

Feline Fragments 24 (2021)

(page checked March 2026)

Pretty Boy

'The Mayor of Seventh Street', New York, USA



It was in 1988 that a handsome white cat walked into Mikey's Pet Store at 130 East Seventh Street in New York City, and he made it his base for his wanderings around other businesses on the block. He slept at the pet store, joined a bit later by another cat called **Herbie**, but visited other businesses including a hair salon called Chatsii. Sometimes in the evenings he would go to the Swiss restaurant at the end of the block, sitting at the pavement café to observe the customers.

It was impossible to say who owned the cat, if indeed anyone did; he was named **Pretty Boy** and became affectionately known as the Mayor of Seventh Street. A vet check-up not long after he appeared revealed that he was between 1 and 2 years old. Pretty Boy had many friends in the neighbourhood. One of them remarked, 'I wish I had a walk like that,' prompting one business owner to say, 'It really was a cool walk, especially as he got older – it was a Zen-like stroll. It was so serene.' As businesses came and went over time, he adjusted accordingly. The Swiss restaurant closed, and when Chatsii changed hands he was no longer welcome there – so he turned his attention to Mark Dolengowski's 'Salon Seven' hairdressing salon at no. 110; he became very fond of Mark. He would turn up after he'd had breakfast at the pet store, and spent his day purring, sprawled across the reception desk and appointments calendar, or even on clients' laps. Towards the end of the day he'd return to the pet store and have a game of chase with Herbie.



Later in his life Pretty Boy's weekends became very busy. On Saturdays he'd travel between Salon Seven and the neighbourhood synagogue, where friends and fans would stop to greet him after services. On Sundays a group of children from a Ukrainian church attended.

Pretty Boy died on 19 May 2009 and, given his estimated age when he first appeared, was thought to be about 22 years old. A six-year-old girl who lived nearby and had known him sent white

tulips to the hair salon on learning of his death, and at the next Halloween she dressed up all in white in his memory. A resident recalled that some years earlier a member of a film crew working nearby had remarked, 'That white cat walks around like he owns the place!' She told him that Pretty Boy was the mayor of the street. His companion at the pet store, Herbie, stopped eating for several days. Pretty Boy was cremated and his ashes returned to Mark at the hair salon. 'We might scatter them on the block where everyone knew him,' he said. 'I think he was a karmic presence. He came here and made everyone feel good.' In fact persistent wet weather – which Pretty Boy hated – delayed the ceremony, but finally in June a little memorial service was held and his remains were scattered along the paths he once so proudly trod.

Mark Dolengowski fashioned a little memorial at his salon with photos and a vase of pink flowers; he was heart-broken at the cat's death. 'You get so hard living here,' he said. 'But pets open up that heart centre. There's something about the unconditional love – they clean the blues off you. That's their mission. That's why a lot of New Yorkers have pets.'

[New York Times](#) (June 2009 – *archived copy: pay wall*) | [The Villager](#) (June 2009 – *archived*)

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Feline Fragments 25 (2023)

(page checked March 2026)

Scrappy

Morley, Leeds, West Yorkshire, UK



Born in 1997 as part of a litter of five, **Scrappy** – so called because as he grew up he tended to scrap with the neighbourhood cats – was a jet-black kitten. However, when he was about seven, a white patch appeared on his head, and gradually more white patches appeared until he had the striking 'camouflage' coat pattern seen in the photos. As time went on the changes slowed down, but increased again in his later life.

At first his owner took him to the vet, thinking there was a problem, but in fact Scrappy was perfectly healthy. The changes were due to vitiligo, a condition caused by a lack of the black pigment melanin; the condition is very rarely found in cats



At the age of 19 Scrappy was diagnosed with terminal liver and kidney problems, and he passed away peacefully in early April 2017. Thousands of messages of condolence were posted on his social-media pages.

[Love Meow](#) (May 2015) | [Facebook](#) (*still active, Nov. 2024*) | [Instagram](#) (*last used 2019*)

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