

CAVITY

Written by

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INT. ALEX'S BATHROOM - EARLY MORNING

ALEX (36), tall and trim, finishes shaving and checks his jaw line thoroughly in the spotless mirror. He opens a drawer next to the sink and carefully selects a pair of small tweezers from his expensive, perfectly arranged toiletry collection. He winces as he plucks out two facial hairs from under his chin. He pushes back his dark brown hair and sets it in place with hair wax. He smiles confidently and gives himself a cheeky wink. Then his front tooth falls out. His smile drops.

INT. ESTATE AGENCY - MID MORNING (LATER)

Alex pushes his way through the busy office with a red folder over his mouth. His normally tidy grey suit is covered in wet blotches and the buttons are done up wrong. DAVID (42) spots Alex from his desk and points at his silver watch.

DAVID

Out late last night?

Alex nods quickly from behind his folder, but continues to dance his way past customers to his desk.

DAVID (CONT'D)

You alright?

Alex rolls his eyes, and replies with a sarcastic lisp.

ALEX

Just dandy!

Alex rushes over to his immaculately ordered desk near the window. He sits in his swivel chair and spins it towards the employee awards and certificates on the wall, hiding as he tries to rub the stains off his once clean suit. An elderly well groomed HUSBAND and WIFE approach his desk smiling, an expensive housing brochure in the Wife's hand.

HUSBAND

Excuse me, I was wondering if you could help us.

The Husband and Wife are oblivious to Alex fumbling with his buttons and continue to flick through their thick brochure.

HUSBAND (CONT'D)

We're looking to buy a four bedroom house.

WIFE

With a large garden, preferably.

Forgetting his tooth, Alex turns around to face the couple, putting on his best salesman's smile.

ALEX

In the city or in the country?

The husband and wife glance up from their brochure and stare at Alex, eyes wide. Alex blinks.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Is everything alright?

The husband and wife cock an eyebrow at each other. Then the wife slowly points towards Alex's mouth, hand shaking.

WIFE

Your front tooth...

Alex slaps his hand over his mouth, eyes widened.

WIFE (CONT'D)

Is black!

Alex jumps out of his seat, knocking over the forever tidy and empty desk. He frantically tries to get out the piece of potato that he had wedged into the gap in between his teeth. It seemed like a great idea at the time.

INT. ALEX'S APARTMENT. LATE MORNING

Alex sits on his expensive white leather sofa, staring idly at his empty apartment. He pushes a cut up potato with his foot on the coffee table while twirling the dentist's business card between two long fingers.

ALEX

There's no way you can fit me in
before Friday?

(beat)

Fine.

He tosses his phone on sofa and picks remnant of potato from his teeth.

A spec of dust on one of his many empty shelves catches his eye and rushes over with a tissue. He wipes it off.

In the reflection of his white shelf he spots a black cat on his plant- and ornament-free balcony.

He marches over to his french-doors and throws them open, startling the cat. The cat jumps to the wooden balcony next door. It rubs itself happily against the big hand-painted plant pots, filled with colourful flowers and insects.

Alex cautiously checks his balcony for hairs and mess, while keeping an eye on the cat.

The cat mews before wandering into Alex's neighbour's apartment where a woman named JOSIE (21) starts meowing from within.

JOSIE
(enthusiastically)
Meow! Mew mew! Meow Meow!

Alex blinks in confusion as he creeps to the edge of his balcony to hear more. A crashing sound comes from the apartment.

JOSIE (CONT'D)
(angrily)
Meow! Hiss! Meow!

Alex leans over his balcony's metal railing to peer through his neighbor's colourful stained glass french-doors.

He jumps back as the short young woman wearing a black cat onesie shoots out onto her balcony holding two cats, not the black cat Alex had seen before.

She dumps them outside, wags her paint covered finger at them while meowing hysterically. She looks up and notices Alex staring at her bewildered.

JOSIE (CONT'D)
They are having a time-out.

She storms back into her apartment and slams the french-doors behind her.

EXT. ALEX'S BALCONY. EARLY MORNING (THE NEXT DAY)

Alex, fully dressed in his suit, eats muesli and fat-free yogurt. He occasionally leans towards his neighbor's balcony hoping for a chance to see the crazy cat lady again.

She finally appears, cookie in hand. She opens the french-doors and comes out in a different cat suit - a white one. Her long tangly blonde hair with paint strewn through it sticks to her face. She rubs freckly cheeks that have cat whiskers drawn on them. She bites the cookie and spots Alex.

JOSIE
(mouth full of cookie)
Why you here?

ALEX
I do live here.

