



MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, CULTURE, RESEARCH, AND TECHNOLOGY  
REPUBLIC OF INDONESIA  
2024

# CEMONG the TIPPED-EAR CAT

IWOK  
ABQARY & IKRU  
NALA







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#### **Cemong the Tipped Ear Cat**

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#### **Publisher**

Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology

Published by:

Center for Book Affairs

Kompleks Kemdikbudristek Jalan RS Fatmawati, Cipete, South Jakarta

<https://buku.kemdikbud.go.id>

First Edition, 2024

ISBN 978-623-118-351-4

This book uses Andika New Basic 26/38, Cloudy With a Chance of Love.  
iv, 60 hlm: 17.5 x 25 cm.

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Head of Center for Book Affairs

Supriyatno, S.Pd., M.A

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TALE

OF

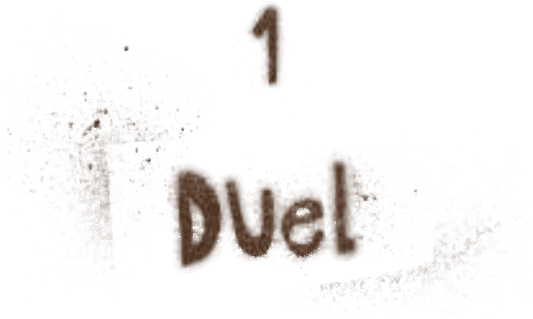
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Cemong was a hungry little cat. His tummy had been growling all day long, calling out for something tasty to eat. Throughout the day, he'd only found a tiny piece of a fish's head. It wasn't a treat, but it was enough to quiet his rumbling belly for a little while.

"Where should I go now?" Cemong thought to himself, lifting his head high. His big eyes searched for a friendly face, but he didn't have many friends in this neighborhood. Whenever Cemong met other cats, they seemed unfriendly. There was the tabby with the short tail, who would hiss and growl every time Cemong came near. That cat lived in an old pile of trash and didn't like visitors. Then there was Mak Abu, a pregnant cat that had once swatted at him in a yard. Maybe it was because she was expecting kittens and didn't want anyone else around her food.

These cats were sometimes friendly, but only when their bellies were full. They, like Cemong, were used to fighting to find something to eat. Cemong had known this struggle since he was a tiny kitten, ever since the day his mother left him to fend for himself.

Cemong looked around, trying to make up his mind. Should he go to the garbage dump where there might be some leftovers? Or should he visit the kind old lady who sometimes put out food in her yard? His tummy growled again, urging him to decide quickly. Sometimes, neither option was available.

The dump was a favorite spot for many cats. They often went there in search of food, so by this time, any leftovers would likely be gone.

Hoping he was lucky, Cemong decided to head towards the small, light green house. When he arrived, he found the plastic bowl on the porch empty. Another cat must have gotten there before him and finished the food.

"Meow...!" Cemong meowed softly, hoping the old lady would hear him and bring some food. He tried calling out a few times, but the door stayed shut.

It's late. Maybe the kind old lady had already gone to sleep.

With a little sigh, Cemong slowly began to turn around. But then, What a delicious smell!

The smell wafted his way. Cemong's head turned quickly to a house across the street. Excited, he sprinted and leapt onto a tall fence. In one jump, he was on the roof, eager to find the source of the tempting aroma.

But wait! Cemong's quest was interrupted by growls. Not too far from him, two big cats had their backs arched, fur standing tall, ready for a showdown.

These two were known as the "bullies" of the neighborhood, always battling over spaces and food. Cemong watched from a distance, knowing he'd need to sneak past them to get to the delicious smell.

Suddenly, a long, sharp meow echoed. Cemong noticed the yellow-furred cat, one of the two bullies, limping a little. He remembered seeing that cat get hit by a motorbike a few months back. Poor thing!



“Shoo! Shoo!”

A voice shouted from inside the house. *No one liked the loud cat fight, especially not late at night!* So annoying!

Yet, the two cats seemed unbothered, still focused on their standoff, meowing loudly and growling at each other.

Bang!

Cemong startled. The sound of a door swinging open followed by hurried footsteps.

Splash!

Water was thrown onto the roof, drenching everything in its path.

“Quiiiiiiiiiet!”

Cemong jumped, taken by surprise. The two big cats on the roof were also startled.

The homeowner had come out, drenched them with a bucket of water. The man, with his round belly, looked up at the roof with a frown. One hand rested on his hip, while the other held the now-empty bucket.

Then he bent over, and...

SPLASH!

Cemong’s eyes grew wide, and he stepped back instinctively.

Another rush of water went flying towards the roof. This time, it landed right on the two quarreling cats, soaking them completely.

The striped cat let out a hiss, then made a quick escape. He darted to the edge of the roof, finding a small opening to squeeze under the roof. The roof made a noisy creak, and a tile cracked under the pressure!

But the chase wasn’t over. Cemong knew the duel could last quite a while. No cat would give up until the other left with a bruised ego. He had seen such chases many times before.

Sure enough, the yellow cat also jumped and escaped. Even with his limping leg, he was quick, proving that this was his turf.

Thump... Thump...

Sounds of the chase moved below, to what Cemong guessed was the attic. The noise of running paws, loud meows, and a tussle echoed out.





Thud... Thud...

The footsteps of the two bullies could be heard again.

“Oh no, they’re in the attic!” Cemong heard a woman’s voice shout.

