

## **'CATSAWAY' (feature animation) - TREATMENT by Phil Parker (SAMPLE)**

**NOTE:** In this story world:

- House cats can understand humans and read their language
- Street cats cannot
- Humans cannot understand cat language

### **ACT 1: BEGIN SEQUENCE A ( 1 OF 10)**

**INSIDE NICE HOME:** ANBAR is a charming house cat who enjoys the luxuries of his owner's home. With a wink and a confident smile, he shows his Arabian Mau cat GIRLFRIEND his mastery of an espresso machine, an electric can opener and an automatic shoe polisher. She rolls her eyes and smiles, indulgently. She and Anbar are obviously in love. Not so impressed by his antics though, is her father, BOMBAY CAT, who gives Anbar a disapproving scowl as he shows off for his daughter.

**OUTSIDE NICE HOME:** Later, Anbar and his girlfriend are outside for a walk when they notice, across a busy street, an angry shop owner trying to swat an alley cat with a broom. Anbar's girlfriend wants to help the cat, but Anbar warns against it. They shouldn't get involved. She's disappointed in him. "What if you were a homeless alley cat? Wouldn't you want someone to help you?" Anbar can't bring himself to cross the dangerous traffic to help the cat, so she goes without him. Halfway across, a crazy driver comes out of nowhere! A horrified Anbar YELLS out a warning, but it's too late! A CAR HORN BLARES ---

### **DAY 1 - NIGHT**

**UNDER A BRIDGE:** Anbar wakes up! He's been dreaming of the past! We can tell it's the past because now Anbar no longer looks like the carefree cat from his dream. He's dishevelled; his hair, a mess; his clothes, dirty; his slim body has a pot belly. He's sleeping under a bridge among the trash; using a ratty backpack for a pillow and a newspaper for a blanket.

Staring at him when he wakes up, is OWL - a suspicious, cynical type who likes to know everyone's business. He asks Anbar why a house cat is sleeping under a bridge. Anbar resents the question and tells him to go away. He puts his newspaper into his backpack and heads out, but Owl persists. He says he sees a mystery in Anbar – his general appearance is that of a dirty alley cat, but his shoes are polished and he keeps a newspaper in his pack. **"Things we can see on the outside are rarely tell the whole truth on the inside,"** Owl pontificates. Anbar's had enough of Owl and scares him away with a SCREECH.

**DITCH BY SIDE OF ROAD:** Anbar trudges on through the late night feeling sorry for himself, when a passing car throws an apple core out a window and it lands on top of a drain hole cove next to him. Starving, Anbar takes a bite. That's when he overhears two voices coming up through the drain. It's a man and woman talking. They're in love and talk of big plans to be together, which just makes Anbar more miserable. Suddenly, BOBCAT, King of the Ditch appears. He warns Anbar not to get too curious about those voices. "But who are they?" Anbar asks. Bob tells Anbar about RAGDOLL, the most beautiful feline in the city who lives in the Big House across the street, and the dangerous cat she's married to, a Mafia cat named SIAMESE. Through the grate, Anbar overhears Ragdoll say "My owner's car is here. I must get back to the house!"

That's when Anbar sees a big black SUV pull up to a huge security gate across the street. The gate opens and Anbar catches a glimpse of a long driveway leading to a beautiful mansion sitting on an island in a lake, before the gate closes again.

Anbar's mesmerized; he NEEDS to see more. Bob Cat, who has an ugly, crooked scar across his face tells Anbar, "I'd forget you ever saw that house if I were you." Anbar's not listening. He scampers up a tree, but it's not high enough to see over the house's security wall. Desperate, Anbar looks around - further back, behind the tree, he sees a hill with an old water tank on top.

**HILL/ TOP OF WATER TANK:** He races up the hill and climbs a ladder on the side of the water tank. From the top, in the orange light of predawn, he can see over the security wall to a mansion sitting on an island in the middle of a magnificent sparkling lake. Beside the house is a large solitary tree with wide, leafy branches. It all looks like paradise.

Owl flutters down and lands beside Anbar. He can see him dreaming of the Big House. "There's no way in there, unless you want to take on the Mafia." Anbar's smile dissolves, uncertainty in his eyes

"Who's this guy, Owl?" Anbar spins around and sees MJ CAT and JAZOOM RAT.

MJ's an optimist, always smiling and a bit naive. He believes people are good, but he'll need to learn to fight for himself if he really wants to live in peace. JAZOOM's the opposite - he's a worry-rat; he always believes the worst is going to happen so he makes his own plans, but he'll need to learn to look out for others if he really wants to survive.

Owl tells them Anbar's dreaming of the Big House. "That's a dangerous thing to do," warns Jazoom. "I'm just looking for a place to live," Anbar replies, defensively.

"Maybe Anbar can come live with us at Garbage Solitude," says MJ. Jazoom doubts Governor Zooz will let him in. You need to pay a tax to get in and Anbar doesn't look like he has anything that Zooz would want. A disappointed MJ wishes Anbar good luck and they leave.

**SIDE OF WATER TANK HILL:** On the west side of WATER TANK HILL, at the foot of the water tank, is GARBAGE SOLITUDE - home to a cool collection of discarded, retro household items; old, overturned trash bins and a community of twenty cats. In the center of Garbage Solitude is a small tent for their social and administrative activities.

That night, Anbar watches Garbage Solitude from a distance. Even though it's a junky place, the light and noise from inside is warm and inviting. Much better than the cold loneliness of living on the street. Looking miserable, Anbar returns to his place under the bridge to sleep.

**UNDER THE BRIDGE:** Anbar uses his backpack for a pillow and his newspaper for a blanket. Shivering and cold, he pulls the newspaper up over his head to hide from the world. THAT'S when he sees an advertisement printed on the inside of the newspaper. His eyes go WIDE, terrified. But then... an idea sparks in his mind. He packs up his stuff and heads out, back up the hill to Garbage Solitude.

**END SEQUENCE A/ BEGIN SEQUENCE B (2 OF 10) - approx. P.12**

