

The Cat That Walked By Himself

by Xanthe



This story archived at <http://www.xanthe.org/the-cat-that-walked-by-himself/>

Story Notes:

This story was inspired by this picture from Tumblr initially - I saw it and thought it looked like Mike cuddling a cat and then this idea just came to me, and I couldn't resist writing it. It was one of those lovely stories that completely flowed, and I finished it in one day (with extra editing time a few days later!). The idea took on a life of its own and evolved a long way beyond the picture. Harvey-the-cat doesn't look like this one in my story! I have to admit I'm no longer watching *Suits* but I do still love the boys from S1.



Thank you to [👤jaccigirl](#) and [👤flyingnorth](#) for loving this fic so much and encouraging me to post it, and a big special thank you to [👤tingreca](#) for beta.

Chapter 1 by Xanthe

But the wildest of all the wild animals was the Cat. He walked by himself, and all places were alike to him.

Rudyard Kipling

The legend went that everyone had once been able to transform into their soul animal. Certainly, everybody had a soul animal. Harvey's grandmother told him that in the old days all the people in the world could see each other's soul animal, just by looking into another person's eyes.

Over time, that ability had faded, and now only a few old bloodlines still possessed it - of which the Specters were one.

When Harvey met Jessica Pearson, what he saw first was the soul animal shining out of her eyes, a fierce, beautiful eagle, with hooded eyes and a predator's finely honed instincts. It was the predator in her that had attracted him, and made him feel at home and safe with her. She would always fly high and strike mercilessly, but he could think of nobody better to have on his side in a fight. With her, he'd be able to soar.

When he first met Donna, he didn't see the foxy woman in the glamorous tight dress, but the literal fox that dwelled within. She was a scavenger - scrappy but cunning. He liked her style, and he knew that she would make a devious ally.

The strange thing about Louis Litt, and it still took Harvey by surprise occasionally, was the shy dog inside that he tried so hard to hide. Harvey was no expert on different breeds of dog, but Louis appeared to be some kind of guard dog - maybe a Rottweiler - loyal to a chosen master, but always fearing the boot as much as he longed for a word of praise. Sometimes it was easy to forget the shy, loyal dog inside when the guard dog was barking so loudly and throwing his weight around. Harvey knew that the way to ensure Louis's loyalty was to take up the role of his master, throw him a bone every so often, and give him the occasional pat on the head.

Sometimes he could even be bothered to do it, too, but the problem was that his own nature often got in the way. When he looked in the mirror, Harvey saw a handsome black cat with white bib and toes and elegant white whiskers, gazing back from feral yellow eyes. Like Jessica, he was a predator, but what made him such a good closer was that he liked to play with his prey before dragging it home for everyone at Pearson Hardman to admire. That was in his nature, in his very soul, and a Specter of all people understood that you couldn't fight your nature - your soul shone in your eyes for all to see, if only they had the gift.

Harvey had the gift. Like all Specters, he could not only see the animal soul in himself and those around him, but he could also effect a physical change and become the creature his soul resembled. As a child, he'd changed often and usually for the purposes of mischief: to escape from lessons on boring days, and to run around the neighbourhood, learning people's loves, weaknesses, and passions. His natural sense of curiosity became even more

finely honed as he snooped into the lives of those around him, invading their privacy and stealing their secrets.

As he grew older, he changed into his soul form less, although sometimes it still suited him to learn about a rival's plans by being the handsome, tuxedo cat, sitting unnoticed outside their doors. He was the unseen visitor, lazing in the sun on the judge's window ledge, or the sleek presence under the table in some corporate boardroom, hoping an eagle-eyed secretary wouldn't see him and shoo him out.

Most often though, he would change for the sheer joy of expressing himself to his fullest extent. He chose all his apartments with this in mind, ensuring they all had floor to ceiling windows, so on sunny Sunday afternoons, when he was alone, he could change into his cat self and lounge around, soaking up the sun and giving himself a thorough wash.

Harvey prided himself on his plush black fur coat, and kept his white bib, toes and the tip of his tail scrupulously clean. He wasn't just any cat. He was the top cat, the king of the alleyways, and he walked with the swagger that befitted his station.

The Specter family gift inferred little privilege. It wasn't something you could earn money from, unless you were a horse, like Great Uncle Arthur, and could carry people around on your back. So, Harvey had chosen to become a lawyer, his feline curiosity and innate predatory instincts standing him in good stead for his profession. The good thing about having the gift was knowing who you really were, and what you were suited to. Harvey knew who he was - he was the cat that walked by himself, the Macavity of New York City, who prowled around his territory with confidence and pride, eliciting admiration and fear in equal measure. He didn't need anyone - cats were solitary creatures that liked their own company, after all, and Harvey guarded his own space zealously. Nobody got close to him, and he didn't get close to anyone, and that was just the way he liked it.

Until he met Mike.

If Harvey hadn't had the Specter gift for seeing into a person's soul and glimpsing the true self within, then he would have sent Mike Ross packing the minute he showed up for a job interview carrying a bag full of weed. The reason he didn't was because he looked into Mike's soul and saw something he'd never seen before - and it shocked him to his core.

