

~~Ah, of course.~~

~~JERRY~~



TAWNY

I needed to fortify myself. You want in?

JERRY

Sure, why not? Allie got cranberry juice.

TAWNY

What, are you in middle school?

(She pours three shots in paper cups.)

So. You're friends of Charlotte's?

JERRY

Oh, yes.

DR. TIM

We've known Charlotte for years. I'm her veterinarian.

TAWNY

Ah.

DR. TIM

She has two cats. Himalayans.

TAWNY moans.

JERRY

Astrid and Perseus, she calls them. They're quite-

TAWNY moans again. A wail.

DR. TIM

Are you... are you alright?

TAWNY

I'm sorry- no- I just lost my cat this week.

DR. TIM

Oh, I'm so sorry.

TAWNY

And no one can tell I'm grieving because my dermatologist didn't tell me not to get in the hot tub!

JERRY

Well I'm... I'm sure what you just said makes sense to you.

TAWNY*(producing her phone, showing photos)*

Her name was Sheila. She was a remarkable animal.

JERRY*(horrified)*

Dear god, how old was that cat?

DR. TIM

Jerry.

JERRY

I'm sorry, I mean-

(horrified again)

How old was that cat?

TAWNY

She was twenty-two.

DR. TIM

Dear god!

(immediately recovers)

It sounds like Sheila had a very full life.

TAWNY

Nobody takes me seriously- fine, Shelia started a few fires here and there, her meow sounded like a strangled scream, she spent the last six years of her life in front of the dishwasher, I had to check her a couple times a day to make sure she was still alive. But my daughter grew up and left, a parade of useless men passed by... Shelia was *there*. I could count on that miserable animal, now I don't have that. And even if you can't see it, I am distraught.

JERRY

Well of course you are.

DR. TIM

Love for animals is just different- it's the best version of what we have to give. Animals teach us how to let our guard down and surrender to fearless devotion. That's the divine exchange between pets and their people. We give them safety and comfort, and they teach us how to be better. And when they take their leave, the lesson remains. Because of that cat, you know without question just how much you're capable of loving, and being loved. What a wonderful gift from your little friend.

JERRY

That's really beautiful, Tim.

*TAWNY lets out a sob, her face contorting in despair.*