

Cecil's Day Out

The crickets began to chirp at noon. The sun was high in the sky, peering through the dense forest trees and shining onto the dirt, twig, and leaf covered ground. Birds flew to branches and sang, while squirrels scurried up the sides of trees and into their holes.

In one of those trees, wasn't a squirrel, but another inhabitant: A weasel by the name of Cecil. His head rested upon his tiny paws, tail curled up, and his back rising and falling with every steady breath he took. He had just woken up from a good night's rest, stretching his body and letting out a big yawn. He felt so relaxed, resting on his leaf pile. He planned on doing a bit of scavenging for new items to collect, but at this very moment, laying about a bundle of leaves seemed like the perfect way to spend the rest of the day.

Unfortunately, that was near impossible to do, since every so often he'd hear the sound of the squirrels scampering up his tree, louder than usual.

"They're doing this on purpose," he thought to himself. "Lousy neighbors, the lot of them."

Cecil peered out of the hole in the tree and looked up to see two squirrels sitting on a branch, holding acorns in their tiny hands. He stared at them with his piercing black eyes, clearly showing displeasure. The squirrels turned to one another, then back to Cecil and simultaneously dropped their acorns on his head. A slight ringing sound went through his ears and he started to feel a bit dizzy.

"Bastards..." Cecil thought as the squirrels started snickering to each other. He hissed at them and threatened to climb up there by approaching the trunk and putting his front paws on the tree, standing on his hind legs. The squirrels froze, worried if he'd actually go through with it.

As Cecil prepared to climb up after the squirrels, he heard the ringing again and shut his eyes, starting to feel a headache coming on. He got off the tree, knowing he shouldn't be climbing up in the state he was in.

The squirrels began to snicker once again and scurried down the tree, past Cecil. They didn't even live there. He hissed at them one more time before slinking back to his hole.

“Next time,” Cecil thought as he climbed back onto his pile. He tried his best to go back to his peaceful place, but every time he did, he saw the squirrels dropping acorns on his head, laughing at him. Cecil writhed around on the leaves, knowing the squirrels ended up winning. Frustrated with this realization, he got off his pile and thought about what else he could do for the day.

Cecil looked around his living space and felt a little put off by it. While the center of it had his leaves, the rest of the room didn’t have any kind of decoration. The only thing that stood out was an intact ribbon near the exit. The ribbon belonged to a discarded liquor bottle he found by a tree on the outskirts of the forest: Blue with gold trimming and letters spelling out “Old Marie Blue’s”. To Cecil though, it was a stylish sash that he’d wear around his body to stand out from everyone in the forest.

“This place really needs some decoration,” He thought while wiggling himself into the ribbon. “Guess I better go with my original plan for today”

Cecil poked his head out of the hole to make sure the squirrels weren’t still there. To his satisfaction, they were nowhere to be seen. With that, he exited his home and formed a pile of dirt and leaves in front of the exit, to hide it away from any possible intruders.

As he ventured through the forest, he noticed a disturbing lack of any junk lying around. No wrappers he could use to make a hat, no ribbons for new sashes, and not even plastic water bottles to have as a sculpture of some kind. Any wrapper he did find was too dingy and torn up to do anything with and the only parts of a water bottle he could find were the caps. There weren’t even any abandoned toys or magazines.

Cecil explored until it all just felt hopeless. He was already too far away from his home to begin with and going any further and still not being able to find anything would prove a waste of time. He hung his head and let out a small sigh, ready to head back the way he came.

Suddenly, his ears perked up as he picked up a sound not too far from where he was. It almost sounded like a car driving by or as Cecil would call them “giant moving rocks”. He turned around and followed where the sound was coming from, knowing he was near a road. Lots of cool stuff was always near a road: cups, cigarettes, coins, toys, really colorful plastic

bags. Sure, there would be the occasional dead animal but Cecil knew better than to just run out without a care and end up like roadkill.

As he approached the road, he noticed that no other cars were driving by. It seemed a little too clear; like at any second a car would come speeding down and take him by surprise. Even more surprising was that something was on the other side of the road: Two rectangular trailer homes with white paneling and each with 3 windows

Cecil tilted his head. He'd seen a house before but never with wheels and bricks underneath them.

"The things humans come up with..." he thought. "Such odd living spaces must have lots of oddities to collect!" He grinned, eager to find a way inside the trailers. He stood on his hind legs and looked both ways before crossing the road. Once he knew for certain nothing was coming his way, he hurried across and reached the soft patch of grass between the two trailers.

"Now, which one should I go into first?" Both trailers looked exactly the same, except Cecil was barely able to make out that one of them had a floral print in the far left window. Whatever was making that floral print, he wanted it. He observed the entire exterior of the trailer, unable to see any opening. He didn't want to try digging underground or through the wall since this kind of home wasn't something he had experience with. Before he could think of going to the other trailer, his ears perked up to hear a window being opened and looked to see a small pair of hands retracting from it.

"Great, my only way in and it's occupied by someone; I'd better be careful." Cecil went up underneath the opened window and hopped onto the trailer, getting a good grasp on the paneling long enough for him to get onto the windowsill. He instantly felt a cool breeze hit him and realized it was coming from a fan in the right corner of the room, a bed and lamp next to it. To the left was a small cube shaped television showing a bunch of pixels jumping on other pixels. In front of the television was a young blond haired boy in footsie pajamas, sitting down on the floor holding a small rectangular controller in his hand, pressing on the arrow pads and little buttons. Cecil had seen these kinds of pixels and controllers before in another house he explored in the past, but never knew what they were supposed to represent.

