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popular coffeehouse, Lindsay's wages and tips would never bring material wealth but afforded fertile social soil in which the flowers of many friendships had bloomed. Many of Lindsay's acquaintances were animal lovers as well. This, good reader, is how our hero came to live, not with Lindsay, but with Lindsey...

Lindsey, whom also worked as a barista in the same coffeeshop as Lindsay, was aware of the situation from the beginning and eventually agreed to take on one of the sweet children, even though she had never before lived with a pet. Lindsay brought the largest male kitten of the litter to Lindsey, with her only instruction being in regards to his christening: "Keep it literary." The book Lindsey happened to be reading at the time was penned by a man with the first name of "Tobias," and, so, our hero had found his name.

Tobias' life took on at once the sort of Bohemian novelty his mother had seemingly craved, only Tobias' Lindsay was complicit, even catalytic, in his roaming. They moved, together, from place to place and, though Lindsey had never learned the importance of human doting on a young animal, the two of them developed a. . . mutual respect, somewhat devoid of sentiment. Lindsey, a hard-worker and dedicated student, hadn't much time to layabout or frolic. The mornings were many she would fill Tobias' food and water bowls before leaving home for 12 hours or more. When she was home, her studies and assignments kept her at the computer. As woeful as this may seem, empathetic reader, know that one of Tobias' favorite games was born of this inattention. To keep Tobias from bothering her, Lindsey would throw objects (usually the white pull tab from modern cartons of orange juice) for Tobias to retrieve. He thus became one of the few cats in the world who can and will play fetch. He is also smart and strong enough to open cabinets, doors and drawers.

As often happens with most highly intelligent creatures passing solitary days, particularly those with less-than-edifying maternal relationships, Tobias eventually developed a sullen, even surly, outlook on life and any other living being who didn't walk, talk, look and smell like Lindsey. This attitude had disastrous results for one creature: a typically optimistic, likely asthmatic, no doubt incredibly obnoxious pug. One scratched cornea later, and a veterinarian deemed Tobias "a cat in need of declawing if ever there was one." Notoriety's consequences are sometimes painful. . . emasculating. . . Tobias endured the surgery but came through with something to prove; he was still a man, damn it! Unfortunately, Tobias is a man cat in a female human's world. . . and circumstances beyond his control were looming. Lindsey had signed the lease on a new place, a house with a strict no-pets policy...

My name is Lotus, reader. I adopted Tobias at this point in the story, in 2007. My love for animals wouldn't allow me to leave his future uncertain and I already had the sweetest kitty in the world who was also black! But, as you may guess, Tobias and my cat were not to become friends. Tobias came from a house where he received little to no affection or even attention. When I first brought him home, he would not engage in any physical contact with me and was aggressive towards my other cat. Now, both cats (mostly) tolerate each other and Tobias is a snuggle/purring machine. He will crawl in your lap, make biscuits on your tummy and he LOVES to sleep at the foot of the bed every night. He craves affection

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because he never received it while young. Accordingly, he is suspicious of any other animal in the home, seeing them as a potential threat to his proper share of love. Tobias would do well to live in a home where he can be your one and only.

Are you in need of a loyal companion, of a higher intelligence than you may be accustomed to in a feline? Please respond and we will arrange a time for you and Tobias to meet. Thank you so much for.