He'd heard the legends, of course. His grandmother used to hold him between her forelegs and wash his furry kitten head with little rasps of her iguana tongue when he was only a child. It was she who had showed him how one could love a soul very different to oneself.

When they both changed back into human form, she would hold him close, rock him in her armchair, and tell him stories about the world that hardly anyone else had ever heard.

"People with this kind of soul animal are very rare," she told him. "I've never seen one, but I hear they do exist. There are maybe a handful of them out there, with a new one born only every generation."

“But I don’t understand.” Harvey turned curious eyes to gaze up at her. “How is it even possible? And how does it work?”

“Like I said, I have no idea. I’ve never met one. Maybe you will, one day, and if you do, it will be a remarkable thing. People with these souls are as special as they are rare. They often achieve great things - and those things can be terrible or beautiful, or sometimes both.”

Harvey had dismissed all this as simply myth and folklore, until he met Mike Ross.

Mike had stumbled into his room, all boyish charm, bad suit, and messy hair, and dropped his suitcase of weed all over the floor, and Harvey had been about kick him out when Mike had suddenly looked at him with those bright blue eyes, and Harvey had seen his soul animal... and stopped dead in astonishment.

This scruffy kid was one of those his grandmother had told him about, one of those rare, special souls, with the capacity to do great harm or great good.

For Mike Ross’s soul animal was... human.

Maybe it shouldn’t have been so surprising. Humans were animals too, after all, but it was so rare that Harvey could hardly believe it. Yet here it was, in front of his eyes. Mike’s human soul peeped out of him, the bizarre interlay of human on human robbing Harvey of speech for once in his life.

However, he was Harvey. Harvey the cat. Curiosity was in his very soul, and he knew he had to get to know this strange creature, to keep it by his side, study it, and learn its ways. Other people - people like Jessica, or Louis - would think it was madness. They didn’t have the Specter family gift for seeing a person’s soul form, so they couldn’t know how rare and exotic Mike was.

Mike Ross was a human whose soul animal took human form. No wonder Harvey would jump through all necessary hoops for this unique creature. He found himself offering Mike a job, anything to keep him close, so he could explore the nature of this once in a generation being.

His studies soon revealed that Mike’s human soul animal was both a help and a hindrance. Mike seemed to possess both human gifts and human weaknesses in double abundance. Humans might behave like complete idiots at times, but they were the cleverest life form on the planet, and Mike had the brain and memory to prove it. He also had a human capacity for self-indulgence, for whining, for believing himself special and hard done by, and for thinking only of himself. He was a social animal, though, as humans are. He longed for intimacy and affection, in double the measure of most, and sought it, as far as Harvey could see, in all the wrong places. He was both beautiful and frail, his double helping of humanity rendering him charmingly... well, human.

At first, Harvey kept this curious creature in his life for the sake of his own insatiable curiosity. He toyed with it, batting it around with his paws, learning how it worked and what

it was, and trying to figure out how he could use it for his own ends. Yet in the end, it was that very curiosity that was his undoing.

He barely noticed it at first. He was the cat that walked by himself, the king of New York City. He sometimes changed into cat form and ran around his apartment for half an hour just to experience the sheer exhilaration of leaping and chasing, sleek fur glossing over strong muscle and supple sinew, rippling, graceful and gorgeous. He was beautiful. He was a creature that others looked at and admired. He was Harvey-the-cat. He walked alone, and he definitely slept alone, except when he wanted sex.

Yet after a few months, he felt himself changing. He first noticed it one day when he glanced up from his work, saw Mike sitting on the sofa in his office, and had to repress an urge to go over to him, curl up on his lap, and fall asleep. It bothered him so much that he snarled at Mike to get out, ignoring Mike's hurt, bewildered face as he exited his office. Damn it! He wanted to tear his claws into Mike and bite him hard. Damn that stupid kid with the soul in human form!

A few days later, he watched Rachel place her hand on Mike's wrist and had the distinct urge to go over there and rub his head on Mike's arm, obliterating the rabbit scent of Rachel from his skin.

He started feeling a ridiculous impulse to show off around Mike. On one occasion, he grabbed a signed basketball from its display stand in his office and threw it in the air, then proceeded to perform a series of dizzying pirouettes with it, batting it around with his hands and making it spin, basking in Mike's admiring gaze. All went well until he tripped over a chair and sent the ball spinning into his record collection, causing the vinyl to go flying.

"I meant to do that," Harvey said smoothly, turning on his haunches and smoothing his hair down assiduously, to try and block out the humiliation.

That night he curled up miserably in his bed, wondering what on earth was happening to him. It was as if he was turning into something else. He got up and checked the mirror, but no... he was still a man with the soul of a cat. Just... a cat that was looking distinctly less feral.

The truth struck him, and he stared at himself in shock. He was being tamed! Nobody could tame a cat. Not an eagle, or a fox, or - God forbid! - a DOG. But Mike had a human soul, and humans had been taming cats for thousands of years, domesticating them to fit into their homes and lives, making them purr, and nestle, and crave the touch of loving human fingers tickling their tummies.

As Harvey gazed at himself, the shock gave way to horror. He was the cat that walked by himself! He was top cat, the plush king of New York City who toyed with his prey and drew admiring glances from friends and foes alike for his beauty, charm and ruthless strength. He wasn't tame. He was feral.

