

**SNOWBALL**  
By Marc Paykuss

# SNOWBALL

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SNOWBALL

*For Ruby, Stacey and Lesli*

## SNOWBALL

### CAST OF CHARACTERS (4W,3M)

LIV.....Female, 50s

JON.....Male, 50s

SNOWBALL.....Female, Late Teens - Early 20s

ZANDER.....Male, 30s

MARGOT.....Female, 30s

LACEY.....Female, 50s

MIKE.....Male, 50s

### SETTING

A mid-century ranch home in the suburbs

### TIME

Present

SNOWBALL

# SNOWBALL

ACT ONE  
SCENE ONE

*A despondent JON and LIV enter their home. Jon is carrying a pet carrier, which he leaves by the front door.*

**JON.** You want a drink?

**LIV.** No. *(Liv sits down on the sofa while Jon pours a shot of tequila. He holds the shot glass in the air.)*

**JON.** To Snowball. *(He downs the tequila, then pours another. Liv looks over at him.)*

**LIV.** I'm numb. Completely numb. *(She reaches behind her back and pulls out a mouse squeaky toy.)* Look! *(She squeezes the toy, which squeaks.)* It was her favorite!

**JON.** I know. *(Liv squeezes the toy repeatedly.)* Please stop. *(Liv puts the toy down. Jon joins Liv on the sofa. They sit in silence for a few moments.)*

**LIV.** Remember when we first got her?

**JON.** Of course! At the Riverside pound.

**LIV.** No. It was at the Saint Claire foundation.

**JON.** No. It was the Riverside pound.

**LIV.** No. We went to the Riverside pound first but it was closed. Then we went to the Saint Claire foundation. Remember? She was the only white kitten there.

**JON.** Was she?

**LIV.** Yes! She was! God! *(Liv stands up abruptly and walks over to a cabinet. She pulls out a drawer, and rummages through it.)* Where is my Tingsha? I have to meditate.

**JON.** I have no idea.

**LIV.** *(Liv closes the drawer and pulls out another drawer.)* I know you don't. I was talking to myself. Ah, here it is! *(She takes out her Tibetan hand cymbals and sits down by the fireplace. She inhales and exhales*

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*deeply, then begins chanting.*)

Om Mani Padme Hum... *(Every time she chants the phrase, she strikes the cymbals together. They make a soft bell sound.)* Om Mani Padme Hum...

Om Mani Padme Hum...

**JON.** *(He enters the kitchen and exits with a food storage container.)* Hey! Want some leftovers?

**LIV.** *(She ignores him.)* Om Mani Padme Hum...

**JON.** You think it's okay cold, or better if I heat it up?

**LIV.** Can't you see I'm meditating?

**JON.** Sor-ry! *(To himself)* I think I'll heat it up. *(He goes back into the kitchen.)*

**LIV.** Om Mani Padme Hum...

**JON.** *(O.S.)* Where do you keep the potholders? I can't find them.

**LIV.** They're in the top drawer to the right of the oven. Like they always are.

**JON.** *(O.S.)* Oh. I see them. Thanks.

**LIV.** Om Mani Padme Hum...

**JON.** *(O.S.)* Liv? Liv?

**LIV.** What?

**JON.** *(He pokes his head out of the kitchen.)* Never mind. I was looking for some sparkling water but then I found it. *(He disappears into the kitchen, as an aggravated Liv stops meditating and stands.)*

**LIV.** Jon? We need to talk about Snowball's ashes.

**JON.** *(O.S.)* Um, all right.

**LIV.** I can have our design studio create a special urn for her. I was thinking a white opaline container with a glass top the same color as her eyes.

**JON.** *(O.S.)* Sounds pricey. *(Jon enters with a plate of food and a glass of water. He sits down at the dining room table and begins to eat.)*

**LIV.** Yeah, well too bad! That's what she deserves. Or if you prefer, we could just flush her ashes down the toilet.

**JON.** She did always like to be in the bathroom with me. She used to nest in my underpants when I was on the john.

**LIV.** *(She gives him a look, then)* We need to call Zander and tell him the news.

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**JON.** I'll text him.

**LIV.** *Text him? You don't text someone that their cat died! You call! He loved Snowball and she adored him.*

**JON.** I'll call him then.

**LIV.** No, I'll call him. It's better if it comes from me. By the way, he's been seeing someone who sounds very nice.

**JON.** He didn't say anything to me, and we talked last week.

**LIV.** That's because all you two ever talk about is Fantasy Football. Anyway, her name is Margot, and I told him to bring her for Thanksgiving. *(She wanders the room.)* Do you remember when Snowball disappeared for three days, and we couldn't find her?

