
Feline Healing

“HEY, Cloud,” said Wedge, one evening in the bar. “You seem kinda tense. Need help with that?”

Cloud remained motionless in an attempt to conceal his displeasure. He was doing his best to convince the others that he was just a naturally reserved, standoffish guy, but they had no doubt noticed those moments of discomfort, the brief spells of confusion and pain that seemed only to be getting more frequent; and the longer he spent with them all, the sooner they would realise that this shell was intended to protect him not just from the outside world, but from true knowledge of himself.

“What do you have in mind?” he said at last, trying

very hard to sound uninterested.

“Well,” said Wedge, “you could come back to my place and meet my cats. Might be relaxing.”

“All right,” said Cloud, and while he didn’t speak to Wedge at all during the short walk to his quarters, he had to privately admit when they arrived that the feeling of several small, warm, furry bodies writhing around him was a greater comfort than he’d thought he needed.