SCAREDY CAT

Written by

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1 INT. THEATER CLASSROOM - DAY 1

CLAUDIA (Senior in high school, dresses like she's anticipating a job interview at any minute) sits in a classroom with a few other students. The

DIRECTOR (Mid 50s, colorful clothing, overly cheerful) standing in front of them.

DIRECTOR
Auditions for the fall play tomorrow, I expect to see all of you there! These auditions are to see what characters you can do ... not an over rehearsed, robotic monologue. Remember, everything will work out.

Claudia, clearly somewhere else, whispers her lines to herself.

2 INT. CLAUDIA'S ROOM - NIGHT 2

Claudia briskly walks into her room and drops her backpack by her desk.

Her room is neat with a tidy desk, leaving nothing on the floor for someone to trip over.

Someone knocks on the door.

CLAUDIA
Come in!

ZARNA (Claudia's mom, mid 50's, neatly curled hair, business casual attire) walks in.

ZARNA
How was school?

Claudia sighs.

CLAUDIA
Busy. Auditions are tomorrow.

ZARNA
Yeah? Do you feel prepared?

MOCHI (10 month old black boy cat, sassy, typically sleeps in his cat tree) saunters into the room.

Zarna picks Mochi up, and he meows in protest.

ZARNA
Oh, hello Mochi!

Mochi snuggles into Zarnas arms.

ZARNA (CONT'D)
See, you should relax like him.

Mochi jumps out of Zarna's arms and onto Claudia's bed to sleep.

CLAUDIA
Yeah, he's totally relaxed, mom. That's why he jumped out of your arms.

ZARNA
Exactly! Not afraid to be his straight-forward self. His mom should take after him.

CLAUDIA
Whatever, mom. I'm fine, I've practiced like thirty times now.

Claudia sits at her desk and moves notebooks off her desk. Opening up her folder, she takes out a script.

Zarna peers over Claudia's shoulder.

ZARNA
Seems a little excessive, no? I'm sure whatever happens, you'll be okay.

CLAUDIA
No, it won't. I haven't practiced enough. I want to run it over some more before bed.

Zarna eyes Mochi before setting her eyes back onto Claudia.

CLAUDIA (CONT'D)
I'm fine. I'll come out for dinner later.

ZARNA
Okay.

Zarna leaves the room.

Mochi gets up from his spot on Claudia's bed and jumps on to Claudia's desk to look out the window, knocking Claudia's script off the table in the process. He sits perched by the window, tail swinging as he looks longingly outside.

CLAUDIA
Mochi, are you kidding? This is important - ugh, now my script's out of order!

Claudia picks Mochi up and walks towards her bed. Mochi sticks his legs out and pushes against Claudia in attempt to distance himself from her. Claudia drops Mochi on the bed before walking back to her desk.

3 INT. CLAUDIA'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS 3

Claudia is muttering lines back and forth while Mochi lays curled up beside her. He stares at Claudia, who barely pays attention to him.

Claudia flips to the last page, finally glancing to Mochi.

CLAUDIA
(to Mochi)
You just get to sleep all day. No constant schedule or memorization.
(beat)
Really you should try it out - being this busy. You've got such an easy life. You don't even have to worry about anything ever.

Mochi's rolls on his back.

Claudia rolls her eyes and throws her back onto her mattress, groaning. She covers her eyes in desperation.

Zarna yells from the kitchen.

ZARNA (O.S.)
Claudia, do you wanna watch some T.V before bed?

Claudia grabs her script again, flipping to the front page.

CLAUDIA
No, Mom, I'm working!
(to Mochi)
I wish I didn't have to worry so much.

Claudia gets up to move to her desk, sighing as she clutches her script in hand.

4 INT. CLAUDIA'S ROOM - NIGHT 4

Claudia sleeps at her desk with her head laying on an open notebook. She suddenly wakes up, looks around, and moves to her bed.

Mochi sleeps on the end of Claudia's bed, slowly wakes up from the sounds of Claudia moving, then moves to sleep on top of Claudia's notebook.

5 INT. CLAUDIA'S ROOM - DAY 5

Sun streams through the windows in Claudia's room. Her alarm clock BEEPS. Mochi grabs a pillow and puts it over his face. Claudia immediately begins to get out of bed.

CLAUDIA (V.O.)
Okay, flashcards at breakfast, run lines with mom in the car-

Not paying attention, Claudia falls when she puts her feet down, the floor being much further away than she thought.

CLAUDIA (V.O.)
Ahh! What-I'm- What?!

Claudia looks down at her paws.

CLAUDIA (V.O.)
No, no, no. This is a stress dream! Not real-

6 INT. CLAUDIA'S BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS 6

Claudia walks to the bathroom and attempts to reach for the top of the counter. She fails.

CLAUDIA (V.O.)
This is stupid! I can jump.