He sat down on the side of his bed, feeling very put out. This wasn't what he wanted. This wasn't what he'd planned when he'd taken Mike by the scruff of his scrawny little neck and

dragged him into Pearson Hardman to be his associate. He'd thought to study this interesting phenomenon, to play with it a little, and now he was finding that his curiosity had a very high price indeed.

He went into the office the next day intending to fire Mike. Only Mike looked at him with those sweet blue eyes, his pathetic human soul gazing sadly out from within, and Harvey found himself wondering how Mike would cope on his own. How would he earn a living? Who would bring him prey, and enforce the importance of wearing beautiful suits and keeping his hair glossy, if Harvey wasn't in his life? Who would keep the rats from gnawing at his toes, the spiders out of his bed, and skunks like Trevor from lurking on the edges of his life? Mike's soul was all too human, and he had no idea how to take care of the important things in life. He was too busy being smart and stupid at the same time, wallowing in self-pity, and getting lost in his own mixed-up emotions. He would be hopeless on his own. His entire history to date had proved that.

So Harvey hesitated, and Mike looked at him from those helpless blue eyes that always somehow got to Harvey, against his will, and he found himself not firing Mike, after all - although he did send him off to perform a particularly irksome errand in retribution.

Harvey's tail was flying only at half-mast when he got home and changed into his cat form. He sat on his own sofa forlornly, and rested his chin on his paws. He couldn't be bothered to wash or eat, and over the next few days his coat, which he usually kept so scrupulously clean, became scruffy and unkempt. When he was in human form at work, people asked if he was ill, as he had dark shadows under his eyes and his suits no longer fit him as well as they should, becoming loose around the waist and hanging off his shoulders.

He knew the cure, but he didn't want to admit the cure. He was Harvey, the cat that walked by himself. Yet, for the first time in his life, he was... lonely.

One night, feeling restless and scared, Harvey changed into cat form and went out for a walk. Usually, he stuck to his own neighbourhood, where the other cats knew better than to challenge him, but on this occasion, lost in thought, he found himself padding into a much rougher neighbourhood. The cats that lived here weren't pampered Persians, or laid-back Ragdolls, too well fed to argue over territory. They were a scrappier kind of cat, hungry, lean and spoiling for a fight with this plush, unwelcome newcomer.

He held his own against a pair of ginger brothers, but was taken down in the end by a vicious tabby that bit his ear and raked a claw deep in his flank. Harvey never usually ran from a fight, but on this occasion he decided that discretion was the better part of valour and high-tailed it out of the alleyway, running as fast as his four paws could carry him, his breath rasping in his chest.

He wasn't sure how he ended up outside the door of the apartment building, but he took his moment to run in when someone opened it. He ran up the stairs, plunked himself down outside the door of one particular apartment, and yowled and yowled until the door opened.

Harvey blinked. Mike was standing there, dressed only in a pair of boxer shorts and a tee shirt, his hair standing endearingly on end and his eyes glazed with sleep. Somehow, in his panic, Harvey had run on instinct to the one person who was causing all his problems - and the one person who could solve them.

"What the hell...?" Mike stared down on him, and his expression softened. "Hey, little guy. You've been in a fight. Are you hurting?" He kneeled down and held out his hand to Harvey. Harvey didn't even hesitate - with his heart still pounding from the fighting and the fleeing, and his sense of self wounded and at sea, he launched himself straight into the warm safety of Mike's arms and clung there, purring loudly.

It was embarrassing and humiliating to be walked into Mike's apartment, nestled in Mike's arms, purring like a kitten. He hated himself as much as he loved the warm embrace of Mike's arms wrapped around his body.

Mike placed him on the couch and got some water and washed the blood from his ear and his flank. Then he stared at him, looking perplexed. "What do I do with you now?" he asked.

Harvey answered that for him by jumping onto the floor, limping to the bedroom with as much dignity as he could muster, and curling up on the foot of Mike's bed.

"So that's what you want, is it?" Mike said, following him in. "You want to stay the night? Well, I guess it can't hurt." Mike got into the bed and turned the light out, while Harvey feigned complete indifference at the foot of the bed. He waited until he heard Mike's breathing deepen, and then he went to sit on Mike's pillow, resting his chin on Mike's head.

Being nestled close to Mike seemed to soothe some need deep inside him. The following morning he woke up feeling stiff and sore but sated and more than a little annoyed by the whole thing. He couldn't imagine now why he'd run from a fight and sought out Mike, of all people, to comfort him. It was embarrassing for any cat, let alone a cat that walked by himself.

He stood by the door and yowled until Mike let him out, giving Mike a haughty glare as he left in case Mike should be feeling pleased with himself, and as a reminder that Harvey might be half-tamed, but he was still his own cat.

He changed back into human form when he got to his apartment, and discovered he had a scratch on one ear and a nasty cut on his thigh. Luckily, the latter was concealed under his suit, but he couldn't do much about his ear so he made up a story that a particularly ardent lover had scratched him during the throes of passion, which seemed to convince everyone who asked. True, Mike did give him a strange little look when he told him the lie, but he was hardly likely to guess the truth, so Harvey ignored him and bluffed the lie out. He proceeded to go on ignoring Mike all day, as a punishment for being so nice to him, which only made sense if you had the soul of a cat.

