

Tom

By

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1 EXT. NEIGHBOURHOOD - DAY - SUBJECTIVE CAMERA

- walking around neighbourhood, along a pavement, avoiding people walking past and cars.

- goes into a narrow drain and walks along its length.

- sees a tunnel on the side and approaches.

2 EXT. VOID DECK - DAY

TOM, 19, is on his way home. He is dressed comfortably in his everyday school attire of t-shirt and jeans with his haversack. He stops by a void deck.

There is a can of cat food on the ground. The can is almost empty, with bits of corn inside. He squats and replaces it with a new can from his bag. Next, he clears the old corn from the previous can and opens his water bottle to pour some water into it. He waits.

A STRAY CAT soon approaches him with a soft 'meow'. He strokes its head.

3 INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Tom sits at the table eating his dinner. His MOTHER tries to start conversation at the dinner table. A tall vase of flowers in the middle of the table blocks his view of her.

MOTHER

I hope you haven't been putting cat food outside again. The auntie next door complained yesterday.

Tom swallows. His FATHER enters the kitchen still in his business attire and settles at the table to eat. His briefcase thuds down on the side of the table, blocking Tom's view of the man.

FATHER

Crazy woman.

MOTHER

Just don't feed them anymore. Stray cats are different. The more you feed, the bigger they get and soon you get more and more cats in your area.

TOM

Tom will starve.

(CONTINUED)

MOTHER

Oh my god. You even named it.

FATHER

You named it after you?

TOM

I just think we're similar.

MOTHER

What would you even have in common with a stray cat?!

FATHER

That's just ego. You want a cat, Tom?

MOTHER

No. I don't want a cat shedding hair on all the clothes and furniture. Besides, Tom, you should be putting more effort into your work. Not a cat.

FATHER

Well-

Tom stops listening to them. He continues his food, blocking out their voices.

4 EXT. DRAIN - DAY - SUBJECTIVE CAMERA

- enters a dark tunnel and hears water  
- a 'meow' comes out from the darkness  
- goes forward towards the sound

5 INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Tom shakes himself awake and sees his mother washing the dishes at the sink.

MOTHER

Finished eating?

Tom looks down at his bowl. There is an uneaten corn cob inside. He scraps the corn into a bin before passing the empty bowl to his mother. She does not notice his act of throwing food away.

6 EXT. VOID DECK - DAY

Tom looks around before approaching the cans of cat food from the day before.

The food has been untouched. Tom is perplexed. He exchanges the cans for fresh ones with food and water. He waits at the side.

No cat arrives and he leaves with only uneaten food from the day before in disappointment.

7 EXT. NEIGHBOURHOOD - DAY - SUBJECTIVE CAMERA

- leaves the tunnel into an empty void deck.

- A cat approaches from behind

- Follows the cat to wander the place

- Cat goes into a tight space between bicycles at a bicycle rack. Camera is unable to follow.

8 EXT. VOID DECK - DAY

Tom locks his bicycle in place at the void deck's bicycle rack. He checks the cans of cat food. It has been left untouched again. Tom adds a new can of cat food to the existing stash on the ground. He also changes the water.

A text message arrives in a family group chat. He looks down at his phone screen.

TEXT MESSAGE - TEXT ON SCREEN

MUM:

Working late. Have dinner with dad.

DAD:

No, I'm flying off tonight rmb?

MUM:

Sorry. Forgot. Have a safe flight. Tom, you want to send dad off?

DAD:

No need. Already having dinner with colleague

MUM:

K. Tom have dinner on your own.

TOM:

K.

Tom looks up from his phone and does not see any cat nearby. He leaves.

9 INT. KITCHEN - EVENING

Tom has his dinner alone in a silent house. He deliberates for a moment before getting a teddy bear and placing it in the chair opposite him. He continues his dinner.

10 EXT. VOID DECK - NIGHT

Tom goes downstairs to check on the cat. His cat food is still untouched. He decides to look for the cat. Taking the most recent can of cat food with him, Tom goes around the vicinity trying to look for it.

TOM  
(gingerly)  
Tom?

He feels silly for calling a stray cat by name. He realises he would need to think like a cat to find it. Tom takes a breath.

TOM  
(quietly)  
Meow? Meow...

11 EXT. DRAIN - NIGHT

He reaches a drain and looks into it. Getting down on his knees, Tom tries to find the cat inside. He sees a side tunnel. Giving in to his hunch that the cat would be in the drain, Tom tries to squeeze into the narrow drain. He barely manages to.

INTERCUT WITH TOM'S POV

He gets to the tunnel and tries to enter, but the space is far too narrow this time.

TOM  
Meow? Tom?

A quiet 'meow' replies. He sticks his arm in. Slowly, Tom inches his body into the tunnel, until he is finally inside.

TOM  
Meow?

12 INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Tom's mother returns home and sees that the rest of the house is in darkness, save for the kitchen. The teddy bear is seated on one of the chairs.

MOTHER

Tom? Why's the bear here?

She goes to switch on the rest of the lights to reveal a stray cat sleeping below the table.

THE END