

Alley Cat

Story by Pennsylvania Kite Weather

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The sun had set outside of the corner café, and I knew I was fucked.

With the rate Austen was reading through his poems, there wouldn't be any daylight to walk home. To the dozen or so other young adults in here with us, he read with no rush whatsoever. This particular poem was an extended metaphor about how the smoke of apartment fires choked the city like the host of other community issues. My friend was quite the subtle activist. I had to commend him for making his writing amount to more public visibility than my work ever could.

Everyone started snapping politely when there was a long enough silence at the end; my fingers were working automatically at that point. My eyes were on the muted television over the counter and the headline from the evening news: "PADDLEBOARDER ATTACKED BY HALF-RACE SQUID". The video was sweeping over a beach, first showing the onlookers, then focusing in on a lone man leaning on his board in the water. Though the aftermath was only captured, he seemed fine just bobbing there.

"And with that, that's all I wrote...!" From his place in the corner of the shop, Austen closed the little pamphlet in his dark hands and took a bow to some renewed snapping. His bright smile cracked through his dense, ink-black beard, his navy buttoned-up shirt pulled tight around his stout waist. He was the happiest hipster in the metro right now. "Thank you all for coming. If anyone wants to grab my chapbook on the way out, I won't be able to thank you enough."

Austen gestured with his book and I did a little wave to everyone, just in case someone wanted to add to the grand total of three sales. I guessed that basically they were content hearing most of the poems for free, and the café slowly emptied out, save for us two.

Austen came up, his bald head like a little beacon in the dim lighting. "Well, I think they all enjoyed those pieces very much. Nobody left early to get home." Even his voice had this odd, charming quaintness to it; nothing that could lift him out of being single though.

I passed him the fifteen dollars he earned: a sorry sum, hardly enough to pay back either the book printings or reserving the café for the afternoon. "You're getting better at your recitation, though, man," I encouraged. "The words are hitting harder, even though I've heard those passages a dozen or so times."

He gave that deep baritone laugh of his, and rapped his knuckle off the tabletop. "If it's waking you up, I must be doing somethin' right." Austen looked up at the screen. "I see there's been another incident..."

The newscast was showing a brief snippet of footage of the attacker being dragged out of the surf, with a pair of beach patrolmen grabbing either arm. It looked reasonably like a woman, except for the pale-blue tint of the skin, the floppy cone shape on top of her head, the yellow eyes, and the lower body made up scraggly, trailing tentacles in the sand. She gave whoever was recording a fleeting, shy smile as she passed, and that moment played again in slow motion. It suggested to me a plead for innocence—like she didn't know what she had done wrong.

"I still don't really like the term 'half-race' that the media uses..." Austen said with an aggravated sigh. "They're all 'race'; different species, different than us, just on a..." He paused to arrange it poetically. "A hillier cultural plain."

"Yeah, I guess..." I shook my head.



“Think they’ll ever get used to us, Ethan? People have been trying so hard to teach them our manners.”

“Hey, we’ll see,” I said, turning away with a shrug. I would be all for calling a bunch of monsters our “sisters” if they’d just cool off their thirstiness for human men. At least the ones that could walk on land were kind of safer to an extent, but I still wouldn’t want to run into one in a dark alley.

The café workers had reappeared out of hiding in the back and were finishing up putting the chairs on top of the tables. It was the cue to get us out. Through the large windows to the outside, there were only the spotty glows of streetlamps. A single car passed by to sweep the intersection like a searchlight.

“Listen,” I said, gathering up the stacks of chapbooks for him. “Are you going to be able to get all these home okay? I’ve really got to get going.”

“I’ll stuff them in the back of my bike compartment, don’t worry,” he reassured me.

Once we were outside, Austen bid me goodbye and switched on his lights, pushed himself a bit and rode off, blinking akin to a passing plane. It kind of annoyed me how adjusted to the environment he was here. He didn’t seem to feel anything. Admittedly, he was born here, raised here, and I was a transplant from the rural regions seeking the jobs. In the end, as a stranger it makes me both admire and fear that familiarity to a chaotic world.

I adjusted my jacket and backpack and buried my hands in my jean pockets, hoping that with the pace I struck that I looked like I had somewhere to be. There were just the typical blocks to cover, the only difference being that they were deserted, highlighted sparingly by streetlight orange.

My love-hate relationship with the city is basically personified as the difference between night and day. You see a hub of activity when the sun’s out, where folks of all walks of life are encountered on every corner, and the buildings to the food stalls to the manhole covers exude culture and enrich the spirit with life. Once the sun sets, the spirit begins to drain. The city harms you without even touching you and makes you dread the very street you walked on a few hours before. The shadows are dangerous and everyone knows it.

