

Case of the Missing Cat

See if you can solve the mystery, and find your cat!

By Laura Lee Bloor

"Maybe we should make some flyers," you suggest.

"That's a great idea," your mom says. "I'll go find a picture of Fritz. You kids start drafting what to write."

You and your brother and sister crowd around the computer.

"I want to write," you say. "I'm the one who even noticed Fritz was gone."

"Well, I'm bigger than you so I say I get to write it," your brother says.

"I'm the oldest, and I say I write it," your sister says.

"Let's see," she says as she pushes her way to the chair. "We need a giant MISSING CAT at the top, his name, his age, what color, our phone number, that we're offering a reward. Anything else besides whatever photo Mom picks out?"

"No, I think that's great," you say. "When do we post them?"

"You can post them tomorrow after school around the neighborhood," your mom says as she enters the room with a picture of Fritz. "Here's the picture, so finish up the flyers and then get to bed."

The next day of school seems like the longest day ever. You've brought your flyers with you so you can get to work as soon as possible. Finally school lets out and you walk to the neighborhood closest to you and your school. Every telephone pole you pass, you post a flyer. After an hour or two of walking around neighborhoods posting flyers, you call it a day and walk home.

As soon as you walk in the door, your mom says, "I have a Fritz update."

"Oh! What is it?"

"Apparently your flyers worked like magic," your mom says. "A nice lady from a few blocks away just called before you walked in the door saying she has Fritz! Great job! Do you want to go with me to get him?"

"Actually, I really want to poke around here to see how he got out," you say. "It's really been bugging me."

"Alright, I'll see you in a few," your mom says.

How did Fritz escape? There must have been an exit somewhere. Someone would have seen him if he had slipped out of the house when you were coming outside for dinner. Time for a closer inspection of all the doors and windows to the house.

There's only a front door, a garage door and a back door. You've already ruled out that someone would have seen Fritz if he had snuck out the back door when you and the rest of the family came outside to eat, plus, he had been missing long before that.

In fact, when was the last time you saw him? That's right, a couple of nights ago before going to bed, you remember. He brushed up against you to say goodnight. Hmmm.

OK, on to the front door. Although it's closed now, you and your family have come in and out of the front door several times today. As with the back door, it's highly unlikely that someone missed big, old Fritz slipping past them as they were to come or go.

Hardly anyone ever used the garage door, so that was even more unlikely. Now it was time to check all the windows.

Fritz escaping through a window was a long shot because all the windows in the house had screens. It couldn't hurt to give them all a closer look though ... and just as you figured, all the windows and screens were secure upstairs. As a last resort, you check the basement.

Ah ha! One of the windows was left ajar, along with a missing screen! So that's how Fritz got out! But who took out the screen and left the window open?

Just then you hear the front door open.

"Fritz is here!" your mom announces.

"Yea! Fritz!" you run up the stairs and scoop him up. "It's so good to see you!"

"Hey, Mom, I found out how Fritz got out. Someone took out the screen and left the window open. Do you know who did it?"

"Hmmm, no, I don't. That's definitely upsetting. We'll have to ask your brother and sister when they get home. Someone is going to be in big trouble," she says. "But for now, let's just enjoy having Fritz safely back at home."

MYSTERY SOLVED ... for now.

Who do you think removed the screen and left the window open? Your brother

Your sister

Your mom

Your dad

You

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