**JON.** Yeah, but she came back.

**LIV.** I thought the worst had happened. That she got stolen or hit by a car.

**JON.** I never did.

**LIV.** But now she's gone forever. Across the rainbow bridge.

**JON.** I hate that expression.

**LIV.** Why are you acting this way?

**JON.** What way?

**LIV.** She's dead, Jon. Snowball is dead! *(She sits down on the sofa, staring blankly ahead. After a moment, Jon goes over to her, sits down and puts his arm around her.)*

**JON.** It was time.

**LIV.** It was. She was a real trouper, though. Especially in these past few years.

**JON.** I think we could have said goodbye to her earlier than we did.

**LIV.** No! She wasn't ready. You didn't have the same bond that we did.

She would have let me know and I would have felt it. *(She laughs.)*

Remember when we tried to get another cat to keep her company? Who would have ever thought that one cat could be allergic to another cat? *(She takes Jon's hand.)* Look, I know you never wanted a cat to begin with.

And she was a handful, I'll give you that. But you were so good with her when she got sick. Giving her IV fluids every day for years.

**JON.** Well, you said you couldn't, so I did it. I'm not going to let an animal suffer.

**LIV.** But it was because you loved her, too. In your own way. Didn't you?

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**JON.** Of course! Listen, I think we both could use a break. Go away for an extended vacation. I'm thinking a month. Maybe two. We could rent a place on the islands or lease an apartment in Paris. Whatever you'd like. I think it would be really good for us.

**LIV.** Hm. *(She looks at the empty cat bed on the floor by the fireplace.)* Look. Her little bed by the fire.

**JON.** *(He goes to remove it.)* I'll put it in the garage.

**LIV.** *(She stops him.)* No. Just leave it there for now. *(She kneels by the cat's bed.)* Rest well, my angel. Until we meet again.

### SCENE 2

*It's the middle of the night. After a few moments, A YOUNG WOMAN's face appears from outside in the glass patio sliding doors, then quickly disappears. After a moment, her face appears again. She reaches for the door handle and ever so slowly slides it open, just wide enough for her to slip in. Her clothes are filthy. She prowls around for a few moments, then spots a cat toy on the coffee table. Delighted, she gives it a few squeaks and sits down on the cat bed and plays with it. After a moment, Liv appears with Jon. She turns on the light. The Young Woman watches them with interest.*

**JON.** You're imagining things.

**LIV.** I am not. I definitely heard squeaking. Look around. *(They search the room. Jon enters the kitchen. After a few moments, the young woman stands up.)*

**YOUNG WOMAN.** I'm hungry!

**LIV.** *(She screams)* Ah! What are you doing in my house? *(Jon rushes out of the kitchen.)*

**YOUNG WOMAN.** I'm hungry.

**JON.** Who are you? Get out of here!

**YOUNG WOMAN.** Don't you recognize me?

**JON.** No! Liv, call the police.

**LIV.** *(She looks for her phone but can't find it.)* I don't know where it is.

**YOUNG WOMAN.** *(She points her finger.)* Sometimes, you leave it in



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that bowl over there.

**LIV.** *(She goes over to the bowl and takes out her phone. Stunned.)* How did you know that?

**YOUNG WOMAN.** I've seen you do it many times.

**LIV.** What? Please leave now, or I'll have to call the police.

**YOUNG WOMAN.** But you love me!

**LIV.** I what?

**YOUNG WOMAN.** You love me and so does he.

**JON.** I don't even know you.

**YOUNG WOMAN.** Yes, you do! I'm Snowball!

**LIV.** What?!

**YOUNG WOMAN.** I'm Snowball. I was your cat for nineteen years. But I'm human now.

**JON.** How did you get in here?

**YOUNG WOMAN.** Through those glass doors.

**JON.** Oh.

**LIV.** Jon, you left the patio doors unlocked again?

**JON.** Sorry.

**LIV.** Jesus! *(To the Young Woman.)* Where did you come from?

**YOUNG WOMAN.** I woke up on the street. I was lying on an old mattress under a blanket. I pulled the blanket off, and everyone around me was shocked. They called me Violet, which I guess was my old name. They told me that I had died a few hours ago. Then someone noticed that my eyes were now green and my hair had turned completely white. They backed away from me and looked at me very strangely. I think I frightened them, and I told them I had to go. I had to walk here in the dark all by myself, but I knew my way here. I thought you'd be happy to see me.