It would have been fine if he could have maintained that air of lofty indifference, but when the evening came, and he curled up on his bed alone again, all he could think about was how Mike had carried him so gently into his apartment and cleaned his wounds.

Much to his despair, he was unable to sleep - something that was almost unheard of for Harvey - so he gave up trying and went over to Mike's apartment in human form, wearing a pair of sweatpants and a tee shirt. He changed into cat form in a dumpster close by, hoping it wouldn't rain on the sweatpants and tee shirt before he could retrieve them the next day. It was a risk worth taking, because he certainly didn't want to bump into the ginger brothers and their vicious tabby friend again any time soon.

He inveigled his way into Mike's apartment block and sat outside his door again, yowling until Mike opened it.

"Hey, little guy. You back?" Mike said. This time, Harvey spared himself the indignity of leaping into Mike's arms, and stalked into his apartment with his tail held high instead, as if he owned it. "Wow!" Mike said from behind him. "How did I not notice those balls before, kitty? They're huge!"

Harvey glared at him over his shoulder but felt pleased all the same. His cat balls were a good size, sticking out big and furry beneath his tail.

"So, it's clear you haven't been fixed. That would explain you getting into all these fights, huh, kitty?" Mike rubbed Harvey's head with his hand, and Harvey couldn't help himself. He pushed the side of his face against the palm of Mike's hand, rubbing his scent glands on Mike and marking him as his territory. "Aren't you a beauty, kitty? Oh, yes you are," Mike crooned. "But I can't keep calling you 'kitty'. You need a name."

Harvey jumped up on the couch and began washing himself fastidiously, purring happily now that he'd been able to scent-mark Mike the way he'd been wanting to do for months.

"Hmmm, what name would suit you?" Mike mused. "You're handsome, you've got a beautiful coat that you clearly take a lot of pride in... and you've got a giant pair of balls. There's only one name that fits." Harvey paused in his washing and glanced at Mike expectantly. If Mike got this wrong, Harvey would make his life hell for the next week, and find a way to sink his claws into Mike's own precious balls before the night was through as well. "Harvey!" Mike said triumphantly, and Harvey mewed his approval. He had a deep, resonant meow, and Mike laughed out loud when he heard it. "Oh yeah. You like that! Harvey! That's your name then."

That night, Harvey tucked himself against Mike's neck and slept there, to reward him for being smart Mike and not stupid Mike. You could never tell which way it would go with Mike, after all.

Harvey woke up early the next morning and purred lovingly as he gazed at Mike's sweet, sleeping face. Mike really was the most adorable creature. Who knew a human with a human animal soul could be so completely enchanting? Harvey wondered if they were all this beautiful, or if this one was extra special.

Mike opened his eyes and gazed back at him, and Harvey blinked slowly at him. Mike grinned and reached out to tickle Harvey under the chin. Harvey's purring increased exponentially, and he stretched out to give Mike better access to his neck.

"Oh, you are gorgeous. What a beautiful kitty. What handsome boy. Oh yes you are." Harvey forgave Mike for speaking in a silly voice, because he liked the substance of what Mike was saying, even if not his infantile tone. He stretched out even more, displaying his beautiful black tummy to be appreciated, too. Mike's fingers drifted lower, and lower, and... Harvey swiped his claws at him to punish his impudence.

"Ow!" Mike put his finger in his mouth and sucked on the wounded digit. "That hurt, Harvey! Why offer me that gorgeous belly if you won't let me stroke it?"

Harvey jumped off the bed in a huff. Mike was taking liberties - the belly was to be admired, not touched. Only a completely tame cat would let a human touch its belly, and even then they reserved the right to lash out if they felt too vulnerable. The tummy was sacred - every cat knew that - and it was only offered to someone a cat loved and trusted.

Mike gave him a bowl of milk for breakfast, which Harvey refused disdainfully because when he was in cat form he was lactose intolerant, like most cats, but he did steal some bacon from Mike's plate before going on his way again.

Everything went along very well for the next few weeks. Harvey regained some weight and was in a much better mood in the office now that he was getting his Mike cuddles every night. He was even beginning to think that this arrangement could last indefinitely without causing any problems. Okay, so he was now very nearly a tamed cat, but there was no reason why Mike should ever find out he'd tamed the great Harvey Specter. Harvey could still spit out orders at work and tell Mike off - he was a cat, after all, and even the tamest cat in the world owned its owners, as all cats knew. Mike was his to cuddle, to swat, to claw, and to love. That was what being a cat was all about.

Harvey had just settled into a nice, comfortable routine when he arrived at Mike's apartment one night to find that his associate had company. He'd been bracing himself to find a woman there at some point, so he wasn't totally surprised when Mike let him in, and he stalked into the bedroom to find another person there. What was surprising was that the person lying on Mike's bed was a man. A naked man. A naked man with glossy brown hair, a supercilious gaze, and the soul of a weasel. It was so surprising, in fact, that Harvey jumped into the air and let out a loud hiss.

"Harvey!" Mike scolded.

"Is this that sweet cat you told me about?" the naked man demanded. "He doesn't look very sweet to me."

