Willa & Panda 1

DO NOT REPRODUCE

WILLA

Who are you talking to?

PANDA

Uhh...don't worry about it.

Have you ever felt like the outside is trying to kill you? And the only safe place to be is your own home where you know exactly where you're supposed to go to the bathroom and when your food bowl ought to get refilled and there are no large BIRDS there and the air is...the air is what you would expect. Have you ever felt like that?

WILLA

Yes.

PANDA

It's nice to be out here again though. I like it. It's uh...you know, refreshing.
I am having fun!
Yeah.
...

To prove how much fun she's having, PANDA goes to scratch a porch chair, causing a throw pillow to fall off it and scare her. It's embarrassing.

WILLA

Are you okay?

Start

PANDA

I need to go back inside now. Can you...?

PANDA gestures for WILLA to open the screen door.

WILLA

Wait. Can I hear you because I've reached some upper echelon of loneliness?

PANDA

I don't know. But if so, that is bleak.

WILLA

You're not very tactful.

PANDA

I'm a black and white cat.

WILLA

Panda, if you're not going to give me some profound message from the animal world, I think we have to try to go back to the way things were.

PANDA

Oh.

WILLA

I'm sorry.

PANDA

Don't be. You were a good listener.
You'll be a good mother.

WILLA

Thank you.
You're...you're a good cat.

PANDA

I don't care.
So.

They make intense eye contact.

PANDA

Meow?

WILLA gives PANDA a look.

PANDA
(More convincing)

Meow.

WILLA

It's not working. You just sound like person saying Meow.

PANDA

I need to go inside!

WILLA moves to open the door for PANDA but pauses suddenly, feeling a contraction.

PANDA

Hello?

WILLA

No no no...

PANDA

The door...?

WILLA

This isn't supposed to be happening like this. I'm here all alone.

PANDA

Rude.

WILLA

Kai and I did everything to try to be ready, you know? Like I always thought preparation was the key to everything. I mean I had all these *plans.*

PANDA

Planning is for squirrels. Cats make no plans.

WILLA

That isn't helpful! And I knew, I mean of course I knew that you can't plan for everything but I thought that the things you planned for would help, you know, make it okay that surprises cropped up but then our mailman died.

PANDA

Oh. Were you...close?

[redacted]

WILLA

No, I don't even know him, he's just my mailman. But I was talking to my neighbor Mary Jane, who just knows everything, and she said our mailman died. She said he had the virus and "He's been touching all our mail, just think about that." And ever since then I've been just trying really hard not to think about that. And now I'm supposed to let this baby out of my body into...into *this*? And Kai isn't even *here?*

PANDA

Perhaps she's out hunting.

WILLA

People don't do that, you dumb cat!

PANDA

Maybe she is out hunting for the thing that will make her a good mother. She doesn't know yet that the thing is you.

WILLA

...

PANDA

I think I have it. I might be able to help you. And then maybe this will all go back to normal. I mean I'll still know absolutely everything about you of course, but I'll have my secrets again. Two birds, one cat.

WILLA

How?

PANDA

Like you said, a profound message from the Animal World. It's just the world really. You're all part of it whether we like it or not.

WILLA

What are you talking about?

PANDA

I can sense her.

WILLA

Sense her?

PANDA

At a table outside a closed Starbucks, a human woman watches a storm cloud move closer. She is crying and she never cries. But there are big tears soaking the mask on her face and she is afraid to take it off to blow her nose. She is crying because she is frightened. She doesn't think the baby is safe. She doesn't think she can protect her. She thinks you are better off alone but she has nowhere to go if not home to her mate. She is waiting for you to call her. She is waiting to hear the words "Come back."

WILLA

Is that for real?
I've been calling her. I called her. She didn't answer.

PANDA

This time will be different. The raindrops are starting to fall. She is walking back to her car.

-End

WILLA takes out her phone and calls Kai.