**LIV.** Well, we're not. We don't know who you are. All we want is for you to go back where you came from. You can't stay here.

**YOUNG WOMAN.** But I live here. *(She points to the cat bed.)* That's my bed. *(She points to a chair by the window.)* That was where I sat and looked outside. *(She picks up the toy mouse.)* This is my favorite toy.

**JON.** Liv, we need to call the police.

**YOUNG WOMAN.** You're my family! I know everything about you. Both of you. *(She looks around the room and spots a pottery vase. She*

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*goes over to it. To Liv.)* Remember when I knocked over this vase and broke it? You screamed at me.

**LIV.** I was furious. *(Then.)* Wait a second!

**YOUNG WOMAN.** *(She goes over to the sofa and points at its arm.)* And here's where I clawed your sofa to shreds. The day after you got it. *(To Jon)* You told me you were going to get rid of me. I was so scared.

**JON.** I...uh...uh...

**YOUNG WOMAN.** *(To Liv.)* And remember when you bought this silly outfit for me to wear for a picture? And when you tried to put it on me, I scratched your eye. You had to wear a patch over it for weeks.

**LIV.** *(Gasps.)* Jon?

**YOUNG WOMAN.** *(To Jon.)* And do you still sneak cigarettes in the garage?

**JON.** You can't know that.

**YOUNG WOMAN.** And remember...?

**LIV.** Stop! Please! Just stop! *(The Young Woman freezes.)*

**JON.** I don't understand what's going on here and I don't want to know. But I think it's best if you'd let us take you to a shelter, where you can get some help.

**YOUNG WOMAN.** *(The Young Woman falls down on her knees, pleading.)* Please don't put me in the pound. I beg you. Please, please let me stay. *(She crawls over to Jon and rubs her face against his pants.)* I love you.

**JON.** *(Jon backs away, appalled.)* Don't do that!

**LIV.** Jon, I'm freaking out!

**JON.** *(To the Young Woman.)* Enough! *(He makes a grab for her but she runs away. He chases her throughout the house, but she evades him at every turn. Finally, he corners her.)*

**YOUNG WOMAN.** *(She arches her back, hissing like a cat.)* Hiss! *(Jon backs away then tries again. She swipes her hand at him)* Hiss! Hiss!

**JON.** *(To Liv.)* What do we do?

**LIV.** I guess we have no choice. *(She picks up her phone and makes a call.)* Yes, I'd like to report an intruder...she's inside my house...she's not armed, but very confused...yes, I'll hold.

**YOUNG WOMAN.** *(To Liv.)* You don't remember when I first met you,

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do you? You were a young girl with dark skin and eyes. I was your pet. You called me Sekhmet.

**LIV.** Who told you this?

**YOUNG WOMAN.** No one.

**LIV.** Jon, remember when I did that past life regression thing?

**JON.** Yeah?

**LIV.** And I recalled a past life in Egypt, and having a cat named Sekhmet?

**JON.** Um...vaguely.

**LIV.** I once read an article about cats in Egypt. The Egyptians believed that all cats are the descendants of the Goddess Bastet. She was human but she had the ability to transform into a cat. *(On phone.)* Yes, I'm still here...thank you. *(She hangs up.)* The police are on their way.

**YOUNG WOMAN.** You were my first owner, and I loved you so much I never wanted any other. I had to wait my turn to come back to you. Sometimes, it took centuries, but it was worth it. You see, all cats get nine lives on Earth. But after eight lives as your pet, I decided to come back for my final life as a human. *(She approaches Liv and stares intently into her eyes.)* Look into my eyes. Can't you see? It's me! *(They lock eyes in silence, then after a few moments Liv is visibly shaken.)*

**LIV.** It can't be. I...can't...no...it's you, isn't it? It's really you?

**JON.** Liv, don't listen to her!

**YOUNG WOMAN.** In my last life before this one, we lived in the South. And you called me Juniper.

**LIV.** That's what I wanted to call you when I got you. It's my son who came up with the name Snowball.

**YOUNG WOMAN.** Yes. Zander. We were inseparable. Once a dog tried to attack him, and I protected him and wound up in the hospital.

**LIV.** You did! You were badly hurt and needed fifteen stitches. But you saved our little boy's life. *(Just then, the police sirens begin to wale, growing in intensity. Liv grabs Jon.)* Jon, we can't let them take her away!

