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The Cat's Mistake

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I won't make you guess where Blackie the cat had chosen to take his Sunday nap. I'll just say: it was inside the church organ.

He'd found his way in the day before. It was warm in there, and dark, and perfectly quiet. He slept deeply and well.

He was still sleeping when the organist arrived and sat down to play.

The opening notes came, and Blackie woke with a start. The sound was enormous, surrounding, completely incomprehensible — nothing in his experience had prepared him for it. He scrambled sideways, and the organ produced a long, extraordinary rumble that made the organist's hands stop.



The congregation stopped singing.

The organist tried again. Another crash and burr from somewhere inside the instrument. The congregation gave up on the organ and finished the hymn on their own, which was admirable, but not what anyone had planned.

Inside, Blackie was trying to find a way out, and every move he made across the stops and pedals sent another strange noise into the church. The organist peered into the cabinet and saw nothing.

Then two large green eyes blinked back at him.

A cat.

"Come, puss," said the organist, in the quietest voice he could manage. "Come on, nice puss." Blackie, thoroughly terrified, didn't move at first. But the voice was very calm and very kind, and after a while the terror eased, and Blackie crept out.

A small boy was found who carried him outside. The cold churchyard air had never felt so good. Blackie went straight home, ate his supper, and slept — this time in a basket, like a sensible cat.

He liked adventures. He always had. But there were limits.

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