JOSIE
You usually leave at stupid-o'clock to go to work. Get fired?

ALEX

No.

Alex takes an angry bite of his muesli.

ALEX (CONT'D)

I'm just taking some time off.

JOSIE

Ah I see. I'm quite noisy during the day so sorry in advance.

Josie stretches lazily as an awkward silence lingers between them. Alex halfheartedly offers her his hand, wincing as he notices the paint from yesterday still stuck to Josie's hand.

ALEX

Alex.

Josie ignores his hand, but smiles.

JOSIE

I know.

ALEX

(beat)

Well what's yours?

JOSIE

Josie.

ALEX

Your parents must have liked pussycats too then, huh?

JOSIE

Eh?

ALEX

Never mind.

Alex rolls his eyes and attempts to escape back into his lonely apartment.

JOSIE

Oh wait!

Alex pokes his head out from his french doors and raises an eyebrow at her.

JOSIE (CONT'D)

If you're going to be at home "taking some time off" could you come over later to fix my fridge?

Alex puts his hands on his hips and scoffs humourlessly.

ALEX
I don't thi--

JOSIE
--and I will introduce you to
everyone!

Josie walks back into her own apartment, ignoring Alex's exasperated expression.

ALEX
...everyone?

INT. JOSIE'S APARTMENT - MID AFTERNOON (PRESENT)

Alex cautiously follows Josie through her chaotic apartment. He lifts his lanky legs high, avoiding her towers of fantasy novels and video games. Josie pushes down a pile of cook books to pick up her seventh cat. She picks it up while eyeing through the other nine felines mingling in her living room.

JOSIE
And this one is Tifa.

She hands the fluffy white cat to Alex, while she points to a brown cat sitting on a pile of Disney DVDs.

JOSIE (CONT'D)
That one is Squall - he's really
moody.

Alex holds the cat awkwardly at arms length in front of him. The cat rubs its head happily against Alex's stiff fingers.

Josie walks on all fours, scanning for another furry friend. She gets up and chews thoughtfully on a strand of hair.

ALEX
So, your fridge?

Josie ignores Alex and waves her hand at a hand-knitted rug, before skipping into her kitchen.

JOSIE
Take a pew.

Alex gingerly puts down the white cat, picks off the hairs she left and cautiously makes his way over to the rug. He brushes the rug before sitting. He looks around the flat, admiring the hand painted and hand carved furniture.

ALEX
Do you do a lot of up-cycling then?

JOSIE
(off screen)
Up-what?

ALEX
You know, when you get something
old and make it look new.

JOSIE
So what poor people have done all
their lives until middle-class
people saw a market for it and
called it "up-cycling" ?

Josie walks in with black coffee for Alex and a glass of milk
for herself. She hands him his drink, then perches herself on
her small book-covered coffee table like a cat.

Alex sips and pulls a face. Peering into his coffee, he spots
several spoonfuls of undissolved sugar at the bottom

ALEX
You could probably make an easy
profit with this stuff.

JOSIE
Thanks but I'll stick to being a
woman's therapist

Alex smiles, astonished.

ALEX
Wow. My mother would be over the
moon if I was a psychologist.

JOSIE
I write advice columns.

ALEX
Oh.
(beat)
For websites? Papers?

JOSIE
Magazine.

ALEX
Which psychology mag--

JOSIE
--Woman's weekly.

ALEX
Oh.

Alex, embarrassed, shifts position and knocks over a pile of hand written letters. He tries to rearrange them but ends up looking closer.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Why don't you write about your up-cycling projects?

JOSIE

Please don't use that word.

ALEX

Up-cycling? Got it.

Josie smiles at Alex's awkwardness.

JOSIE

I could but most people would rather buy "shabby-chic" furniture than decorate it themselves.

Alex reads a few lines from the top letter. His neck reddens. They are old love letters with a man's name crossed out viciously in black ink.

INT. ALEX'S OLD APARTMENT- EVENING- 10 YEARS AGO (FLASHBACK)

Alex's younger, chubbier self stands shirtless in a pair of paint stained ripped jeans in his untidy studio apartment.

He glares in silence at his own painting of a smiling, tall, well-groomed WOMAN (32) in red.

He takes a step towards it, a wet paintbrush in hand.

He stabs black blotches into the painted face with his brush.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. JOSIE'S APARTMENT - MID AFTERNOON (PRESENT)

JOSIE

Also they have to buy materials which is more expensive than just buying furniture. Stuff like, tools, wood...

Josie raps her knuckle on the table she's balancing on.