**JON.** What are you saying?

**LIV.** I think I believe her. It's her eyes! They're the same color green.

**YOUNG WOMAN.** I'm hungry!

**LIV.** Jon! *(The doorbell rings. And rings again.)*

**JON.** *(Shaking his head.)* Lord have mercy. *(Liv, Jon and the Young*

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*Woman all look at each other.)*

### SCENE 3

*A short time later. The Young Woman (now known as SNOWBALL) has changed into a sweatshirt and sweatpants and is eating at the dining room table. Her whole face is in the plate of food. Liv and Jon sit with her, watching her in a state of disbelief.*

**JON.** She's always been a good eater.

**LIV.** I hope the police don't think we're a couple of crackpots.

**SNOWBALL.** *(She lifts her food-covered face from the plate.)* I'm done.

**LIV.** Clean your face. *(Snowball licks her hand and begins wiping her face.)*

No! With a napkin. *(Liz hands her a napkin. She wipes her face with it.)*

That's right.

**SNOWBALL.** I'll try to remember. *(Snowball puts down her napkin and stands.)*

I have to go pee.

**LIV.** Okay. *(Snowball walks away. Liv stops her.)* The bathroom's the other way.

*(Snowball looks confused.)*

**JON.** *(Quietly.)* She was going to use her old litter box.

**LIV.** *(Standing.)* Snowball, you have to use the bathroom humans use now.

**SNOWBALL.** Oh!

**LIV.** Would you like me to come in there with you and show you how?

**SNOWBALL.** No, that's okay. I watched you lots of times. Squat. Wipe. Done.

**JON.** And don't forget to flush.

**SNOWBALL.** I won't. *(She heads off, then stops and turns.)* I've always wanted to be able to flush the toilet. *(She exits. Liv clears the dishes.)*

**JON.** Liv, I think we're taking on something we have no idea how to handle.

**LIV.** All I know about her is what she told us, and what she told us we just

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can't ignore. We need to explore this a little further.

**JON.** And where is all this exploration supposed to take place?

**LIV.** Here, of course! Where else?

**JON.** What do you suppose we'll tell everyone?

**LIV.** We're not going to tell anyone anything for the moment. Let's just see how it goes.

**SNOWBALL.** *(She comes back into the room, smiling ear to ear.)*

I flushed the toilet. It was fun!

**LIV.** Good for you, Snowball.

**JON.** *(Snowball goes over to Jon and tries to sit on his lap. Jon leaps up.)*  
What are you doing?

**SNOWBALL.** I want to sit on your lap.

**JON.** Why?

**SNOWBALL.** Because I always liked sitting on your lap. It's so nice and warm.

**JON.** But you're not a cat anymore. And adult human beings don't sit on each other's laps.

**SNOWBALL.** But I've seen Liv sit on your lap before.

**JON.** That's different. We're husband and wife. We have a relationship.

**SNOWBALL.** But don't we have a relationship, too?

**JON.** Of course we do! But there are different kinds of relationships.

**SNOWBALL.** All I know is that I love both of you, and I'm so happy to be home! *(She does zoomies around the room, squealing with delight.)*  
Wee!

**JON.** *(To Liv.)* By the way, you're the one who's going to tell her that she was spayed.

**LIV.** Snowball, stop running around and sit down.

**SNOWBALL.** No.

**JON.** Liv said sit down!

**SNOWBALL.** I don't want to, and you can't make me.

**JON.** *(To Liv.)* Same old Snowball.

**LIV.** Snowball, if you sit down, I'll give you a treat.

**SNOWBALL.** *(She immediately stops running and goes over to her.)*  
Treats are my favorite!

**LIV.** Wait here, and I'll be right back. *(Liv goes into the kitchen. Snowball*

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*jumps up and down in excitement. Liv returns with a small piece of cheese.)*

**SNOWBALL.** Is that...cheese?

**LIV.** Yes, it is. It wasn't good for you when you were a cat, but you can have some now. *(Liv hands the cheese to Snowball who gobbles it up.)*

**SNOWBALL.** Mm...mm...mm...more!

**LIV.** Maybe later. If you're a good girl and do as you're told. Excuse me. *(She starts walking away.)*

**SNOWBALL.** Where are you going?

**LIV.** I have to use the bathroom.

**SNOWBALL.** Ooh! Can I flush the toilet when you're done?

**LIV.** Um...okay. But just this once. People like to flush their own toilets. I'll let you know when it's time. *(Liz exits. Snowball sits down next to Jon).*

**JON.** So out of curiosity, Snowball – what's it like to be a cat? I remember looking at you, sitting contentedly on a chair with your eyes closed and wondering what you were thinking about.

