

I LOVE MY CAT

By Justin Alejandro Gonzales

Based upon the content and comments of

The r/TrueOffMyChest post

*I just finished beating someone up and I hate myself for it but he
kicked my cat*

by u/Reaper1868
(removed by moderators)

Cast of Characters (in order of appearance):

2 male, 0 female, 3+ either

Reaper [m]
Future Reaper [m]
Roommate [m]
Witness [m/f]
Redditors [m/f]

Time:

2022, a regular evening.

Setting:

Reaper's house.

ACT I

(At rise: REAPER is relaxing in his living room. He has notably long unclipped fingernails. His six-week-old kitten, Dark Star, is with him. The scene is Wholesome 100. Elsewhere on the stage, separate from the living room scene, a laptop sits closed until FUTURE REAPER enters and opens it. He narrates as he makes a Reddit post.)

FUTURE REAPER

“Reddit.com . . . u/Reaper1868 . . . r/TrueOffMyChest . . . “

(REAPER sighs a beleaguered sigh.)

F. REAPER

“I just finished beating someone up and I hate myself for it but he kicked my cat!”

(ROOMMATE enters the living room, holding a bottle in his hand, belligerently drunk. This guy is just the worst, I mean *the worst*. He smashes the bottle on a piece of furniture, then beams a nearby wall with what’s left.)

ROOMMATE

Woooo! Beer and shit, yeah!

REAPER

Good evening, roommate. I’m glad to see that you have arrived home safely.

ROOMMATE

Fuck you, loser!

REAPER

You’re clearly drunk again, so I’ll let that slide. Rudeness notwithstanding, I hope you enjoyed yourself.

ROOMMATE

Enjoyed myself? Maaan . . .

(ROOMMATE belches enormously.)

ROOMMATE

I *outjoyed* myself, man!

(ROOMMATE thinks this joke is the funniest thing on earth. His laughter is atrocious.)

ROOMMATE

Waaay funner than what you got going on. Lights *off*? No *music*? By *yourself*, man?!
Maaan, you're like a fucking- a fucking mummy, man!

(ROOMMATE laughs again.)

REAPER

I'll remind you that the pharaohs buried in the tombs of ancient Egypt were venerated as gods. So, needless to say, I'm not bothered.

ROOMMATE

Pfft!

REAPER

You may scoff, but some of us simply don't need alcohol to have a good time. I am content being unplugged and unbothered, with little else than my thoughts and the companionship afforded by Dark Star.

ROOMMATE

Who the hell is "Dark Star?" One of your made-up cartoon girlfriends?

REAPER

Ugh, don't be crass; she's my new kitten. Surely you remember?

ROOMMATE

Oh, right, the fucking furball! Man, it might as well be your girlfriend. You think it's a real person, man! Freaks me out!

REAPER

She is not an "it," or a "thing," she is a living, thinking creature like you or me, and she deserves the same respect. It's called empathy, look it up sometime!

ROOMMATE

Nah, that's called- that's called "zoocology" or something. It's freaky shit, man!

REAPER

Ew. Go to bed, you're delirious.

ROOMMATE

Fuck you, man, you're not my mom! I'm going to bed! Finna go sleep, bitch! See ya, loser!

(ROOMMATE laughs. He sings and dances offstage to his room without coordination or coherence. REAPER shakes his head disapprovingly and muses to Dark Star.)

REAPER

It is dreadful that people have to live like that. Alcoholism truly is a disease, Dark Star.

(As REAPER settles back into his business, FUTURE
REAPER continues his post.)

F. REAPER

“I just had a roommate coming to my house drunk and trying to start a fight with me . . .”

(ROOMMATE comes barreling back into the living room,
furious, holding another bottle in his hand.)

ROOMMATE

You were in my room! I don’t like that!

(ROOMMATE pelts the wall with the bottle.)

ROOMMATE

Let’s fight!

REAPER

Can you substantiate that claim with evidence?

(ROOMMATE squares up.)

ROOMMATE

Fuck evidence! C’mon, let’s go!

REAPER

No! I’m not a neanderthal!

F. REAPER

“ . . . and when I didn’t reciprocate . . . ”

(ROOMMATE attempts to provoke REAPER to no avail,
then has a dastardly idea.)

