



Cat in the Dark

Shirley Rousseau Murphy

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I'm a cat," said Dulcie. "Of course I worry, Joe. What is the cops catch one of us opening a skylight and masterminding a robbery? The tabloids will love it. Every nut in the country will read about the trained burglar-cat...Or, heaven forbid the talking cat..."

Dulcie is right it be worried, for the precious peace of sleepy little Molena Point is threatened as never before.

There's a new cat in town: Azreal, a renegade tom with a penchant for voodoo, a scorn for his fellow felines, and a nasty hatred of humans. And he's quickly escalating toward murder most foul.

Dulcie and Joe Grey both knew the score--they have seen Azreal in action. His nocturnal depredations threaten the very fabric of their lives. Dulcie could lose her spot as library cat. Even the evening handout for Jolly's Deli is at risk.

But how can they expose the criminal without letting millions of ordinary, untrustworthy humans in on the secret that certain *select* cats can think and talk?

Cat in the Dark is the newest foray into the human-haunted world of Joe Gray and Dulcie, whose uncanny abilities. and extraordinary intuitions are helping to make small town crime a losing proposition. So far.

Joe Gray, P.I. It was not until the next morning that Joe, brushing past Clyde's bare feet, leaping to the kitchen table and pawing open the morning *Gazette*, learned more about the burglary at Medder's Antiques. He read the article as Clyde stood at the stove frying eggs. Two over easy for Clyde, one sunny-side up with sardines for Joe. It had taken a bit of doing to get Clyde trained, but the effort has been worth it.

"What are you reading?" Clyde picked Joe up as if he were a bag of flour, so he could see the paper.

Joe dangled impatiently, twitching his tail, as Clyde read.

Clyde sat down at the table and dumped pepper on his eggs. "So this is why you've been scowling and snarling all morning, this burglary."

I haven't been scowling and snarling," Joe slurped up a sardine, dipping it in egg yoke. "Why would I bother with a simple break and enter? The police can handle the simple stuff."

Clyde raised an eyebrow.

"So there's a new cat in the village. So are you satisfied? It's nothing to worry you, nothing to

fret over."

Clyde was silent a moment, watching him. "I take it this is a tomcat. What did he do, come onto Dulcie?"

Joe glared at him. The stupid humans could be all too perceptive at the wrong times.

Cat in the Dark Details

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Jen says

Once again, I spend a delightful few hours traipsing through the impossibly quaint Molena Point with talking cat detectives, and then I give the book away because it's not worth owning for another read.

In this (the fourth Joe Grey mystery, I believe), a new cat is introduced, and it is kind of nice to have the change of pace of whole scenes without humans in them that aren't just the flirtations of Joe and Dulcie. The introduction of jealousy was fun, too, in terms of not only underscoring how human the character of Dulcie is, but being able to get into all of the intricate little habits that cats have when they're honked off at each other.

I will say this about Murphy, she has cat mannerisms pegged. But so much of this story felt invented (which you shouldn't actually *notice* in fiction, and the woman never met a simile she didn't like. Quite evocative imagery, sometimes, but when the page has more "like"s than Facebook, it's time to break out a metaphor or something.

As usual, a good distraction and pleasant read.

Betty says

Dulcie & Mavity are featured in the 4th book of the Joe Grey tales. Dulcie's role as the library cat is challenged. Azreal, a black cat with evil tendencies enters the story. He tempts Dulcie with stories of voodoo and dark jungles. Joe & Dulcie watch Azreal & his human partner Greeley burglarized several stores. They recognized that Azreal is able to speak like them. Only to learned Greenly is Mavity's brother. Another super story.

Marjorie Dawson says

I am slowly working my way through the series and love each one. Sometimes they can be a worry or a challenge - why? Because I worry about the cats, the danger, and sometimes the really sinister characters they encounter. The world that Shirley Rousseau Murphy has created slowly develops book by book, and the magic of Molena Point weaves its spell as you curl up and enter the world of Joe Grey and his feline friends.

