

# Sailor Meow

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*A story about my OC Sailor Meow. It's a kind of prologue to swampertgirl0504's Sailor Sun Chronicles from sailor Meow's point of view.*

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# 1 - Not yet a Sailor Soldier

Princess Meow sat on the window ledge and looked out at the sky. Through the thin atmosphere of her home moon Meow, she could see the Planet Mau, a lush green planet inhabited by a race of human-feline hybrids known as Mauans. Aside from Meow, Mau had another satellite called Nya, a barren and desolate moon with few inhabitants.

Suddenly a golden light flashed across the sky. Meow was brought out of her trance and watched as the golden light seemed to touch Nya, and then it faded. She wondered if her aunt, Queen Nya was expecting a visitor. She also spared a thought for her cousin Nyanko, who Meow got along well with, but didn't know very well.

Tiny padded footsteps alerted Meow to the presence of Adam, a small kitten with dark brown fur. "Whatcha thinkin' 'bout Meow?" he asked as he jumped up onto the window ledge next to her. "Nothing," Meow answered dismissively, "Everything. I don't know." Adam bowed his head solemnly. "Be strong, my Princess."

It had been two days since Meow's mother, Queen Meow had been diagnosed with an unidentifiable disease. Maua, the queen of the planet Mau had come to the Meow Palace, bringing the finest doctors in all of Mau to examine Queen Meow. But Queen Mau had been whisked away home when Meow's mother's condition had been diagnosed as "life-threatening and malignant". The palace attendants hadn't even let Meow near her mother.

There was a knock at the door.

"Mama?" Meow jumped up and ran to the door, flinging it open. Her face fell when she saw Nek, her mother's advisor. But Nek was in human-form, rather than her usual cat-form. She had long blue hair and bright golden eyes. At twenty, Nek was five years older than Meow.

"You know the rules, Meow. With your mother..." Nek's voice faltered, "Well, now you're the guardian of Meow, we can't let any harm come to you."

"That's a joke." Meow said bitterly, "I don't even have my own Transformation Brooch. I'm not a Sailor Soldier."

"But you were born with a Sailor Crystal. That makes you a Sailor Soldier. And besides, your mother has entrusted you with this." Nek held out her hand to Meow, who did the same. She hesitated when she saw what was in Nek's hand, but only for a second. She grabbed the small mirror from Nek and turned and ran, her heart heavy with the finality that accepting the crystal held.

## 2 - A Cure?

Adam found Meow in the palace library. She had a big leather-bound book on her lap, and she was turning its pages much too fast too actually be reading it. Adam suspected she was looking for something-anything- to take her mind off her mother. He jumped onto her lap, and then realised what was wrong with her. Pinned to her dress was a multi-faceted crystal mirror on a golden cat-shaped brooch.

"Meow! You've got the Kitten Soul Mirror! So you're a Sailor Soldier!" Meow's expression was completely devoid of emotion.

"That means mama is never going to get better." She turned back to the book, and frowned as if concentrating on the text.

"What's up?" Adam jumped up onto the book and looked down at the page Meow was reading. There was a picture of a young woman with long, silver hair holding a small diamond.

*The Silver Imperium Crystal is an item of immense magical power. It has the power to vanquish evil, heal any illness and even freeze time.*

"Heal any illness," Meow whispered.

"Meow, I know you want to save your mama, but you don't even know where this crystal is."

*The Silver Imperial Crystal is the possession of Queen Serenity of the Moon Kingdom.*

"That's it? That's nowhere near enough information to go by, Meow." Adam warned, already sure that his concern fell on deaf ears. Meow tore the page from the book and darted out of the library.

Adam raced after her, barely able to keep up. Meow skidded to a stop at the top of the long flight of steps leading down to the palace hangar.

"Hurry up!" She hissed at him, "And do you have to pant so loud? Everyone's going to hear you." Without giving him time for an apology, she grabbed him by the scruff and fled down the stairs.

### 3 - Destination: Planet Mermaid

Meow was surprised to find the hangar unguarded. She punched in her access code on the security door and cringed at the metallic clang it made as it opened. The palace hangar was small, but there was an underground tunnel that led to a larger hanger and the launch pad, which were a few hundred leagues from the palace and surrounded by a dense forest. Meow carried Adam to her ship, a silver speeder about three yards long, with a tiny cockpit.

She looked down at the tiny kitten in her hands, and realised that by carrying him down the stairs at top speed she had made him extremely dizzy.

She hurriedly strapped him into the cockpit's luggage holder as best she could, weighing the fact that her mother was dying against the need to keep her best friend secure. She knew that in her long princess dress she was hardly attired for safe space travel, so she sprinted back across the hangar and grabbed a silver pants-and-jacket space suit. She pulled the pants on and ripped the bottom of her princess dress off at the waist.

Meow climbed into the driver's seat of her ship, strapped herself in and closed the hatch.

[Hello, Meow.] the on-board computer greeted her in an electronic yet feminine voice, [Where are you going?]

"The Moon Kingdom" Meow said clearly into her ship's microphone.

[Location of "The Moon Kingdom" not found.] The ship's computer told her. Meow sighed.

"I guess we'll just have to search each system. How far can we get without having to refuel?"

[Destination: Planet Mermaid] the computer replied.

The ship rotated on its platform and moved along the track towards the underground tunnel. Then they were plunged into darkness. Traveling along its track the ship sped up to a constant speed, and Meow turned to Adam. The kitten was slowly recovering from his dizziness.

"Are you alright, my little kitten?" she asked him.

"I guess so." Adam answered.

[Entering launch area] the computer warned.

Meow felt the heat of her ship's engine starting up. She hung on to her seat and shut her eyes as the ship gained speed, and with a deafening roar from the ship's exhaust, they were propelled into space.

Meow had never learned to fly her ship, so she turned the ship's auto-pilot on. Meow stared sadly out at the stars as they whizzed past.

"Adam, I'm sorry about everything. But I have to save Mama."

Adam was about to reply when a hard jolt knocked him out of the luggage holder and into Meow's head.

[Entering asteroid field] the ship's computer warned them.

"Well get us out then!" Meow yelled into the microphone, while rubbing her head. Adam had fallen somewhere behind her seat.

"Adam?" she called to him, but he didn't answer. Another jolt, and Meow blacked out.

## 4 - Transformation

Meow awoke to find herself still in her ship. It seemed to be floating on a vast ocean, and there was no sign of land. She unfastened her safety-belt, opened the hatch and stood up slowly, being careful not to tip the ship over. Looking behind the driver's seat she saw Adam, who was unconscious, Meow hoped. She picked him up and looked around at the ocean surrounding her ship. The water around Meow's ship bubbled, and a face emerged from the water. Meow was staring at a young boy of about ten, with turquoise hair and shiny silver eyes.

"Nice landing." The boy sneered, "at least on a planet covered with water you can't crash."

"Which planet is this, then?" Meow asked.

"Mermaid." the boy replied, leaning backward into an underwater back-flip, displaying a beautiful blue fish-tail.

"Do you know where I can get some Starship Fuel?" Meow asked him.

"I don't... but our princess Sailor Mermaid knows the entire planet."

"Oh, your planet has a Sailor Soldier?" Meow asked, excited to meet another Sailor Soldier.

"What do you know about Sailor Soldiers?" The boy asked suspiciously.

"I'm Sailor Meow, a Soldier from Mau's moon."