“Grab the broom, dear! Shoo! Shoo!” The man with the round belly yelled back.

Bang! Bang!

Cemong could only imagine the chaos inside the house. The sound of something being banged against the walls joined the mix. The two big cats seemed undeterred, fearless in their pursuit.

Crack! Crack!

Deciding he’d seen enough, Cemong quietly padded away. *At least the rooftop was free of the two big cats*, he

mused. Now, he could continue his food search without any interruptions.

Cemong sniffed, catching the scent of something delicious once more. With renewed energy, he darted and leapt onto the neighboring house’s roof. The aroma was strongest there.

“Shoo!” came another shout. But Cemong was on a mission and didn’t let the noise distract him. He pressed on.

“They’re in the living room now!” a voice exclaimed.

Thump... Thump...

Crash! Bang!

Cemong could hear angry loud noise from the house. Suddenly, Cemong paused. He tilted his head toward the noise, trying to figure out what had happened.





“Oh dear... not the ceiling again!” cried a woman’s voice. “First the bedroom, now our living room!”

Crack! Crack!

Meow...

With a little smirk, Cemong watched two drenched cats rush out of the house’s front door, scampering as fast as they could. Their little dispute seemed to be over for now, especially with an unhappy homeowner in pursuit.

Shaking his head, Cemong turned away, his main focus on one thing: finding a meal to satisfy his growling stomach.





2

## Cats Everywhere

The delicious smell filled the air, coming from a house just two doors down from where the two “bullies” had just fought. Cemong hopped nimbly from roof to roof, stepping on a line of tiles without fear, his paws landing confidently on the tiles. This wasn’t new to him; he had done it many times before. Drawn by the aroma, he made his way closer to the kitchen and hopped down. The smell intensified. He knew what it was. Fried fish! Cemong’s stomach rumbled again.

Through an open kitchen window, he spotted the fish, tempting and unguarded, almost as if it had been left just for him. Seizing the moment, Cemong jumped onto the table, but then...

Although his landing was soft, it caused the table to sway just enough to rattle the utensils. Spoons and



forks jingled loudly, alerting a woman who rushed in and shrieked.

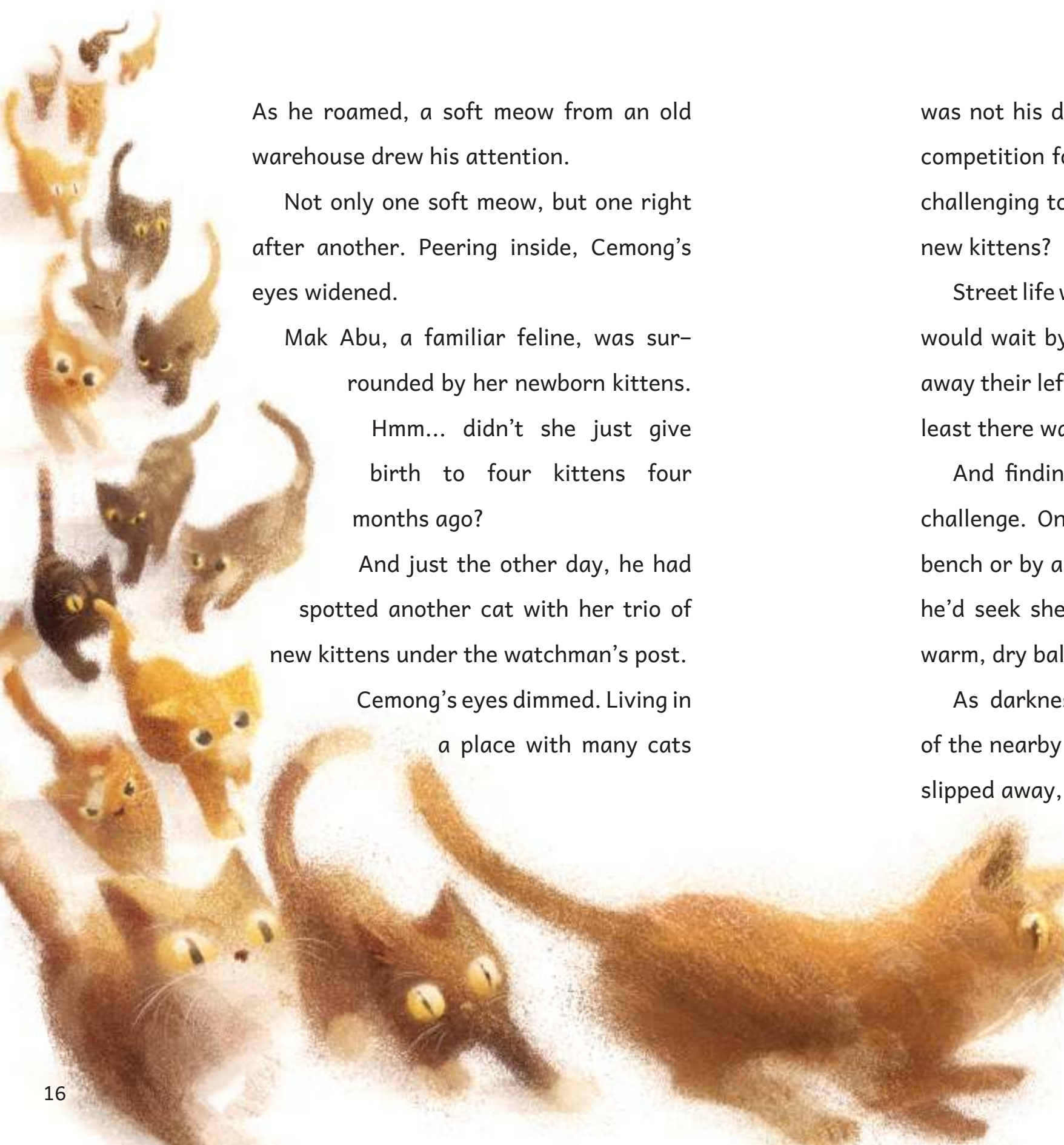
“Shoo! Shoo! Out, you thief!”

