

The Empty Cages

Words and music: Gary McGath, Copyright 2020

Song #5 for FAWM 2020

The shelter is a place where cats arrive and then they go.
Whenever they're adopted, what comes next I rarely know.
Where they're now living, what it's like, or who their people are,
And whether they live down the street or somewhere very far.

I get a glimpse or two. The new adopters sometimes write.
Sometimes they send us pictures of the cat's new dwelling site.
And once a pair went out to friends. They still are doing fine.
But mostly it's a mystery, without a trace or sign.

Chorus:

See the empty cages,
Hear the silent meow,
Look around and wonder
Where the cats are now.

We never euthanize, except from strict necessity,
Some felines stay a long time here, some find homes rapidly.
The hardest are the ones who are repeatedly returned.
But there's a home for almost every one, as we have learned.

The ones who are the best, the cutest, go within a week.
I hope that they have found the kind of family that they seek.
The older ones take longer, but when someone picks them out
I'm sure the choice is thoughtful, and I don't feel there's a doubt.

Chorus

I rarely know a cat for long, but I do not forget
Each one who passes through our place and then is someone's pet.
I have three hundred pictures and as many memories
May all of them be safe and never left outside to freeze.

But life remains uncertain, for the human and the cat.
If most of them have happy lives, I stay content with that.
If all I do is clean the cage, I help the journey on
And wish them all good health and joy, wherever they have gone.

Chorus