"Well if you're a Sailor Soldier, let's see you transform."

Not sure that her mother's transformation phrase would work for her, Meow said a little cautiously "*Kitten Power!*" Adam glowed in her hands, and became a blue beam of light. The Kitten Soul Mirror pinned to Meow's dress absorbed the light, and Meow was wrapped in blue light. She felt waves crash around her, and she could smell the salty ocean air. She closed her eyes and in an instant she was standing on the water as if it were ground. She was wearing a blue Sailor fuku with a fluffy skirt. Her usually black hair was blue, and the right half was much shorter than the left. And she had cat ears and a tail!

The boy shrugged, "It'll do, I suppose. Now follow me."

"Wait a minute! Where's Adam?" Meow looked around, panicking.

"Right here, Meow!" Adam's voice emanated from Meow's brooch, "The Kitten Soul Mirror absorbs a cat's soul, so that Sailor Meow can have ears and a tail. Those give her cat-powers. Your mother used to get her powers from Nek."

Meow turned to the mermaid-boy but he had disappeared underwater, leaving nothing but ripples in his wake.

## 5 - Seidon and Siren

Meow took a deep breath and dove into the icy, green water. She could see the sunlight glinting off the scales of the boy's tail. She hurriedly swam after him, and noticed that she was swimming much faster than she remembered swimming in the palace pool. She saw the boy stop, and quickly caught up to him. In front of the boy was another mermaid, a girl of about nineteen with long, wavy sky-blue hair wearing a vacant expression.

Not noticing that she was behind them, the two mermaids continued talking.

"I was just worried about you..." the girl was saying.

"I can take care of myself, Siren," the boy replied angrily, "but do you have any idea how mad Princess Mermaid would be if she knew you were just swimming around by yourself?"

"But I was looking for you..." the girl looked sad.

"You're so absent-minded, you could have gotten lost! And there are sharks around these waters at this time of year, big ones!"

"But..." the girl trailed off. "I'm sorry Seidon." The boy still wore a frown.

Meow thought this was a good time to intervene. She turned to the girl.

"Hello there-" As she spoke, the air seemed to drain from her lungs. She hurriedly breathed in, and was shocked to find that she could breath easily underwater.

"I'm Sailor Meow. It's nice to meet you."

The girl looked at her, startled.

"Oh... A Sailor Soldier? Wow! Um, I'm Siren..."

The boy cut in, "She's my sister."

"What planet are you from?" Siren asked Meow curiously.

"It's none of our business, Siren. She needs some fuel for her Starship. I told her I'd take her to see the Princess." With that, the boy swam off toward a coral reef.

Siren and Meow followed him, Siren regularly slowing down so that Meow could keep up.

"I'm sorry if my brother's rude sometimes..." Siren apologised, "It's just that he always has to look out for me. I'm a burden to everyone. Seidon, the Princess, everyone."

The boy stopped in front of the reef. Meow and Siren did the same. The reef was a beautiful forest of pink and purple coral, green and yellow seaweed and fish of a thousand different colours.

"The quickest way to get to the Mermaid Castle is through here." Seidon told Meow. "I'm first, then Siren, then you." Seidon weaved his way through the coral and seaweed, and Siren followed him. Meow took up the rear, struggling to keep up with the mermaids. She cautiously swam through the narrow gaps between the coral. She wondered how far she had swam, so she took a moment to look behind her.

"OW!" Meow felt something heavy collide with the side of her head, and she was hurled sideways into a coral formation. She opened her eyes to see a huge cod.

"Bluh." The cod said apologetically, a bunch of bubbles escaping from its mouth. The cod swam off and Meow hurried to catch up with Seidon and Siren.

"What took you so long?" Seidon called behind him to Meow.

"I was hit by a fish and crashed into some coral!" Meow shouted back.

Siren turned back to Meow, her eyes wide.

"Did you cut yourself?"

Meow looked down at her body. Her left arm was badly scratched.

"Yes, but I'm only bleeding a little."

Siren grabbed Meow's hand and sped through the coral until she was side by side with Seidon.

Seidon stared in horror at Meow's bleeding arm and suddenly grabbed her other hand.

"Sharks can smell a little drop of blood from miles away." Seidon's expression was grim. "We've got to hurry, soon there'll be sharks everywhere."

## 6 - The Tunnel

Seidon and Siren led Meow to the entrance of a narrow cave hidden among a large formation of purple coral.

"This tunnel leads to Princess Mermaid's Coral Gardens. It's a tight squeeze, and it's dark, but at least the sharks can't follow us." Seidon turned to look behind him. "The fish are all hiding. That means the sharks are coming."

"I'll go first." Siren bravely volunteered.

She disappeared into the tunnel.

"You next. We can't have you going last again." Seidon gestured at Meow's arm. "Siren's not the only one who needs looking after."

Meow turned to the cave, and crawled through the entrance. The tunnel was barely large enough to swim through, so Meow used a combination of pulling herself along with her arms and kicking with her legs.

She felt something slimy brush across her arm, and screamed.

"Wh-what was that?" She asked Seidon.

"Probably just an eel." He replied calmly.

"Eel?" Adam's voice echoed as a dim light emerged from Meow's brooch.

Meow smiled and said quietly into her brooch. "It's not lunch time yet, kitten."

"Lunch time? Did you say 'lunch time?'" Siren called back.

"No!" Seidon shouted at her. To Meow he said, "That girl only thinks with her stomach."

The tunnel seemed to go on forever. With the dim light of her brooch to guide her, Meow managed to avoid hitting her head on the low ceiling of the tunnel, or touching any more eels.

She could hear Siren humming cheerily up ahead of her, but Seidon was utterly silent.

Soon Meow could make out the silhouette of Siren in front of her, indicating that the end was close.

Meow sped up her pulling-with-her-arms-and-kicking-with-her-legs technique in excited anticipation of getting out of the eel-infested tunnel.

But Siren had stopped right at the exit.

"What's the hold-up?" Seidon asked, as he and Meow stopped behind Siren.

"The opening's too narrow... I don't think I can fit through." Siren explained.

"Well, try!" Seidon urged.

The light of the opening disappeared as Siren called out, "I have my head and arms through, but my hips are stuck!"

In the faint light of her brooch Meow saw Seidon roll his eyes.

"You eat too much. I guess we'll have to push you then." Seidon and Meow took hold of Siren's tail and pushed as hard as they could. After what seemed like an age of pushing and shoving, Meow's ears began to twitch, indicating that Adam was impatient.

"Come on!" His voice shouted annoyedly from Meow's brooch. Suddenly Meow was bathed in blue light as she heard a phrase repeat over and over in her mind. She put her thumbs and index-fingers together in a diamond-shape and held her hands out in front of her, aiming at Siren.

"Kitten Whirlpool!"



## 7 - Gardens and Mines

Siren shot out of the cave, propelled by a spiral of water. She landed in a large seaweed-bush. Meow and Seidon hurried through the tunnel opening after her. Seidon helped his sister out of the tangle of seaweed, but Meow just stared around in awe at the enormous garden of coral and seaweed. Unlike the wild, unkempt coral of the reef, all the formations of coral and the seaweed plants were perfectly shaped as though a thousand people had spent hours shaping and maintaining the garden.

"No time to enjoy the scenery." Seidon told her, grabbing her wrist and leading her through the fronds of a large, yellow seaweed plant. The seaweed seemed to be a gateway to another coral garden, much like the one they had just left, but much smaller. In one corner of the garden there was a mermaid with short, silver hair and a long silver tail. She had her back to them but Seidon swam up to her, throwing his arms around her shoulders.