She approached the table, clapping her hands loudly to scare him away from her meal.

He got caught!

Cemong jumped fast, fleeing back through the open window. Dinner had slipped through his paws once again. Sighing, he wondered where he could try next.





As he roamed, a soft meow from an old warehouse drew his attention.

Not only one soft meow, but one right after another. Peering inside, Cemong's eyes widened.

Mak Abu, a familiar feline, was surrounded by her newborn kittens.

Hmm... didn't she just give birth to four kittens four months ago?

And just the other day, he had spotted another cat with her trio of new kittens under the watchman's post.

Cemong's eyes dimmed. Living in a place with many cats

was not his dream. The more cats there were, the more competition for food there would be. He already found it challenging to find meals; what would it be like for these new kittens?

Street life wasn't always easy. There were days Cemong would wait by the trash bins, hoping for someone throw away their leftovers. Even though he had to fight for it, at least there was the hope of getting something.

And finding a cozy spot to sleep? That was a daily challenge. On clear nights, he might curl up on a park bench or by a quiet street corner. But if rain threatened, he'd seek shelter under a roof, wrapping himself into a warm, dry ball.

As darkness blanketed the neighborhood, the doors of the nearby houses were already closed. The hours had slipped away, and it was too late to get any food.

Seeking a safe spot, Cemong nestled beneath a chicken coop, a cozy nook away from the prying eyes of homeowners who might startle him with an unexpected splash of water. He hated when his fur got









wet. Perhaps, he mused, the morning would bring better luck with food.

Crunch!

His stomach growled again . Cemong walked towards a plastic bowl near the coop's entrance, hoping for some leftovers. There was a bit of water left over from the chickens' drink. He slurped it up with relish hoping the water would stop the sounds from his stomach.

Lifting his head, he tuned into the soft clucks of the chickens above, their rhythmic sounds lulling him. *How simple life seemed for them, he pondered. They had no worries about scavenging for meals. Their days began and ended with generous servings of feed.*

Crunch!

Cemong then fell asleep with a hungry stomach.





### 3

## The Trap

Cemong opened his eyes, smelling a yummy aroma. He stretched and let his nose guide him.

There it is! On the porch was a bowl of yummy, crispy dry food. However, his steps slowed. He crept. The Fluffy White Cat, with a collar showing he lived in the house, was already there. That meant, the food already had an owner.

The Fluffy White Cat growled when he saw Cemong approaching.

“This is mine. Shoo! Go away!”

Cemong walked away. He didn’t want any trouble. he just needed to endure his hunger a bit longer.

Cemong headed towards the park inside the residential area. Maybe he could find food there where, once, some kind kids gave him and other cats a treat. A few days ago, two young people had invited him and the other cats in the park to a feast. They gave them a lot of food. Cemong hoped that they would come every day, but they didn’t. The next day, he waited all day, but the two young people didn’t come back.

Like other cats, Cemong loved this park. It was not too big, but he could play, nap, and enjoy the sun without the surprise of splashing water. It was definitely safer than lounging in someone’s yard.

Oh, there’s a tricolor cat. Cemong was wide-eyed. Who was that? She looked well fed wearing a shiny jingling collar! This was the first time he had seen one. Cemong approached with envy. He had always wanted to wear a jingling collar.

But then he noticed something – her ear was tipped, not as big as his but still a tipped ear! Cemong’s eyes widened.

“What happened to your ear? Did a street cat bite yours too?” Cemong asked.



When he was a kitten, Cemong had been attacked by a street male cat. No male cat liked it when another male invaded their territory. Even a kitten was perceived as a threat. Luckily, Cemong was able to save himself by hiding in a stack of wood. However, one of his ears did not escape the attack.

The tricolor cat shook her head, and smiled, looking at her reflection in the pond.

“I’m okay,” she said, jingling her collar happily.

Jingle! Jingle!

Cemong tilted his head. His eyes were glued to the collar. The collar was so beautiful, blue in color with a bright red strap. It was clear that this tipped-ear cat had a home. He was thinking how lucky she was to have a home where she was loved and cared for.

Why is her ear like that?

“One day, maybe your ear will look just like this!” replied the cat with the tipped ear, smiling. And with that, she scampered away quickly.

Cemong was puzzled. What did she mean by that?





Lost in his thoughts, he barely noticed a growing shadow behind him. As it loomed closer, Cemong's heart raced. He felt he should run away. But before he could act...

Whoosh!

Suddenly, Cemong was wrapped up in a net! He tried to wriggle free, but the net held tight.

"Help!"









## The White Room

Cemong looked around from the cage that had been his home for some time. He felt nervous and scared, unsure of how long he'd been there. He didn't even know where he was. All he could do was cower anxiously.