And for me, I can’t remember the last time I willingly went out at night. If I were to get mugged, face-to-face with someone who had everything to gain from me and nothing to lose, the bad outcomes drafted and redrew themselves like a whiteboard in my head.

I passed a small office building where the curb ended, and stopped at the dip in the pavement. To my left, a familiar side street: Princess Alley. My normal shortcut by day to the coffee shop and the rest of downtown.

Imagine Moses parting the sea, and the narrow trench to walk through that appeared between two towers of vertical water. That was kind of how it looked and felt to cross through that street, at least by day. The sun passed in a near-perfect line overhead from east to west, and when it disappeared, there were only the faint, dull lights that were wired to shine from the building exteriors, only five in number. One was flickering like it wanted to burn out tonight. All of them were too high and spaced apart from each other to illuminate the ground properly, so patches of the void obscured any heaps of trash to walk around, or threats lying in wait. Could I walk those 90-some yards?

I rummaged through my backpack to maybe turn my cellphone into a light—dead of course.



Reaching back into the pocket I felt my keys, my wallet, and the cylindrical thing I used for self-defense. I took out the little canister and tried to read the label on it, the whole thing maybe about as far as I could spread my thumb from my index finger.

From the start-up company I had bought it from online, I knew it was advertised kind of like mace, but different in that it wasn't supposed to hurt who was sprayed, only "hamper" them. I skipped the directions and the warnings and placed the cap back into the depths of my bag, leaving the opened can within the outer side pocket; if I was going to face this, I wanted to be prepared. Another part of me relented and begged me to just go around the block and take the extra few minutes.

Just then I heard a teenager shout loud and nonchalant to somebody using a crude nickname from a distance. Like I was repelled from the source of the sound I steered myself into the alley, letting the darkness pull me in. I was in a fog at first, shuffling unsteadily to the light source like a moth trying to get its bearings. My eyes were adjusting though, sorting out the shades of black, of objects pushed to either side of the aisle. A plastic bag caught my shoe with a rustle and I shook it off with a noise of disturbed dry leaves.

Then something—somebody—reacted to the sound. It was within the cluster of milk crates, old wooden pallets and a trash can to the left just ahead of me, close enough that I could see a jump of motion and hear a metallic thump. After a pause, a voice between a drunken moan and a mewl.

"Huuuuh?~"

I expected a crash next, as per the formula for a horror movie, and it came, with a heavy tumble of glassware and planks. "Oof!" A feminine squeak, and out spilled the perpetrator, pitifully enough that for a second I was about to ask if they were alright.

But as the figure crawled out, I sighted the twisting shadow of a tail lifting itself up into the backdrop of light like a submarine periscope. She looked at her hands for a span, seemingly realized they were there, and straightened up to a stand with a flex of her limber legs. The woman was barefoot, wearing a petite pair of gym shorts and a matching grey tank, barely distinguishable in the gloom. Two triangles stood up like a bow from the bundle of tousled, lengthy black hair. The pair of yellow orbs fixated on me, belonging to a hungry jaguar, its gaze wavering as one step after another was taken, swaying her narrow buns.

The glint of her milky teeth became broader every time I glanced between her and my side as I hurriedly tried to fish out the mace from my pocket. To this disheveled, stray animal, every move of mine seemed to be studied intensely.

"Hey, just..." I tried to explain to the creature. "Step out of the way so I can..." Fearing the worst, my hand started rattling like I was priming a tiny, tiny can of spray paint.

"Play?!" The ears flicked, and with her mouth agape in curiosity she suddenly advanced towards me.

"Oh-ho no, you do not want to inhale this stuff," I warned her. "Y'hear me? Just back up...!"

She lunged then, and I teetered backwards and sprayed. We heard the mist spritz out and she stopped for a moment, blinked, and touched the moisture on her nose. Like nothing had happened, she just giggled as a fearless smile slowly reappeared. With arms outstretched this time she reared forwards, and by reflex I fired again—that was probably a mistake. I knew nothing about what exposing someone to twice the concentration would do.



She paused even longer this time and seized up slightly, only resulting in a quiet “Ha—chew!” The catgirl didn’t move, save for a little outward lean of the waist. I could see it happening: a bubble of skin unfurling, a patch of paleness separating her top from her trousers and widening it. She felt it for herself, her hands now rubbing furiously over her rounding belly, whining as she thrust it a hair further forwards and scrabbled her fingers over her navel.

