

Tom\_1002

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1 EXT. VOID DECK - DAY

TOM (25) pours water into an empty container. He is dressed in a formal shirt and pants. There is an empty can of cat food next to the container. Tom gets a new can from a plastic bag behind and sets it on the ground to open. He clears the old can of food.

A CAT approaches and nibbles on the food. Tom pats its head lovingly. He stands up and turns to go home. On his way to the lift lobby, Tom finds a BOUQUET OF FLOWERS thrown next to the bin.

2 INT. KITCHEN - EVENING

Tom sits at the dinner table. His MOTHER (55) assembles the bouquet of flowers in a tall vase at the middle of the dishes on the table.

MOTHER

They are so pretty! Where did you get them from?

Tom does not respond and starts eating. Mother tries to start a conversation. The flowers block her face.

MOTHER

You remember Aunty Alice? Our old neighbour?

FATHER (60) sludges in, dropping his BRIEFCASE onto the table and sinks into a stool. The briefcase blocks Tom's view of Father.

TOM

(flatly)

Why?

Father pulls his socks off with his left foot with his right toes under the table.

MOTHER

She asked me about you, then I told her you're looking for a job. Her office needs a part-timer.

Father continues pulling his socks off in the same fashion for his right foot. Mother waits expectantly. Father starts eating with his mouth open, chewing noisily as he fills the silence.

(CONTINUED)

TOM

(beat) So?

MOTHER

Go tomorrow! They're having walk-in interviews. Just bring your portfolio.

TOM

I'm not free tomorrow...

MOTHER

That's what you always say every time. But you always just sit downstairs doing nothing!

Tom glares at his food.

MOTHER

Anyway, I already told Aunty Alice you're going tomorrow. Wear your blue shirt. Please get your life together.

Father burps.

3 INT. OFFICE - DAY

Tom waits outside an office with a folder. He is wearing a WHITE SHIRT, clutching his portfolio uncomfortably. He overhears an INTERVIEWEE #1 talking about herself on the other side of the door.

INTERVIEWEE #1 (O.S.)

(faded)

I'm known to be responsible. I was the president of the student council and organised several leadership camps in college...

Tom hears a scoff from INTERVIEWEE #2 behind him.

INTERVIEWEE #2

She's trying too hard.

Tom turns around and sees a boy around his age with half of his face behind a magazine. Only his eyes can be seen.

(CONTINUED)

INTERVIEWEE #2

She was so arrogant? I was with her just now, and she just kept talking to herself. I just hope I won't need to work with idiots  
(jabs finger at door)

Like that.

The door opens and INTERVIEW #1 leaves. Interviewee #2 prepares to enter.

INTERVIEWEE #2

Well, good luck.

Tom watches him go in. He overhears the interview inside again.

INTERVIEWEE #2 (O.S.)

(faded)

I think being responsible and fast is important. I used to be the leader of the student union and was also the basketball captain back in school... I....

Tom stares at the door with a poker face.

4 EXT. VOID DECK - DAY

Tom squats next to the Cat and gives it a head rub. He feeds it treats from his hand.

Curious about how it tastes like, he licks the treats gingerly.

5 INT. KITCHEN - EVENING

Tom touches a piece of fishcake at the dinner table with his hand. The family sits in their usual positions.

MOTHER

How's the interview?

TOM

Okay.

He licks his finger.

MOTHER

What did they say?

Tom shrugs.

(CONTINUED)

MOTHER

Think you'll get it?

Father kicks his socks under the table.

TOM

(impatient)

Don't know.

FATHER

(chewing)

Should be able to get it. You're  
a bright boy.

A faint smile appears on Tom's face at Father's  
compliment.

MOTHER

'Bright' doesn't mean that you  
get the job.

Tom rearranges his smile back into a poker face.

MOTHER

Anyway, they should take you,  
since Aunty Alice knows me.

TOM

Maybe they will decide based on  
who I am. Not you, Ma.

MOTHER

Ya, but having the right  
connections will help. Told you  
already. You need to socialise  
more to know the right people.  
That's how people get jobs in  
this industry.

Father scratches his leg under the table with his toes.

MOTHER

You listening to me?

Tom bares his teeth into a snarl but the vase of flowers  
blocks Mother's view. She does not notice.

6 EXT. RAFFLES PLACE - DAY

Tom sits on a bench, eating a sandwich as he watches  
office workers rush around during their lunch time. His

(CONTINUED)

portfolio is on his lap. He chews slowly, in contrast to the blur of office workers trying to get their lunch and errands done before their break ends.

Tom looks around. No one spares him a glance. He scratches his nails against the bench.

7 EXT. VOID DECK - DAY

Tom waits by an uneaten can of cat food. He lounges on his side, as if he is a cat lazing on the ground.

He looks around but the Cat is nowhere to be seen. He is alone. Tom inches closer to a wall and rubs himself against it.

DAD

Tom?

TOM

(startles)

So early today? Ma hasn't finished cooking.

Tom hurriedly moves away from the wall to approach Father.

FATHER

It's okay. (beat) Want to go up together?

Tom glances around once more before following him.

8 INT. KITCHEN - EVENING

Mother sets the dishes on the table.

FATHER

You usually feed the cat downstairs?

MOTHER

What cat?

TOM

Just some stray cat.

MOTHER

Just some stray cat? (beat) Stop feeding it. It's disgusting!

TOM

I can't just stop like that. Tom will starve.

FATHER

Tom?

MOTHER

Tom, as in, the cat?

Tom keeps quiet. He looks at his bowl of rice.

MOTHER

Are you mad or stupid? It's not even your pet! And why would you name it after yourself?

TOM

I just think we're similar.

FATHER

(amused)

Maybe we can adopt Tom.

MOTHER

No. Stray cats have diseases. And I can't stand them dropping hair everywhere.

TOM

Humans drop hair too.

MOTHER

Enough is enough! Can you please wake up? You're 25. Not 5. Why can't you be like other kids, getting proper jobs on their own and being a proper adult?

TOM

What's a proper adult?

His question surprises Mother. Father clenches his toes under the table.

MOTHER

Well, finding a stable job, having a good income. Being responsible.

TOM

You mean feeding Tom isn't being responsible?

MOTHER

(hisses)

Stop it, Tom. And don't you dare call it by your name. Eat your food.

Tom picks at the dish in front of him. It is spinach. He shoves some into his mouth and spits it out in disgust.

9 INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Tom drinks a cup of water. Father enters.

FATHER

The cat... Tom... I can help feed him sometimes too. If you want.

TOM

(surprised)

Oh. Thanks.

Father gives him an apologetic pat on the back and leaves.

10 EXT. VOID DECK - DAY

Tom walks around the void deck. The cat food is uneaten again. He gets worried and starts to search for the Cat.

TOM

Tom?

Feeling silly that a stray cat would respond to his name, Tom hesitantly continues his search.

TOM

(quietly)

Meow...?

There is no reply. He circles the void deck and returns to the untouched can of cat food. He gets on all fours and sniffs at it.

He nibbles at the cat food.



11 INT. KITCHEN - EVENING

Mother and Father wait at the dinner table. Mother is annoyed.

MOTHER

He should at least tell us if  
he's going to be late!

12 SWITCH TO POV OF CAT

Tom looks up at them from under the table.

FATHER

(looks down)

Tom?

THE END