Harvey jumped on the bed and glared at him, his tail swinging dangerously, and hissed some more for good measure. The weasel had a fine white neck, and Harvey had two very sharp incisor teeth. Harvey let out a high-pitched scream, his tail whipping back and forth. It would be an easy matter to launch himself at the naked one, sink his teeth in, and...

“Sorry, Greg. I don’t know why he’s being like this,” Mike said helplessly. “Harvey! Stop it!”

He grabbed Harvey under the stomach and threw him on the floor. Harvey licked his paw - a natural response to his dented dignity - but continued glaring at Greg the entire time. Mike was his! He wasn’t allowed to have naked men in his bed. If anyone should be naked in his bed it was Harvey.

That brought Harvey up short. He stopped licking and blinked. He owned Mike - that much was clear. He might not have wanted it to happen, but in retrospect he could see that when a cat soul adopted a human one then it was inevitable. It was his own fault - he should have seen it coming. However, he was also jealous; he wasn’t the kind of cat who shared what he owned, not with this Greg person or anyone else. Mike was his. He was his for Harvey to play with, torment, adore, provide for, haul around by the scruff of his neck, and protect - that was all Harvey’s soul knew. He was Mike’s owner, and Mike belonged to him, and that included anything involving being naked and in bed.

He hissed at Greg again, and Mike yelled at him, grabbed him, threw him out of the bedroom, and shut the door on him pointedly.

Harvey had no choice but to go and sit on the couch by himself. He curled up into a tight ball, trying to ignore the sounds of Mike and Greg having sex in the bedroom. Who knew that Mike was bisexual? Harvey’s own sexuality was fluid, like most people with cat souls. As long as he was admired, petted and treated well, then the gender of the person he was with didn’t matter to him. What surprised him was that he wanted exclusivity. He never had before. Rutting was just that - sex without strings and no requirement of intimacy. Yet now that had changed. He wanted Mike - not just to sleep next to, but to sleep with, to own as much in the bedroom as everywhere else. Mike was his, damn it, and Harvey, with impeccable cat logic, had to acknowledge that the reverse was also true. Mike was his, and he was Mike’s. He was no longer a cat that walked by himself; he had a fellow traveller now.

Mike wasn’t a kitten; he wasn’t someone to be nurtured and swatted in equal measure. He was a mate, and right now he was mating with someone else. So Harvey did what any self-respecting, un-neutered male cat would do in the circumstances: he went around Mike’s apartment and anointed everything in it with his pungent spray. He sprayed Mike’s walls, his doors, his TV, and even his bike. That would teach Greg who Mike belonged to - and it would teach Mike, too.

In the morning Mike stepped out into the living room, took a look around, inhaled, and gasped, holding his nose.

“Harvey!” he thundered. “You little shit! What the hell have you done? Jeez, that smells bad.”

Harvey sat beside the door, glaring up at him to open it, and Mike did just that, seeming all too happy to be rid of him. Harvey sauntered out, tail held high, his pride at least partially restored by the spraying.

He returned to the dumpster, changed back, and pulled on his clothes quickly in case anyone passed by. He went home and immediately dived into the shower, hating the smell of the dumpster that permeated his clothes and transferred itself to his skin.

As he got dressed, he found himself mulling everything over. Now that he was in human form again, his thought processes were less clear than they had been the previous night. When he took his soul animal form, everything was so simple: he wanted Mike, and Mike was his, so therefore he should have him and anything else, like naked men getting in his way, was intolerable. Now that he was human again, he could see all the problems inherent in his situation. He worked with Mike, and also, Mike didn't know he could turn into his soul animal form - something he'd hardly be able to avoid sharing with a potential mate. It was easy enough when your relationships were the fly-by-night affairs that Harvey had indulged in up until now, but not when you wanted to move someone in with you.

Harvey hesitated while tying his tie. Move in with him? Did he really want Mike in his life in that way? The cat that walked by himself huffed away angrily inside at the very thought, but the kitty who had curled up on Mike's pillows purring knew the truth. He was now completely tamed. There was no point fighting it anymore. He'd know no peace until he could sleep next to Mike every single night. It was what he wanted, what he needed, and what he had to have. He would have no rest until then, and he was a cat, damn it, so his rest was important to him.

Harvey was particularly mean to Mike at work for the next few days, to punish him for having tamed him and forcing this dilemma on him. He hissed at him viciously, set Mike tedious tasks to perform in unrealistic timeframes, and then sulked in his office, preening his hair occasionally in distress. He refused to go to Mike's apartment in the evenings, and spent several lonely nights lying at the end of his own bed in cat form, over-grooming his paws.

After chewing Mike out in front of the entire office a few days later, he felt so guilty that he knew he couldn't continue like this. The feelings weren't going anywhere. The cat that walked by himself now wanted to walk with someone by his side, and he had to just face up to that. Whether that person wanted to walk with him was another matter, and he dreaded finding out the answer to that. Supposing Mike wasn't interested in a relationship with him? It was hard to believe but entirely possible, and Harvey didn't cope well with rejection.

He crept back to Mike's apartment with his tail between his legs that evening. Would Mike even let him in after the whole spraying incident? He wasn't sure. When Mike opened the door he looked down on Harvey with a sigh.

"You're back then, are you? Are you still in a bad mood? Because let me tell you I am in no mood to put up with another one of your hissy fits. I've had a really bad day."