Who had brought him here? Had they visited the park just to find him? And why?

Next to him, another cage held a big orange cat who was meowing quite a lot. He looked scared too. Cemong remembered seeing this cat near the garbage bins in their neighborhood.

"Where are we?" whispered Cemong.

The orange cat replied, "I wish I knew. I don't like this cage."

Cemong agreed with him. But, there was a silver lining. Inside the cage was a bowl of yummy food. The smell of fresh sardines made him hungry. Even with all his worries, Cemong thought this was the best meal he'd had in a long time.

He was full and content, for the moment. But he still wondered, where would they go next?

Soon, Cemong was allowed out of the cage in a bright room with white walls. There were some people there. One of them looked familiar – he had given Cemong food earlier.

Was he also the one who brought him here? Cemong was too nervous to think straight.

“Look at his unique fur! It looks like he’s been playing with paint,” a person giggled. A hand reached out to pet Cemong.

Feeling unsure, Cemong hissed and stepped back. He always loved being petted, but he wasn’t ready to trust yet.

“Careful! He’s running away!”

Strong hands tried to grab Cemong. But Cemong didn’t want to be held. He meowed loudly, showing his claws.

“Meow!” Cemong exclaimed.

Oops!

He accidentally scratched someone, leaving a long scratch mark.

“Ouch!”

Cemong’s captor let go, and he darted towards the open door.

“Shut the door!” a voice called out.

Bang!

Cemong searched for another way out, his eyes darting around the room. No doors. No windows. Once again, he felt trapped.

He curled up in a corner, watching everyone closely.

“Here psssss..... psssss.....kitty... kitty...”

A man in a white coat knelt down in front of Cemong. He had a kind face and young eyes. The man made clicking sounds with his fingers.





Click... click...

He then offered his hand for Cemong to sniff.

Cemong hesitated, then sniffed the hand. It smelled... familiar. Like other cats! The man smiled warmly at him, and Cemong felt a bit safer.

He didn't pull away when the man gently touched his head and petted him. Cemong looked up at the man.

The man gently lifted Cemong up and said, "Always be gentle with cats. Take your time." Examining Cemong, the man noted, "He might be thin, but he's healthy."

"Are we ready, Doc?" someone asked.

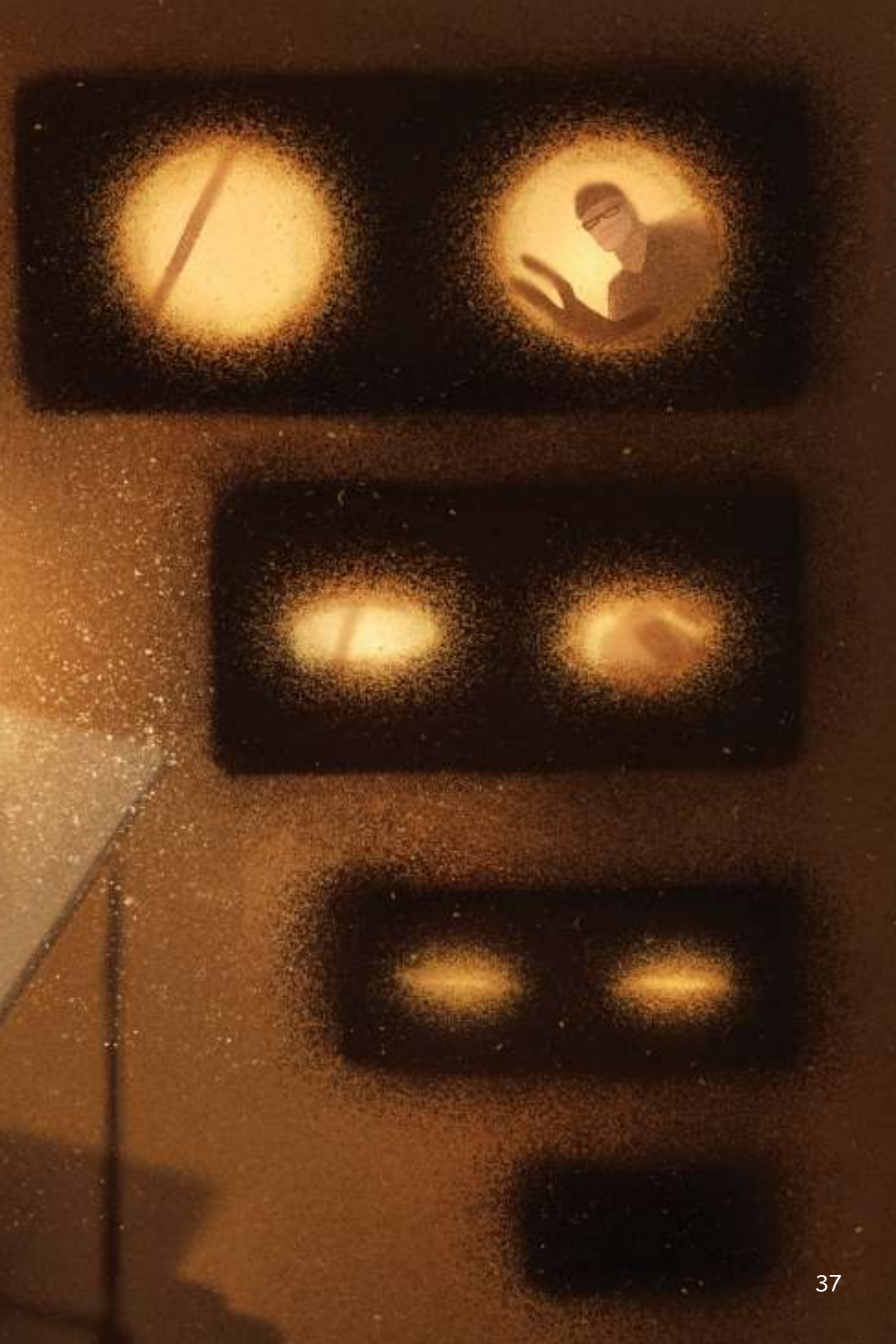
"Yes, but first, let's put him back in his cage. And no more food for now. We'll continue later."

