

Chester the Cat

“Goodnight, Pete!” Mrs. Monroe said with great finality as she came back into the living room, and then more calmly, “Good night, Harold. Good night, Chester.”

Mr. and Mrs. Monroe went up the stairs together.

“You know, dear,” Mr. Monroe said, “that was very clever. Bunnacula. I could never have thought of a name like that.”

“Oh, I don’t know, Robert.” She smiled, as she put her arm through his. “I think Prince is a lovely name, too.”

The room was quiet. Chester was still sitting by the closed kitchen door in a state of shock. Slowly, he turned to me.

“I wish they had named him Fluffy,” was all he said.

I feel at this time there are a few things you should know about Chester. He is not your ordinary cat. (But then, I’m not your ordinary dog, since an ordinary dog wouldn’t be writing this book, would he?)

Chester came into the house several years ago as a birthday gift for Mr. Monroe, along with two volumes of G. K. Chesterton (hence the name, Chester) and a first edition of Dickens’ *A Tale of Two Cities*. As a result of this introduction to literature, and given the fact that Mr. Monroe is an English professor, Chester developed a taste for reading early in life. (I, on the other hand, have developed a taste for books. I found *Jonathan Livingston Seagull* particularly delicious.) From Chester’s kittenhood on, Mr. Monroe has used him as a sounding board for all his student lectures. If Chester doesn’t fall asleep when Mr. Monroe is talking, the lecture can be counted a success.

Every night when the family is sleeping, Chester goes to the bookshelf, selects his midnight reading and curls up on his favorite chair. He especially likes mystery stories and tales of horror and the supernatural. As a result, he has developed a very vivid imagination.

I’m telling you this, because I think it’s important for you to know something of Chester’s background before I relate to you the story of the events following the arrival of Bunnacula into our home. Let me begin with that first night.