

## The Lady from the Alley

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The moon is calling me to play. I stretch my limbs and feel how every muscle wakes from the slumber. I've been laid down for too long. I groom myself, slowly and thoughtfully. Nothing rushes me: the night is long and it can wait a bit more. I grab a quick bite before going out, just in case I don't find anything else out there.

The first thing I see is that the world is almost bright in spite of the blanket of darkness. I take my time, and amble until I come out of my alley onto the corner of the sidewalk. Noisy cars roaring to places, tired drivers talking to people, green lights turning red... What a vivacious world! It is nothing like me... I'm like a leaf in the wind... I prefer quiet moments to all of this... But I still need to come out; the moon is glowing high up in the sky, as an invitation to join some sort of party.

As usual, now I just have to wait until something interesting happens. Last night, for instance, turned out surprisingly good: I met a generous, loving man right at this very same spot. He caressed me, very quickly, and then he left. We will never meet again, but that's okay. I'm used to it. Men and people in general are trains that just come and go through my life. I don't need anyone. I only need the night: each cosmic dance is more astounding than the previous one, and the stars are so bright, so playful... How can I ever refuse the moon's call? The night always invites new adventures...

"Hi, Lady!" says one of the neighbours. They call me Lady because they don't know my real name. I can't tell them. He gives me a quick kiss, and then runs off home.

The light turns red, and the few cars on the main street reluctantly slow down. There is a particularly appealing blue car, with a very impatient driver at its wheel. He has dark-brown hair, sharp features, and a sullen expression on his face. Something tells me I need to check him out, see whether there is any business for me there. I strut slowly, gingerly, towards the blue car. The driver is listening to the news on the radio, barely paying attention to the world that endures outside his car.

When I reach the vehicle, I start to meander around it in a way that I hope is almost provoking. I want to get the man's attention and I'm determined to do anything. I press my body, my majestic body, against the car, putting strong emphasis on my behind. But the man is too focused on the news, I'm starting to believe there is no point in insisting, as he has not even raised his eyes to meet mine. I've been told my eyes are quite captivating, though.

Sadly, the light turns green. The blue car roars into the night, before I can realize it. Oh, I should have moved away from the car sooner. The tyres roll over me and the world turns upside down. Someone wails, but life continues its blistering pace, leaving on the street this agonizing cat known as Lady.

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