Harvey gave an apologetic meow that sounded sweet to his own ears and must have sounded the same to Mike's as well, because Mike sighed again and then held the door open for Harvey to walk through.

"And I mean a really bad day, so don't even think of spraying anywhere," Mike warned. "I was late for work cleaning that up last time it happened, and my boss yelled at me. Then he yelled at me again today, even worse, and in front of everyone, too. He's in a permanently bad mood these days, just like you."

Mike sat down on the sofa, and Harvey crept onto his lap and rubbed his head apologetically on Mike's chin, surreptitiously scent-marking him at the same time, because he just couldn't help himself.

"I hate Harvey," Mike said suddenly. Harvey gave a little growl. "Oh, not you, Harvey." Mike smiled and rubbed his ears, and he relaxed again. "I hate the Harvey I work with. He's such an asshole." Mike leaned back and gave another big sigh. "He really is a total asshole, so why the hell can't I leave him?" he asked plaintively. Harvey's ears pricked up. "That guy you saw me with the other night? Greg?" Mike continued. Harvey gave a little hiss. "Yes, yes, I know, you didn't like him." Mike stroked Harvey's fur soothingly. "But the thing is, I didn't like him that much, either. He was a shit. He was just some arrogant banker I picked up in a bar... and here's the worst part. D'you know why I picked him up?" Harvey purred encouragingly, blinking at Mike to tell him. "I picked him up because he looked like Harvey. Not just physically - he also had that sleek, shiny confidence, the Harvey Specter arrogance, but without any of that sweet Harvey charm, the good guy he tries so hard to hide under all the swagger. Oh shit, Harvey-kitty." Mike buried his face in Harvey's furry head. "I'm in love with my boss. I'm in love with my boss, and I don't know what the hell to do about it."

Harvey froze. Mike was in love with him? This was unexpected. Not unwelcome, and certainly not surprising, given how handsome and gorgeous he was, but all the same, it was unexpected. He had assumed his feelings were one-sided, and hadn't realized Mike was in love with him. Perhaps he should have thought of this. People fell in love with cats far more frequently than cats fell in love with people, so it was entirely natural.

He felt a sound emanating from his chest, and looked down in amazement to see it positively vibrating from the strength of his purring. He was purring so loudly that it was deafening even to his own ears, and all he could feel was this amazing sense of happiness. Mike loved him. His Mike, this beautiful, rare creature with the soul in the form of a human, loved him.

He was so ecstatic that he couldn't think straight for the next few hours. He could only purr, lost in the delicious joy of his own feelings. He kneaded Mike's tee shirt with his paws, offered his chin for strokes, and generally made a complete idiot of himself in a way that he would have despised if he wasn't so utterly elated.

Mike seemed happy to skritch him behind the ears and coo to him softly, and they spent a happy few hours that way until finally Mike got up and carried him next door to bed.

Mike got under the sheets in his usual night attire of boxers and tee shirt, and Harvey jumped on the bed and went and sat on Mike's chest, sprawling out on top of him, his head pressed under Mike's chin, still purring away happily.

It was dawn when Harvey woke. Now that the initial elation of knowing Mike loved him had worn off, he realised he had a decision to make. He thought about it for a little while, but then, deciding that bold moves were best when catching prey and it was probably the same in love, he changed back into his human form. He was still lying on top of Mike, and now was a large, heavy, naked man lying on top of Mike, not a sleek, considerably lighter cat.

Mike murmured something softly in his sleep, and Harvey wondered whether this might, in fact, be too much of a shock, and perhaps he should change back again - when Mike's eyes suddenly opened, and it was too late.

"Uhhh... what?" Mike said, in bleary confusion.

"Morning, Mike," Harvey replied pleasantly.

Mike stared at him for a moment, and then he shoved Harvey off his chest, got to his feet, and grabbed a sheet to cover himself, all in one shocked move.

"You're wearing boxers and a tee shirt," Harvey pointed out. "So the sheet thing is stupid."

"Harvey! I mean... what? Just...what?" Mike scratched his head and gazed around the room, looking adorably confused. "How did you get in here, Harvey?"

"You let me in. Last night," Harvey replied. He sat up with a sigh and held out his hand. "I should be the one with the sheet." He gestured to his body. "Naked here."

Mike dropped the sheet nervously into Harvey's hand, and planted his fists on his hips. "What do you mean I let you in?" he said. "I'm pretty sure I didn't."

"Okay." Harvey wrapped the sheet around his body, but not before noticing that Mike was checking him out. "This is the part where you'll gasp, and argue, and accuse me of being insane, but hear me out." He sat back and gazed up at Mike. "Everyone has a soul in animal form, but only a few families still have the gift of being able to see them. An even fewer amount of families - just a handful - also possess the ability to turn into their soul animal at will. The Specters are one such family."

"Sorry. What?" Mike frowned. "Uh, Harvey - are you on something?"

"No, and don't be boring, Mike. Just accept the fact that my soul animal is a cat, and that occasionally that's what I manifest as."

"Right." Mike nodded slowly. "Okay then. I accept that."

"Also, I'm in love with you, and as you told me last night that you're in love with me, I want you to move into my apartment and live with me," Harvey added.