**SNOWBALL.** I wasn't thinking about anything most of the time. The rest of the time I thought about my memories. How warm it felt to lie in the sun. How you hated it when I knocked stuff onto the floor. I knew if you called me over, you were going to pet me. I knew if you asked if I was hungry that you were about to feed me. I'd think about how I liked to climb up high so I could see everything around me. Or if I hid, you knew that I wanted to be alone. I especially liked when you told me I was a pretty girl. I knew I was, but I liked it anyway. *(Liz enters and listens in.)* But most of all, I felt safe and happy to be around you. And then when I started to get old and didn't feel well, I liked that both of you paid even more attention to me and that made me feel better. And when I knew that I didn't have much longer to live, I would just want to stay as close to you as I could. Because I loved you so much, and I never wanted to say good-bye.

**LIV.** *(Jon is visibly touched.)* You okay, honey?

**JON.** *(Sniffing.)* I'm fine.

**SNOWBALL.** *(She stands up.)* I'm tired now and I want to go to sleep.

**JON.** Best idea I've heard all night.

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**LIV.** Me too. Snowball, you can sleep in Zander's old room.

**SNOWBALL.** Can't I sleep with you in your room?

**JON.** Um, no. That's not happening.

**LIV.** Now that you're a human being, you need to sleep in your own bed.

**SNOWBALL.** But it's so cozy and warm when I sleep with you.

**JON.** That's just the way it's going to be from now on. You in your bed and Liv and me in ours.

**SNOWBALL.** *(Defeatedly.)* Okay.

**LIV.** Come with me, Snowball, and I'll get you a pair of pajamas. *(She and Snowball exit. Jon heads back to the bar and pours a large glass of tequila and downs it all at once.)*

**JON.** *(To himself.)* What a night. *(Liv enters.)* I know you believe in reincarnation, but really, Liv?

**LIV.** If a person can come back as an animal, why can't an animal come back as a person?

**JON.** To me, it defies all logic.

**LIV.** It's not about logic. It's about belief.

**JON.** My belief is we're asking for a lot of trouble.

**SNOWBALL.** *(She enters in her pjs, unevenly buttoned.)* I'm going to sleep now.

**LIV.** Not until you brush your teeth.

**SNOWBALL.** Can you show me how?

**JON.** I'll show you. C'mon. *(Snowball follows Jon to the bathroom as Liv tidies up. She listens in on them in the bathroom.)* (O.S.) You put the toothpaste on the toothbrush like this. And then you put the bristles on your teeth, and you go up and down.

**SNOWBALL.** (O.S.) Up and down?

**JON.** (O.S.) Correct. And you keep doing it until you've brushed all the teeth in your mouth. Go ahead. *(Snowball makes groaning noises)* What's wrong?

**SNOWBALL.** (O.S.) *(Whining.)* I don't like it.

**JON.** (O.S.) That's too bad, but you need to brush your teeth or they'll all fall out.

**SNOWBALL.** No! I won't do it. I won't. *(She runs back into the living room and into Liv's arms.)* Don't make me brush my teeth. I hate it. It

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tastes awful. *(Jon enters.)*

**LIV.** It's all right, Snowball. It's all right. Tomorrow we'll find a toothpaste with a flavor you like.

**SNOWBALL.** Tuna fish?

**LIV.** If they make it, we'll get you some. Now, nighty-night!

**JON.** Goodnight, Snowball.

**SNOWBALL.** Goodnight. *(She exits.)*

**JON.** Well, I'm beat!

**LIV.** Me, too. Let's go to bed. *(Liv and Jon turn off the lights and go to their bedroom and close the door. A few moments pass. Snowball opens her bedroom door and stands in front of Liv and Jon's bedroom. She scratches her nails on the door, and yowls like a cat.)*

**SNOWBALL.** Yowl! Yowl!

## SCENE 4

*Night. One week later. Jon enters from outside. He carries a large box.*

**JON.** Liv! I'm home. *(No response. He puts the box on the coffee table, then goes to the hallway table and picks up the mail. He sorts through it as he walks through the house, pausing at the sliding patio doors. Suddenly, from behind the curtains, Snowball leaps out at him.)* Ahh!

**LIV.** *(She enters from the kitchen.)* What's going on?

**JON.** Snowball leapt at me from behind the curtains. Almost gave me a heart attack.

**LIV.** Snowball, you can't scare people like that.

**SNOWBALL.** You used to laugh when I did that.

**JON.** Am I laughing now?

**SNOWBALL.** No.

**JON.** So no more surprise attacks, okay? Why don't you go into your room and watch TV.

**SNOWBALL.** Okay. *(She exits.)*

**JON.** So how's it going with Snowball?

**LIV.** She's a fast learner. She's getting much better using a knife and fork, and she's beginning to learn how to read. But she's easily distracted and



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likes to nap a lot.

