

Isaac's Moment



Most of the time my neighbors are very tolerant of my cats, but 6:30 on a Saturday morning is not the time to test their good-natured patience. I was making coffee when I heard a battle cry. So, dropping everything and racing out the door in my pajamas, I wondered who I would have to save. There on the back wall was Isaac, the youngest of our pride, staring down the enormous black and white tomcat that had just moved into the neighborhood.

Our cats patrol the perimeter of our yard, each taking a shift to keep us safe from stray cats, wandering dogs and wayward children. They take patrolling very seriously, going out in the rain, braving the snow, and giving up precious nap time. This breach of security had brought all hands on deck.

As I hurried across the lawn, I noticed Noah, our quiet cat, standing guard on the balcony overlooking the back wall, and Abraham, our good-natured boy, on the wall by the garbage cans. T.J., the leader of our pride, sat under the oak tree, his whiskey-colored eyes trained on the intruder. Mia, our rebel tom, stole quietly up the alley, moving into place on the opposite side of the wall. Like a well-choreographed drill, each cat seemed to know his position as they worked together to keep out this trespasser.

This was not the first time that the new kid on the block had come around, trying to establish his territory. He had spent one night sleeping in a comfy chair on our deck, and he had shown up one memorable morning for breakfast, coming through the dog door as if he belonged. Today however, he had pushed his luck one step too far.

Figuring the cats had it under control, I stopped to watch. The stare-down continued. Every now and then the intruder would let out a snarl, but Isaac remained silent. It is unusual for Isaac to be silent. My Isaac talks, all the time. He talks when he wants attention, when he is alone, when he is happy; he even talks in his sleep. My kids call him motor mouth. The vet says it is because he is part Siamese. I think it's because he has so much to say.

But in this moment, my little warrior seemed to know the value of silence. His golden eyes were locked on the intruder, steely with purpose. His shiny black coat raised in warning. This bad boy was not getting into the yard.

Finally, after what seemed forever, the intruding tom decided that retreat was the healthiest choice. With one last snarl he jumped into the alley and ran off.

One by one, the cats congratulated Isaac on his victory. Abraham body slammed him as only brothers can, Mia rubbed against him and Noah sniffed him before brushing him with his tail. The biggest reward came when T.J. licked his head and nuzzled him.

As I walked up to add my own congratulations, my little warrior turned back into my little boy, nuzzling and talking, letting me know all about his big moment.