

The Boy Who Can Talk To Cats

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EXT. SMALL COTTAGE - EVENING

A young boy named FELIX gets off of the school bus and walks towards his house. A long haired tabby and several other cats are laying at the edge of the woods. Felix looks at them before walking in.

INT. SMALL COTTAGE LIVING ROOM - SAME

Inside, there is a living room, steps leading upstairs near the front door, and an open archway to a dark kitchen at the back of the room. The whole of the living room is consumed with a hospital bed, IV pole, and medical equipment. The boy's grandmother, DOROTHEA, is sitting in an armchair. The radio is on. It is unclear if she is listening or if she is asleep.

FELIX

Hey Grandma! Did the nurse just leave? Can I get you anything?

DOROTHEA

(weakly)

I'm okay, dear. I told Jo she should go home early to spend time with that young man of hers. I'll be fine until your mother comes home. I think I'm just going to rest my eyes for a bit.

Dorothea shuts her eyes and is almost instantly asleep. Felix kisses her on the cheek, walks to the cluttered couch, and sits down with some homework. Several hours pass as he works, reads, and draws. Suddenly, headlights shine in through the curtained windows. The door opens and Felix's mom, BRIDGET, enters looking tired. She walks by Felix, stopping to give him a quick kiss on the head before heading towards the kitchen. The lights come on in the kitchen and the microwave is heard. Mom returns with a meal for Felix and a bowl of soup for Dorothea. She wakes her up, feeds her, and puts her to bed. When Felix finishes his meal, he takes his plastic container and fork to the kitchen and throws it away. He returns with a glass of water, which he hands to his mom. Mom takes it and looks up from medicine bottles in her hand toward Felix.

BRIDGET
Is that for grandma?

FELIX
Yes.

BRIDGET
You're such a good boy, Felix. Thank you. Did you get all of
your homework done?

FELIX
Yes, mom.

BRIDGET
Great job, sweetie. Heading to bed? I can come and tuck you in
in a few minutes.

FELIX
Yeah, goodnight. You don't have to tuck me in anymore!

Felix walks up the stairs.

INT. FELIX'S BEDROOM - SAME

Felix heads into his dark room. The only light source is the
bright, white moonlight shining in through the window. There is
a long haired tabby cat sitting outside below the window. Felix
gets into bed as moonlight illuminates his face. He tucks
himself into bed.

QUICK MONTAGE OF THE DAY:

INT. FELIX'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Felix wakes up to an alarm clock, turns it off, grabs clothes
for the day, and heads to the bathroom.

INT. FELIX'S BEDROOM - LATER

Felix enters the room dressed with damp hair. He grabs his backpack and goes downstairs.

INT. LIVING ROOM - SAME

Felix puts his backpack down at the bottom of the stairs. He walks to the hospital bed to check on his sleeping grandmother. He sets up her daily medications on the side table. He heads to the kitchen.

INT. KITCHEN - SAME

Felix grabs a frozen breakfast meal from the freezer and puts it in the microwave. He grabs two glasses and fills them with water. He takes one to the living room and puts it down on Dorothea's side table. He returns to the kitchen and eats his meal. He throws away the container and puts his glass and washes his glass and fork.

INT. LIVING ROOM - SAME

Felix walks to the door, grabbing his backpack. The bus is visible through the window.

INT. SCHOOL BUS - LATER

Felix is sitting in a seat alone reading a book.

INT. SCHOOL CAFETERIA -LATER

Felix sits with a small group of friends. He is laughing.

INT. CLASSROOM - LATER

Felix is sitting quietly, doodling in class as the teacher talks. The school bell rings. The clock shows that it is the end of the day. The calendar shows that it is Friday.

END MONTAGE

EXT. SMALL COTTAGE - EVENING

Felix gets off of the school bus and walks towards his house. The same several cats are laying at the edge of the woods. Bridget's car is in the driveway.

INT. LIVING ROOM - SAME

Felix enters the house. His mom and grandmother are in the living room. The tv is on at a quiet volume. Bridget is sitting on the couch typing on a laptop. Dorothea is sitting in her chair. Her eyes are closed.

BRIDGET

(looking up from the laptop)

Hey, honey. How was your day?

FELIX

It was good, mom... You're home early?

BRIDGET

(tiredly)

Jo had to go home early, again. So, I'm working from home for a little bit.

FELIX

Oh. Well, do you need anything?

BRIDGET

No. Why don't you go and play for a bit, sweetie? I'll figure out something for dinner in a few hours.

FELIX
(excited)

Okay! Can I let Angel inside? I bet grandma would want to see her!

