

Version 1

But I kept on dancing. I got stronger. It feels amazing when someone focuses on your talent and not what you look like.

Three years ago, I was playing the part of Puss in Boots in *Sleeping Beauty*. The makeup person was standing at the ready with her container of powder to turn my face white.

When I asked to be a brown cat, she agreed.

Version 2

But I kept on dancing and practicing and performing. I got stronger in every way. And I can't describe how it feels when you finally get someone to focus on your talent and not the color of your skin.

Three years ago, I was playing the part of Puss in Boots in *Sleeping Beauty*. The makeup person was standing at the ready with her container of powder to turn my face white.

"I'm wondering why the cats have to be white," I said. "I'd prefer to be a brown cat."

She listened to me.

Original

"But I kept on dancing and practicing and performing. I got stronger in every way. And I can't describe how it feels when you finally get someone to focus on your talent and not the superficiality of the package you come in.

Three years ago, I was playing the part of Puss in Boots in *Sleeping Beauty*. The makeup person was standing at the ready with her container of powder to turn my face white.

I looked at her. 'I don't understand why the cats have to be white,' I said defiantly. 'I want to be a brown cat.'

And so I was." (229)

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Copeland, M. (2014). *Life in motion: An unlikely ballerina*. Touchstone.