

Boxes

by Jake Barnes

We have seven boxes containing the ashes of seven cats sitting in a stack on a desk in the spare room. We call the room the nursery. This is where new cats and kittens live when we first bring them in. We use the room as a spare bedroom for house guests, too. It's always interesting to see how somebody reacts to sleeping there. It wouldn't bother me, but I suspect it gives some folks the heebie-jeebies.

All but one of our live cats are old, and when they die, the stack of boxes will grow. I am long of tooth, too, and when I go, maybe a box with my ashes inside will join the boxes containing the cats' remains. On the other hand, maybe not. My wife, who is younger than I am, has something else planned for me she says. She says that when I die, she is going to mix my ashes in with the contents of the cats' litter boxes. She'd do it, too; I wouldn't put it past her.