"BOO!" he shouted.

"Seidon! You startled me!" The mermaid giggled. Then her face turned serious. "Did you find out the cause of the disturbance on the surface?"

"This Sailor Soldier's Starship landed in the water." Seidon explained. Seidon and the mermaid swam over to Meow and Siren.

"I am Mermaid, the princess of the planet Mermaid." She introduced herself. "What brings you to our planet?"

"It's an honour, Your Majesty," Meow bowed. "I'm Sailor Meow from the Moon Meow of Planet Mau. I have run out of fuel for my ship."

"What makes you think our planet has fuel?" Princess Mermaid asked Meow. Meow didn't know what to say. The princess continued.

"Because of the asteroid field, many people from many different worlds crash into asteroids and fall to our planet, but I am unable to provide the right kind of fuel for most of them. As for repairs, there isn't any mermaid qualified, or even interested in repairing a broken Starship. So the people who find themselves stranded here very quickly adapt to life underwater."

Seidon sneered at Meow's puzzled expression. "She means they become Mermaids."

"That's right." The princess nodded. "In fact, Siren and Seidon's own father came to our planet in a Starship many years ago."

Princess Mermaid suddenly noticed Meow's bleeding arm. She broke a piece of seaweed off one of her plants and wrapped the wound.

"So, are you sure you don't just want to stay here?" Siren asked Meow.

"Yeah, you could help me look after Siren." Seidon agreed.

"Thankyou," Meow said, "but my mother is very sick, in fact she's dying. I have to find something called the Silver Imperium Crystal, so I need to continue my journey."

"Very well." the princess sighed, "I'll take you to the Crystalcoralite Mines. However, we haven't had anyone working at the mines for quite some time..."

The princess led Meow, Seidon and Siren through a mass of seaweed to the edge of her garden. They swam out into a vast expanse of sand and water. Meow was shocked at how plain the ocean looked without any coral or seaweed. The four swam along the huge plain until they reached an underwater

cliff. Meow looked over the edge, but all she could see was dark blue water.

"In this pit there are many small caves, all of which have Crystalcoralite growing in them. There are very few things on our planet that need to be powered, but Crystalcoralite always works." The princess swam over the edge of the cliff and began to float downwards. Meow and the mermaid siblings followed. They sank downwards for about ten yards until they reached a small cave. Meow stared into the cave. The inside glowed an eerie purple.

"Does Crystalcoralite glow purple?" Meow asked the princess. The princess frowned, and looked into the cave.

"Let's try another cave, shall we." The princess hurriedly swam a few yards to the next cave. Then she swam to the next cave.

"What's wrong, Princess?" Seidon asked.

"I'm afraid every Crystalcoralite cave is infested with poisonous sea slugs."

"Will they attack us?" Siren asked nervously.

"They're more interested in eating the Crystalcoralite. However, if one touches you, it will inject its poison into your blood." The princess warned.

Siren picked up a sharp rock from the entrance of the cave.

"I'll get you that Crystalcoralite!" She swam into the cave.

"Siren!" Seidon shouted after her. Meow followed Siren through the cave. There were glowing, purple slugs everywhere, hungrily gnawing on shiny, black crystals.

Over in one corner of the cave there was a small clump of the shiny black crystal that didn't have sea slugs crawling all over it. Siren swam over to it and started hacking at the black crystal with the sharp rock. Meow swam to Siren's back as the purple slugs noticed the intruders. They crawled towards Meow and Siren, oozing purple slime.

"Kitten Whirlpool!" Meow shouted. Her attack blew a small group of the disgusting slugs backward, but most of them just stuck to the cave floor.

"My attack isn't working, Siren! We've got to get out of here!"

"I've almost got it, just keep it up!" Siren urged. The slugs crept closer and closer.

"Kitten Whirlpool!" Meow shouted again. The slugs kept coming.

"Kitten Whirlpool! Kitten Whirlpool! KITTEN WHIRLPOOL!" Meow kept blasting the slugs.

"I've got it!" Siren cried. Meow grabbed her arm.

"KITTEN WHIRLPOOL!!!" Meow aimed her attack at the cave wall, and she and Siren hurtled out of the cave.

## 8 - Sharks

Seidon and the princess were waiting at the cave entrance. They grabbed Meow and Siren and swam upward as purple sea slugs poured out of the cave. The four reached the top of the cliff and swam back across the huge sandy plain until they were back at the entrance to the Coral Gardens.

They maneuvered themselves through the seaweed and coral until they were back in Princess Mermaid's garden.

Siren handed Meow the small chunk of Crystalcoralite.

"That should be enough for you to travel anywhere you need to go." the princess told Meow. "I bid you farewell."

"Thankyou very much for all your help, Your Majesty." Meow bowed.

"I'll take you back to where your ship is." Seidon offered.

"I'm coming too!" Siren cried.

"Siren, you're very brave but there are sharks about. You're staying with me." The princess told her.

"But..." Siren sighed. "Goodbye, Meow."

Seidon led Meow back through the narrow tunnel to the coral reef.

"There are a school of sharks swimming around out there." he told her. "I'll distract them while you get to your ship. Good luck, Miss Sailor Soldier."

Seidon emerged from the safety of the coral reef. Meow could see about five sharks swimming above the reef. She cringed as they turned their attention to Seidon.

"Go!" He shouted down at the seaweed bush where Meow was hiding, then swam off in the opposite direction. The sharks followed. Meow swam up to the surface. As her head broke the surface, she could see her silver Starship a few yards away.

[Welcome back] the ship's on-board computer greeted her.

"How do I refuel?" Meow asked it.

[Fuel compartment opening] Meow saw a small gap appear on the ship's hull. She dropped the Crystalcoralite into it.

[Fuel recognised. Preparing for take-off] The hatch opened and Meow climbed into the driver's seat. She strapped herself in and was about to close the hatch when she saw Seidon speedily towards her, followed closely by the sharks. Meow stretched out her arms towards Seidon.

"KITTEN WHIRLPOOL!" A spiral of water sent Seidon flying through the water towards the safety of the coral reef. She shut the hatch as a hard object rammed into her ship.

"Sharks." Adam guessed from her Kitten Soul Mirror.

The ship's engine began to heat up. It moved through the water slowly picking up speed.

[Five...Four...Three...Two...One] The ship lifted out of the water and in a few minutes was racing through the planet's atmosphere. As planet Mermaid got further and further behind them, Meow thought she saw a golden light glinting off the planet's watery surface.

She put her hand over her brooch and was back in her space-suit. Adam was sitting on her lap. They sat silently as the ship raced through space, passing stars, asteroids, comets and planets.

[Now leaving home system] the ship's computer told them. Meow wondered how long it would be until

she saw her mother again.

## 9 - Golden Warrior

Nyanko sat alone in her mother's throne room. Her mother had gone to visit Queen Mau. She thought about her aunt Meow, who her mother said was dying. She had been told that her cousin Meow had been given a Sailor brooch, and was now a Sailor Soldier. She wondered how long it would be until she was a Sailor Soldier. Nyanko sat up as the door to the throne-room opened.

"Princess," one of the palace attendants was standing in front of her. "You have a guest."

Another palace attendant was escorting a tall lady wearing a Sailor fuku that seemed to be made of solid gold.