Bridget stands from the couch. She grabs Felix by the shoulder and gently guides him into the kitchen away from Dorothea.

INT. KITCHEN - SAME

Bridget guides Felix in to continue their conversation. She leans against the doorway, with her back to the living room.

BRIDGET
No, honey. We've talked about this. You know the cats are bad for grandma's health. Grandma is really sick.

FELIX
(pleading)
She'll feel better soon. And, Angel will cheer her up! She's grandma's cat. And, this was her house first. We can't just keep her out.

BRIDGET
(strict)
Yes, we can. It's better for grandma. And, cats are animals. They can survive outside. It's where they belong.

Felix sniffles.

BRIDGET
(continuing)
Listen, why don't you take some of grandma's cat food out and a bowl of water? And, you can play with the cats outside?

FELIX
Okay, mom.

Felix goes to one of the cupboards under the sink and pulls out a half-empty bag of dry food and a few cans of wet food. He puts it together on a paper plate and fills a paper bowl with water.

EXT. BACKYARD OF SMALL COTTAGE - SAME

The backyard is a modest clearing of grass with woods surrounding it. Felix comes out through the back door, carrying the cat food and water. He places them down near the house and begins trying to call Angel and the stray cats.

FELIX

(loudly)

Here, kitty, kitty! Here, kitty, kitty! I brought food. Hello!?
Do you want to come play?

He finishes calling the cats and none have come. Felix then looks around the yard. He sees a cluster of cats gathered at the edge of the woods. The cats almost seem to be having a conversation. One calico cat takes a step out into the grass of the backyard, but is stopped by a dark, skinny cat. A long haired tabby cat, ANGEL, appears to hiss at the dark tomcat. Felix waits to see if any of the cats will come, but they don't. Disappointed, Felix goes inside and returns with some toys. He plays by himself in the middle of the yard for awhile, keeping his eye on the cats at the edge of the woods. Felix plays by himself for about an hour. He eventually turns his attention away from the cats. He does not notice as all the cats leave, apart from Angel and the calico cat. Angel and the calico then stand on two legs and beckon towards Felix with their front paw.

ANGEL

Hey! Hello?

Felix startles, drops his toys, and looks around. Angel continues beckoning.

ANGEL

Over here!

Felix whips his head around and sees the two cats standing on their back legs. He sees Angel talking.

ANGEL

Yeah, over here! Can you come over here a second?

Felix stares, frightened.

FELIX

You're talking?! What's going on? Is this a dream?

ANGEL

No, you're awake. Please, calm down. I can explain everything.

May I speak to you somewhere more private?

FELIX

Wha- What?

ANGEL

(calmly)

Please, Felix. I need your help. In fact, we can help each other. Come with me?

FELIX

(screaming)

Wha- No! Mom! Mom! Mom!!!

Angel and the calico cat return to all fours and run into the woods. The backdoor opens and Bridget runs out to Felix, who is in tears.

BRIDGET

Hey, hey. What's the matter?

Felix snuffles and points into the woods. He stammers, but can't get the words out.

BRIDGET

Did you see something scary in the woods? Or, hear a noise?

Felix continues crying and stammering.

BRIDGET

Okay, okay. Calm down. Let's go inside. I made real dinner tonight. Come on.

Bridget guides Felix toward the house. He is still crying. He points back to the woods, grabbing the edge of Bridget's shirt.

FELIX

I saw Angel and some strays and- and- and, they tried to talk to me.

BRIDGET

(dismissively)

Talked to you? Sweetie, don't let your imagination scare you. You should have just left those cats alone. Come on inside.

Bridget opens the door and nudges Felix in. The door shuts behind them. Angel and the calico cat peer over from behind a tree at the edge of the woods.

EXT. SMALL COTTAGE - LATER

Through the window, the kitchen is illuminated. Felix, Bridget, and Dorothea sit around a small dining room table. Felix and Bridget are having a simple dinner; Dorothea has a bowl of soup. Felix looks a little worried and is silent. Bridget is busy eating and feeding Dorothea. Dorothea perks up slightly and takes the spoon from Bridget.

INT. KITCHEN - SAME

Dorothea takes a spoonful of soup, then clears her throat.

DOROTHEA

Felix, are you alright dear? You haven't said anything all evening.

Felix looks up at Dorothea with a forced smile.

DOROTHEA

What's the matter? Cat got your tongue?

INT. FELIX'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Felix is sleeping peacefully in bed. Moonlight is shining across his face. In the window, is Angel. She pops her claws on one paw and uses it to tap lightly on the window. Felix continues sleeping. Angel taps louder.

