Cat went.

About a week later, the cowboys found Cat asleep in her box in the kitchen. They were very glad to see their pet again.

“Good luck has come back to the ranch,” said Jimmy.

“Bad luck is what I call that cat,” said Mrs. Jones, but she let Cat stay in her kitchen.

One morning Cat did not get out of her box. That evening when the cowboys came

into the kitchen to eat, they looked in Cat's box—Cat had four little black kittens.

Cat meowed as if to say, "See my pretty babies."

Mrs. Jones said, "One cat is bad enough, but I will not have five cats in my kitchen. That cat and her kittens must go."

The cowboys did not want to take Cat and her kittens away.

Then Jimmy said, "I think the McDonalds would like to have Cat and her kittens."

The McDonalds owned a ranch on the other side of the river, about ten miles away.

Jimmy put Cat and her kittens in a basket. Then he went to the McDonalds' ranch.

Mrs. McDonald was glad to have Cat and her kittens. Her cat was old and did not catch mice. Jimmy put Cat and her kittens into the box Mrs. McDonald got for them.



As Jimmy came back across the river, he was thinking that he was glad Cat and her family had a good home. He knew the cowboys would be glad for the black cat and her family of kittens too.

Two days later, Mrs. Jones got up to cook for the cowboys. She was going to put Cat's box away, but when she got to the box, she saw a black cat and four little black kittens. They were all asleep.

Cat opened her eyes and looked up at Mrs. Jones. She meowed as if to say, "I am bringing my babies back home. Don't send me away again. Please let me stay."

Mrs. Jones gave her some food.



Later, when the cowboys came to eat, Mrs. Jones said, “Cat and her kittens are back home. She will have to stay.”

The cowboys were saying, “How could that little cat have walked all those miles and come across a river, carrying a kitten in her mouth? She could only carry one kitten at a time. And the McDonald ranch was ten miles away on the other side of the river.”

“I think Cat is the bravest little animal I have ever seen,” said Jimmy.