Noticing that the lady didn't bother to bow to her, the *Princess* of Nya, Nyanko frowned. The lady sneered.

"So, you're Nyanko, are you?"

"I am *Princess* Nyanko of Nya." Nyanko replied coldly.

"Disappointing." The lady sighed, "I thought you'd be a Sailor Soldier like your cousin."

Nyanko was shocked, "How do you know my cousin?"

The golden lady laughed but ignored Nyanko's question.

"I thought the daughter of Queen Nya would be a Sailor Soldier too, but since you aren't it seems I'll have to proposition your cousin instead." The golden lady turned to leave.

"Wait!" Nyanko called to her, "Who are you?"

The lady smiled coldly.

"I am Sailor Galaxia, the most powerful warrior in the universe. I am seeking the strongest and bravest Sailor Soldiers to join my Sailor Animates. With my help, they will receive powers beyond imagination! But you are not a Sailor Soldier, so you aren't a candidate to become a Sailor Animate."

"B-but I am!" Nyanko stammered, "I-I am a Sailor Soldier!"

She stood up and walked over to the small door in the corner of the throne room, which connected the room to her mother's royal chambers via a flight of stairs. She flung the door open and raced up the stairs, taking them two at a time. She crossed the floor of her mother's royal chambers to a big wooden dresser. On top of the dresser sat a large jewelery box. Nyanko opened the lid, reached in and took out a large golden bell-shaped brooch. She turned and hurried back down the stairs to where Galaxia was still waiting. She held the locket high in the air.

"Nya Power!"

A golden light surrounded Nyanko, and in moments she was wearing an shiny white Sailor fuku with red stripes and little golden bells. Her hair was covered by a hood that looked like cat ears.

Galaxia looked amused. She strode towards Nyanko.

"So, the little kitty has found herself a Sailor Locket."

"W-what do you mean?" Nyanko stammered. "This is *my* brooch!"

"So, you accept my proposal to join the Sailor Animates?" Galaxia asked.

"I-I'm not sure... What do I need to do?"

Galaxia smiled and held out her hand. In it were two golden bracelets, one with a green crystal and one with a purple crystal.

"All you need are these bracelets. They will amplify your power..."

Sailor Nyanko held her hands out in front of her.

"...And give me complete control over you." Galaxia whispered as she clamped the bracelets over Nyanko's wrists. Galaxia stepped backwards.

Suddenly Nyanko's body was surrounded by black electricity. Her Sailor fuku turned from white to Black.

"I am at your service, Queen Galaxia." Nyanko said robotically, bowing.

Galaxia turned and strode out of the throne room.

"Follow, Sailor Tin Nyanko. You are now one of the Sailor Animates." Nyanko hurried after her.

## 10 - Computer Problems

After a few days of uneventful space-travel, Meow was sitting silently in her ship, feeling more and more agitated and impatient. She kept thinking of her mother.

"Look over there!" Adam pointed with his paw to their left. They were headed for a cloud of pinkish-purple fog.

"Is the fog dangerous?" Meow asked into her ship's microphone. The on-board computer didn't answer. Meow shrugged.

"I guess not."

As they entered the fog, Meow noticed that the fog contained tiny golden lights.

"It's so beautiful!" She cried.

Suddenly, her ship began to emit a loud beeping sound.

"What's wrong?" She asked into the microphone.

[Losing...nav...] the computer said in a high-pitched voice.

[Switch...to manual!] it said much lower.

"What!?" Meow screamed, "But I can't fly this thing!"

[Time is... three hundred degrees! Autopilot! Fuel-recognised! Welcome back! Nav systems.....DOWN!]

Meow grabbed the controls. She hit the accelerator button hard, and the ship hurtled through the fog at top speed. After about ten minutes of speedy flying and struggling to keep her ship level, Meow was relieved to see the edge of the cloud of fog.

"Adam, can you see a planet anywhere? I need to land."

Adam frowned. "But you don't know how to land!"

"Not to worry, I can see one up ahead!" Meow grinned.

"Not to worry'? YOU DON'T KNOW HOW TO LAND!" Adam reminded her loudly. He could see a small, greyish planet in the distance. As they got closer, Meow turned her ship's engine off. She let the planet's gravity pull her ship down toward its surface. The ship began to fall faster and faster, and Meow began to feel nauseous.

Just as it seemed as though the ship was going to hit the surface of the planet, Meow hit the hover button, and the ship suddenly stopped falling and hovered a few inches off the ground. Meow opened the hatch. She surveyed the planet she had "landed" on. Her ship was hovering in the middle of what seemed to be a small, rocky plain. She turned to her left and was shocked to see an enormous grey square. After a few moments she realised that it was a city with huge sky-scrapers.

[Seventeen] the ship's computer buzzed with static.

"I need to get the computer fixed, and that's where we're going." She called back to Adam.

She turned her ship left and it hovered along towards the city.

As they got closer, Meow and Adam could see that there was a concrete wall around the city, about ten feet high.

"What do you think it's for?" Adam asked Meow.

"I'm not sure, little kitten, but can you look for a gate, please?"

As they reached the wall, Meow turned the ship to the right, and began to travel along the circumference

of the wall. Soon, they got to an opening in the wall with a small iron gate. There were red lights around the edge of the gate.

"How do I open it?" Meow wondered aloud. The red lights flashed.

an electronic voice sounded from nowhere.

"Um, I need to get my ship repaired." Meow said hesitantly.

The electronic voice shouted and the red lights flashed.

"I'm Meow." Meow said.

"I need-" Meow started.

The voice said again.

"Repairs!" Meow said loudly, looking around for a microphone or intercom.

The lights turned yellow. This time, the electronic voice that spoke was high and feminine.

The lights turned green and the iron gate slid silently open. Meow and Adam looked at each other and shrugged.



## 11 - A Friendly Chat

The ship hovered slowly down the road, and Meow desperately tried to stop it from colliding with the other vehicles and hover-crafts. The planet seemed to be completely inhabited by robots, androids and other mechanical beings. The only robots that Meow had ever seen were the guards at Queen Mau's palace. But none of the robots stared at Meow as if she were out of the ordinary.

"So, we were looking for Street 3467-G, right?" Adam asked Meow from the luggage compartment of the ship.

"Yes, why?"

"Because that street over there is Street 3467-E, so we're probably getting close."

Meow slowly turned her ship in the direction that Adam was pointing. One of the vehicles behind her started beeping loudly.

"Sorry!" She called back. She could see the neon street sign with the numbers 3467-G. As she turned into the street, she gasped at the size of all the buildings. Not only were they so tall that they blocked out all natural light, but they were wide as well. As the ship hovered along, Meow looked for the building numbers. They weren't hard to find, as they were all displayed using bright neon signs.

"100-F, 100-G, 102-A, 102-B..." She murmured as she passed each building.

"There it is!" Her face fell as she saw the line of vehicles outside the building. She joined the line, but because it wasn't moving she picked up Adam by his scruff, got out of her ship, and walked over to the front of the building. She saw a female-looking robot standing against the wall, away from the line of customers.

"If you need somethin' fixed, join the line," She said to Meow without looking at her, and sighed. "But it's gonna take weeks..."

"Oh," Meow said, unsure at what to say to a robot that just sighed. She didn't know that robots could sigh. After some thought, she asked "Is it expensive?"

