

PEPPER'S HOUSE

Written by

Sarah Elizabeth McVicker

FADE IN.

INT. HOUSE-DAY

PEPPER, an 18 year old cat, lazes around the house. She sleeps and sunbathes in front of a window in the living room.

She wakes up from her nap, stretches out her legs, and paws at the curtains. She cries louder and louder to wake up JULIA, mid 20s, to feed her.

PEPPER (V.O.)
Hey! Hey! Feed me! It's way past my
eating time! I was hungry hours
ago! Wake up!

Julia rolls over in bed and puts a pillow over her head. Pepper continues to whine and paws at Julia's body.

PEPPER (V.O.)
I will so put a hairball near your
slippers.

Julia finally wakes up to a blaring alarm.

PEPPER (V.O.)
Oh so you'll wake up to that, but
not me? Oh wow, I must be so
important in your life.

Julia sits up and begins crying into her hands.

PEPPER (V.O.)
Oh no not again. Why are you always
crying?

Pepper rubs her head on Julia's arm. Julia pets Pepper back with a slight grin.

Pepper leads Julia to the LAUNDRY ROOM where her food and water bowl are. She meows the whole way and stops to make sure that Julia is still behind her.

PEPPER (V.O.)
What are you doing? Hurry up.

Julia snaps open a can of wet cat food, shakes it into the bowl, and puts it down in front of Pepper.

JULIA
Here you go pooter-bear.

She wipes tears off her cheek with the back of her hand.

PEPPER (V.O.)
Can't you find anything better to
call me? Oh, whatever this salmon
is so good.

Once Pepper finishes eating she has a bolt of energy and runs
all over the house back and forth.

She wraps up in her favorite spot on Julia's bed and takes a
nap.

Julia gets ready to leave and gives Pepper a kiss on the
head. Pepper side eyes her in disgust.

Pepper watches telenovelas, screams, and throws Swedish Fish
at the TV screen.

Now that Julia is gone, Pepper speaks aloud.

PEPPER
How dare you Hector! Rosa loved
you! Carmen just wants your money.

Pepper hears the door unlock, she rushes to turn off the
remote with her paw, sweeps the Swedish Fish under a pillow
with her tail. She acts asleep.

Pepper hears a jingling noise, pouncing footsteps, and heavy
breathing coming from the kitchen. She opens one eye.

Julia enters the room.

JULIA
Hey Pepper, I have a surprise.

PEPPER (V.O.)
Oh God last time you said that you
brought a boy home. I didn't like
him, but you refused to believe me
he wasn't good for you, but no, no
one listens to Pepper.

Pepper is not excited.

Julia picks up Pepper and takes her into the KITHCEN.

Pepper's eyes grow wide.

PEPPER (V.O.)
That is not a boy.

Pepper locks eyes with HONEY, 5 months, a German Shepherd puppy with black and tan marks on her face and one ear that leans over almost touching the other ear that stands straight up with a long and bushy tail. She is about three times the size of Pepper but with loads of vitality.

Pepper's hair stands up and she clings onto Julia.

JULIA

Pepper it's ok. This is Honey, my new emotional support animal. Dr. Roberts recommended her for my anxiety disorder. She's friendly. She just wants to meet you.

Julia gets Pepper closer to Honey.

Honey sniffs Pepper. Pepper hisses at Honey. Honey retreats, but then is curious and sniffs Pepper again.

Pepper runs up Julia's body. Julia tries to hold onto her but Pepper slips through her arms.

Pepper races back to Julia's bedroom. She uses her tail to slam the door.

Julia brushes the cat hair off of her shirt, face, and fixes her hair. She pets Honey.

JULIA (CONT'D)

She'll come around. Let's go for a walk.

Julia grabs the leash. Her and Honey leave the house for a walk.

INT. HOME - DAY

Julia and Honey return. Honey stretches out in her bed.

Julia notices Pepper is outside up in a tree through the window. Julia calls her from the screened porch.

JULIA

Pepper.

Pepper looks at Julia then turns away upset. She thinks of a plan while twirling a leaf in her paw.

PEPPER

How to get rid of that mutt. Let's see.

(MORE)

PEPPER (CONT'D)

I could poison her food, no no
that's too harsh, I'm too nice to
kill her. How about making it seem
like she's got the runs?

Pepper stops for a minute.

PEPPER (CONT'D)

I know. I'll just make her tired of
being here. So tired that she'll
have to runaway.

Pepper rolls on her back and starts an evil laugh but gets
choked up by her own spit.

She rolls off the branch onto the ground, she coughs, and
catches her breath. She looks up annoyed at the branch.

