



Cat Dog

Brian hadn't planned to stray, but the draw of a new woman he'd met online had pulled him in. She was quiet but intense, with a fierce sense of justice—especially about animal rights. After they shared bubble tea, she insisted on stopping by a nearby animal shelter. She called it a cruel place, where animals suffered while the shelter profited.

Inside, the smell was overpowering, the air thick with the stench of neglected animals. There were cages everywhere, some so flimsy it seemed the animals could break free at any moment. That's when Brian noticed an odd creature, tucked away in a rusty cage. It looked like a strange mix of cat and dog, small and skittish, with curious eyes. His date grew furious at the sight, and without hesitation, she began opening cages, urging the animals to flee. She handed the strange creature to Brian and told him to run. Against his better judgment, he did.



Later, she convinced him to keep the animal, calling it “Catdog.” Brian wasn’t sure why, but something about it intrigued him. Besides, he’d been thinking about getting a pet. The small creature was oddly endearing, though his girlfriend had once scoffed that he could barely take care of himself, let alone a pet.

A week later, Brian left town for a weekend with his girlfriend, thinking the time away might calm her suspicions. He left food, water, and a litter box for Catdog, confident it would be enough. He even left the TV on for company.

When he returned, though, his apartment was a wreck. Holes marred the walls, the smell of urine was suffocating, and the TV screen had a massive dent. Then, to his horror, he saw Catdog—but it had changed. It was now the size of a human, wearing one of Brian’s grimy garage jumpsuits and glaring at him with familiar eyes.

“Catdogs don’t watch TV, Brian,” it sneered, speaking in Brian’s own voice. “Catdogs need attention, or else we break things.”

Brian froze, feeling cold all over as he tried to understand what he was seeing. The sight made his stomach turn. Catdog’s eyes locked onto him with an intense, almost angry focus, as if it recognized him in a way no animal ever should. Its stare was fixed, unblinking, and filled with something unsettlingly close to human anger. It started to pace back and forth, each step awkward and stiff, almost like it was



forcing itself to move like a person. The whole time, its eyes never left Brian.

Then it spoke, using a voice that sounded disturbingly like Brian's own, but warped and wrong. It explained, in that strange, flat tone, that it could copy anything it saw. At the shelter, it had copied cats and dogs, but here, alone in the apartment, it had been watching him. It had picked up on all his routines, his habits, even his voice. It knew things about him now—everything he'd done, everything he'd tried to hide. And now it stood there, mimicking him perfectly, a twisted version of himself staring back at him.

Catdog started listing Brian's secrets, things he thought only he knew: the dating sites he used, his excuses to his girlfriend, the lies he told himself. It spoke of these things calmly, yet with a tone that made Brian's skin crawl. His secret life was no longer a secret.

"You're going to keep me fed," Catdog declared, its eyes narrowing. "You're going to keep my litterbox clean. And I'll be staying in your bedroom from now on. You can use the couch."

Brian tried to argue, but Catdog's stare stopped him cold. It was clear there would be no escaping this creature. And as it leaned closer, it added one last warning, its voice low and chilling: "Leave me alone again, Brian, and you won't like what happens."