On her third try, she makes it to the counter top and looks in the mirror. Claudia makes a noise of disgust, moving around as she stares at her body.

CLAUDIA (V.O.)
Thank god I'm not a cat in real life. This feels so weird.

ZARNA (O.S.)
Claudia, it's time to get up!

Claudia turns to see Zarna walking into her room and nudging Mochi awake. Mochi groans and rolls over.

CLAUDIA (V.O.)
If that's my body..then - WAIT.

Claudia jumps off the counter immediately, rushing to Mochi on the bed. She gets on top of Mochi to nudge him awake.

CLAUDIA (V.O.)
Oh my god, oh my god, oh my god.
This CANNOT be happening!

Claudia walks on top of Mochi's body to her face.

Zarna goes to open the blinds. The sun shines through the room and Mochi rolls over, using the pillow to block the light once more.

Walking over to Mochi's face, Claudia begins to purr and her paws begin to fold into the blanket on their own accord.

CLAUDIA (V.O.)
This seriously cannot be happening.
My auditions! I'm so screwed--

Zarna hears Mochi meow and bends over to give him a kiss.

CLAUDIA (V.O.)
It's me, Mom! Oh no, what am I
going to do? Mom! Mom, listen to
me, you HAVE to help me, auditions
are today-

Zarna pets Claudia one last time before nudging Mochi awake.

Mochi finally rolls over and wakes up. He raises his hands to block the sun. His eyes widen in shock, staring at his fingers.

ZARNA
You're up late today, Claudia.
Let's get going.

Zarna leaves the room, shutting the bedroom door.

Mochi moves his arms slowly, pushing himself off the bed. Almost falling, he catches himself on the edge of the bed as he attempts to get up.

Turning to the mirror, Mochi's eyes widen in shock for a while.

CLAUDIA (V.O.)
Is that - IS THAT MOCHI?!

Mochi breaks out into a smile. He laughs a short and loud laugh unexpectedly then covers his mouth in shock.

CLAUDIA (V.O.)
Mochi! Mochi, I need to get to my audition- I've worked so hard-

Mochi ignores her pleas and continues to stare at himself in awe.

7 INT. KITCHEN - DAY **7**

Mochi walks out of Claudia's room with messy bedhead and still wearing pajamas. He stands by the counter.

Zarna serves Mochi a bowl of cereal.

ZARNA
Here you go.

Mochi brings the bowl to his mouth and pours some of the cereal and milk into his mouth. Zarna gives a questioning look.

Mochi sets down the bowl, wipes his mouth and smiles.

Zarna serves Claudia a plate of cat food. Claudia walks over, smells it, and walks away.

8 INT. FRONT HALL - DAY **8**

Zarna and Mochi head for the front door. Zarna notices Mochi doesn't have his backpack.

Claudia jumps in her backpack before Zarna can see her.

Zarna zips the backpack partially, and picks it up.

9 EXT. CLAUDIA'S HOUSE - DAY **9**

Mochi walks out the front door. Zarna catches up with him, backpack in hand.

ZARNA
You forgot your backpack.

Mochi grabs it by the top handle and carries it by his side. Zarna walks toward the car, and Mochi trails behind, using bushes and trees to stabilize.

Mochi topples over in the background. Zarna doesn't notice.

Mochi brushes himself off and continues walking.

Zarna and Mochi get into the car.

10 OMITTED **10**

11 INT. ZARNA'S CAR - DAY **11**

Zarna sits down in the car with Mochi who is entranced by the air freshener hanging up on the rear view mirror. He swats at it.

Mochi points and looks at Zarna amused. Zarna stares in concern.

Zarna puts her own seatbelt on, Mochi watches, then copies her.

12 EXT. ZARNA'S CAR - DAY **12**

Mochi unbuckles his seatbelt, staring at a bird. He opens the door quickly, eyes tracking the bird.

Zarna stares concerned. Mochi goes to shut the door but Zarna yells.

ZARNA
Claudia?

Mochi ignores Zarna, his arm beginning to rise to swat a bird thats far away.

ZARNA (CONT'D)
Your bag?

Mochi turns and stares blankly. Then, grips the side of the door to bend over and grab it.

Mochi shuts the car door and begins following the bird, too intrigued to be paying attention to his surroundings.

Walking through the hallway, he looses track of the bird and ends up in a line of people. Mochi sets down his bag and begins searching for something else. When he can't find anything interesting, he begins licking his hand to groom himself.

From the bag now on the floor, Claudia reaches a paw from inside the bag and peaks her head out.

CLAUDIA (V.O.)
Oh my god - Mochi! Mochi what are you doing?

When she realizes Mochi really won't understand, she huffs in frustration and settles into the backpack.

CLAUDIA (V.O.)
All for nothing.

13 INT. CLAUDIA'S CLASSROOM - DAY 13

An evaluator pushes a stiff Mochi into the classroom. He drops his backpack by a chair before standing at the front.