"A total rip-off, honey." the robot shook her head sadly. "Really, it's robbery, but it's the biggest and most advertised repair shop this side of Mecha." The robot turned to Meow. "I *do* feel morally conflicted working here, you know. Not as if I don't have a soul."

"Oh..." Meow tried to sound sympathetic, but she was completely taken aback hearing a robot talk about "moral conflict" and "having a soul".

"Don't see many of those type of things around here," The robot gestured to Adam. "What is it?"

Adam rolled his eyes. Meow laughed. "It's called a "cat". We have them on my planet." Then a thought occurred to her. "What about people? Are there people here?"

"Oh, sure. There are a few around." the robot said. "There's a school for little people, um, children, not too fare from here. My brother works there. You know, if I could get a job like that-" Meow could tell the robot wanted to talk, but she needed to help her mother, and she didn't have "weeks" to wait for her ship to be repaired.

"Well, I should probably find another place to get my ship fixed. It was nice meeting you." Meow turned to leave.

"Aww, don't let me keep you. All that stress and worry isn't good for a little girl like you. See you 'round, hon." The robot was full of surprises.

"How did you know?" Meow asked her.

"You kiddin'? Your worry-levels are off the charts. It's gotta be somethin' big."

"It's my Mama. She's very sick." Meow could feel her face grow red and her eyes fill with tears. The

robot put her steely arms around Meow.

"There there, hon. You might wanna try Ol' Mister Drill's repair shop, it's just down the street. Tiny little place, but Ol' Mister Drill's great at fixing. It's the only place I go when I got problems."

"Thanks." Adam called back to the robot, as he and Meow walked back to their ship. They got in, and Meow turned the ship to head down the street.

## 12 - The Old Man's Deal

Old Mister Drill's shop must have been the tiniest building on the whole of Mecha. It was only two storeys, and the sign out the front was hand-painted.

"Hello?" Adam called as Meow parked the ship at the front of the shop. She was silent, but the tears had finally stopped flowing down her cheeks.

"Hello!" A voice called back, as an old man appeared from around the back. Leaning on a metal cane the old man hobbled over to the ship.

"Looks like your on-board computer's down." The old man smiled at Adam's shocked expression.

"Surprised, little furry thing? I'm Drill. I'm one of the few people here on Mecha who can actually fix things. I can tell at a glance what's wrong with your ship."

"Well, you're right about the on-board computer. A lady-robot suggested we pay you a visit."

"Ah." Drill smiled. "You mean KT83. She works at that big-ol' place down the street."

"That's her." Adam replied. Then he thought for a moment. "What kind of money do you take? All we have are Mauan credits. Will you fix it?"

"I s'pose I can." the old man said, "But i have to pick my granddaughter up from school, so you'll have to wait."

Adam frowned. He looked at Meow's sad face. Mister Drill noticed it too.

"Something troubling you, Missy?" Meow said nothing.

"What if we picked your granddaughter up and brought her back here?" Adam asked. "Then you could work on our ship."

"I s'pose that could work too. Consider that your payment for my service." The old man smiled. "My granddaughter's name is Mika. She's in class 37 at the school on Street 3467-C. I'll get straight to work." Adam and Meow thanked Drill and exited the shop.

It took Adam and Meow about an hour to reach Street 3467-C on foot. Meow was silent the whole time, and after a while Adam gave up trying to talk to her. Adam was having a lot of trouble trying to figure out how the numbering system of the streets worked, and Meow wasn't helping at all." They turned around a corner, and came face-to-face with a huge silver building covered in neon lights and the letters "3467-C School for Future Mechanics".

As soon as Adam and Meow walked through the automatic doors, a loud buzzer rang, followed by an electronic voice.

Within a minute a mass of children between the ages of about five and fourteen flooded out of the nearby doors into the lobby, all taking loudly.

Adam jumped onto Meow's shoulder and shouted at a group of three little boys. "Hey! Do you know a girl called Mika?"

The boys turned to look at them. Meow could see they were holding some small pieces of metal. She wondered what sort of things they taught children at a school for mechanics. Quite frankly, she thought it was dangerous for such young children.

The oldest looking boy sneered at them. "What on earth is that furry thing on your shoulder? You should get that checked out, lady."

Meow frowned. "Hey, we asked if you know Mika, Mika Drill?"

"Yeah, she's in our class but she's pathetic. So she had to stay behind to talk to the teacher." The boy

motioned to the pieces of metal. "That's how we ended up with this." The three boys snickered and ran out of the doors.

"What was that about?" Meow asked Adam.

"I don't know, but I guess Mika must still be in her classroom. Let's find her and take her home to her grandfather."

Meow walked down corridors and up flights of stairs until she finally found Classroom 37. She could see a young girl of about seven and a small robot sitting at a table. The girl looked upset.

"Mika, is that you?" Meow walked over to her.

"...yes..." the girl answered shyly.

"I'm Meow. I'm here to pick you up, because your grandfather's working on my ship." Meow explained.

"Wait a minute!" The small robot glared at her. "How do I know that story's legitimate? I can't just let Mika leave with a total stranger!"

"Oh, of course!" Meow was a little taken aback. "Um... I'm a Sailor Soldier, if that helps."

"So show me." The robot demanded.

"Kitten Power!" Meow cried. Adam was engulfed by fluorescent green light, and was absorbed into the Kitten Soul Mirror. Bright lights flashed all around Meow as she closed her eyes. When she opened them she realised that instead of her blue sailor fuku, she was wearing a silver Sailor fuku with acid-green ribbons, and her hair was also acid-green. She had Adam's cat ears and tail but this time they were a light grey colour.

"Wow!" Mika gasped. "That's great!"

"Alright." the robot sighed. "I guess a Sailor Soldier is a trustworthy escort." He turned to leave, then called back over his shoulder. "Remember what I said, Mika. You have to concentrate and try harder in class. Otherwise you'll fail."

"I will!" Mika promised. She turned to Meow. "I can't believe Grandpa sent a Sailor Soldier to pick me up! Thank you so much!"

"No problem." Meow assured her. "Are you ready to go home?"

"But I can't!" Mika cried. "You see, the thing is, my little Robo got stolen. I have to rescue him!"

"What?" Meow asked, not really sure what else to say.

"I bet it was those Wrench brothers!" Mika said angrily. "They usually play at the scrap metal yard after school. We have to go there and save Robo!"

Adam's voice resonated from Meow's brooch. "Your grandpa said we were supposed to pick you up and take you home."

Mika's eyes filled with tears, and she grabbed Meow's hand. "Please! You're a Sailor Soldier, aren't you? You have to help!"

Meow smiled. "Alright, Mika. Let's go find those boys."

"To the scrap metal yard!" Mika cried.

## 13 - Scrap Metal

Mika led Meow through a maze of tall buildings and streets, towards the edge of the city. As they walked, Mika asked Meow all kinds of questions.

"How long have you been a Sailor Soldier?"

"About a week, actually." Meow answered, slightly embarrassed.

"What planet are you from?"

"Meow, a moon of the planet Mau."

"Why did your fluffy robot disappear when you transformed?"

Meow laughed. "Adam is a cat. He disappeared into my brooch so that I can have cat-powers in my Sailor form."

Mika stared at her. "That's so cool! I've never seen a Sailor Soldier before!" Her answer surprised Meow.

"Doesn't your planet have a Sailor Soldier to protect it?"

Mika thought for a while. "We used to... but that was a long time ago, before I was born."

