

## Hot Purrsuit

Juan Cruz Morales\*

He zoomed across the dining room and into the living room, his heart racing and feeling as if on the verge of busting. Behind, rhythmical footsteps approached rapidly as a foreboding, almost demonic aura loomed over him, making every single one of his hairs stand on end. Time was of the essence – if he didn't find a hiding spot soon, this would be it. With the agility of a feline he vaulted over the couch, bounced off the coffee table and cowered behind a cupboard as the terrifying fiend that was after him asserted its presence by letting out a blood-curdling, deranged giggle. It was a matter of time before it found out where he was hiding, but perhaps he could buy enough time to come up with a plan. But a loud stomp on his left caused what little hope he had left to vanish. A few meters apart stood the beast, staring intently into his eyes, feasting on his soul. Baring all its teeth in a nightmarish grin that would stir fear in even the boldest of hearts, the demon slowly started to approach him, its curled caprine horns bobbing slightly up and down with every step. At first, he thought that the abomination wouldn't spot him if he stayed put, but his conjecture was proved wrong when he looked back at where the beast had stood and saw nothing, only to look up and come face to face with it mid-pounce. A fight-or-flight response kicked in and he swiftly lifted himself off the floor, the abhorrent creature missing its mark by a whisker. He landed on the mantelshelf and slid along its entire length, knocking everything on top of it over the edge. Somehow, he'd managed to dodge it at the last second. Now, it was just a matter of making it to the back door...

But the unthinkable happened. Just when he was about to land and make a run for it, he was yanked back, as if by means of a rope. He flew backwards with a half-stifled moan and straight into the demon's hands. How he wanted to bite and scratch, but alas, he knew that would provoke the implacable rage of a more dangerous force. The demon was presently snuggling, nuzzling and kissing him.

"I said it's bath time! Dontcha think you're getting away from this one so easy, Mr. Bristly Whiskers, you naughty boy!"

Why. Cats clean themselves with their tongues all the time. It's like dry-cleaning. What was the point of being subjected to such an ordeal? And getting pulled by the tail was such a low blow, in such bad taste! And that ridiculous name, ugh! Just as mellifluous as nails on a chalkboard. Beelzebub had certainly put a devil aside for him in the shape of this obnoxious grade-schooler. She prepared to carry her feline victim to the bathroom, triumphant, the twin buns on her head merrily bouncing with every step, about to come undone. But the creak of the front door swinging open made her heart skip a beat and she came to a grinding halt. Mom was home. A voice, not unlike that of Legion, reverberated across the house, menacing:

**"WHAT IS THE MEANING OF ALL THIS MESS?!"**

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The hunter had become the prey. Thankful, he snuck out through the back door, with the satisfaction of living one more day away from the horrors of the bathtub.