

# KOZMO GOES HOME



**For Jonah**  
**With love from Niki, Monty & Kozmo**

**CHAPTER 1..... THE MOVE**

**CHAPTER 2..... THE TRIP**

**CHAPTER 3..... NEW HOME**

**CHAPTER 4..... HITCHHIKER**

**CHAPTER 5..... HOMELESS**

**CHAPTER 6..... FOUND**

*No animals were harmed in the creation of this work  
(except a few spiders).*

*This story is mostly true....*

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## 1 - THE MOVE

Kozmo was a lucky cat. He was a rescue cat and lived at the rescue cat place with his brothers and sisters. They were all adopted and Kozmo was the only one left. He wasn't sure where he would end up. He wondered if anyone wanted him. One day Niki and Monty came to the cat rescue house and asked to see him. They held him and petted him. He purred and said, "Meow"?. He was so happy to go home with them!



Now he lived in a small house in the mountains of B.C. He could run and climb and chase and jump. He had sharp claws and a very long kinked tail. He was all black and could disappear into a shadow. His golden eyes could see mice in the dark and his little black nose could always smell his way home! He lived with Monty and Niki and was brushed and fed everyday. He curled up in his box with a fuzzy blanket every night. Life was good but....

Kozmo knew something was up! Niki and Monty were putting everything in boxes. Boxes were everywhere. Kozmo liked to hide in the boxes. He would jump out at Niki with a "Meow", and she would drop everything and shriek and say, "Kozmo!". Then she would open the door and let him outside to play.



Kozmo loved being outside! He liked to chase chipmunks and climb to the top branches of very tall trees! Sometimes he got scared after looking down and realizing how high he climbed. Monty and Niki would sit at the bottom of the tree until he was brave enough to come down. He visited all the neighbours and their houses and kids and dogs and cats. He liked to get dogs to chase him. He would zig and zag across the yard and climb up a tree, and laugh at them barking down below.



Kozmo really liked kids and especially liked Monty and Niki's family who came to visit with their son Jonah.

Jonah said, "Kozmo is the cutest cat ever!" and played with him all day. Jonah's parents, Jeff and Jenny liked Kozmo too, even though Jenny was allergic to cats! There were lots of hugs and cat treats when they came to visit. But after the last visit a big moving truck came.



Soon Monty and Niki were putting all the boxes in the moving truck. Kozmo wondered if they were taking him too. He was worried they might leave him. The day came when Niki picked him up and put him in the car and Kozmo knew he was going with them. He climbed in and curled up and went to sleep.



## 2 - THE TRIP

Kozmo was tired of being in the car as it climbed through the B.C. mountains. It smelled like winter outside and he could see snow on the road. Sometimes he explored the rest of the car but mostly he just looked out the window or curled up between Monty and Niki. After the mountains they dropped down, down, down the long rolling hills of Alberta. He could see the mountains through the back window. Ahead, there was nothing but sky.



Kozmo really liked the hotel rooms. There were so many different kinds of curtains and carpets to climb and claw. “No Kozmo!”, Niki would say, but she wouldn’t let him outside to play. He watched things out the window. One day a duck waddled up from a nearby pond and was looking for snacks in the parking lot. He saw Kozmo in the window and laughed at him!



In Saskatchewan, Kozmo smelled lots of farm animals and hay. He noticed the landscape was flat. He could see so far! “Imagine the mice in those fields!”, he thought. From the hotel window he watched prairie dogs popping out of holes in the hotel lawn down below. He chattered at them through the window. Monty said, “No Kozmo! be quiet, we’re sleeping”. But Kozmo wasn’t tired. After all, he slept all day in the car!





In Manitoba it started to rain. The wipers squeaked back and forth; the raindrops were streaking across the side windows. The water was running over the road in places. In the hotel room, the rain splattered against the window.