"What? Oh come on!" Mike threw his hands up in the air. "This is ridiculous!"

"Oh, so you're okay with the 'I turn into a cat' thing, but not okay with the 'I'm in love with you' part?" Harvey was wounded.

"No! I mean, yes. I mean... you're in love with me?" Mike sat down on the side of the bed, looking dazed.

"And I can turn into a cat. Yes." Harvey nodded patiently. "I didn't mean for this to happen, if it's any consolation. I was perfectly happy as a feral cat, walking with my tail held high. I was proud of being a cat that walked by himself. Then you just wormed your way into my life, and next thing I knew..." Harvey gave a regretful sigh. "It started out with needing to scent-mark you. Then, embarrassing as this is to admit, I started to want to snuggle with you." He grimaced. "And next thing I knew, I was in love and wanted to be with you all the time, preferably with the addition of hot sex, although not, obviously, while in my cat form, as that would be creepy."

"Everyone has soul animals?" Mike mused.

Harvey sighed. They were clearly back to that part again. "Yes, Mike. Everyone's soul takes animal form, but most people can't see another's soul, so most people don't know that."

"But you can?" Mike raised an eyebrow.

Harvey nodded. "Yes, I can."

"What's mine then?" Mike challenged. "What my soul's animal form?"

"It's human," Harvey told him.

Mike frowned. "You mean my soul looks the same as my corporeal body?"

"Yes."

"Well that's totally boring!"

"It isn't. It's actually unique. I've never seen another soul like yours before. Don't let it go to your head, but you're very special."

"But I want to be something interesting, like, I don't know - a peacock or something!" Mike complained.

Harvey grimaced. "No, you don't. They're total show-offs."

"Well, then, like a badger or a hamster!"

Harvey frowned. "A hamster? Really?"

"Okay, no, not really, but you know, something interesting and exotic."

"But you are exotic," Harvey insisted. "Like I said, people with souls shaped in human form are very rare. Apparently, it only happens once in a generation, according to my grandmother, anyway. Although, being a human with a human soul can be both good and bad: according to folklore, you have the capability to do great good or great evil - or even a bit of both. You need a wise guide to ensure you don't do anything too stupid." Harvey puffed out his chest proudly.

"And that would be you, would it?" Mike asked.

"Yes. In the words of Hippolyte Taine: *I've met many thinkers and many cats, but the wisdom of cats is infinitely superior.* You may be smart, but I'm wiser than you, Mike. This should not come as a surprise to you."

Mike stared at him. "Are we really having this conversation?"

"Apparently." Harvey shrugged.

"And you really can turn into a cat?"

Harvey sighed. "Clearly you won't be convinced without proof," he said, turning into his cat form and promptly disappearing under the folds of the sheet. He fought his way out and emerged, one ear flattened by the sheet, to find Mike gazing at him with eyes as round as saucers. Harvey turned back into his human form again and rubbed his ear absently. "Convinced?"

"Kind of," Mike croaked.

"Good, because I was thinking - could we have sex now?" Harvey glanced at him hopefully.

"Are we even compatible?" Mike waved his hand at Harvey. "You know, you having the soul in cat form, and me... well, not."

"We're still people - we're still the same species. It's true that plenty of people end up marrying those with the same animal soul as themselves, but plenty also don't," Harvey explained. "I've seen a frog marry a vole - which worked surprisingly well, actually. However, some combinations are best avoided. Owls and mice, for example." He winced. "I've seen a few divorces based on that kind of combination, although there is a horrible tendency for attraction, too, that I've never really understood," he added thoughtfully.

"Hmm, interesting. So, if your soul animal is cat and mine is human... does this mean I've tamed you?" Mike asked, with an entirely too innocent look on his face.

Harvey glared at him. "Aspanso," he muttered into the sheet.

"Sorry, Harvey, I didn't hear that," Mike said, that sneaky human soul of his beaming out from those pretty blue eyes.

"I said, I suppose so," Harvey said grudgingly. Mike raised an eyebrow. "Oh, okay, yes! You tamed me," Harvey growled. "Happy now?"

"Yes!" Mike punched the air with his fist. "I tamed the great Harvey Specter! How cool am I?" He did a little happy dance around the room while Harvey rolled his eyes, feeling faintly embarrassed.

"Double the smart - but also double the stupid. I wish my grandmother had warned me about that," he said mournfully.

Mike stopped dancing and gazed at him, and then suddenly burst out laughing. Harvey waited patiently. Cats didn't like being laughed at, but he didn't think, strictly speaking, that Mike was laughing at him, so he resisted the urge to go and wash some part of his anatomy to compensate.

Mike finally finished laughing, and his face became oddly solemn. He sat down on the side of the bed, leaned over, and gently stroked his fingers through Harvey's hair. Harvey couldn't help himself; he pushed up into Mike's hand and rubbed his face against Mike's stubbly jaw. He had no scent glands in human form, but the instinct was too strong to resist. A second later, he felt a low humming sound resonating deep in his chest.

"Harvey - are you purring?" Mike asked.

Harvey looked down, as astonished as Mike by this new development. "It's never happened before," he admitted bashfully. "Hey, don't stop stroking... under the chin is good, too."