*Continue what?*

As Cemong was placed back inside the cage, he heard meows from the other cages. The other cats seemed restless. Like Cemong, they were used to the freedom of the streets, not the confines of a cage.

Settling in, Cemong's heart was filled with a mix of confusion and fear.







## The Tipped-Ear Cat

Cemong awoke, feeling a bit groggy. Earlier, he had been brought to that white room. He remembered a brief prick, and then... nothing.

Opening his eyes in his cage, he wondered how much time had passed in the white room. It felt so quick.

*What had happened?*

He felt mostly okay, just a little soreness in the lower part of his body.

Cemong tried to stand...

Eh, his legs wobbled. He felt like a baby kitten learning to walk. Each time he tried to stand, his legs gave way. Why were his legs so shaky?

He yawned. So sleepy...

Closing his eyes, Cemong drifted off. He felt so groggy, he just wanted to sleep all day. He woke up more alert and noticed something odd about his fellow cats.

Hang on a minute!

Rubbing his eyes, Cemong stared at the cage next door. The big orange cat who used to be nervous and agitated seemed more relaxed now. But something looked different. The tip of its ear! It looked as if a tiny piece was missing!

In surprise, Cemong glanced around. All the cats had the same little notch in their ears!

Then he remembered a cat from the park, one with three colors in her fur. She had the same little notch in her ear. Like all these cats.

Did he have the same mark?

Trying to feel his ear, Cemong's paw touched his head. *Hmm, I can't feel anything different*, he thought. The notch might be too small to feel. But then, his other ear was tipped when he was little.



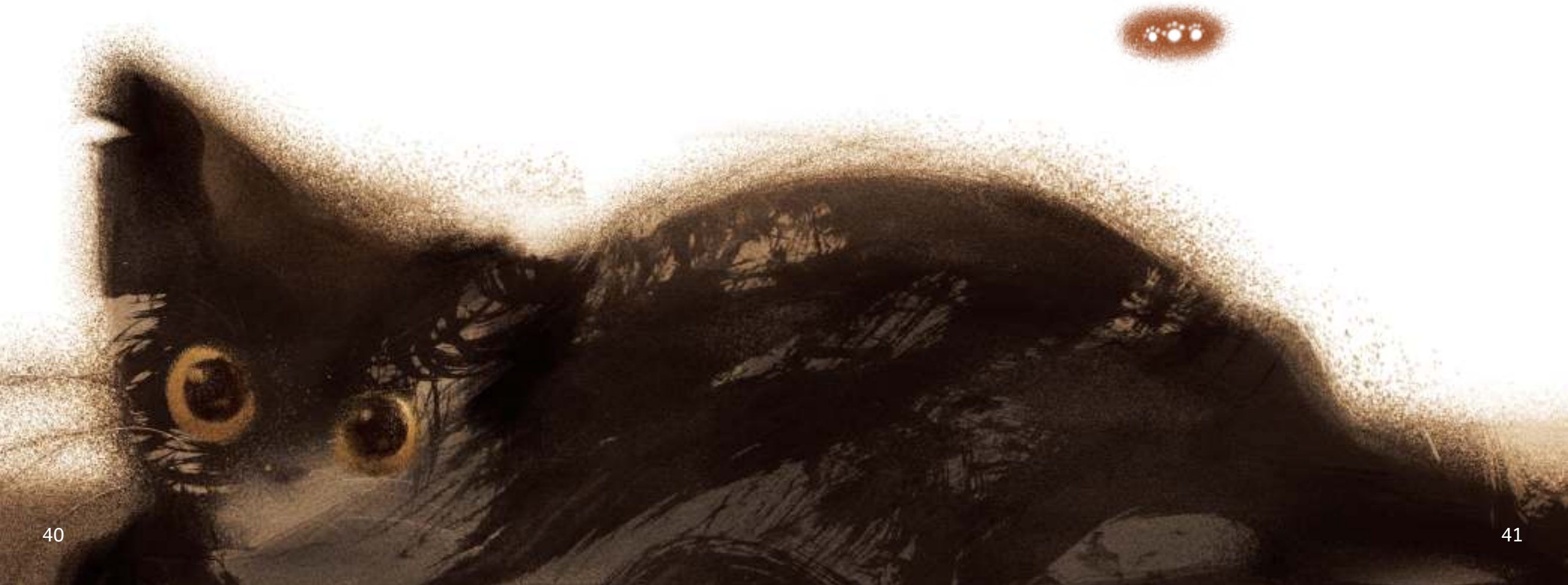
What did this little tip mean? What had they done?