Kozmo was glad to be inside. The next day, he saw some swamps and more ducks. In Ontario they drove around the biggest lake ever! Kozmo liked Lake Superior and watched the sunshine dance on the water as they drove into Thunder Bay. The next day was very sunny, and it was hot in the car. Monty and Niki turned the car fan on and Kozmo sat in the breeze all the way to Sault St.



Marie.



Kozmo was getting tired of travelling. He meowed and wanted them to stop, so he could play outside. But Monty and Niki ignored him. Then they drove the car right into the back of a gigantic ferry boat!

He realized they were leaving him in the car. The boat horn blasted and Kozmo hid under his blanket on the back seat.

The boat rumbled and rumbled and rumbled and then with a bump and another blast of the horn it was over. Monty and Niki came back and brought him a treat. He was glad this part of the trip was over!

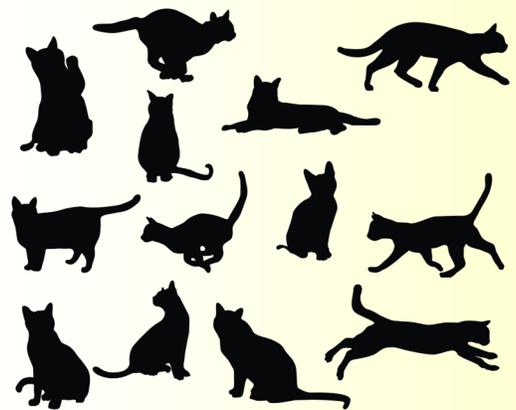


Soon, they were travelling through hills and swamps and lakes. Late in the day, he smelled something strange. He stood up to look out the window. There was the strangest creature ever with gigantic antlers and a very big nose. It raised its head and looked up at him from the swamp. He learned from the local cats later, that this creature was a moose.



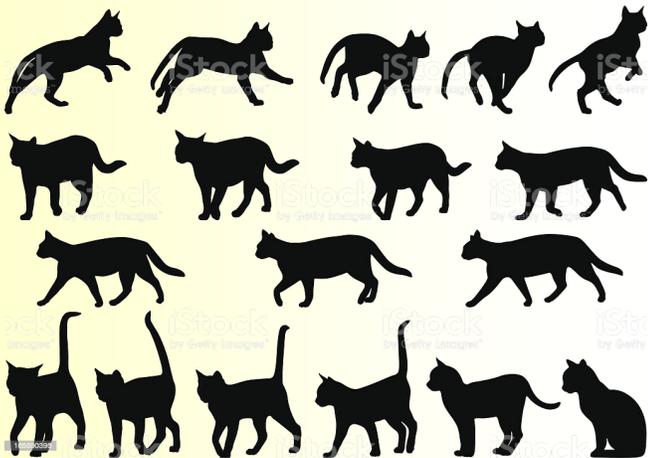
### 3 - NEW HOME

They arrived at their new home and Grama and Grampa came with hugs and cat treats. Kozmo really liked his new house. There were lots of stairs and he liked running up and down them, jumping from the window-sill to the dresser to the floor and back again. “No Kozmo”, Niki said and let him outside to play.



The yard was so great! There was a big garden and lots of neighbours and other cats and kids to visit with. “Come home Kozmo!”, Monty and Niki would say. But after being in the car

for so long he just had to explore. He noticed some of the other cats were nervous and didn't leave their yards. Some of the cats even wore collars with their name on it. Kozmo thought they were ridiculous. There was nothing to be afraid of here!





“No Kozmo!”, Niki yelled at him, “Come back here”. He was digging in the neighbours garden. The neighbour was waving her hoe at him. “Get your cat out of here”, the old lady said. “So sorry”, said Niki and picked Kozmo up and carried him back home. She put Kozmo inside the rest of the day.

