

The Kind Barber and His Street Cats

With two heavy bags of cat food in her arms, Manuela can't stop smiling as she hurries toward a shop she is very familiar with. She's making her weekly visit to see Hussein the barber. He spots her through the window of his quiet shop and runs outside to greet her. Hussein clasps his hands in gratitude as he sees the bags of cat food and the two hurry to an alley where there are several small food dishes lined up. Soon the sound of kibble being poured into the bowls attracts cats from around Hussein's shop.



In Turkey, cats and dogs are not well liked. Especially strays. Those who feed them are often scorned. But Hussein doesn't pay any attention to those who glare at him. He takes his time feeding and stroking each cat and speaking gently to them. Hussein is simply a man who loves with his whole heart, and he is an animal lover.

As the two talk Hussein reveals some bad news. He explains that he is about to lose his barber shop.

After decades in the same tiny room - with gleaming scissors and grooming tools neatly arranged on the counter, Hussein has been told that he must leave. His barbershop simply doesn't make enough money and Hussein can't pay enough rent. The landlord has informed him that another tenant will be moving in soon, so Hussein must leave. And the new tenant won't be feeding stray cats outside the building.

Manuela starts to cry as Hussein talks about his concern for the cats he has been taking care of. There are only seven days until Hussein must leave and Manuela is worried not only for the cats who depend on Hussein, but for Hussein himself.

Manuela took Hussein's cause to Facebook. As Manuela's Facebook friends read her post about the barber's fate, they start to show their support. The supporters begin making small donations to help. And as fate would have it, there is something better in store for the barber and his cats.

For the next two days Manuela visits Hussein and each time gives him the small amount of money donated to him.

On the third day, something wonderful happens. Hussein is able to rent a space for his shop in the dilapidated building across the street. There is no electricity, no water, but the spot has potential.

Volunteers come by to help with the painting and cleaning, while electricians and plumbers connect the electricity and water.

It takes less than two weeks for Hussein the barber to get back in business again. Thanks to the kindness of strangers, he has a new lease on life. And as for his cats, well they are doing just fine.