ROOMMATE

I know what your problem is. You just need a little . . . motivation!

(ROOMMATE kicks Dark Star.)

F. REAPER

“ . . . he kicked my six-week-old kitten!”

(When a nice guy loses his patience, the devil shivers. REAPER instantly becomes enraged and begins the first session of beatings, which should last for about 1-2 minutes or so. FUTURE REAPER continues over the action.)

F. REAPER

“I proceeded to beat his ass for thirty minutes. I feel very ashamed, but I love my cat. It was multiple beatings in a thirty minute time frame. Post.”

(As the beating continues, REDDITORS come in and out of the living room reciting their comments, entering and exiting from all kinds of places. FUTURE REAPER reads these comments as they happen and reacts to them. Additional and specific interactions may be improvised.)

REDDITOR

“u/HWGA_Exandria. No. No. He had that coming. Fucking animal abusers are scum to begin with.”

REDDITOR

“u/T-money79. It was the right thing to do.”

REDDITOR

“u/carmachu. Kicked a six-week-old kitten? That could have killed it. You’re fine.”

REDDITOR

“u/SmallTownMortician. I love a good ‘fuck around and find out.’”

REDDITOR

“Account deleted. I’d kill for my cat. You’re better than me. :D”

REDDITOR

“Account deleted. Really happy that the lil guy is safe. <3”

REDDITOR

“Account deleted. You reap what you sow. He deserved it. Anyway, I would have locked him in a sleeper hold until he submits.”

F. REAPER

“I have her with me all day today and am kicking him out, or starting the process at least. I also have a witness that was there to see him be the one to throw the first punch; it was a shitty one, and then proceeded to get beat.”

(On the word “witness,” REAPER and ROOMMATE stop the scene and briefly look at each other with confusion.)

They shrug it off and reset to when ROOMMATE is attempting to provoke REAPER. Any REDDITORS onstage exit. This time, WITNESS enters.)

WITNESS

Roommate! Shut up! There are people in this house with a normal sleep schedule, you know!

ROOMMATE

This coward doesn't want to fight me!

WITNESS

Listen, I don't care what you're doing down here, just keep it quiet, huh? Gah, six solid hours, that's all I ask for in this damn house!

REAPER

I apologize for the noise; he's very drunk. I should have this situation handled shortly.

WITNESS

Yeah, sure. Oh, by the way: your cat pissed in the kitchen, and I cleaned it up. You're welcome.

REAPER

Oh, ahem . . . many thanks.

ROOMMATE

(dastardly realization)

I think I know what your problem is. You just need a little . . . motivation!

(ROOMMATE kicks Dark Star.)

WITNESS

Damn!

(REAPER is enraged and makes clear that he is ready to fight. ROOMMATE throws the first punch which is "a shitty one" and then the beating resumes for another 1-2 minutes. WITNESS initially sticks around but chooses to leave at some point. The REDDITORS are back.)

REDDITOR

"u/ILonara. Don't fuck with cats. He deserved it and more!"

REDDITOR

"u/829KP. He's an animal abuser, call the cops next time..."

REDDITOR

“u/Merv7. 30 minutes? Bullshit!”

REDDITOR

“u/newmanator84. Why do you feel ashamed? He’s an animal abuser, fuck him!”

REDDITOR

“Account deleted. Same thing happened to me. My soul kitten got kicked into a wall; no injury, thank the gods. I was about a foot shorter and 80 pounds lighter so I got my jug of honey and poured it over his keyboard, DJ gear, and MacBook. He slammed me into a wall but my crazy eyes got him to back down.

REDDITOR

“u/29yearoldboomer. Hope you get arrested.”

REDDITOR

“u/Serdasus101. You are guilty because the beating took 30 minutes. After a few seconds, say 1 minute, it is torture. Nothing justifies 30 minutes of beating. Even killing, with the spur of moment, is understandable; wrong, but understandable. For 30 minutes of beating, you would have to rest sometime and continue beating. So, you are lying; you hated this guy and the cat is just an excuse to beat him.”

REDDITOR

“u/goldenbee123. I hate to condone violence but they guy fucking kicked a kitten. How much more shitty can you get? That’s like, cartoonishly evil. Hope your cat’s okay.”