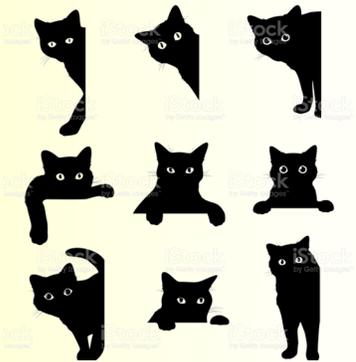
“No Kozmo!”, yelled Monty, “Come back here”. Kozmo-climbed a clothesline pole. The neighbour lady with the red hair said, “keep your cat off my clothesline!”. “So sorry”, said Monty and carried Kozmo home.

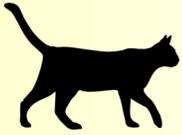


“Kozmo come home!”, Niki called. Kozmo was busy exploring the neighbours shed and stayed out after dark. Kozmo chased other cats, he followed kids, he was always on the look-out for snacks. “Kozmo, please stay home”, Monty and Niki said. Kozmo thought they were ridiculous!



Everyday, Monty and Niki tried to keep track of Kozmo. He would watch them from the corner of his eye and soon as they weren't looking, he took off through the neighbourhood and got into trouble.

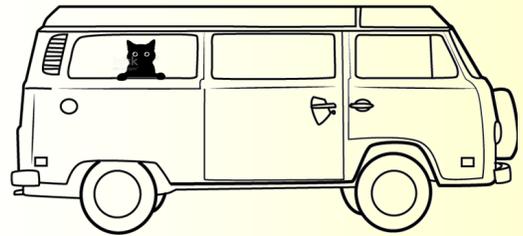




## 4 - HITCHHIKER

One day Kozmo saw a camper van pull up to the neighbour's house. It had curtains and a little table, and the back door was open. Kozmo jumped in and explored the camper. He found some butter on the table and ate so much he got sleepy. He jumped up into a soft seat and curled up under a bag.

Suddenly, the van started up with a roar. He could hear an old man and woman talking. He wasn't sure what to do. The van roared along the highway for miles. It stopped at the next town.



Kozmo jumped down from the seat with a "Meow?". The old lady shrieked, "there's a cat in here!". The old man jumped down and opened the door. Kozmo jumped out and made a run for some bushes near a creek.

Meanwhile, Niki and Monty looked everywhere for Kozmo. They put signs up and talked to everyone they knew. They looked in neighbours' yard, under decks and the forest nearby. Even Grama and Grampa helped look for Kozmo.



One night, a bad storm was coming, and Grampa knocked on Niki and Monty's door. "Someone saw a cat that looked like Kozmo at the restaurant". They drove off into the night. They walked around the restaurant, poking in bushes, shining a flashlight into back yards.

Kozmo could not be found.



The rain started dropping and lightening flashed and thunder roared! They all went home. Everyone thought of poor Kozmo out in the storm that night.



## 5 - HOMELESS

The creek went through the little town and started in a pond behind the hardware store. There were lots of bugs and birds and Kozmo ran after them all. He jumped too close to a slippery bank and fell in the pond.



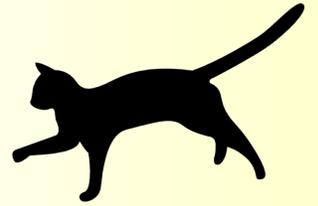
A frog jumped by and Kozmo ran after him. Suddenly with a “Yeowl!”, a big orange tom cat jumped at Kozmo from the bushes. Kozmo turned and ran the other way through the long grass. He couldn’t see where he was going. He could hear the big tom cat close behind him. Finally, he saw a tree and climbed it. Panting, he looked down. The orange cat lay down at the base of the tree and started licking his paws. “You’ll come down soon enough”, he purred.