Mike grinned and stroked under his chin, and then down to his chest, and Harvey sank back on the bed and let Mike kiss his belly - something he'd never, ever allowed anyone to do before.

Mike went lower, edging towards Harvey's now very hard cock straining up from his impressively big balls.

"It's a good thing I didn't get these fixed," Mike murmured, licking and kissing his way downwards.

"Like I'd have let you." Harvey grabbed Mike before he got there, turned him, and thumped him down on his back on the bed in one swift, graceful move. Then he straddled Mike's body, gathered Mike's arms in his hands, and held them over Mike's head.

"Hmmm, so you like to top, huh?" Mike grinned up at him.

"Well, duh. Soul of a cat, remember." Harvey grinned back, and then he leaned forward, captured Mike's mouth in his own, and kissed him, deeply and soundly. Mike moaned and pressed up against him, and Harvey mewed in pleasure. He really was the cat who'd got the cream, and he intended to enjoy every last taste of it.

Later, as they lay wrapped up in each other's arms, naked and sated, Harvey kissed Mike's hair and glanced around the bedroom.

"We'll take the day off so you can move into my place," he said.

"Isn't that a bit quick? We only just started sleeping together," Mike pointed out.

"Well, I'm not travelling over here whenever I want my chin stroked, so yes, you're moving in."

Mike rolled his eyes. "You really are incredibly bossy."

"Hello - cat!" Harvey reminded him again, with a little squeeze. "I'm not moving in here. I don't like the neighbourhood. There's a particularly vicious tabby living just down the block." Harvey grimaced.

Mike gave an amused gurgle. "Was he the cat you were running away from that first night you visited me?"

Harvey glared at him. "I wasn't running away - it was a strategic retreat. I'm sure I could beat him in a fair fight if he didn't have the ginger brothers for backup, but I have my ears to think about. You won't love me if they get tattered and torn."

"Oh, I think I'll love you even when your fur is old and grey, and your whiskers have fallen out." Mike laughed. "But cats aren't exactly known for being faithful," Mike added, in a worried tone. "Do I have anything to worry about there, Harvey?"

"That's just a rumour spread by dog people," Harvey told him. "We're very faithful to the people who love us, so you don't need to worry about that. Besides, I don't just roll over and let anyone pet my belly, you know. You're the first, last and only one who ever gets to do that."

"I'm glad to hear it." Mike stroked his fingers gently over Harvey's naked stomach. "You're not going to scratch me for doing this, are you?"

"Not today. I do reserve that right in future, though, depending on my mood. Also, I am very definitely an only cat. I don't share you with anyone, and if I ever find a naked person in your bed again, I will sink my claws into them - and you," Harvey warned.

"Understood!" Mike grinned and leaned up for another kiss. "Although I don't think you have anything to worry about there, Harvey."

Harvey smiled and hugged him close.

He wasn't a cat that walked by himself anymore, but he found he didn't mind that, after all.

Mike Ross stretched out contentedly. It had been a whirlwind few weeks, but he was extremely happy to be living with his lover in Harvey's sun-filled apartment.

It was a beautiful day. The sun was shining through the window onto the sofa where Mike was lying on his back, with Harvey stretched out in cat form on his chest, purring his head off. Mike stroked him lazily, enjoying the feel of Harvey's sleek black fur under his fingers.

One thing that Grandma Specter hadn't known, because they were so rare, was that all people with souls in human form could see the animal souls of others. Mike was a cat person, and he'd pretty much fallen in love with Harvey's handsome feline soul the minute he first met him.

Harvey shifted contentedly, and Mike skritch'd him under the chin. It had taken him awhile to tame this beautiful creature, but it had been worth it. At first, he'd despaired of ever winning Harvey's love, but he'd been patient. He'd enticed Harvey in with the promise of adoration and attention, had admired Harvey's sleek exterior and fine mind while entertaining him with his own brilliance, and had done his best to be easy to be around, providing a quiet lap to sit on, and a willing hand to stroke.

He'd been excited and amazed when Harvey had first shown up at his apartment in his cat form. It was rare to meet anyone who could change into their soul animal, but that just confirmed to Mike how very special Harvey was. Despite his excitement, he'd forced himself to take it slow, not wanting to spook his feline visitor.

After a few weeks, when it became clear he'd succeeded in half taming Harvey, Mike had decided to move things along a little. Picking up Greg had been a good idea - a jealous Harvey was a sight to behold indeed, even if it had taken Mike a good hour to clean the stink from his apartment. After that, it had only been a matter of time.

Cats might be cunning, but humans are the most devious animals of all, and Mike's soul animal was a true reflection of his soul. Mike knew you couldn't force a cat love you. You had to be patient, wait for your chosen cat to think it was his idea, and let him come to you...

The End

Friendly feedback adored!



One reason we admire cats is for their proficiency in one-upmanship. They always seem to come out on top, no matter what they are doing, or pretend they do.

Barbara Webster

*If a cat did not put a firm paw down now and then,
how could his human remain possessed?*

Winifred Carriere

*Way down deep, we're all motivated by the same urges.
Cats have the courage to live by them.*

Jim Davis

As every cat owner knows, nobody owns a cat.

Ellen Perry Berkeley

The cat has too much spirit to have no heart.

Ernest Menaul

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