Thinking back, the three-colored cat in the park seemed fine. She was healthy, her fur was smooth, and she always seemed well-fed. Plus, she had a shiny collar!

Were they all going to get collars too? Cemong's heart fluttered with hope. Maybe the tipped-ear was like a special badge for cats getting collars!

But then, he remember the fluffy white cat with a collar, yet without a tipped-ear.

Cemong's excitement faded a bit.





## 6

### The Departure

For two days now, Cemong had been living in his cage. There were other cats around, and while he always had a full belly, he missed the pleasure of roaming freely.

Aside from the little change on his ear, Cemong felt well. His legs were strong again, He could walk upright and jump. Also, the tiny ache he once felt was gone.

Suddenly, he heard footsteps. Was it mealtime again? Usually, a kind young man would come and fill their bowls, but wasn't his bowl just filled a while ago?

This time was different. There were other noises accompanying his arrival. More people entered the room.

"If they don't find homes, we'll take the cats back to where they came from," said the young man Cemong recognized. "But if you adopt one, it'll make them so happy."

Cemong saw a young boy eagerly look into each cage.

He stopped at the Big Orange Cat's cage beside Cemong's. They had been next to each other since they first arrived.

"I want this one! He's amazing." The door opened, and the boy gently lifted the majestic cat who was a little bit nervous but soon settled into his arms.

"Please take good care of him," the young man said warmly.

"We will," the boy replied, hugging the orange cat. His father beamed with joy.

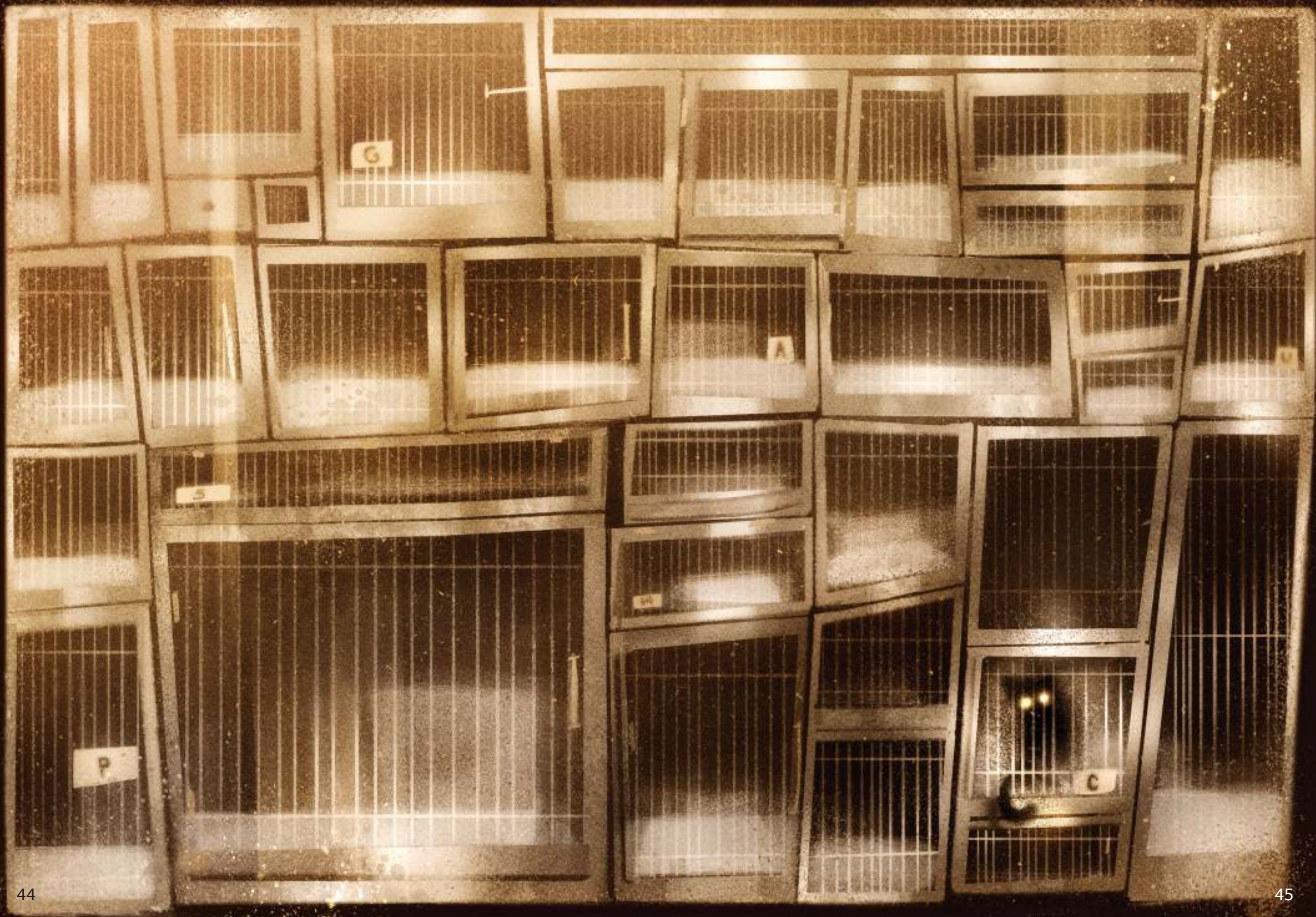
Cemong blinked in surprise. Was the Big Orange Cat going to have a home now? Was he going to wear a collar?