Kozmo tried to get comfortable in his tree. He was on a small branch and couldn’t move too much. The sun was hot, and he was thirsty. The big tom appeared to be sleeping so he started to climb down. He got halfway down the tree and jumped over the old tom cat and ran as fast as he could down the creek. The orange cat chased him again but soon got tired. Kozmo travelled further down the creek where there were large rocks. The rocks were hot on his feet. The water ran faster here he had a long drink from a pool. He was getting hungry. He wished Niki and Monty were nearby. He was suddenly very tired and curled up under a bush for nap.



He woke up as the sun was setting and there was a cool breeze coming up the creek. He stretched and yawned and spied something moving. He chased a snake through the long grass and came around the corner of the creek and screeched to a halt.



There was a bridge over the creek and five cats were hanging out under the bridge. One of them saw him and “Yeowled!” and the others looked over.

Kozmo decided to be brave. He stuck his tail up straight and approached them. They were the roughest cats he ever saw, with torn ears, matted fur, and lopsided looks. “This is our bridge kitten, keep moving”, an old black cat hissed a warning at him. Kozmo stopped and decided to avoid the group.



He jumped up the bank and found himself in a small park. He found some snacks under the picnic table and was eagerly chewing a bit of hot dog when a little fuzzy grey cat came right up to him with a friendly “Meow”.

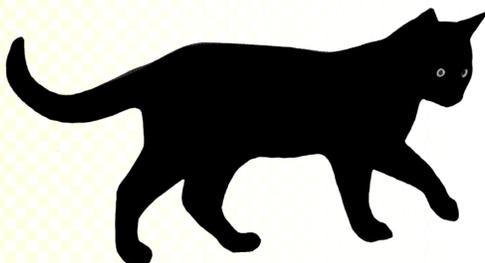
“Hey stranger, I’m Missy, who are you?”.

“Kozmo”.

“Where you come from?”

“I don’t know. I was at home, then in a van, then I ended up here”.

“Do you want to come over to my house?”, Missy purred.





“Sure!”, Kozmo danced from foot to foot, happy to have found a new friend. He followed Missy through the bushes behind the park. Missy wound through a few backyards, a garden or two and back alley that dead ended at an old garage building.



The building was falling apart and leaned over the creek that flowed behind it.



Missy jumped up onto a porch with broken boards and slinked through a broken window. Kozmo followed her inside. There were cats everywhere! Cats sleeping, cats playing, cats loung-

ing on shelves. Some were fighting, some were laughing, some were crying.

“These are my cousins”, Missy said, “don’t worry, you’ll fit in just fine here”. “Are you hungry”?





“YES!” said Kozmo and looked forward to a fresh can of cat food. Missy jumped up onto a cupboard and batted a fat spider out of its web. It dropped to the floor, and she scrambled for it.

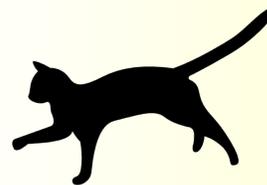
“Here you go”, she purred, pushing the squished spider toward him. Kozmo gulped. He hadn’t eaten a spider for years and remembered the terrible taste, “Uh, that’s OK”, he said, “you go ahead”.



“Thanks!”, said Missy and chewed and swallowed the spider. She smiled at him, and a spider leg was sticking out between her teeth. She started to scratch furiously! “Darn fleas”, she said. Kozmo noticed some of the cats were missing fur, some of them had tears in their eyes and looked sick. “What’s the matter with those cats?”, he asked.



“Oh, they got the Mange”, Missy said. “I’m sure they’ll be fine!”. “Come on, let’s go outside and play!”.





Kozmo and Missy played in the bush behind the house along the creek all afternoon. There were lots of flies and butterflies to chase. Missy ate a ton of grasshoppers. Kozmo tried one but spit it out, “Yuck!” he hissed.



