

Seeking Smoky

Smoky licked her paws then washed one ear, then the other. She twitched her whiskers and looked around her from where she was sitting in her basket.

Silence.

Ah, this was the life, she mused. A basket to herself. No one to bother her, so she could curl up and go to sleep.

Smoky laid down and rested her head on her paws. This life was far better and cosier than her previous one in that shop. She was cared for and fed more here.

She closed her eyes as she thought of her new family.

She was just dreaming of a nice bowl of milk when she twitched her ear as she thought she heard her name being mentioned.

Smoky opened one eye and saw her young mistress come into the room with two other people as tall as her.

It must've been her that had spoken her name, Smoky mused, as she opened the other eye and saw her young mistress and her two friends walk towards her.

Then she saw the older female of the family follow them in and sit down. So much for her sleep.

As she watched her young mistress, whom she heard the others call Amy, approach her, she heard the word play. Now that sounded like fun.

Smoky sat up even more and meowed.

She watched the older woman get things out of cupboards and guessed that she'd be cooking food. That sounded an even better idea. But then the lady said to Amy, "Why don't you take her into the living room, so you're not in my way?"

Oh no, she didn't want that. She wanted to be by the warmth and the smells. You're not taking me anywhere, Smoky was determined and placed her claws into her blanket.

So when Amy picked up Smoky, the blanket was lifted up with Smoky too.

“Come on, Smoky, be good for me, please. Let go of the blanket,” Amy told Smoky.

No, I don’t want to, Smoky silently told Amy, but had to relent when Amy gently prised the blanket from her claws.

You’d better make up for that, Smoky meowed to Amy. And sure enough, when they went into the living room, she placed Smoky onto the carpet.

Not sure what she was meant to do now, Smoky looked from one girl to the other until she heard one of Amy’s friends, whom she thought was called Becky, say, “Ah, she’s cute.”

Smoky liked this girl and meowed at her.

Amy said, “I think she heard you and is agreeing.”

“Can I hold her?” Becky asked.

Smoky looked to Amy then to Becky and back to Amy.

“Yes, if you’re gentle with her,” she heard Amy say.

Be gentle with me like Amy says, she pleaded with Becky with her eyes.

“She seems to like me. I can feel her purring through my hands,” Becky said, giggling.

Then stroked her a few times.

Smoky liked this attention, and didn’t want it to stop. Carry on, she mused.

“Can I hold her now, Amy?” Smoky heard the other girl ask.

What is this? Smoky thought. I’m not a parcel in a game, can’t you leave me where I am. I like this Becky girl. But of course she couldn’t talk to them and she was handed over to Natalie.

Smoky meowed.

“I’m not sure if she likes being passed around,” Amy said hearing the meow.

No, I don’t, Smoky thought. You tell her, mistress.

“Let me take her for now as she’s used to me.”

Thank you. Oh, thank you, mistress Amy.

So Natalie passed Smoky back to Amy, who began stroking Smoky softly. Now this was more like it should be, Smoky purred

Amy said, “She’s happy again. She’s really funny when she chases after things. I’ll show you,” and she got up and fetched a ping-pong ball and a piece of string.

Smoky pricked her ears up at the words ping-pong and string. Now what was Amy up to. She watched Amy get out a small round white ball and a thin piece of something, then place them in front of her.

Smoky watched as Amy rolled the ping-pong ball near to her paws. Smoky looked at her. not sure what to do, but when Amy pushed the ball nearer to her, Smoky patted the ball with her paws, so the ball moved away.

What kind of game was this? Easy, she thought. Then she frowned as she heard the girls laugh at her.

She didn’t like this game anymore. How dare the girls laugh at her.

Then taking the ball away, Amy dangled the piece of string on the carpet in front of Smoky saying, “Watch this.”

Now what was she up to?

Smoky eyed the piece of whatever it was. It looked like a worm to her.

She went to pounce on the string, and just as she went to paw it, Amy pulled it further away from her.

Hey, what are you doing? I wanted that. Come back here, she said and Smoky chased after it. This happened a few times until finally Amy picked Smoky up saying, “You’re so cute, aren’t you?”

In answer, Smoky purred. Her way of saying, of course I am.

Amy started stroking Smoky, and with the games she fell asleep.

By then it was time for dinner, and the girls decided to put her back into her basket. Smoky was grateful for this and closed her eyes.

When she opened her eyes again, Smoky looked around the room and saw that she was on her own.

Now, where could she go? What could she do? Sitting up, then treading out of her basket, Smoky padded around the room.

She wanted a bit of fun but couldn't see any to be had until she saw it. It was a round plastic thing and was open at the top. She approached it and through the holes in the side of it, she pawed the contents.

Softness. That looked comfy and somewhere she could hide. That was it. She could hide from the family. Make them aware that she didn't like being laughed at and teased. She looked at the height of it. Could she jump up and in to it in one go? Worth a try. Here I go, she told herself and with one almighty leap, went up in the air and straight into the thing, onto softness.

Yes, she'd made it. Right, now to hide and go to sleep. That leap had taken a lot of energy.

Smoky burrowed in way under the clothes – it was a laundry basket, and closed her eyes.

She was dreaming that her people family were looked around the house and were calling her as if they thought she was lost.

Her name got louder and louder until Smoky twitched one ear and realised that she hadn't been dreaming and it was real.

Her name was being called out and she could feel the floor vibrate as people moved about.

They did think she was lost. Oh no, she hadn't meant them to think that.

She listened to what they said.

“Mum, have you seen Smoky recently? She’s not in her basket where we left her before dinner. Becky and Natalie wanted to say goodbye to her,” - Amy.

“I can’t say I have, but she can’t have gone that far. She’s only a kitten. Let’s look in each room and call her. She usually appears when we call her name,” - the lady.

What should she do? Meow to let them know where she was. Smoky opened her mouth to meow but heard the voices move away. Where were they going? It was only meant to be a bit of fun, she hadn’t meant for them to be upset.

Smoky then heard Amy wail, “Oh, where is she? Where could she be?”

Oh no, she’d got her young mistress very upset. She had to let her know where she was and she was OK, so she meowed.

She waited to see if anyone had heard him, then she guessed that they had because she heard Becky say, “Did you hear that? I thought I heard a meow then.”

“Where?” Amy asked.

“Ssh,” her mother said, “let’s listen.”

Smoky let out a louder meow to say I’m in here.

“I think it’s coming from the kitchen,” Natalie said.

That’s right, I’m in here. Come and find me, please.

He then heard Amy say, “But we’ve looked there.” There was a pause before Smoky heard her say, “What if she’s strayed into a cupboard? Let’s look in all the cupboards.”

No, not in there, Smoky wanted to shout out, in here, in this round thing.

She waited until she could sense that someone was close to where she was and when she had that feeling, let rip with a roaring meow.

That did it because she heard the lady say, “Ah, I think I know where our hiding kitten is,” and lifting the clothes off from the kitten said, “Girls, I’ve found Smoky.”

“Where? Where?” Amy squealed.

Here. Here, Smoky said, sitting up at last.

Her mum pointed into the laundry basket.

Amy peered in and there was Smoky curled up in all the clothes inside.

Amy put her hand in and gently lifted Smoky out saying, “How on earth did you get in there, eh? You daft thing.”

For answer, Smoky lifted her head, blinked at Amy and meowed.

“Yes, and we love you, too, and you know that, don’t you?” Amy told the kitten.

They all laughed.

Smoky meowed, determined to have the last say.