
ADALEIGH NGUYEN

2nd Place – 5th Grade

Mary Moore Elementary

Teacher – Kim Schield

Saving the Animals

Mud! The stray stepped through a puddle, making his paws look like boots. He stopped at a winding road, glanced over his shoulders, and was caught with unconsciousness in the center of the road.

Suddenly, a deafening rumbling stopped him in his tracks. A monster! He heard a female human shout, "Dad! Stop the car!" The monster screeched to a halt. Before he could escape, large hands scooped him up. "Aaah!" Mud yowled. "Its okay", the person crooned. He was brought into the monster and later ended up at the human's nest. "we have to get you cleaned up," said the human. He was brought into a room, and got cleaned up. Before he knew it, he was eating dry pellets and drinking warm milk. His captors ate, and then they were talking, and could catch some of what they were saying. "Thankfully the cat isn't a girl, otherwise we would have to get him spayed." He continued, "Spaying is taking them to the vet for a surgery so they won't give birth. It helps fight overpopulation by preventing larger and large numbers of animals. It's probably why he was wandering." His ear fur pricked with wonder at the extremely inquisitive human. After a while he learned their names; the father was called Dad, and the mother Mom, and the young one Kate.

He craned his neck to look through a window, just quickly enough to spot a family of dogs diving into a toppled trash can. Everywhere he looked, even from his small view from the window, he saw a desperate animal. A kitten wailing pitiful mews of hunger. A helpless, sickly puppy with matted fur. Then he realized there were too many helpless creatures.

The people were still conversing. "You know," Kate said, "there probably were more cats where he came from. I think the problem would've been a lot worse if the shelter hadn't hosted the adoption fair." Dad shuddered. "The streets would have been swarming with lost pets." Mom was thoughtful for a moment. "The neighbors that moved left their cat behind. I doubt that it's had proper care and has a whole litter of its own." Kate grimaced. "Those people are partially responsible for overpopulation here." Kate frowned and said, "And I even feel guilty not doing anything about this. Can I go help out at the shelter? I saw a flyer requesting volunteers." "We'll think about it," Mom said. "Speaking of which, there's one particular animal we could help....and right now, too."

Kate beamed, and Dad sighed his agreement