Cemong's face instantly darkened. Why didn't the boy choose him?

As the day went on, more and more people came. One by one, the cats in the cages departed, going home with different people. They had found new homes and families.

Everytime Cemong saw someone coming, he always sat quietly giving his best behaviour.







“Meow.....”Cemong tried to sit prettily, letting out gentle meows, swishing his tail, hoping to be noticed.

Still, no one stopped at his cage. No one touched him. His cage was always overlooked.

*Maybe the next person,* thought Cemong full of hope. He would wait patiently for the person who would pick him. But, it was getting dark and no one else came.

Cemong sadly curled up his body in the corner of the cage.

Before they went home for the night, the young man said, “If no one chooses the rest by tomorrow, we’ll take them back to where they came from.”

“We want them to remember how to live outside,” added another helper.

Peering out, Cemong saw that all the neighboring cages were empty. What did that mean for him?





Late in the afternoon, Cemong was startled by the young man's voice.

"Time to go, Mong!" The man gently placed him into a cozy pet carrier.

Cemong looked up at him, then stepped inside. His thoughts drifted to his old park home, with its playful kittens and familiar feline faces. He was about to meet again with the bully duo, Mak Abu with her tiny babies, and the other cats in the park. Maybe that park was truly where he belonged.

Secured tightly on the back seat of a motorbike, Cemong was whisked away through the busy traffic.

"We're headed somewhere new, Mong!" the young man called out. "Promise me you'll be a good boy."

Cemong blinked in surprise. A new place? Weren't they heading back to his old park? His tiny heart raced with questions. ? Didn't the young man say he would return the remaining cats to their original habitat? Inside his jostling pet carrier, Cemong was anxious.

But then, the motorbike slowed, turning into a peaceful neighborhood. Was this his new home? Would he meet new friends? Would they be friendly? Or Were the cats here as tough as the bully duo?

Stopping at a house, the young man got off and untied the pet carrier from his motorcycle and carried Cemong inside.

From inside his pet carrier, Cemong peeked out. A woman greeted them warmly. Her face seemed relieved. He didn't know why.

"Lila is in her room," she gestured.

"Got a surprise for you, Lila!"

The young man, now known as Uncle Ivan, announced, walking into a room. "May I come in?"



A little girl sat in a wheelchair with a gloomy face. Yet, her eyes seemed bright. She turned her head and nodded softly.

“Look, what I brought!”

As the pet carrier opened, their eyes met.

“Who’s this?” she whispered.

“This is Cemong, a new friend for you. I know that you lost your cat, I hope he can be your new friend now. “ Uncle Ivan said with a smile.

“But...” Lila looked at Uncle Ivan hesitantly.

“Cemong may not be as chubby and as clean as your previous cat. But, if he is taken care of, he will definitely be no less handsome.”

Lila’s eyes shone. “Hello, Cemong.”

“Meow ....”

“Look, Cemong likes you.”

Cemong saw Lila staring at him intently. Then, the girl’s smile broadened. “His ears are cute!” She pulled

Cemong into her embrace. Her other hand then turned her wheelchair closer to the table. Her hand reached for a red bell with a yellow collar.

Gently, she placed a little bell collar around his neck.

“This was Luki’s.”

Cring! Cring!

The bell jingled.

Cemong jumped. He butted his head into Lila’s hand. His eyes sparkled. He always wanted a collar! Cemong swung the bell around his neck happily.

CRING! CRING!

Cemong purred happily, feeling more at home than ever.









Months passed.

One day, as Cemong lounged outside, another cat paused to stare.

“What’s with your ear?” he asked.

Cemong grinned. “The left or the right one?”

“Does it hurt?”

