

THE PET SHOP

I didn't think my brother would want some boring pet for his birthday. "Do you have anything *unusual*?" I asked the man at the pet shop. He gave me a confused look. "You'd better come with me," whispered another lady behind the counter. She opened a door in the wall that I hadn't noticed before. The man gave me a worried look. "Be careful," he said. "Don't worry" the lady brushed him off. Despite her cheerful face I still felt a shiver of fear as I looked down the cold, dark stairs. "You know, I might just get a cat..." I said in a quivering voice. "You'll be fine ... hopefully" she said. She grabbed my hand and pulled me down.

The small door sealed behind, leaving us in darkness. "I- I- I want to go back!" The lady kept dragging me down. I thought of my brother, opening his present, the disappointed look on his face as he finds a boring fish in a tank. I pressed on, down into a small, dark room.

In the center I spied a huge cage with iron bars and a massive padlock and chain. I heard a low growl and what sounded like bones being munched. She unlocked the cage and heaved a big tarp off. I closed my eyes, preparing for the worst. "Look upon... Luna!" She drew back the curtain to reveal a tiny mouse gnawing on a piece of cheese.

When Luna saw me she squeaked and cowered in the corner. Suddenly a dark liquid spread across the floor. She was peeing! She was more scared of me! But with relief came annoyance. "What's so special about Luna?" I asked the lady. "I could have bought a mouse from the shop upstairs!" "Luna is very special." "How?" I barked at her, losing my patience. "She's just a stupid-" "SHE CAN TALK!!!" The lady roared.

"She can?" I asked, dumbfounded. Before she could elaborate, I heard a tiny voice coming from the cage. "I can talk?" Lunar squeaked "I didn't know I could do that! Oh! Who are you! What's that you're wearing on your head? Who are you?" "You asked him that already." The lady said with a tired expression. "Can we be friends? Can I see your house? What's your favourite food?"

"Do you want her? You seem like the kind of person who could put up with her chatter". I smiled at Luna. "Do you want to come home with me?" I asked. "YES!" I scooped her up and put her in my pocket. Luna just kept chattering, but I wasn't listening. "The price?" "Listening to her never-ending chatter" she laughed. "I'm just glad she finally found someone who wants her".

On my brother's birthday, we drove to the hospital. Luna was in my pocket. I opened the door and saw my brother lying on the bed. Tubes were sticking out of him. I saw his heavy eyelids open and he smiled weakly. "How ya doing, soldier?" he said, using the name from when we were little. "I'm good. How's your treatment going?" "They're hoping I can be home in a month or two. The medicine seems to be working."

The excitement of showing him Luna almost overpowered me. "Happy Birthday!" I said to him. When I saw the happy look in his tired eyes, I couldn't help but smile myself. When Luna started to talk, his smile grew even wider. "Well, aren't you a pretty little thing!" he said, stroking her head.

From then on, Luna and my brother were best friends. She kept him company and he would listen to her ramblings. Eventually, my brother got out of hospital and slowly recovered from his sickness. And Luna was by his side every step of the way.