**JON.** That hasn't changed. At least she won't be coughing up hairballs anymore. *(On Liv's look.)* No! Don't tell me!

**LIV.** No. No more hairballs. Anyway, I've been thinking – we can't go on calling her Snowball. She needs a new name.

**JON.** Funny you should mention that. *(He reaches into his pocket and pulls out a sheet of paper.)* I took the liberty of writing down a few names I thought of. Let's see. *(Reading.)* Bella.

**LIV.** Too common.

**JON.** Bijou.

**LIV.** No.

**JON.** Bianca.

**LIV.** What's with all the "B" names?

**JON.** I was on a roll. Oh, I really love this one. Misty.

**LIV.** That's perfect, if she were a stripper.

**JON.** *(He crumples up his list and throws it on the floor.)* Forget it.

**LIV.** Why don't we ask Snowball? *(Calling.)* Snowball! Come here.

*(Snowball enters.)* Snowball, we need to pick out a human name for you. Is there a name you'd like us to call you by?

**SNOWBALL.** *(She thinks it over for a moment. Then...)* I like Kitty. You used to call me that sometimes.

*(NOTE: From now on, the name Snowball will be replaced by KITTY.)*

**LIV.** That's a great name! From now on, we'll call you Kitty. Okay?

**KITTY.** Okay. May I have a glass of water?

**LIV.** Of course. *(She enter the kitchen.)*

**JON.** So you're learning to read, huh?

**KITTY:** Yeah, but I don't really like it.

**JON.** Well, it's important to know how to read. It helps develop focus, concentration and knowledge.

**KITTY.** I like Tik Tok more.

**JON.** *(Liv exits the kitchen,)* You let her watch Tik Tok?

**LIV.** Who doesn't? *(She gives Kitty her water, who brings her lips to the glass and drinks it with her tongue, like a cat. Liv stops her.)* No, no,

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Kitty! Drink it like people do. Just take a sip. *(She takes a small sip. Liv smiles. She takes another sip.)* That's right. *(She attempts a large gulp, and spills water all over herself.)*

**KITTY.** *(Screaming.)* Ahh! *(She starts tearing off her clothes.)*

**LIV.** Stop, Kitty! No!

**KITTY.** I'm all wet!

**LIV.** I know. *(She grabs Kitty by the arm.)* Let's get you into some clean, dry clothes. *(She exits with her. Jon shakes his head in dismay.)*

**JON.** Oh boy oh boy oh boy oh boy oh boy. *(Liv enters.)* You know, Kitty hasn't bathed at all since she's been here.

**LIV.** She absolutely refuses to. At least she stopped cleaning herself with her tongue.

**JON.** What are we going to do about it?

**LIV.** You mean what am *I* going to do about it, don't you? Remember the one time I tried to give her a bath when she had that run-in with a skunk? She turned our bathroom into a crime scene.

**JON.** Maybe we need to give her an ultimatum. We'll tell her if she doesn't bathe we'll take away her TV privileges.

**LIV.** She'll just get all sulky and yowl non-stop until we give in.

**JON.** She stinks, Liv.

**LIV.** I know, Jon. We just have to be patient. I'm sure she'll come around very soon. So, what's in the box? *(They sit down on the sofa and Jon opens the box. He takes out three candles and lines them up on the coffee table.)*

**JON.** These are our new scented candles just out of the lab. *(He gets a log lighter from the fireplace.)* I think they're pretty close to what we want. *(Kitty enters and sits down next to them)* These versions are all soy paraffin blends. *(He lights the first candle. Liz leans over the candle and inhales the fragrance.)*

**LIV.** Hmm...not bad. I smell myrrh...some kind of jasmine...pine resin...and something else. I'm not sure what.

**KITTY.** Can I smell it? *(Liv moves the candle in front of Kitty, who inhales deeply.)* I remember this smell. It was a long time ago. Its flower was blue.

**JON.** That's exactly right, Kitty. It's called Blue Lotus. It's been said that Cleopatra wore this scent. *(Jon blows out the candle and lights another*

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*one. To Liv.*) Now, this is the one we kept going back and forth on. I liked it, then you didn't. Then you liked it, and I didn't. I think we found the perfect balance now.