"I guess if you did, then you'd get her to rescue your robot instead of us, huh?" Adam asked Mika from Meow's brooch.

"Yeah!" Mika shouted. "And I'd ask her to make those Wrench brothers stop picking on me!"

"So, why would they have stolen your robot?" Meow asked her.

"Because Robo is special. My mummy gave him to me before she died."

Meow stopped in her tracks and stood completely still. Mika kept walking, not noticing Meow's expression.

"So," Meow's voice quivered, "So, your mother is dead?"

"Yes, she died when I was a baby. So I've had Robo a long time."

Meow ran to catch up to Mika, who was walking extremely fast for a seven-year-old. She had a determined expression plastered on her face. Meow smiled at her.

"Well, don't worry Mika. We'll find Robo."

Soon, Mika and Meow reached the wall at the edge of town.

"There isn't a gate around for miles," Mika explained, "but this is the closest point to the scrap metal yard, so I think we should climb over."

"How did those boys make it over the wall by themselves?" Meow asked. She realised that even with Mika standing on her shoulders and reaching her arms upwards, their combined height was still about a foot away from the top of the wall.

"I don't know." Mika shrugged. Meow had no idea how she and Mika were supposed to get over the wall.

"What do I do?" She asked into her brooch.

"I've got an idea." Adam replied with an air of smug confidence. "Pick Mika up, and we can jump."

"JUMP!?" Meow exclaimed. "I can't jump ten feet!"

"No, but I can."

Meow picked Mika up and turned to face the wall.

"Mister Drill won't be happy if we kill his granddaughter, you know."

"Don't worry, she'll be fine." Adam assured her.

"What about me!?" Meow screamed as a hot power began to flow through her legs. In a split second she leapt high off the ground and came to a steady land on the top of the wall.

"Wow!" Mika exclaimed. "That was so cool!"

Meow held Mika tightly and again the power flowed through her legs. She leapt from the wall to the ground below, outside of the city.

Meow put Mika down, and Mika took her hand.

"The scrap metal yard is just over there." She pointed to a shiny heap of silver and brown.

Meow and Mika walked slowly toward the pile of scrap metal. As they got closer, they could make out the figures of three small boys.

"That's them!" Mika hissed. "The Wrench brothers!" As they got closer, the boys noticed them.

"Well, if it isn't little Mika Drill." the oldest one sneered.

"Give me back my Robo!" Mika cried.

"Your robot's a piece of junk. I think it's broken." The youngest boy said.

"What do you mean?" Meow asked.

"It doesn't do its glowing thing." The oldest boy explained. He put his hand into his pocket and pulled out a circular piece of metal with a smiley-face design and thin, jointed arms and legs. It also had a small antenna on the top of its "head".

The boy raised his arm and threw the little robot into the huge pile of rusty metal.

"No!" Mika screamed, and ran towards the pile.

"It's broken, so it's junk." The middle brother called back to her, as the boys ran off towards the city.

Meow hurried to catch up to Mika.

## 14 - Needle in a Haystack

Meow and Mika reached the edge of the pile of scrap metal. It was a lot bigger than Meow had originally thought. She could see that a large pit had been dug, and over the years it had gradually filled with scrap until the pile was almost as high as the pit was deep.

Mika was already kneeling in the pile, digging through the pieces of scrap.

"Mika, wait." Meow called to her. "Searching for Robo like this is going to take a million years. A needle in a haystack."

"But," Mika's eyes filled with tears. She sighed heavily, and sobbed, "I guess... I guess you're right."

"Look," Meow smiled encouragingly, "If the boy threw Robo, then he would have landed on the surface of the pile. So there's no need to dig. Let's climb to the top and see if we can see him, alright?"

Mika wiped her eyes with her sleeve. "That's a good idea."

The girls climbed over huge pieces of shiny sheet-metal, rusty old pipes, and metal cut and welded into all kinds of shapes. Finally, they reached the top. They stood precariously on a large piece of what seemed to be some sort of hovercraft, and looked out over the vast expanse of rusty metal.

"Kitten Laser!" Meow cried and pointed her right index finger at the pile. A beam of neon red shot out of her fingertip.

"Robo!" Mika called. "Tell me when the laser beam touches you, ok?"

Meow slowly moved her finger so the laser beam moved across the pieces of metal, one by one. After about ten minutes, there was still no response from Robo.

"Robo!" Mika called, "Come on, we're trying to rescue you!"

Still no response.

"Robo!" Mika turned around and called in the opposite direction, "Robo! Robo!!"

She ran in circles calling in all directions, "ROBO!?"

Meow felt the ground under her feet tremble. In a split second she was falling. She heard Mika scream.

Meow and Mika landed with a thud, lower on the pile of scrap metal. Before them was an enormous, spider-like robot. It screeched deafeningly.

"Robo!" Mika screamed. Meow looked up at the robotic spider. In its mouth was the tiny robot, hanging from one of the spider's teeth.

"Kitten Laser!" Meow cried, aiming her laser beam attack into the giant robot's eye.

The spider screeched again, and lunged at Meow with one of its legs. The force of the blow sent Meow hurtling through the air, and she landed with a heavy thud, winded. The movement also sent Robo flying through the air, and the little robot landed a few feet from Meow.

Mika scooped up Robo and ran to Meow's side.

Meow dizzily tried to stand up, but toppled over immediately.

"Come on, Mika, get out of here!" She ordered.

"I can't! That spider will chase me!" Mika wailed.

"I can't move, so I can't protect you!" Meow had tears in her eyes.

Robo glowed in Mika's hands.

"Then I'll protect you!" Mika cried. "Mecha Power!"

Mika was wrapped in neon light, and her school uniform changed to a silver sailor fuku with a long skirt.

Robo was pinned like a brooch to the bow on her chest. She turned to face the gigantic robot-spider and held out her hands.

"Mechanical Malfunction!"

A harsh white light and a deafening sound emanated from Mika's hands, and Meow felt the air around her get extremely hot. Her dizziness became unbearable, and then she lost consciousness.



## 15 - Crystal Shadow Virus

When Meow woke up, Mika was kneeling over her. She sat up slowly, and looked around. She was in the middle of a pile of rusty pipes, and the gigantic spider was in pieces a few yards to her left.

"Wow, Mika, you're a Sailor Soldier too, huh?"

"I guess I am!" Mika giggled.

"Well, that's one nasty attack you've got there." Adam from Meow's brooch. The girls climbed out of the pile, and began walking back towards the city.

As they weaved their way through the streets, Mika explained about the gigantic robotic spider.

"Sometimes, repair shops like the one down the street from Grandpa's, will throw out parts as well as power sources, and programming. These mutate, and form monsters like the spider we battled."

"Wow." Meow wasn't sure what to make of that. "Well, at least Mecha has a strong Sailor Soldier to protect it now."

"Yeah! And those Wrench brothers won't pick on me anymore!"

With a flash of light, Meow was back in her space-clothes.

"Sorry." Adam apologised. "I just couldn't stay in there any longer."

"That's alright, little kitten, I was getting tired of being in my Sailor form anyway." Meow said, scooping Adam up into her arms.

"Well, I'm going to stay like this to show Grandpa." Mika decided.

"Hi Grandpa!" Mika cried as she and Meow entered Drill's repair shop.

"Look at me! I'm a Sailor Soldier!"

