On a quiet little street nestled between two overgrown hedges and a crooked lamppost, lived a cat named Waffles. Waffles was no ordinary cat. While he looked like any other chubby tabby with a lazy stretch and a fondness for napping in sunbeams, he had one peculiar habit—every Thursday at exactly 3:07 PM, Waffles disappeared.

His owner, Mrs. Penelope Trumbull, never noticed. At 3:06 PM, she would be watching her soaps with the volume far too loud. And by the time Waffles returned at 3:18 PM, he'd already resumed his post on the windowsill, blinking innocently as if he’d been there all along.

But Waffles was, in fact, a time traveler.

It had started one stormy night when he accidentally fell asleep on a glowing old wristwatch in the attic—a watch once worn by Mrs. Trumbull’s late husband, a retired theoretical physicist with a mischievous streak and questionable lab safety habits.

Every Thursday, the watch activated.

Waffles would vanish in a puff of ginger fur and reappear somewhere unexpected: Ancient Egypt (where he was worshipped), a 1920s speakeasy (where he was smuggled in a violin case), or once, terrifyingly, in a future where cats ruled the world and humans scooped their litter.

Today, he landed in a pirate ship's crow’s nest in the year 1692. The crew, utterly convinced Waffles was the reincarnation of Captain Fishbones, their long-lost feline mascot, declared a holiday in his honor. He was fed salmon jerky and got to nap in the captain’s hat.

At precisely 3:18 PM, he blinked and poofed back to his windowsill, licking a piece of salmon off his whiskers just as Mrs. Trumbull looked up from her program.

“Strange,” she said aloud. “I don’t remember giving you fish.”

Waffles purred.

He never told her where he went.

But the wristwatch still ticked in the attic, faintly glowing... waiting for next Thursday.