

The Taming

by Catherine Davis

This snit — furious with even the cats. Silkily they glide beside, round ankles, cross keyboard — trailing me. N-n-never screamsold a cat.

I need to run. Rampant, amok, wild on the savannah. ??

Ding-a-ling, La Friendessa, getting back. “WHAT!” I snap. “Always, you gotta get off, oh! — the subway, doctor, thrift-store, museum! For pooch-type predicaments, I had patience. So, you ever gonna replace that Pippi, god rest her, or what?” Click off, craving an old rotary you could clang down good.??

Scrambling to locate my hat. Shoes, key!

The cats have chins pulled in by the time I break out.

Half a block on, trotting away: this frigid raindrop splats on my lid. Fine. I spit on the street and glare at the sky: *raise ya!* ??

Convinced I have a secret strain of asthma, undetectable unless confessed. My doctor's long distance — in subways, no doubt, or museums. Huff on.

A Labrador ahead, pee-pausing on hydrant.??

Chew over unreturned messages, e.g., Mr. Placid's hep-tone text: Wanna catch a flick? (Scram! Don't you get this isn't MOVIE time?)??

To the hydrant: “All-*fucking*-ready 2011!” Kick that pee-marked sucker to the ouch.??

Here's a station-wagon dogging me now. Not! Stopping! Busy, see? Even if it is Father, reclusive these twenty years since he died. Sure, when I lunge to latch on, that silver wagon disappears in a swirl of exhaust.

Back to the house with a limp. The cats sit Egyptian on the staircase, watchful. Sotto sotto now, watching these watchers, I breathe their rhythm.