ANGEL

(whisper shouting)

Hey, kid! Come on. Wake up!

Felix startles awake and stares at the window. He hesitates for a moment, continuing to stare at the window, before getting up and going over to it.

ANGEL

Come on, Felix. You know me. I know this is all crazy, but I need your help. Dorothea is really sick.

Felix opens the window. Angel enters and sits on the inner ledge.

FELIX

Grandma? I know. That's why my mom won't let you in the house anymore. How- how are you talking?

ANGEL

There is a lot you don't know about cats, Felix. We could always talk. Only some have the ability to understand us. I figured you would. And, I'm glad you did. Dorothea is sicker than anyone is telling you. When I was inside, I was helping her stay alive. But, it's too late for my presence to help anymore, even if your mom would let me back inside. But, I have another solution.

FELIX

What are you saying? What do you mean?

ANGEL

I'm saying that I know what can save her. Your grandmother will die unless you come with me.

FELIX

Well then of course I'll come with you.

Felix grabs his school bookbag and dumps everything out in the bed. He goes around the room putting an assortment of other items in the bag. He then puts pillows in the shape of a person and covers them with his blanket.

FELIX

(continuing)

Where are we going?

ANGEL

It will be easier if I just show you. Put on shoes.

Felix puts on sneakers and a jacket and turns back to the window.

FELIX

How am I supposed to get outside? I might wake up mom and grandma if I go down the stairs.

ANGEL

Just jump out the window. It's not that high up.

Angel jumps down from the edge of the window to the ground and looks up at Felix. It looks pretty far. Felix looks nervous.

FELIX

I don't think I can.

ANGEL

Fine. You'll have to go down the stairs. I'll show you how to be as quiet as a cat.

Angel climbs up on a tree near the window, walks across a branch and jumps back through the window.

ANGEL

Follow me.

Angel walks across the bedroom and through the closed door. Felix looks shocked, but follows, opening the door quietly. She slowly rolls her paws as she places them down and Felix copies that motion with his ankles and feet. Angel then guides him through the hall and down the stairs. She seems to know where any creaky spots are, pointing them out before avoiding them.

EXT. BACKYARD OF SMALL COTTAGE - SAME

Angel phases through the backdoor before the door opens and Felix walks through. The two set off into the woods with Angel leading the way.

EXT. FOREST - SAME

Felix pulls out a flashlight and turns it on.

ANGEL

Turn that off. Your eyes will adjust in a moment.

Felix turns off the flashlight and the two continue walking. After a moment, the two pass under bright moonlight, Angel's eyes reflect the light and then Felix's do as well. They continue deep into the forest. They come upon a small clearing with two trees twisted together into an archway. The clearing appears to continue for a bit on the other side of the archway.

ANGEL

Can you see this gate, Felix?

FELIX

Gate? You mean the trees?

ANGEL

Yes, but they are not ordinary trees and not everyone can see them. It is a gate to my other home. The true home of cats.

FELIX

What?

ANGEL

I will answer all of your questions in time. But, we must hurry. Just, step through the archway with me. On the other side, is what we need to save your mother.

Angel runs through the archway and disappears from view. Felix takes one step towards the gate, but hesitates. Angel's head reappears, shimmering white light around her neck.

ANGEL

Come on through. It's fine.

Felix braces himself and walks through.

EXT. OPEN FIELD - SAME

Felix walks in on a large open field with bright green grass and cattails. Two full moons are overhead, one small and one large. All colors are bright and everything is tinged with magic.

ANGEL

Alright, come on. It's not far.

Angel begins to bound away through the tall grass. Felix doesn't follow. He throws out his hand.

FELIX

(exasperated)

Wait a minute! Wait a minute! There is so much going on! You haven't even explained what we're here for. Why are there two moons?! How can any of this help my grandma?

ANGEL

There have always been two moons here. Technically, we are on another planet...Don't worry about that! We're here to get water from the moon pool. If she drinks it in time, it will save Dorothea.

Angel begins walking again. Felix follows.

FELIX

Okay, but what is the moon pool? It is a great body of water that trickles down from the moonstone. It has healing properties. The moonstone is the heart of the planet.

FELIX

Okay...where is it?

ANGEL

It's underground. The only entrance is underneath the castle.

Felix and Angel reach the top of a hill. In the distance is a castle. In the foreground, there are small mud hills with open doorways carved into the ground. They have grass growing on top of them. Angel leads Felix over to some of these cat houses. The Calico cat steps out from one and stands on two legs. In their front paws is a small vial.

ANGEL

Drink this, Felix. It will make you cat-sized for a little while.

FELIX

What? I'm already pretty short. Why do I need to be cat-sized?