Fred Nachbrunn says

So many plot twists

A story with a long series of plot twists.

A mystery book with enough plot twists to keep even the most avid reader ready to turn the next page.

Kelly Moore says

This is #4 in the Joe Grey series, and my favorite so far! A new tomcat comes to town, upsetting the feline balance of things. I love that the cat drama is mirrored by the human drama. The mystery is compelling and not too predictable.

Danielle says

This Joe Grey really sucked me in right from the start. It's very clever and Azrael is a terrific villain.

Sandie Herron says

This fourth entry in the Joe Grey series is a mystery featuring amateur sleuths Joe Grey and Dulcie, two sentient cats who are more than best friends. I think this entry has a line going through it about love, or lack of love, and the various kinds of love. Joe Grey and Dulcie are very much in love and spend as much of their time together as possible. They love to investigate crimes. They must do so carefully since they don't want to reveal their special abilities of speech and reading. Sound too far gone and unbelievable? Not so in Mrs. Murphy's skilled hands or in Susan Boyce's proficient narration.

Wilma's niece Charlie's new Clean it, Fix it business was doing well. Under the cats' silent supervision, she had two employees to whom she was delegating the cleaning and minor repairs – Mavity and Pearl Ann -- while Charlie did the heavier fixing. Both are working at an investment guru's place who works by computer at home. Pearl Ann just loves what he does with the little bit of money she's given him to invest, until later when she discovers what he's actually done with it.

When Mavity disappears, no one knows why or where. The town searches for her until finally a woman is found unconscious in the back seat of her car which has apparently hit a lamp post. Mavity's worst wound came from a screw driver hitting her, not the car accident, and she has temporarily lost her memory. She is taken to the hospital where she is quickly identified. Afterward Wilma takes Mavity into her home to help her regain her memory. Dulcie comforts Mavity and gathers clues.

Mavity's brother Greely is in town on a visit, only he has rented a store room as the only place he could find to rent and get drunk. He has an all black cat named Azrael who is evil. He and the other cats do not get along and actually enter several fights. Azrael is also sentient and cruel. He enjoys scaring Dulcie. He actually jumps to attack Mavity, but Dulcie jumps to stop him, and they fight until he runs off.

One action that makes this story explode is made by the investor. He had his doubts about Pearl Ann. Via Dulcie and Joe Grey, we know that Pearl Ann had entered his home with the key she had to clean with, and spent many hours on his computer. He supposedly leaves his home for a short trip, but he hides his car a few blocks away and returns home quietly to find Pearl Ann working on his computer. What follows is rather nasty!

When we finally reach the end when humans and cats all share a picnic, we again visit family ties and how family interacts with each other and outsiders. A few humans leave Molena Point with the possibility of return one day. Molena Point is the better for it.

Sandie Herron

Sarah says

Abandoned on page 96 of 311. Too dark

?Susan? says

These are such good mysteries and I love how the author blends in real feline antics to the stories. Same great main characters. Such good palet refreshers in between heavyweight reads. Wonderful adventure cozies.

Lynne says

Another great book with talking cats Joe Grey and Dulcie. Really enjoyed reading this book.

Mscurl123gmail.Com says

I loved reading all the mischief the three cats get into. Shirley Rousseau Murphy is one of my favorite authors.

Tracy Smyth says

4 1/2 stars - Love these two cats

Liz says

You just can't beat talking kitties! The murder mystery part of the story was alright, not stellar but good enough...but I just love Dulcie and Joe. Definitely going to be looking up some more in this series.

Anita Byler says

[the character of Pearl Ann/Hoke who seems to be capable of near super human feats- (s)he is always there, in th

Sandra says

I am addicted to Joe Grey and Dulcie and now the Kit...the books get better and better and I intend to read each and every one. Joe and his relationship with his human room mate Clyde can be rocky at times, but there is (dare I say it?) love between the two which creeps in amidst the fussing and feuding over Joe's propensity for getting involved on police matters. Yes. I admit it. I love Joe Grey.
