

Shelby E.

## The Baby and the Bird

Many a time have I heard my people say how change is a good thing, which I'd assume it could be when change impacts you in a positive way. In a way in which Change never flies up to you and pecks you in the face. I am referring to Change, the yellow chickadee my people recently bought, not the invisible force that usually makes me feel awful, although the pesky bird causes my claws to prepare for an attack.

I believe that a beautiful calico, like myself, shouldn't have to bother with a menacing songbird. I could swallow Change in one gulp, but my people would exile me to the streets, horrified. He would make a wonderful breakfast anyhow.

A snack usually makes my spirits boost, so I crawled to my food bowl. As I nibbled my feast, Change spat insults at me in a chirping language I couldn't understand, nor did I want to learn.

I debated whether I should pounce onto the songbird's cage and end all my problems then and there, but the thoughts of the filthy streets surfaced in my mind. I had no desire to return to being an alley cat.

Then my nemesis decided to start singing. I call it screeching. He sounded worse than myself when my people forced me to take a bath. My ears felt they would explode because of the torturous noise.

I knew only thing would make the bird shut up.

I hurled up a hairball, and Change stopped dead in his tracks.

"Quiet," I meowed angrily at the bird.

Change tilted his head, looking at me suspiciously.

“That’s right! Evangeline, that’s me, the queen of this house says to quit it!” I yelled at Change.

The bird said something back, but I couldn’t understand him. Then, he returned to singing.

Although I despised the miserable alleyways, I utterly loathed the obnoxious ball of feathers. I faced two options. I could be driven to insanity in my house, or I could become a free cat on the streets, prancing around, snacking on stray chickadees whenever I pleased. The choice seemed rather simple.

I crouched low to the ground. I prepared for takeoff. Then, I flew.

I felt freedom before I felt wooden poles hit my forehead. I realized I hit a crib, not a birdcage.

I woke up and looked at Change, the baby boy my people had recently brought home. He showed no resemblance to a chickadee, his alter ego in my odd dream.

I hadn’t felt jealousy surface towards Change before, but now it boiled inside me. My people had ignored me ever since the baby was brought to the house. He stole my spotlight.

I took a deep breath, then looked back at Change, sleeping soundly. He clearly wasn’t a threat.

I knew my people still loved me, but right now Change was their priority. I knew that this innocent creature needed protecting.

The baby woke up and started to bawl. His cries reminded me of a small, yellow chickadee’s song.

“Don’t worry Change,” I thought. “I will always be there to protect you.”