F. REAPER

“He got up . . .”

(ROOMMATE is somehow able to get to his feet. He chases REAPER around the room while stringing together copious profanities.)

F. REAPER

“ . . . and ran at me again calling me every name in the book multiple times.”

(REAPER ends the chase by putting ROOMMATE into a headlock.)

REAPER

My friend, you need to calm down. I don’t want to hurt you, but if this behavior continues you’ll leave me no choice in the matter.

(ROOMMATE responds with yet more profanity and tries to fight back ineffectually. REAPER pacifies him. Any REDDITORS onstage exit.)

F. REAPER

“Had him in a headlock at one point asking him to relax but to no avail. He didn't do much damage but would not stop wanting to fight.”

(Seemingly satisfied with his work, REAPER goes to check on Dark Star. Seeing that she is okay, REAPER exits and reenters with a bottle of water and takes a breather.)

REAPER

Was it worth it? Did it make you feel good? Well . . . how do you feel now?

(REAPER comforts Dark Star. Reflecting on his love for his cat, his fury flares once again, and he continues to beat ROOMMATE as lights go down for a short intermission.)

END OF ACT I

ACT II

(At rise: REAPER has been going at it since intermission started. At some point he pulls himself away. He looks down on ROOMMATE for a while. His adrenaline is still pumping, so he paces around the living room and makes attempts to dissipate it; he tries petting Dark Star, talks to himself, etc. WITNESS enters.)

WITNESS

Hey, I think I left my charger down here, have you seen it?

(REAPER points off, and WITNESS exits then reenters with the charger.)

REAPER

I hope I haven't kept you up.

WITNESS

. . . Oh, no. Actually, I drowned it out after the first few minutes or so.

REAPER

He was getting violent; this was unfortunately the only outcome.

WITNESS

Mm-hm.

REAPER

I hate to see him this way, but what am I to do when he insists on doing this to himself?

WITNESS

Do you mean the alcoholism, or the lying beaten on the floor?

REAPER

Both, I fear.

WITNESS

Right. Well, I'm sure he's learned his lesson. Good job.

REAPER

Let us hope so, for the sake of us all.

WITNESS

Yeah.

(WITNESS exits. After several moments of agonizing and introspection, REAPER eventually decides to go in on one last 1-2 minute beating. Once again, the REDDITORS return.)

REDDITOR

“u/Electronic-Cat86. ‘Play stupid games, win stupid prizes.’ What were you supposed to do, let him be violent toward your helpless animal—and you—and just take his abuse? Hell no; defend yourself!”

REDDITOR

“u/adorkablegiant. This is such a BS story, how do people fall for this shit? OP is obviously a wannabe tough guy that invented a story to show how tough and strong he is and how he also has a sensitive side, caring about a kitten. BS.”

REDDITOR

“u/Big Investigator8994. 30 minutes? He would be dead.”

REDDITOR

“u/srv50. Yeah. Prob coulda stopped at 10.”

REDDITOR

“u/Dadbod86_20. Yea, I’d feel pretty bad that it was only 30 minutes too, but it really does get exhausting. Especially knowing he deserves at least an hour.”

REDDITOR

“u/BiteMyShinyMetalAzz1. Someone stomped on my cat’s foot once and crushed it. Found out who it was, beat the fuck out of him, and called the cops and told them everything about him selling pills and cocaine. Dude’s in prison now”

REDDITOR

“u/VisamLord2000. Another ‘I need attention and appreciation’ post from a person actually doesn’t feel like off my chest.”

REDDITOR

“u/Flik_the_amazing_cow. Can we talk about your nails for a sec?”

(At “nails,” F. REAPER and REAPER react differently; F. REAPER looks at his fingernails, scoffs in annoyance, closes the laptop, and exits along with any REDDITORS onstage; REAPER ceases his assault and looks at his fingernails. They are like the claws of a monster . . . what has he become . . . ? REAPER steps away from ROOMMATE, awash with shame and regret. He sits, reflecting on his actions for a while, Dark Star at his side.

In silence, in darkness, he ruminates, until he has a solemn realization.)

REAPER

I have to tell Reddit about this!

(REAPER scoops up Dark Star and exits, leaving ROOMMATE behind.)

END OF PLAY