"Ah, so you are." Drill looked his granddaughter up and down. "Just like your mother." He turned to Meow, "Well, your ship's all ready t' go, and I installed new navigation equipment, an' even a new personality for your ship's computer. Her name's 348-F57-MA, or Mae for short. You should be able t' get where you're going with no problem at all."

"Thank you so much!" Meow was delighted.

"But won't you stay and have dinner with us before you go?" Mika asked Meow.

"Stay for dinner at least. It's almost ready." Drill said, leading Meow and Adam into the back room. A table was set out with four places, and Drill, Mika and Meow sat down. Adam jumped onto the table and sat on the edge, behind his plate.

As they ate, Drill asked, "So why are a young girl and a little ball of fur traveling through space all by themselves?" Adam rolled his eyes and continued eating. Meow decided to tell Mika and Drill her story, even though she could feel herself getting choked up.

"We come from a moon of Planet Mau. My mother was the Sailor Soldier protecting it, but she got really sick, and now she's dying. The doctors have examined and tested her thousands of times, but nobody knows what's wrong."

"What happened?" Mika asked.

"One day she said she was feeling dizzy. Then she couldn't stand up, so she was taken to bed. She's been in bed ever since, and the doctors said that her life energy is disappearing, her bones and muscles are deteriorating... and..." Meow sobbed loudly, "And her Sailor Power is completely gone."

"I was afraid you were goin' t' say that." Drill said solemnly. Meow turned and looked at him. Like hers, his eyes were filled with tears.

"The same thing happened to my daughter, Akiko, seven years ago. I traveled far an' wide trying to find out what was wrong with her. I contacted a well known doctor on a planet called Fuyunoyuki, 'cause he was supposed to be an expert. He told me of a space virus that targets people with Sailor Crystals. He said it was called the Crystal Shadow Virus, an' that there was only one possible cure. He promised to come and examine Akiko, but he never contacted me again. My son Toron, an' Akiko's husband Roshi took a ship an' headed to Fuyunoyuki to find him, but they never came back. Then Akiko died."

## 16 - An Argument, a Life-or-Death Decision

That evening, Meow and Adam bade Drill and Mika farewell. After hearing about the loss of Mika's family, Meow was more determined than ever to save her mother. Both Meow and Adam were silent during takeoff, and were happy to let the ship's new on-board computer, "Mae", do all the talking.

[Now leaving Planet Mecha, please enter destination]

"Planet Fuyunoyuki." Meow said into the microphone.

[Estimated arrival on Planet Fuyunoyuki is 3 days]

"What are you doing?" Adam asked Meow, slightly alarmed.

"Drill said there's a specialist there who knows about the Crystal Shadow Virus, and he knows about the cure."

Adam rolled his eyes. "Drill *also* said that he went missing seven years ago. Drill *also* said that his son and son-in-law went to find him but *never came back*."

"I'll find him." Meow said determinedly.

"And how are you going to do that?" Adam asked. "We don't have time to get side-tracked. If we mess up, it could mean the difference between life and death."

Meow felt her eyes fill with tears. She turned to look straight ahead, so that Adam wouldn't see. She did this often, when she didn't want to accept the truth that Adam spoke.

"Not just the difference between life and death for your mother," Adam went on, "But for you too. I just think sticking to our original plan and going to the Moon Kingdom is the safer option."

Meow thought about it. "Maybe you're right. But didn't Drill say that there was only *one possible cure*? I mean, what if the only possible cure isn't actually the Silver Imperium Crystal? A chance to meet a doctor with that information is way too valuable to pass up."

"I suppose you're right about that, but going to a planet that people disappear from is dangerous, to say the least." Adam knew Meow was determined, but he was concerned for her safety, and made his next words hit hard. "If we die, there is no hope. For your mother, for our home, for anyone. If we take too long looking for a doctor that may no longer exist, the Queen could be dead before we get back."

"A compromise." Meow said. She has a strange smile on her face that Adam suspected was there to mask conflicting emotions.

"Explain." he demanded.

"We'll set a time limit. If we haven't made progress finding the doctor in three days of landing on planet Fuyunoyiki, we'll just give up and continue our journey to the Moon Kingdom."

"That's assuming we have the chance to make it off Fuyunoyuki..." Adam said gravely.

## 17 - Destruction

Queen Mau and Queen Nya sat at a long wooden table with a delicately embroidered silk tablecloth, its designs featuring all the different species of cats found on Mau.

As Queen Mau sipped her tea, a tear rolled down her cheek. Queen Nya's eyes were red and puffy from days of crying.

"Really," She explained to Queen Mau, "I hate leaving Nyanko alone, she's probably as upset as I am, but I had to see you.

"Your sister's condition is heartbreaking for everyone, Nya." The Queen assured her. Queen Nya stood up and crossed the marble floor to a stone archway leading out onto a balcony. Queen Mau stood up to follow her, her long silk dress trailing behind her.

The two Queens looked up at the beautiful moon that was Meow, and let their tears flow freely down their cheeks.

"We can't-" Nya sobbed, "We can't just stand here crying. Young Meow will need our guidance. We have to be strong." She turned her head to her own moon, Nya.

"What was that?" Queen Mau said sharply. Nya squinted to see better where Queen Mau was pointing. She could see a small spark of light amidst the lush green of Nya. As she stared, the spark seemed to grow bigger. Her eyes grew wide.

"GET DOWN!" Mau screamed as she flung her arms around Nya's waist and threw her roughly down behind the low wall of the balcony. The two queens heard an ear piercing sound, followed by a rumbling so deep that they could only feel its vibrations. In an instant they were showered by rock and dust.

When they felt the rumbling stop they slowly kneeled to look down at the courtyard, over the edge of the balcony. Mau was covered in a light powder of dust and rock, as far as they could see, but otherwise seemed unharmed. They saw a pair of Palace Guards covered in dust.

"Guar! Bob! Are you both alright?" Queen Mau called to them. The guards turned to look up at their queen.

"Fine, Your Majesty." The taller one replied. "The real question is, are \*you\* alright?"

"Yes, thank goodness!" Queen Mau clasped her hands together and turned her eyes upwards in a silent prayer. Her face suddenly morphed into a twisted look of sheer horror. She screamed loudly struggling not to vomit as she did. Queen Nya and the palace guards quickly looked upwards to see what had shocked their queen.

Above Mau they could see Meow floating erratically through the sky, and just beyond it, were a dozen large chunks of floating rocks.

"That's where Nya used to be!" Bob the guard shouted up at the two queens. "What does this mean?" Beside him, Guar fell to his knees.

"My sister..." he whispered "My nephews..."

There was a thump, as Queen Nya fainted to unconsciousness on the marble floor of the balcony. Queen Mau was still too shocked and confused to help her. She could only gaze down at her courtyard where a blanket of dust and debris, the remainder of the moon Nya, lay. It was Bob's sharp, echoing cry that brought her back to her senses.

"DOWN!" Queen Mau saw Bob pull Guar down to the ground, and she hid herself again behind the low edge of the balcony. She heard the same ear-piercing sound, though perhaps louder this time? She wasn't sure. But the rumbling was much more violent, and she felt her head knock against the balcony wall.

## 18 - Icy Planet

Meow woke to a harsh white light shining onto her face.

[Approaching Planet Fuyunoyuki] Mae greeted her. Meow rubbed her eyes and looked out at the planet they were approaching. She gasped. The whole planet looked like a huge piece of jagged glass, and it reflected the lights from nearby stars like a prism, forming rainbows in every direction. It was the most beautiful thing she had ever seen.