**LIV.** *(She inhales the candle deeply.)* Ah, better. Much better. Not as woodsy anymore.

**JON.** It has a greener scent now, I think. Kitty, would you like to smell it? *(Jon moves the candle in front of Kitty.)*

**KITTY.** *(She smells it.)* I like it. I would definitely pee on it.

**JON.** Talk about a ringing endorsement. *(He blows out that candle and lights the last one.)* Okay, this is not very complex or exotic. Just a good all-purpose candle that's right for any occasion. Why don't we let Kitty have the first whiff? *(Jon moves the candle in front of Kitty.)*

**KITTY.** *(She breathes in the scent and immediately gags.)* Ack! Ack! *(She gets down on the floor on all fours, continuing to gag.)*

**LIV.** *(Comforting her.)* It's okay, Kitty. You'll be fine in a moment. *(To Jon.)* Blow out that candle! What the hell is in it?

**JON.** Nothing unusual. Lavender, marigold...some citrus notes.

**LIV.** All smells that cats can't stand.

**JON.** Oh.

**LIV.** Remember when we had that bowl of oranges on the dining room table and Snowball went to sniff it and threw up all over my nana's antique table runner? *(Stroking Kitty)* Just breathe, Kitty. Good girl. *(Kitty stops gagging. Liv helps her up on her feet, puts her arm around her waist and exits with her to her bedroom.)* Why don't you lie down and rest for a few minutes.

**JON.** *(His cell phone rings. He answers.)* Hello...Oh, hi Miguel. What's up...Huh, I see...Okay, thanks. *(He hangs up as Liv returns.)* I just got a call from Miguel. He has the package designs for our new line ready for our approval.

**LIV.** Good. I'll check on them tomorrow.

**JON.** What about Kitty?

**LIV.** What about her?

**JON.** Who's going to take care of her?

**LIV.** You are! You haven't offered to stay at home to look after her since she's been here. I'm going to the office tomorrow and you're minding

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Kitty.

**JON.** Fine.

**LIV.** And you'd better not ignore her and let her sit in front of the TV all day. By the way, I got a call earlier from Lacey. Her Thanksgiving plans fell through, so I invited her here. God help me.

**JON.** So your sister and brother-in-law are finally gracing us with their presence. I'll need to take my Gucci suit to the cleaners. *(Liv laughs)* Don't she and Mike always go to his billionaire buddy's fancy estate for Thanksgiving?

**LIV.** They were disinvited. Something to do with a disagreement Mike had with him about banning Dr. Seuss from the public library.

**JON.** Well, his books were always so controversial. When was the last time they invited us over?

**LIV.** Fourth of July 2017. Anyway, getting back to you and Kitty. I think spending some one-on-one time together will strengthen your bond.

**JON.** We're bonded.

**LIV.** Hardly. It's very clear to me that you don't totally accept her. We need to give her the time and the love she needs to adapt to her new life.

**JON.** But her new life is interfering with our own.

**LIV.** It'll all work out. You'll see. *(Her cell phone rings. She answers.)* Hello... Oh, hi Arlene... What? Oh my God! We'll be over right away. *(She hangs up.)* That was our neighbor, Arlene. Kitty has climbed her tree and refuses to come down. She must have climbed out her window.

**JON.** What? This is too much.

**LIV.** *(Heading to the front door)* We have to go there now! *(She stops at the front door and looks back at Jon.)* C'mon, Jon. *(Jon sighs and walks out with Liv.)*

## SCENE 5

*Day. Living room. Jon is at the dining room table, working at his laptop. Kitty comes out of her room in a chic cocktail dress.*

**KITTY.** *(Fluffing her hair.)* Jon?

**JON.** *(Ignoring her.)* What?

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**KITTY.** How do I look? *(Jon looks at Kitty who strikes a pose, then turns his eyes back to his computer screen.)*

**JON.** Did Liv give you her permission to wear her dress?

**KITTY.** No. But I saw a show on tv where people were dancing together and the girls were wearing these pretty dresses, and I wanted to look pretty, too. Do I?

**JON.** Yes, Kitty. You look pretty. Now go change back into your own clothes before you get it dirty.

**KITTY.** I will in a moment. *(She walks over to Jon and kneels.)* Scratch me behind my ears.

**JON.** I'm busy right now.

**KITTY.** Are you mad at me?

**JON.** No, I'm not mad. I'm just working, that's all. *(He gets up and goes into the kitchen. Kitty climbs atop the dining room table and lays across the laptop keyboard. Jon returns with a cup of coffee.)* Kitty, what are you doing? Get off my computer!