CUT TO:

INT. ALEX'S OLD APARTMENT- EVENING- 10 YEARS AGO (FLASHBACK)

There's a loud angry knock at Alex's door before the Woman in red barges it open, knocking over several of Alex's master pieces blocking her way.

She struts forward in heels more expensive than Alex's flat, knocking over a can of paint.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. JOSIE'S APARTMENT - MID AFTERNOON (PRESENT)

A ginger cat jumps on Josie's lap, making her spill a bit of her milk on the floor. She ignores it while a herd of cats swarm around the treat, lapping happily.

ALEX

How do you pay for materials then?

JOSIE

Living with ten cats and no room mates, weirdly, saves money. They only need cheap food and cheap treats.

ALEX

Spilt milk counts as a treat?

JOSIE

You see them complaining?

CUT TO:

INT. ALEX'S OLD APARTMENT- EVENING- 10 YEARS AGO (FLASHBACK)

The Woman, hand on her hip, glances between her watch and Alex's unmarked painting of her. She scowls, while adjusting the tight bun on her head.

WOMAN

Some roses or jewelry would have been fine.

ALEX

Well, anyone can buy roses or jewelry.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. JOSIE'S APARTMENT - MID AFTERNOON (PRESENT)

Josie twirls a strand of hair around her finger.

JOSIE

If I was better at painting I'd
sell some of my projects.

CUT TO:

INT. ALEX'S OLD APARTMENT- EVENING- 10 YEARS AGO (FLASHBACK)

ALEX

But this painting is one of a kind.
Only I could give this to you.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. JOSIE'S APARTMENT - MID AFTERNOON

JOSIE

But I'm just not good enough.

CUT TO:

INT. ALEX'S OLD APARTMENT- EVENING- 10 YEARS AGO (FLASHBACK)

The woman arches her eyebrow and smirks before strutting out
the door and out of Alex's life.

He grabs a a black paint brush and quickly turns to the
painting. He pauses, glaring at the smiling face.

He repeatedly stabs the painting's face. His rage stabs a
hole through the canvas.

INT. ALEX'S APARTMENT- MIDNIGHT- PRESENT.

Alex lays in bed wide awake, listening to someone cursing
from outside his french-doors.

He gets out of his pristine bed and leaves his white bedroom,
and walks over to the french-doors of his living room.

He sees Josie with a big bag, spread across his balcony
railing with her foot caught on her balcony railing. She
looks up pleadingly.

JOSIE

I stuck...

Alex comes forward and pulls her over. Three cats follow.
Alex tries to push them away with his foot, but it's too
late, they are in his apartment investing everything with cat
hairs.

He sighs. Josie gets to her feet and smiles sheepishly.

ALEX

Don't wear black cat suits when
sneaking into people's houses.

Josie winks and runs through the french-doors, turns on the
lights and starts spinning in circles.

JOSIE

Wow! Your place is so much bigger
than mine!

ALEX

I think you will find that mine is
simply tidier...

JOSIE

Not for long!

Josie empties out her bag. Lots of paints, pencils and
brushes fall out onto his floor.

JOSIE (CONT'D)

Let's paint!

ALEX

I'm tired. I have the dentist
tomorrow and I have no paper.

JOSIE

Who said anything about paper?

Josie grins sickly at Alex as she walks towards the snow
white wall his equally white sofa is against.

ALEX

(panics)

What are you doing?!

Josie shoves his sofa aside and grabs some orange paint and a
brush.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Don't you dare, Josie!

Josie splats a dollop of paint onto the wall and giggles.

Alex scowls, grabs a tin of red paint, opens it and throws it
over Josie - splashing the wall behind her too.

Josie stops dead in her tracks.
Then laughs hysterically.

JOSIE

You toe!

Josie throws her orange paint over Alex. They chase each other around the flat with paint, staining the floor and walls with rays of colours. Alex paints a life size portrait of Josie and her ten cats in perfect detail on a large wall.

Josie does a small painting of Alex in the corner of the wall - it ends up looking like a stick man. Josie pulls a face at Alex and he laughs while flicking some paint at her. The playful fight continues.

INT. ALEX'S BATHROOM - MORNING.

ALEX finishes shaving and checks his jaw line thoroughly. He gets some tweezers and plucks out a couple of missed hairs. He rolls his tongue around his false tooth and grins. He pushes back his dark brown hair and sets it in place with hair wax. He notices a speck of orange paint in his hair. He goes to pick it out and hesitates. His hand lowers as his smile does.

Alex walks into his living room and stands in the centre of it. He stares at a painting he did of Josie with her cats. He looks to his balcony. Then he looks at his front door. He pinches his nose and sighs heavily. Undecided.

THE END.