Though I heard a hissing in the air, she only made confused squeaks as she ran her arms down underneath her bulging paunch and squeezed it like a sandbag. “Ahhh...! W-Waaah...” Next she tried swatting away with a curled hand at the balloon attached to her front, jostling and jiggling its weightlessness around. I was too busy staring in shock in the dark corridor, still lingering in the alley for the fear of being caught as the cause of this spectacle. When she suddenly staggered I made a hasty retreat again, and she flopped over and bounced comically on her yoga-ball stomach.

The catgirl grit her teeth in dismay, scooting her size on all-fours against the gravely pavement as the growth became faster and faster, squishing around her limbs, splaying her thighs. The stranger looked up for my help and yowled, now close enough for me to spot a small cluster of freckles on either cheek—all she seemed to lack was a coat of fur, a snout and whiskers from being an ordinary, albeit very irritated house cat.

But I couldn’t be moved for sympathy. “I’m sorry,” I hastily tried to explain, glancing at her tailtip flicking about. “But this is your own fault...! Maybe I could call a doctor—when I get home... I swear this wears off, I think...!” My mind shifted to putting the canister away back into my bag, or else a third spray on accident might as well cause her to burst and wake up the entire city block. The trouble this thing was causing was never worth using again, especially if it was going to leave me with a wriggling, bloated catperson to deal with.

Her mouth parted and her hands flew to her backside all of a sudden with the sound of ripping mesh. As her tiptoes began to leave the ground where she lay, her shorts surrendered down both sides. She gave her hips a profound shake and the shreds slipped off her bare cheeks. I couldn’t ignore how she raked her fingers through her soft flesh and let go to watch her curves wobble. Hiking her rear up higher, she then pressed her thighs down into the sprawling belly she balanced upon and crooned with new intrigue; I squeezed shut my eyes for the sake of decency.

“Nyaaah! Haaaahh...” A shrill squeal forced me to look again, just in time for the stretchiness of her tank to run out in dramatic fashion. Her breasts had swollen from practically flat to full beachballs, overflowing with her cleavage around the neckline, and the jutting nips nearly tore through the material completely, each shaped like birdies in a game of badminton. The shoulder straps crackled like velcro then snapped, leaving us both staring wordlessly at her air-ballooned mounds for a moment as they swayed.

The catgirl was just getting friskier, shifting her thickening arms and rolling her hands along the top of her breasts, smooshing them down into the curve of her stomach. Even prone she was up to my chest, leaving her jaws ajar to pant her satisfaction. I couldn’t stand her moans; she was going to attract attention if her ridiculous proportions hadn’t done so already...!

“Shh-shh-shh...!” I ran up and made contact with her for the first time to cover her mouth. It just elicited lewder, subdued squeaks above her whistling innards and rubberlike creaks as she squirmed. “Just be quiet ‘til this runs out. Please...!” She cooperated for a time even though I was sure she couldn’t understand me, idly kneading her breasts as her belly fought to dominate her frame, inching her ever upwards. But I cringed as she soon started to fool around, sticking out her tongue, swabbing it against the bridges between my fingers like she was part dog instead. The fact that I had my legs getting pushed



into by her stomach and my chest against the entirety of hers wasn't making this situation any less awkward.

"Stop it, you...!" I scolded, up on my toes as I leered into her tittering face. "Or else I'll leave you here to—" I caught myself. What was I even doing? I needed to run past her before she blocked the entire alleyway...!

Fanning away the saliva from my hand I drifted off to her left. "I'm sorry for all this again, but you have fun until help gets—"

"Nyieeeee!" The catgirl suddenly shrieked, her arm flapping about until her nails caught me and clung. I heard a rustle of her skin as her body rose, seemingly pitching forwards at the same time. I realized as we brushed together that she was starting to float, at the behest of her swelling which still kept carrying on exponentially.

"L-Leggo of me," I kept my voice down and begged, her head a good foot over mine. I tugged on her wrist, but she kept her fingers firmly sunken into the collar of my shirt, biting into my flesh. I was her only tether to the earth now as she whimpered, a tiny face in comparison to the broad shoulders and puffy back of her near-spherical frame. She was enormous—at least a small bedroom in volume, and she might just progress to a master suite if the chemical spray didn't slow down.

Somehow, I didn't feel in danger of drifting away myself, so I did her a rare favor and pulled on her arm instead, getting her to settle against the pavement with a gentle, echoing bounce. That seemed to stop her from hyperventilating for a moment, but she gave an uncomfortable moan as I heard a series of prolonged rattles and crunches; her sides wedged against the buildings and crushed many a loose object.

Higher she loomed, letting go of me once her arms shot out straight into empty air. At least she seemed content now, cozying her chin into her titanic breasts and purring, and that sound in her throat matched the hollowness of the groaning throughout her frame.