ANGEL

So you can navigate the castle. It will only last a few hours.

FELIX

Okay.

Felix takes the bottle from the calico cat and drinks it. He makes a face, implying that the liquid inside tasted bad. A shimmer moves around Felix for a moment, and he shrinks, but is still proportional. After a moment, though, Felix grows cat ears on top of his head. He reaches up to them in surprise.

FELIX

You didn't say that was going to happen.

CALICO CAT

It wasn't supposed to...

ANGEL

(to the calico cat)

You don't think it's because-?

CALICO CAT

(to Angel)

Maybe.

CALICO CAT

(to Felix)

I'm sure it's okay! The effects should still wear off in a few hours and the ears should go away, too. Which set are you hearing out of, though?

FELIX
Um...both?

CALICO CAT
Ooooh, cool. Does that mean that I sound louder? Can you hear better?

The calico cat begins clapping their paws together around all four of Felix's ears. Angel's tail begins swinging back and forth.

ANGEL
We don't have time for this. Sorry. We should really be on our way to the castle.

CALICO CAT
Are you sure that's a good idea?

ANGEL
Yes, there's no other choice. Come on, Felix.

FELIX
Okay, bye...what was your name again?

CALICO CAT
Oh, I don't have a human name.

FELIX
Can I call you Cali?

CALI
Yeah! Awesome! Thanks! But, this doesn't make me your cat, okay?

FELIX
Okay.

ANGEL
Okay. We really have to be going now. Cali, are you coming?

CALI

Uhhh- No. I think I'll sit this one out.

ANGEL

Okay, I'll see you after, Cali. Let's go, Felix.

Angel drops down on all four and bounds away. Felix runs after her. Eventually, they slow to a walk. The castle grows closer and closer. As they are nearly there, Angel slows, stands and looks over at Felix.

ANGEL

Not a lot of humans come here and no one is really supposed to go to the moon pool without permission or take the water from it. It would probably be best if no one in the castle saw you. But, if they do, don't mention anything about the moon pool or the crystal. Got it?

FELIX

Got it.

EXT. CASTLE - NIGHT

They reach the base of the castle.

ANGEL

Great, let's go in through that window.

Angel nods her head to an open stone window, quite high up. She jumps up to it, easily. Felix sighs.

FELIX

I can't jump that high.

ANGEL

Try.

Felix jumps. His hand nearly touches the edge of the window, but misses. He slides down the wall, comically. Angel chuckles a bit.

ANGEL

Hold on a second. Wait there.

Angel disappears from view for a few minutes. Felix sits down below the window. Angel returns with some fabric. She holds one end of it with her teeth and drapes the rest over the ledge.

ANGEL

(talking through the fabric)

I'll hold you. Climb up!

Felix looks skeptical, but grabs the fabric. Angel braces on all fours. He begins climbing. Angel strains, but holds him. He makes it up.

INT. CASTLE - SAME

The two move deeper into the castle. There are many close calls where other cats are about to come around the corner and they have to duck into a room, or turn a corner. They eventually reach a large wooden door, with gems encrusted into it. Angel nods towards the door.

ANGEL

(whispering)

This is the room we can access the moon pool from. Let me peek in and see if anyone is in there.

Angel peeks in through the door. She stands on two legs and gestures Felix in. They walk through the door. Around the corner, the dark skinny cat watches them go through.

INT. CASTLE CHAMBER - SAME

Angel and Felix enter the chamber. It is covered in decorative fabric and pillows. A bit of clear crystal is mounted on a pedestal at one end of the room. Angel goes over to that side of the room and presses on a loose stone in the wall. A secret passageway opens.

ANGEL

We're almost there. It's just down these steps.

FELIX

Okay, let's hurry!

The two descend down the steps and the secret passage closes behind them. The dark tomcat enters the room and looks at the door as it closes and becomes a wall again.

INT. STONE STAIRWELL - A LITTLE LATER

Angel and Felix are making their way down a long spiraling staircase. Glowing white stones embedded in the stones light their path. They reach the bottom of the stairs. The only path ahead of them is blocked by a large stone door, covered in the glowing crystal fragments. Attached to the front of the door is a clear crystal sculpture of a fearsome-looking cat.

ANGEL

Okay, the crystal and moon pool are just behind this door. You just have to ask the statue for passage.

FELIX

Me? You aren't coming with me?

ANGEL

I actually can't enter...anymore. That's why I needed your help.

None of the other cats know Dorothea like I do. A lot of them don't care for humans. Even the ones that do... No one was willing to risk getting in trouble.

FELIX

Okay... What do I have to do to get in?