"Adam! Wake up!" You have to see this!"

"Mmm." Adam murmured. Still half asleep, he jumped onto Meow's lap, and immediately collapsed with the effort. He opened his brownish-green eyes to follow Meow's gaze. "That's Fuyu-whatever, is it?" Meow didn't answer.

[Landing in ten minutes] Mae said cheerily.

Meow and Adam watched as their ship drew closer and closer to the planet. Meow shivered as the temperature grew consistently colder.

"Are you cold or something?" Adam asked her.

"I'm freezing!" Meow said through chattering teeth. "Aren't you?"

"Nope, can't feel it." Adam said cheerfully.

[Landing sequence initiated] Mae informed them. The ship started to shake as it began to land, but Meow was too cold to notice. With a loud thud the ship landed on a flat sheet of crystal. Meow unbuckled her belt and pressed the button to open the hatch. She let out an ear piercing scream.

"What is it?" Adam asked, alarmed.

"It's so COLD!!!" Meow was huddled in a ball.

"Well come on, you're never going to find that doctor by sitting in your seat. Get up."

"It's too cold!" Meow whined, slowly rising from her seat and stepping down to the icy crystal floor below.

"You'll be fine once you transform, I promise."

"K-kitten P-power!" Meow shouted. A cold gust of wind blew Adam towards her and just as the two were about to collide, Adam turned to light and was absorbed by Meow's kitten Soul Mirror. Cold wind chilled Meow to her bones, and she shut her eyes tightly. In a split second she was wearing a light blue Sailor fuku.

"Better?" Adam asked.

"I'm still cold." Meow complained.

"But not as cold." Adam pointed out. Meow closed the hatch of her ship, and turned to survey the surrounding landscape.

"There are a few small openings in the ice crystals over there." She told Adam. "Do you think we should check them out?"

"Sure, why not?" Meow walked across the flat ice floor towards a formation of ice crystals.

"Why do I look different every time I transform?" Meow wondered aloud.

"That's the nature of the Kitten Soul Mirror." Adam explained to her. "It reflects your surrounding environment and uses that power to give you an appropriate transformation."

"Well, aren't you the expert?"

"Hey, hey, hey," Adam cried defensively, "When you spend your time inside a piece of jewelery, you

learn some crazy things."

## 19 - Winter Snow

Meow peered into the opening between two slanted ice crystals.

"It looks like a small cave." She said.

"Are you going to go in?" Adam asked her. Meow stepped into the cave.

"Hello!?" She called out, and her voice echoed deafeningly loud.

"Do you have any idea how loud that sounded from in here? Don't do that again." Adam said angrily.

"I'm sorry." Meow said, stroking the face of the Kitten Soul Mirror.

"Who goes there?" Echoed a male voice. In moments, they were met by a middle-aged man wearing glasses and a brown fur coat.

"Uh, hi!" Meow stammered, not expecting to see another person so soon after arriving.

"Can I help you there, young lady?" The man asked, adjusting his glasses.

"Uh, well," Meow stammered, "Um, I'm looking for a doctor." The man adjusted his glasses again, and looked at her quizzically.

"A doctor, is it? Well, we have quite a few doctors here. I'm Dr. Raphael DeFredo. Follow me back to headquarters and I'll introduce you to some of them." The man turned abruptly and walked quickly back the way he had come. Meow hurried after him.

"Uh, wait!" She called. "The doctor I'm looking for, well, he's supposed to be an expert on something called the 'Crystal Shadow Virus'. I need his help."

"Crystal Shadow Virus?" Dr. DeFredo asked, quickening his pace. "A colleague of mine knew a great deal about that virus. He even learned of a cure."

"Great!" Meow smiled delightedly. "Can you please take me to him?"

Dr. DeFredo stopped.

"I'd sure like to, young lady. But Dr. Arrow disappeared almost eight years ago. We had two young chaps come looking for him, but they soon went the same way." The doctor began walking again.

"Toron and Roshi, I'll bet anything!" Meow said into her brooch.

"You knew them, did you? Well, please don't tell me you're here to look for them."

"What could have happened to them?" Meow asked desperately.

"Hold on a minute." The doctor said as they reached the end of the cave. On one side of the cave wall there were a series of horizontal steel bars, leading like a ladder up into a hole, just big enough to fit a person through.

"I'll go first," Dr. DeFredo said, putting his foot on the first rung. "You follow." He disappeared through the hole. As soon as he was out of sight, Meow followed. The steel rungs were icy and Meow's hands felt numb, even through her gloves. Through the hole was a vast cavern, and Meow followed the doctor as he climbed up the wall. The climb was a long one. Meow struggled not to look down, and instead tried to make conversation with her guide.

"And do you know how Dr. Arrow disappeared?" Meow asked.

"I'm not sure," The doctor replied, "But I'd wager it has something to do with the Winter Snow."

"Winter Snow?" Meow asked. "What's that? Is it like the snow that falls in winter?"

"Snow doesn't fall here on Fuyunoyuki." The doctor explained. "True, our planet is icy. But we are



surrounded by stars, so our atmosphere is quite warm."

"Then where does the snow come from?" Meow asked as she climbed.

"We don't know." The doctor said gravely. "But we avoid the snow at all cost."

## 20 - Notebook

At the top of the ladder was another opening, and Dr. DeFredo helped Meow through. They were greeted by a group of people in fur coats like the doctor's, holding portable computers, fold-out chairs and tables and hot thermoses. There were three men and two women, all about the same age as Dr. DeFredo. They circled around Meow as Dr. DeFredo introduced them.

"This is Professor Hielo, and that's Doctor Schnee. The tall man there is Doctor Schnee's brother Sneeuw. The lady in the white coat is Professor Glace, and this is my wife, Eis. We're expecting our first child this month."

"Oh, nice to meet you!" Meow said, bowing politely, "And congratulations."

"Aren't you sweet?" Eis smiled. "What is it that we can help you with?"

"She's looking for Arrow." Dr. DeFredo answered for her.

"You'd better sit down, sweetie." Eis and the others unfolded their chairs and offered Meow one of their spares.

Professor Glace began.

"Arrow was a brave man, and a brilliant doctor. He put his life into studying diseases that affected people with Sailor Crystals, like you. He was researching a disease called Black Pneumonia which he thought was related to the Winter Snow..." she stopped. Sensing that the professor wasn't going to continue, Dr. Schnee continued.

"Arrow foolishly traveled to the top of Glass peak-"

"That's our planet's largest Ice Peak." Eis cut in.

"And that's where the Winter Snow can be found. Although, how it gets there is anybody's guess." Dr. Heilo explained to Meow.

"Anyway," Dr. Schnee continued, "Arrow took his notebook full of all his research with him. He didn't believe in computers, only ink and paper. So when he disappeared, his life's work disappeared with him."

"I need that notebook." Meow explained.

"I'm sorry." Dr. Schnee bowed his head. "Glass Peak is enormous. Not to mention extremely dangerous. If we honestly thought there was any hope of finding Arrow, we would have recovered that notebook years ago."

"Well, I have to try." Meow said determinedly. "Do you have a map I could borrow?"

"Of course, there's no stopping you." Eis shook her head.

"But we'll give you two things." Dr. DeFredo handed Meow a piece of folded paper. "This map-"

"And this advice," Eis interrupted, "The second you see a single snowflake, just turn and run the other way."