

DUSTY THE CAT

Dusty the Cat entered our lives unexpectedly. He looked to be at death's door. A filthy coat of long, matted hair hung on his boney frame, and dull eyes peered from his sad face. Dad decided to keep Dusty as a shop cat. Slowly the bedraggled feline regained his health. Matted fur became clean and beautiful.



COMFORTED AT NIGHT

But after several years, Dusty began acting funny. We took him to the veterinarian and found out that Dusty had gone blind.

Instead of confining Dusty to the safety of the shop, Dad installed a wire fence extending to the house and back. The small enclosure allowed Dusty to enjoy the outdoors without being in danger. Whenever Dad was near, Dusty would wander toward his voice until bumping into the fence. He would then move along the fence, getting closer to the familiar sound. At mealtimes, Dad would gently pick him up and carry him to food and fresh water.

When I first saw this, it reminded me of how we all come to our Father in Heaven, blind and in need. We are loved and comforted while being fed the bread of life and led to living waters (see John 4:6–14; 6:47–58). Our coats of sin are cleansed through the Atonement as we repent and live righteously. We can hear His voice through the Spirit and move toward our Father in Heaven without seeing Him. He will carry us gently toward eternal life.

The tenderness exhibited by my dad for Dusty may seem insignificant, but it illustrates part of the great love and mercy our Heavenly Father has for us.
Cynthia B., Wyoming, USA

THE STRENGTH TO RESIST

For many young people, the high school years can be difficult. The pressure to fit in with the crowd—coupled with school, sports, and the struggle to find an identity—can create

One morning as I watched TV, I came across a show about ghosts. Watching it unsettled me, and I switched off the TV. I've always had a hard time separating fact from fiction. I have a vivid imagination, and often I can't help but conjure up images and situations in my mind that turn my blood cold.

That night, the memory of the ghost stories assaulted me, and I lay in my bed in wide-eyed terror. My imagination wouldn't stop, and I was literally afraid for my life.

I turned on my lamp and prayed for peace.

Finishing my prayer, I opened my scriptures. As I read, my anxiety slowly faded. I felt the comforting

situations that make it hard to live life in harmony with gospel standards. I was certainly no exception. There were many times when I questioned both my ability to live righteously and my strength to overcome temptation. I watched a close friend, who was a Church member, fall to temptation. I saw him continually make poor decisions until he dropped out of school and began to refuse my aid and advice. As I saw most of my friends surrender themselves to Satan's will, and as I felt a separation growing between us, I feared I would be the next to fall.

I began to realize, however, that whenever I was faced with a difficult



impression that my Heavenly Father was aware of my fears. He would protect me. I read on, clinging to the growing feeling of comfort.

I read Joshua 1:9: "Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God is with thee

withersoever thou goest."

I wasn't really alone. I was reassured that Heavenly Father is aware of me and knows my fears. I closed my book and drifted off into peaceful sleep.

I know that Heavenly Father will always be there for me. In a world where apprehension and uncertainty threaten peace of mind, we can take refuge in the Lord.

Megan G., Colorado, USA

decision, I had already made the choice. I knew what was right, and I had already decided that I was going to serve a mission.

Ever since I was young, I have been eagerly looking forward to serving a mission, and I don't want to do anything to put that in jeopardy. This desire and goal to serve has been a tremendous blessing in my life. I think it has truly separated me from my friends in high school. This sense of purpose has helped me in all of my decisions. I have not even served a full-time mission yet, but already I can feel the blessings that I am receiving because of my choices.

John S., Colorado, USA

THE POWER OF PRAYER

One day I decided to visit my granny who lives far away in the country. She invited me over for lunch and to ride her horses. We had a wonderful afternoon together and enjoyed each other's company. After we talked for a couple of hours, it was time for me to go. I started up my motorcycle and began my long journey home.

After two hours of driving I was in the middle of nowhere. Suddenly my motorbike ran out

of gasoline. I couldn't believe it! And my grandmother was too far away to help. I put my hand in my pocket to look for my cell phone, but it wasn't there. I was terrified. Where could it be? I must have dropped it in the road.

I thought I had no way out of this situation. I had no idea what to do. Then suddenly I felt a voice

that said: "Pray always, that you may come off conqueror" (D&C 10:5). So I decided to pray. In that moment two of my friends appeared and rescued me.

I know that God hears our prayers. The Savior taught, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you:

"For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened" (Matthew 7:7-8).

I know that it is true. Sometimes He may not answer as we expect, but He does answer—in His own time and according to His will.

Cristian L., Uruguay