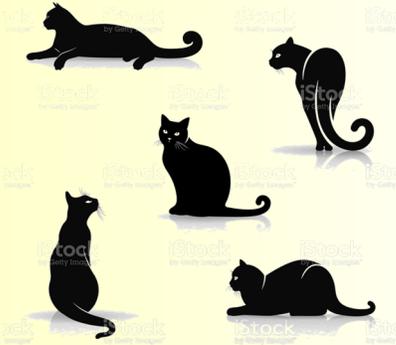
In the late afternoon they sat side by side in the sun by the creek. Kozmo told Missy about Monty and Niki and how he got brushed and fed everyday and had a box with a fuzzy blanker to sleep in. Missy asked him why he would go out exploring so much when he had it so good. “I don’t know”, Kozmo hung his head. “I just had to get outside!”



“Well, you can be outside but still stay close to home”, she said. “I would stick close to those people if I were you and had it that good!”. Kozmo thought of how Missy lived and figured she might be right. He sure missed Monty and Niki and his fuzzy blanket.

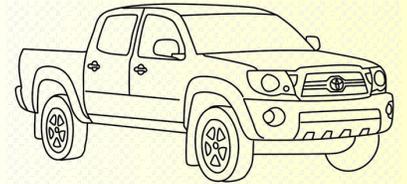
Missy stretched and said, “I have to go home for dinner now, dried beetle stew tonight, do you want to come over”. Kozmo thought of the messy garage, the sick cats and the spiders and said, “No, I’m going to try and find my own way here”.

“Ok, well... see you around!”, Missy said and ran off through the bushes.



Kozmo went back to the park near the bridge and found some more snacks under the picnic table. He decided to stay near the park and the creek for awhile until he could figure out how to get home.

Meanwhile, Monty and Niki sadly decided Kozmo wasn't coming home. Three weeks went by, and he didn't come home.



Niki's family from B.C. came for a visit. Jeff, Jenny and Jonah flew to Ontario in an airplane and then drove Grampa's truck to visit Monty and Niki. They were very sad to hear that Kozmo was missing.



Jonah went searching for Kozmo with Niki and helped to search the bushes around the neighbourhood. Once, they saw a black cat, but it wasn't



Kozmo. Niki explained that Kozmo was all black but had salt and pepper hairs on his paws, and he had a very long tail with a kink in it. Jonah looked in all the backyards whenever they were walking through the neighbourhood but didn't see Kozmo anywhere. They were so sad that Kozmo was lost!



## 6 - FOUND

Kozmo was getting tired of hunting for food everyday. He was sick of sleeping outside under bushes and porches in the cold, in the rain.



One night there was a big thunderstorm and he got soaked by the rain. He ran under a porch to hide from the thunderstorm but it was wet under there and there were a lot of spiders!



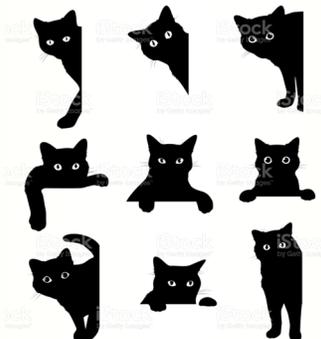
Some of the days were hot and it was hard to find shade in the park, but he was nervous to go too close to the bridge. The cats under the bridge were always chasing him when he came too close.



He was so hungry! He started approaching people that came into the park. He meowed and purred and rubbed against their legs. "Oh kitten", they would say, "are you hungry?" and would give him a snack. Sometimes they just shooed him away and one old man tried to kick him. He was so hungry though he kept going up to people with a "Meow?".



It was a very hot day and Kozmo was panting with thirst. He was too tired to hunt so just drank some cold creek water. He curled up under a bush near the playground in the park and was just falling asleep when he heard familiar voices.



“No Dad, don’t steal my chicken nuggets!”



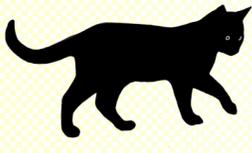
“Oh, Jonah, it’s just one, here you can have one of my onion rings”.



“But Dad I don’t like onion rings!”.

Kozmo’s ears perked up. He knew these voices. He jumped up and scrambled out of the bushes and saw people sitting at the picnic table.