Four evaluators sit in the middle of the classroom with bored expression.

Claudia slowly peaks her head out of her backpack.

CLAUDIA (V.O)
Oh god...

She looks back and forth between the bored-looking evaluators and the stiff Mochi.

Mochi stares blankly at his audience, before his gaze races to the fly buzzing around the classroom.

CLAUDIA (V.O)
No, Mochi! This is terrible...

Claudia keeps staring, muttering all kinds of phrases of disappointment.

Suddenly, the four evaluators perk up.

Mochi's arms begin to move, attempting very hard to catch the bug. Believing to be close, he jumps up, his arms moving oddly to grab the bug. He is now running back in forth, completely intrigued in this bug.

The evaluators begin to clap, in complete awe at Mochi's unplanned performance.

Finally, Mochi catches the fly and a final clap is heard from him clutching it in his fist.

Mochi stops moving, then stands and stares at the evaluators, giving a quick smile.

The room is silent for a minute before the director slowly stands.

DIRECTOR
That was...spectacular, gripping, heartfelt.
(beat)
Honey, that was art.

Mochi doesn't react. Claudia watches from the backpack.

CLAUDIA (V.O.)
Oh...

DIRECTOR
Ah! And still in character!

Mochi still stands in front of the director.

DIRECTOR (CONT'D)
Alright, time to move on. Although, I wouldn't want to be the one to follow that performance.

The next performer enters the room at that moment and gives a look to the director.

14 EXT. CLAUDIA'S CLASSROOM - DAY 14

A group of kids huddle around the classroom door, looking at a paper. Someone pushes Mochi up to the front.

Claudia sticks her head out of Mochi's backpack, she finds her name at the top of the paper labeled "Callbacks"

15 INT. ZARNA'S CAR - DAY 15

Zarna pulls up to the school, Mochi gets in the car.

ZARNA
How did it go?

Mochi sees a butterfly outside of the car and smiles wide.

ZARNA (CONT'D)
Good?

Mochi moves from looking at the butterfly to looking at Zarna, still smiling.

ZARNA (CONT'D)
I knew you'd do well.

16 INT. CLAUDIA'S ROOM - DAY 16

Mochi walks in to Claudia's room, Claudia trailing behind him.

Mochi looks at his cat bed, then lies down on the floor with his head resting on the bed. Claudia lies down in her bed.

It's silent.

CLAUDIA (V.O.)
Man, Mochi, you get one day as a human and upstage me.

Mochi says nothing and stretches.

CLAUDIA (CONT'D)
Seriously, you didn't prepare - at all! But, it was okay.

17 INT. CLAUDIA'S ROOM - NIGHT 17

Mochi stands up, groggy, and walks to Claudia's bed. Claudia stands up from her bed and curls up in the cat bed.

18 INT. CLAUDIA'S ROOM - DAY 18

Claudia quickly sits up in bed, eyes wide. She looks down at her hands, pats her face, then smiles triumphantly.

CLAUDIA
Yes!

She jumps out of bed.

CLAUDIA (CONT'D)
Yes, yes yes!

Claudia walks over to Mochi and picks him up.

CLAUDIA (CONT'D)
Oh my gosh we're back!
(beat)
Right? You're not secretly thinking like a person are you?

Mochi tries to wriggle out of Claudia's hands.

CLAUDIA (CONT'D)
Nope, same old Mochi.

19 INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY 19

Claudia practically skips into the room to find her mom reading a book.

CLAUDIA
Hello!

ZARNA
Oh! Hi. Feeling good about your audition?

Claudia sits down next to her mom.

CLAUDIA
Yeah, I was way too worried before, but I got a callback! Turns out, everything <u>does</u> work out!

Zarna gives Claudia a knowing smile.

ZARNA
So, you didn't have to practice fifty times the night before?

Claudia raises a brow at Zarna.

CLAUDIA
How funny.

Zarna smiles.

CLAUDIA (CONT'D)
I'm just glad be able to talk again.

Zarna gives her a questioning look, then puts her arm around Claudia.

20 INT. CLAUDIA'S SCHOOL - DAY 20

Claudia waves goodbye to her mom, walking down the hall to her acting classroom. She takes a deep breath as she walks into the room.

CLAUDIA
Just like Mochi. It'll be okay.

DIRECTOR
Oh, look who it is! Perfect, perfect, come on over, we'll be beginning shortly!

Claudia stands in line, watching another student preform freely. She smiles.

Taking a deep breath, she steps forward.

DIRECTOR
Good morning, Claudia. Nice to see you again!

Claudia nods a greeting, fidgeting with her sweaters zipper.

DIRECTOR (CONT'D)
Deep breaths, and let it come to you!

Claudia begins moving around the stage, running the lines from memory.

The director stands up to applaud, and Claudia smiles.