INT.JULIA'S ROOM - DAY

The next morning Julia wakes up and sees that Pepper is not
curled up next to her like usual. Before leaving for work she
gives love to Honey and looks over at Pepper.

JULIA

Bye Honey. Bye Pepper. Y'all be
good.

Honey walks over to Pepper and wants to greet her.

Pepper hisses and paws at her, but she has no front claws.

Honey is a little threatened but continues to sniff.

EXT. BACKYARD - DAY

Pepper pushes her way through a hole she scratched in the
screened porch hidden behind a chair.

Honey follows her, pushes over the chair, and makes the hole
bigger. Pepper glares at Honey.

PEPPER

No! No! You stay away from me mutt!

Pepper jumps up on the patio furniture.

Honey begins playing with a log.

PEPPER (CONT'D)

Let the games begin.

BEGIN MONTAGE- OVER A FEW DAYS

Pepper unrolls a roll of toilet paper and makes it look like Honey did it.

Julia comes home and knows it was Pepper's fault.

Pepper is upset and looks over at Honey. She rolls her eyes.

Pepper hides behind a door and jumps out to scare Honey.

Honey jumps back and runs away with her tail between her legs.

Pepper lays on her back and laughs.

Honey chases Pepper outside.

Pepper goes under a tree branch and escapes. Honey runs into the branch.

Pepper offers Honey a piece of gum, Honey grabs it with her mouth. Honey is shocked by the fake gum, jumps back, and begins to whimper.

Julia is upset and crying. Honey licks her face. Pepper sees from a distance and sighs.

Pepper and Honey are outside. Pepper hangs from a branch and drops water balloons on top of Honey's head.

Honey thinks it's a game and starts to dodge the water balloons. She wants Pepper to continue.

Pepper angrily pushes over the bucket that houses the balloons. The bucket lands on Honey's head and gets stuck.

Pepper gives Honey a peace offering of whip cream in a pie crust.

Honey eats it, gets sick, and leaves Julia a surprise in the kitchen. Julia takes her outside.

Pepper taunts Honey from a window inside the house.

Honey is sad.

END MONTAGE.

INT. HOUSE-DAY

Julia and Pepper wake. Julia gets ready to take Honey for a walk. She frantically looks for her under the couch, in the bathroom, and calls for her outside.

JULIA

Honey. Honey. Come here girl.

Julia gets fidgety, walks back and forth, and hyperventilates. She slumps down on the couch and cries.

JULIA (CONT'D)

No! No! Why?

PEPPER (V.O.)

Yes, my plan worked.

Pepper walks over to Julia and rubs her head on Julia's leg.

PEPPER (V.O.)

Hey no need to get upset. We don't need her anyway.

Julia's crying intensifies. She tries to speak through her tears.

JULIA

I need her.

Pepper feels bad, but not that bad.

PEPPER (V.O.)

Oh gosh, I guess I have to fix this.

EXT. OUTSIDE - NIGHT

Pepper searches for Honey. She walks the streets of the neighborhood.

PEPPER

Where are you mutt? Honey? Oh come on I don't have all night.

She walks down an alley and hears whimpering from behind a dumpster.

PEPPER (CONT'D)
 Geez, you look a hot mess. Listen
 Julia really misses you so I guess
 I have to put up with your over
 hyperactive young-in tendencies.
 Let's go.

Honey hesitate to get up.

PEPPER (CONT'D)
 I promise I won't play tricks on
 you anymore... sometimes.

Honey gets up and licks Pepper's face.

PEPPER (CONT'D)
 Alright. Alright. Alright! Enough.
 I don't like you that much.

They walk back to the house. Pepper gives Honey a few rules.

PEPPER (CONT'D)
 Listen, if we are going to keep the
 peace there needs to be some rules.
 Just don't get in my way and we
 should be fine.

Honey smiles, her tongue hangs out the side, and her floppy
 ear flops.

INT.HOUSE - NIGHT

Pepper and Honey come in the house from the screened-in
 porch. Pepper can hear Julia sniffing. She meows.

JULIA
 Pepper I just fed you.

Pepper continues to cry.

Julia comes out from her room into the LIVING ROOM.

JULIA (CONT'D)
 Pepper what do you-

Julia sees Honey, runs to her, and hugs her tightly.

JULIA (CONT'D)
 I thought I lost you.

Julia turns to Pepper.

JULIA (CONT'D)

I'm so happy.

She pulls them both in for a big family group hug.

Pepper is not thrilled and tries to push away.

Honey licks Pepper's face.

FADE OUT.