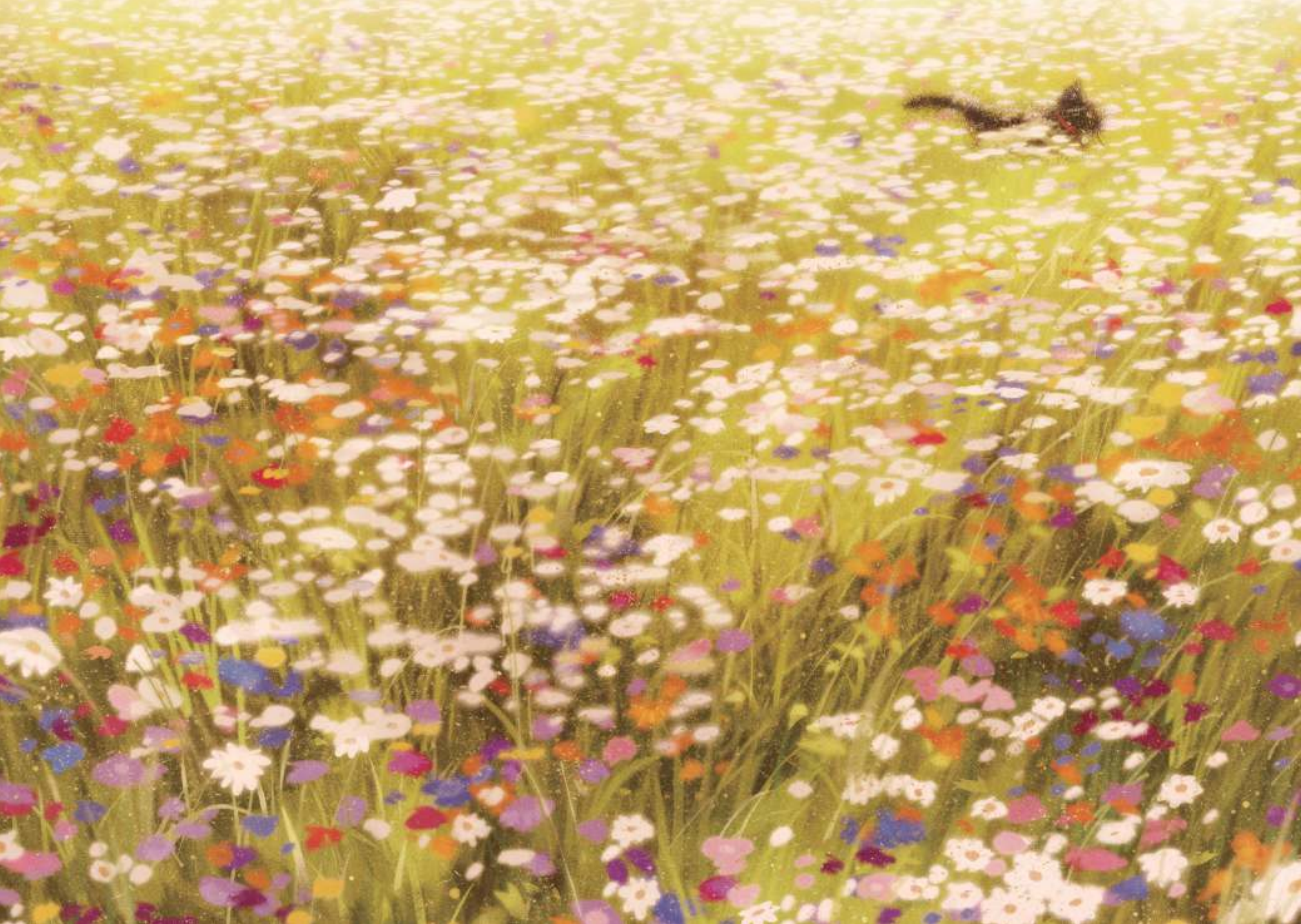
Cemong twirled, showing off his glossy coat. “Look at me. Do I seem hurt? I’m actually happy about it.”

“Why?” the cat wondered.

“You might know soon,” Cemong replied with a cheeky wink.











DID

YOU

KNOW?

#1

Cats are sometimes sterilized to prevent too many kittens, especially with wild cats. When a cat is sterilized, it means they've had a surgery so they can't have babies. Boy cats have their testes removed, and girl cats have their ovaries taken out.

#2

Have you ever seen a cat with a special mark on its ear? That means the cat has been sterilized! This mark helps cat lovers know if a cat has already had the surgery, especially for the girl cats. This notched ear sign is recognized all around the world.

So, if you travel and see a cat with this ear mark, now you'll know why!

#3

Have you ever heard of TNR? It stands for "Trap, Neuter, Release." This is a special program for wild cats, usually carried out by communities or cat lovers. They'll catch a wild cat, sterilize it, care for it until it's fully recovered, and then release it back to its natural home.

Why do people do this? There are so many benefits to sterilizing cats!

#4



**Healthier Cats:** After sterilization, the hormones in cats change. This makes them more active and healthier.



**Less Marking:** Male cats will be less interested in mating. They'll also mark their territory with urine less often, meaning fewer "territory battles."



**Controlled Cat Population:** With sterilization, the number of wild and abandoned cats won't keep growing.



**Calm and Friendly:** Cats become calmer and more gentle after sterilization because they're less aggressive.





AUTHOR

**Iwok Abqary** started writing children's stories in 2006. Since then, he's written over 100 books for children and teenagers! Kak Iwok graduated with an English degree from Padjadjaran University and now lives in the city of Tasikmalaya. Want to get to know Kak Iwok better? Dive into his tales about the books he writes and the cats he cares for on his Instagram account: @iwokabqary.



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VISUAL  
EDITOR

**Evi Shelvia** is a passionate artist who enjoys drawing, writing stories, and cuddling with cats. She has created numerous books that have been published both domestically and internationally. Additionally, Evi actively participates in providing illustration training for children's books, not only in her home country but also in various countries across Asia and Africa, collaborating with Room to Read, Let's Read Asia, and other organizations. To get in touch with Evi, you can reach her via email at [evishelvia@gmail.com](mailto:evishelvia@gmail.com) or visit her website at [epit-at-home.blogspot.com](http://epit-at-home.blogspot.com).



DESIGNER

**Damar Sasongko** has loved children's books and comics ever since he was young. In 2014, he decided to work in the publishing world. Since then he has helped with the publication of hundreds of books as a designer, art director, or editor. Right now, he is pursuing the art of printmaking. Say hello to him on Instagram @kaoskutang



Cemong always gazed with envy at cats wearing bells. To him, those bells symbolized a home and affection. Could he ever have such a cherished bell, being a stray with no protection? Then one day, someone captured him, stirring feelings of confusion and grim. Where is Cemong being taken, and what mysterious fate awaits him? Dive into this enigmatic tale, and journey with Cemong as his story unfolds in detail.

HET Rp24.900

ISBN 978-623-118-351-4