Just as I heard the mortar beginning to crack, and the rumbling, stretching, quaking noise of her body threatening to cause something to give out—she slowed and shrank slightly with a hiss that trailed off into the night; I could hear the hum of the city's pulse again.

The wall of a blimped catgirl was nearly up to a second story in height, and pinched between two immovable obstacles. She ignored how much in disbelief I was and wiggled her pair of bloated arms, laughing without a care. "Again!" she beamed. "More big!" I could imagine her tail swaying eagerly from behind her towering form.

But after considering such a thing, how was I going to get around her now? Though it had been a perilous five minutes or so, they were still wasted. And getting caught with someone naked and helpless like this—it didn't matter the individual. It'd land me in hot water.

So I raised my hand in an apologetic wave below her, and circled around in the same direction I meant to before. "Sorry about all this. Gotta get going now..."

She threw a small fit and fidgeted trying to rock herself around, whining as I disappeared out of view. I stepped as close I could to the alley wall and crouched, peering into the crevice made between her belly; woefully dark, the rest of the lights beyond were completely blotted out. I needed to know just how tight the fit would be if I decided to muscle through, and I pressed a hand into her side, feeling the smooth and plushy bloated skin.



“Hee!” came a distant squeak, a tremble throughout her dimensions. I sank my fingers in like squeezing a giant sponge, and then narrowing my shoulders, clutching the strap of my backpack on my left, I plunged in holding my breath. Easing up on pushing the pressurized catgirl for only a moment just made her skin sproing back out and shove me into the bricks.

Lowering my head, I just kind of plowed through, hearing the drag of rubber in my ears as my cheek chafed against her body. She must have really hung onto my shoulder as it burned from further contact. I fought to even drag one leg in front of the other as her hysterical laughter carried through her core, a form of torture for the both of us. The smothering, the shuddering, the pulsing all could’ve either massaged me or compressed me flat over time.

Naturally I tripped over a crate, and clawed my way past a trash bin in my rush to escape. I thought I had endured enough time compacted before in the middle seat on an airplane, but this was much worse. If I didn’t breathe now I’d suffocate underneath her; I gasped for just a sliver of air in comparison to all of it that was stuffed within her, and smelled the dust, the stagnancy—and something akin to pet dander. Soon after I started wheezing, miraculously I popped out from the corner of her gut on the other side.

Wiping my face of sweat I spun around and witnessed the catgirl from the back. From my estimate she was a bit elongated from having her width suppressed, a short zeppelin instead of a perfect sphere. Her buttocks were each the size of a dumpster, resting propped up on her mountainous underside with her two small feet kicking slowly. The charcoal tail was the flagpole resting atop the summit.

I sighed and backed away from her shimmering in what little moonlight there was to offer, then I dashed along the stretch of Princess Alley that remained and emerged on the street. A cement sidewalk underfoot again was like a finish line where I could fill my lungs.

I turned and blanched as I walked straight into a teenager with his head down at his phone. He glanced up with his ghostly-lit visage and glared as I kept going.

“Yo, the fuck you doing?”

I just grinned, surprisingly, as I strode away backwards. “Just taking a shortcut.” The strangers of the night could throw no more curveballs—or punches—at me at this point. We quickly went our separate ways wanting to be out of each other’s faces, but he didn’t notice at all what lay in wait in the alley as he passed.

It was a brisk but otherwise uneventful walk for another half-mile to my apartment.

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The next morning, I watched the national news with an ice pack pressed to my shoulder, hearing the story about a catgirl found swollen up in a city alleyway, and how there had to be a team of trained professionals and a small crane present to extract the giggling animal out from between the buildings. Every angle of her goods was tactfully blurred out.

Reporters speculated that a little-known spray to the public was responsible for her transformation; some went further to suggest it was only a matter of time before the product was banned. A few monster advocate groups would voice questions about how anyone could just be left there in that state, but there didn’t seem to be any witnesses who could attest to how it happened or be put on the spot for the blame.



Austen also got in touch with me during that week if I'd attend a rally for monster girl rights at the downtown public square. As much as his enthusiasm was usually contagious, I politely passed on the event.

Upon reflection, the emerging theme in a majority of my stories is that monster girls are troublesome parts of daily life, but I think they're fortunately good inflation subjects. I feel with this entry it starts to solidify a universe where ordinary people struggle to adapt to these exotic females living among them. If expansion shenanigans keep happening like these, at least one online community knows how to embrace them. Here's to continue trying to give more representation in the literature!

Thank you so much for reading.

[Project: heyna-bonics / gseafasegfoewanbfadheiuwqp]

