

## The Scruffy Clan

### Handout 9.5

1. The wild-haired cat sat unassumingly with a worn look next to a large concrete collection tank.

2. To all appearances, it was a calm, slightly wild feline, probably two or three generations feral.

3. To make such an assumption would be to fall into gross error.

4. This cat, sedate now, could make the hair rise on the back of your neck.

5. Streaking through the wild-lands of Stockton's mixed pine and oak forest, moving lithely through the cedar bog, this matriarch of the Scruffy Clan asks observers to reexamine their ideas of feline behavior.

6. Thinking of her as a gentle, measured or relaxed cat misses the depth and breadth of her character.

7. For instance, she likes dancing in the moonlight by the banks of Cedick Stream, and often she can be found prancing around the old cedar stump beyond the footbridge.

8. Sitting queen-like by the stone pile at the bottom of parking lot seven becomes her, and with a demanding expression she awaits feeding brought by a gentleman in shorts.

*Tricky in more ways than one*

9. Wearing a broken top hat on festive occasions, this gentleman is reputed to be a third cousin of Dr. Doolittle, and certainly he can communicate freely with Scruffy Clan.

10. The queen, Dervorgilla by name, makes the others hunt for her.

11. Reclining close by in the collection tank, one of her proven favorites is a smaller black cat [that watches with eyes [which seem to hold magic]].

12. Blackie enjoys hunting for small creeping rodents, lurking out of sight and awaiting opportunities to pounce delightedly on unsuspecting critters.



13. Respecting the natural order means [that man, mouse, and cat must learn to coexist].

14. Observing the Scruffies and their way of life may show us the humanity residing quiescently within our souls.