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The Fussy Cat

Mary Graham Bonner

Snow was a white cat, and Coal was a black dog, and they were the best of friends — which made Snow's latest enthusiasm all the more baffling to Coal.

"I'm so pleased today is wash day," Snow was saying, purring to herself. "All the clothes scrubbed and hung out, and tomorrow they'll be ironed and folded and put in the linen room. Bliss."

Coal stared at her. "I understand when you talk about mice," he said. "I've never known anyone so fond of mice. But why do you care about clean laundry? You don't wear it. You bathe yourself."

"I like to *lie* in it," said Snow, with great dignity. "A basket of freshly washed linen is one of the great pleasures of my life. And the linen closet — when they leave that door open, I'm the happiest creature in the house."

"That is the strangest thing I have ever heard."



"It is absolutely true. The mistress knows perfectly well that she can't leave clean washing in a basket for even a moment before I'll be in it. And she never dares leave the linen closet open." Snow paused. "I don't think she truly understands how much I love it. If she did, she might make me a proper bed of clean things."

"What about soiled clothes?" asked Coal. "Wouldn't they feel the same?"

Snow looked at him as if he had suggested something deeply offensive.

"I only lie in *clean* clothes," she said. "Soft cushions, cream, the best food from the table — these are all fine. But clean laundry is in a category of its own."

"I learn something new about you every day," said Coal.

"And this," Snow said serenely, "is because I have excellent taste."

This, it should be noted, is a true story.

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