ANGEL

The statue will read your intentions. It might ask you a question. Just think of your grandma. Think of how you are here to save her.

FELIX

Uhh- okay. How do I- How does the statue read my intentions?

ANGEL

Just place your hand on it's head. Remember to think of Dorothea.

FELIX

Okay. I can do this.

Felix walks to the statue and places his hand on its head. It begins to glow brightly. Inside, Felix's mind we see a white space and visions of his grandmother. There are recent memories of her sick, a vision of Angel warning Felix that his grandmother could die, and old memories of a healthy Dorothea caring for Felix.

STATUE (V.O.)

What has a head like a cat, feet like a cat, a tail like a cat, but isn't a cat?

FELIX

A... uhm... A kitten?

STATUE (V.O)

Yes. A kitten.

Felix returns to himself and pulls his hand from the statue. The door swings open. He turns back to Angel.

FELIX
What should I do?

ANGEL
Just collect some water. That vial you drank from earlier is in
your bag.

INT. MOON ROOM - SAME

Felix enters the chamber. At its center is a large, glowing white stone that reaches up through the ceiling, presumably up to the surface of the planet. Around it is a pool of clear, sparkling water. Through the water, the crystal seems to continue down infinitely. Felix walks forward, kneels near the edge of the pool, pulls the vial from his book bag, and fills it with the glowing water. He then gets up and runs out of the room.

INT. STONE STAIRWELL - A LITTLE LATER

Felix and Angel are running up the steps. Their footsteps echo and the music swells. They reach the top and open the door.

INT. CASTLE CHAMBER - SAME

Felix and Angel enter as the secret door re-opens. Inside the room are armed cat-guards and the tomcat.

TOMCAT
(loudly)
Stop right there!

Angel jumps in front of Felix and looks ready to fight.

ANGEL
We can't! This is important! Let us pass!

TOMCAT

I know what you're trying to do! You want to help that human again! And, you've brought another one to our world!

ANGEL

You don't understand! They are special and kind. Dorothea needs my help!

TOMCAT

Help? What do humans ever do to help? Humans threw me out on the street. I was lucky to find this world, and you're endangering it.

ANGEL

Not all humans are bad! If I save Dorothea, she will take you in, if you want.

TOMCAT

I don't want to live with humans ever again! I won't let you save her!

Angel moves closer to the guards and the tomcat.

ANGEL

Felix, run! Find Cali! Go through the gate and give the water to Dorothea.

Angel swipes at the tomcat, tackling him, and biting his neck. Felix looks around and bolts to a nearby window. He jumps out of it and lands on all fours. He looks surprised.

EXT. CASTLE - SAME

Felix stands and sprints away from the castle. Some guards look out the window and yell.

EXT. OPEN FIELD NEAR CALI'S HOME - LATER

Felix runs up.

FELIX

Cali! Angel told me to find you. Will you come through the gate with me?

Cali comes out of her home, startled.

CALI

Uhhh, okay. Yeah. Sure. Let's go.

They both take off running for the gate. As Felix runs, he begins to grow back to his original size. He picks up Cali and runs toward the gate. His cat ears fade and he goes through the gate.

INT. SMALL COTTAGE LIVING ROOM - LATER

Felix enters, panting and holding Cali. The door slams shut. A sound is heard upstairs. He puts Cali down and pulls out a small vial of the shining water. A light comes on at the top of the stairs. Felix runs over to Dorothea with the vial. She is breathing shallowly. Bridget comes running down the steps.

BRIDGET

Felix?! What's going on?

FELIX

Mom, just trust me. I have to help grandma.

He puts the vial to her lips and pours it down her mouth. Bridget looks worried and concerned. She runs over and grabs the bottle away before it is empty. She checks grandma's pulse and looks upset.

BRIDGET

Felix, I don't know what is going on, but I need you to go get the phone and call 911.

FELIX

No! The water will help her! I promise! Give her the rest of it!

BRIDGET
Sweetie, she isn't breathing.

EXT. GRAVEYARD - EVENING

It is a month later. Felix and his mom are dressed in black. They are holding flowers. They place them on Dorothea's tombstone. Across the way is Angel. She gets Felix's attention. He leaves his mom and goes over to Angel. They are talking out of earshot.

INT. SMALL COTTAGE LIVING ROOM - DAY

Felix is sitting on the living room couch. The living room is completely changed. It is clean, homey, and inviting. Around Felix are several cats: Angel, Cali, Tom, and more. Felix's mom is standing by the steps watching him. In his arms is a small grey kitten.

DOROTHEA
You know, it's weird being this small.

FADE TO BLACK