

A Cat in a Pack of Toms

by nata

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Chapter 1 of 1

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When Xenophilius picked up the *Daily Prophet* in the morning to check out his competition, he sputtered his tea all over a picture of his daughter on the front cover.

Again.

The only difference from yesterday being that she was now portrayed with a bare-chested Ron. She straddled his upper thigh, head thrown back, their pelvises locked together. Ron held her to him with one hand on the small of her back and with the other pulling her shoulder down from behind, staring at her breasts. They were thrusting.

"Luna!"

The house echoed his shout.

He tried again to the same effect.

Resigning to the inevitable, he looked to a clock hanging over his breakfast. Any minute now.

The banging on his door came before he managed to eat his eggs.

"Yes, yes, I'm coming," he said, but instead of walking towards the front door, he returned to the kitchen and put the kettle on the stove. As the water started to boil, he fixed the tea. Only once tea seeped, he went to get the door.

"Tea, Molly?"

Molly stood before him with her fists at her hips, pouting. Xenophilius thought he'd seen her stomp, but she always denied it, saying that he had no way of seeing her feet under her skirts. Which was true enough, he admitted.

"Did you make it fresh?"

"Of course."

"Yours is on the paper, I presume."

Xenophilus simply shrugged. "Children."

"I've had enough of this, Xeno. We have to stop them."

"You keep saying that. As if anything we say ever worked."

Molly sat down at the table, siphoning the spilled tea and drying the remnants of the paper. She looked at Xenophilus critically and cast a warming charm on his breakfast.

"That's no excuse," she said.

"Arthur says it's a form of art. You should support *him*, at least." Xenophilus brought over two mugs, rich with aroma.

"Don't blackmail me, young man. If they only wouldn't do it outside."

Xenophilus giggled. "They need the space. But I'm happy they moved over to your house. Your troop has an uncanny need to stampede around too early in the mornings, demanding food after a busy night."

"Percy promised that when they're good enough, they'd earn enough Galleons for a new roof."

"If Percy says so."

"You know, Xeno, it wouldn't be this bad," Molly pointed to the offending paper, "if Luna wasn't with them. She is the only cat in a pack of toms. It's supposed to be all cats and a tom."

"Would it matter? When they start to gyrate together, that's bound to attract the reporters."

"George says that photos from rehearsals are great for promotion."

"They are. People will want to see them," Xenophilus said a bit too quietly to sound casually conversational.

Molly caught on. "It's you!"

"Molly, I..."

"How could you? Ridiculing us all like this! It's your daughter, Xeno! How could you do that to her?"

"I didn't. That's a nice dip, that pose in the paper today. The *Prophet* changed the picture. They cut the dip and shortened the rewind charm. See? It rewinds with each thrust."

Molly frowned, but consented to pick up the paper and study the picture. Indeed, there was a telltale jerk as Ron's and Luna's groins connected. Two pink spots appeared on Molly's cheeks, watching her youngest son all grown up.

"All readers will pay to come see them perform the musical. You'll see. You'll get a new roof, Molly, and maybe even a facade for the whole house."

"All right, Xeno. I'll forgive you. But I'm going to want your tea every day until their premiere."

Xenophilus beamed and hugged his long-time neighbor. As he let go, he said, "Great! Now, I've a stack of photographs here. Let's pick something to send the *Prophet* for tomorrow."

A/N: Thanks to Karelia for beta-reading this story.

Muse Amusant's prompt: A reality programme, Oddities of Ottery, feeds wizarding Britain's appetite for scandal.

The story is based on the musical Cats.