“Meow?”, he said, walking up to them, his long tail kinked into a question mark.



“Hey Dad! Doesn’t that cat look like Kozmo?”, Jonah pointed at the cat coming up to him. When Kozmo heard his name, he came running up, “Meow, Meow, Meow”, he said. He rubbed against Jonah’s legs. Jonah gave him a chicken nugget and he gobbled it down.



“I don’t know Jonah”, said Jeff. “It could be any black cat. He’s just being friendly because we have food”.

Jonah bent down to pet Kozmo. “Kozmo?”, he said.



“Meow, Meow, Meow”, purred Kozmo.

“Look, he has salt and pepper legs Dad!”, said Jonah. I think this is Kozmo”.

“Meow, Meow, Meow”, said Kozmo, dancing from one paw to the other.



Jeff, Jenny and Jonah all stared at Kozmo. He jumped up on the picnic table and put his paw on Jenny’s leg. “Kozmo?”, she said.



“Meow”, he said, “Meow Meow”.

“Maybe...”, said Jeff.





A girl walking her dog through the park called to them, “Do you know that cat”? she asked.

“I think it’s my aunt’s cat”, said Jonah.

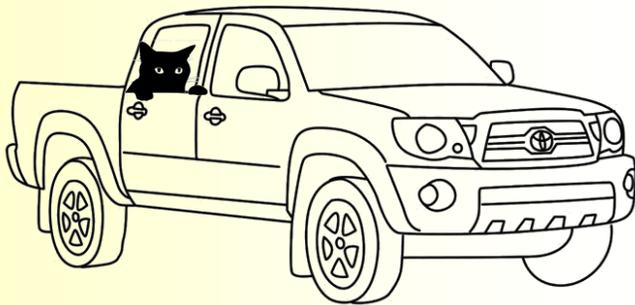
“Well, you should take him home with you”, she said.

“He’s been hanging out here for weeks and will get sick or hurt if he doesn’t go home soon”.

“Thanks for letting us know”, said Jeff. “I guess we’ll take him to Monty and Niki and hope it’s actually Kozmo”.

“I KNOW it’s Kozmo”, said Jonah.

“Meow, Meow, Meow”, said Kozmo.



Kozmo followed them to the truck and jumped right in and curled up on Jenny’s lap. As soon as the car started moving, he fell asleep. When the car started to slow down, he woke up. What were those smells? He got up on

Jenny’s lap and looked out the window. He saw they were in the neighbourhood. He could see they were pulling into the driveway at his new house. Monty and Niki were in the driveway. “Meow!”, said Kozmo and jumped out of the car.



Monty and Niki picked him up and kissed and hugged Jeff and Jenny and especially Jonah.

“I can’t believe you found Kozmo in another town!”, said Niki.



Kozmo was suddenly very, very hungry! They all went inside the house and Niki gave him a can of cat food. He ate it all in one big gulp.



He was so tired now! He found his box with the fuzzy blanket and lay down for a long sleep. He dreamt of Missy and the cats under the bridge and the park and the thunderstorms and the spiders in the cat house. He dreamt he was chasing frogs and birds and was hungry.

When he woke up, he wasn't sure where he was and then realized he was in his box. He stretched and noticed his food bowl was full. He ate more cat food and drank a lot of water. Niki brushed him and he purred.



Then he felt Niki put something around his neck. It was a collar! It was blue and had a gold tag that matched his eyes with his name and address on it. "You look so handsome", said Niki. Kozmo thought so too. He decided maybe the neighbourhood cats with their collars weren't so silly after all.

He thought of Missy and all her sick cousins in the cat house and decided he was a lucky cat! Kozmo stayed close to home after his big adventure and didn't eat a grasshopper or spider ever again.



\*\*\* THE END \*\*\*



Kozmo in Barry's Bay after 22 days in Killaloe