**KITTY.** You used to think it was cute when I was a cat.

**JON.** Well, I don't think it's cute anymore. Off! *(Kitty reluctantly gets off his computer and wanders around.)*

**KITTY.** I'm bored.

**JON.** Do you want to play outside?

**KITTY.** It's too cold.

**JON.** Would you like to read a book?

**KITTY.** It's too hard.

**JON.** How about watching a movie?

**KITTY.** Okay. Can I watch "The Aristocats?"

**JON.** You've seen that movie like 150 times already.

**KITTY.** I like "The Aristocats."

**JON.** Fine. I'll put it on for you. *(He rises from his chair when suddenly there's the sound of a cat yowling from outside.)* What's the noise? Sounds awful. *(The yowling gets louder and more incessant. Then a second yowling begins. Jon goes to the patio doors and looks outside.)* There are two cats sitting in the backyard. *(He slides open the patio door.)* Go away! Shoo! *(To Kitty.)* Why won't they leave?

**KITTY.** *(She looks outside.)* They're here for me.

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**JON.** Do you know them?

**KITTY.** Yeah. They're both Toms from the neighborhood.

**JON.** What do they want?

**KITTY.** They want to mount me.

**JON.** Mount you? But you're not a cat anymore.

**KITTY.** I guess they don't care. I'll handle this. *(She goes outside as Jon watches. The yowling turns to intense hissing and growling. Jon grimaces. Then after a few moments, it's all over and she heads back inside.)* They won't be back.

**JON.** Wow, you really showed them! I'm impressed. Ready to watch your movie?

**KITTY.** Actually, I don't feel like a movie anymore.

**JON.** What would you like to do?

**KITTY.** I'd like to try dancing. Can you show me how?

**JON.** I'm not a very good dancer. You should ask Liv. She'd be happy to teach you.

**KITTY.** But on that TV show, it's always boys and girls dancing together.

**JON.** Well, this isn't TV, Kitty, and I really need to get back to work. *(He sits back down at his computer. Kitty watches him for a few moments, then sidles up to him and rubs her face against his.)* Kitty, please stop. *(She stops and hangs her head down.)*

**KITTY.** *(Sulking.)* I think you liked me more when I was a cat.

**JON.** That's not true, Kitty. It's just different now. *(Kitty walks away dejected while Jon continues working. After a few moments, she begins to cry.)*

**KITTY.** Waah! Waah!

**JON.** Kitty! Kitty!

**KITTY.** Waah! You won't dance with me.

**JON.** Come on, Kitty. Stop crying.

**KITTY.** Only if you say you'll dance with me.

**JON.** I'm sorry, Kitty.

**KITTY.** Waah!

**JON.** Please stop crying, Kitty.

**KITTY.** Waah!

**JON.** All right, Kitty, I'll dance with you. *(Kitty immediately stops crying.)*

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*Jon rises from his chair.)*

One dance only. And then I need to concentrate on work. Understood?

**KITTY:** *(Nodding.)* I understand. Can I put on the music now?

**JON.** Go ahead. *(Kitty runs into her room and comes out with a 90s boombox).*

**KITTY.** I found a music player.

**JON.** Ah! That's Zander's old boombox. *(Kitty turns it on. The song has a strong, rhythmic beat. She begins to move to the music. Jon joins in, moving stiffly. As the song goes on, the more Kitty gets into it. She gyrates close to Jon, and he's clearly uncomfortable. Then, she dances in front of him, her body pressed against his, in a very sexual manner. He's frozen. She turns around, grabs his neck and puts her face on his, and kisses him. Jon pushes her away and turns off the music.)*

**KITTY.** What's wrong?

**JON.** That was...totally inappropriate.

**KITTY.** I don't understand.

**JON.** You can't kiss me like that.

**KITTY.** Why not?

**JON.** Because it's not what people do.

**KITTY.** You used to let me lick your face and I've never kissed anyone before.

**JON.** The kind of kiss you gave me is strictly between people who make love to each other.

**KITTY.** But you love me, don't you?

**JON.** Of course I do. But not in that way. People who kiss that way have sex with each other.

**KITTY.** Like when those cats wanted to mount me?

**JON.** Exactly. And now, I have to get back to work. *(He goes back to his computer. Kitty lies on her back on the sofa. After a few moments...)*

**KITTY.** Now I understand what you and Liz were doing at night. You were having sex, right?

**JON.** Uh, probably.

**KITTY.** I wasn't sure. You were both making a lot of noise.

**JON.** I don't want to discuss this any further. After I finish work, how about we go for a walk around the park.

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**KITTY.** I'd like that. And after we come back, I'd like to try taking a bath.

**JON.** Really? That's great.

**KITTY.** But only if you watch me. (*On Jon's look.*)

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