“Timmy! Wash up, it’s time for supper!” A voice could be heard from another room.

The boy replied, “Yes ma!” Once one of the pixels on the screen jumped onto a pole, slid down, and ran into what appeared to be a house to Cecil, the boy got up and left the room, leaving it open for poking around.

Cecil peered down to see the floor wasn’t too far down. He got off the windowsill and onto the carpeted floor, taking in his surroundings. He knew he only came in for the floral print but everything else in this room looked amazing. Unfortunately just by looking around, most of it seemed too heavy for him to carry. He hopped up on the bed to see if he could find anything and right by the pillow was a wooden slingshot though to Cecil it looked like a piece of wood with some kind of rubber attached to it. He tried to see if he could take the handle in his mouth and sure enough, he was able to. He climbed up the wall and to the windowsill, throwing the slingshot onto the grass below. He’d get it later after obtaining the floral print.

Cecil went back into the room and this time looked at the television displaying the pixels. He looked at the screen then down at the floor to see the box the controller was connected to. He saw a few buttons and tried to press on them.

“I wonder what this one does...” He pressed down on one of the buttons, causing the box to eject a cartridge. He looked at the picture printed on it that showed the pixels he saw on the screen, as well as words printed on it. Before he had time to read it, Cecil heard a sink running from the other room. The kid was almost done washing up. Cecil took a corner of the cartridge in his mouth and threw it outside, next to the slingshot on the ground and scurried under the bed. The boy left the other room and went down the hallway.

Cecil got out from under the bed and carefully left the room. The kid still had his back turned on him as well as the mother in the kitchen who was a few feet away from the kid, stirring up something in a pot on the stove. To the left of the mother was a kitchen sink and above it, a window with a small floral curtain.

“Finally!” Cecil’s tail wagged slightly, but he suppressed his excitement as he tried to find a way to get to it.

The mother stopped stirring and got 2 plates from a cabinet overhead. As she went to set the plates on the table, she noticed a silhouette of something in the hallway. She leaned forward and squinted her eyes to make out Cecil's appearance.

In absolute fear, she jumped back, dropping the plates onto the floor and causing them to break, screaming at the top of her lungs.

"So much for a plan," Cecil made a run for it, going past the mother's frantically moving feet.

"Get out of here!" she exclaimed as she got a newspaper from the counter and rolled it up. Cecil jumped up onto the sink and grabbed the corner of the curtain. With all the strength he could muster, he pulled on the curtain until the fabric wore down and tore apart, leaving a good piece of the curtain for Cecil to take with him.

The mother was right behind him, ready with the newspaper. Cecil leapt out of the way just in time and ran across the countertop. He got on top of a small radio, pressing on one of the buttons unintentionally. A static filled voice filled the room:

"And now here's the song that's got everybody talking, it's Radio Gaga' by Queen!"

The volume was turned all the way up and the synthetic beats were too much for Cecil's ears to handle. He got off the radio with the curtain still in his mouth and ran back to the kid's room to exit through the window. The mother was distracted by the loud music and covered one of her ears while trying to turn the volume down.

Once Cecil found himself outside the house, he put the curtain on top of the slingshot and cartridge and pushed it slightly underneath the trailer so that it couldn't be found out and taken back into the house.

Cecil made his way to the other trailer and to his luck one of the windows was wide open. He got into the house, getting onto the kitchen countertop underneath the opened window. In his immediate view was a man with a big belly in a tank top and boxers, sleeping in an armchair with his head tilted all the way back. The home was dimly lit and Cecil tried his best to get a better look at his surroundings, but it was to no avail.

Before he could get off the counter, a loud banging at the door could be heard. Alarmed, Cecil got into the sink to hide, while the man woke up, smacking his lips and scratching his belly, slowly getting himself out of the chair. Answering the door, the person doing the knocking was the mother from the other trailer, her hair frizzy with a look of frustration plastered on her face.

“Whatcha need Mabel?” The man said.

“Have you seen a rat go by here?” The mother asked.

“Why must every human I come across, get me confused with those heathens!” Cecil thought, letting out a quiet hiss

The man replied to the mother by shaking head, “Nuh uh.”

The mother continued, “Well if you do, kill that little bastard! Damn thing broke into my house and scared the living daylights outta me. Probably got its nasty fur into my stew or something.”

The man nodded, “If I seem em, I’ll get em.”

“Thank you Mark. Now if you’ll excuse me, I need fix my hair. It’s such a mess”

“Mhmm.”

The man closed the door once the mother left his porch and sat back down in his chair, falling asleep almost instantly. When Cecil peered out from the sink though, he noticed the door wasn’t closed all the way. There was a tiny crack, just big enough for him to slide his way through as a quick exit.

He hopped off the counter and went towards the man, wanting to see if anything near him was worth something. Next to the chair was a small end table and on that end table were three empty bottles, except they weren’t just any bottles.

They were “Old Marie Blue’s” liquor bottles, with the ribbons still intact and wrapped around them.

“So many...sashes” Cecil thought, his tail wagging. “Now how to get up there...” He looked at the man’s exposed belly and instantly found the answer. Cecil moved back and took a running start, leaping onto the man’s belly and off of it to get the table. The man never even noticed and simply shifted in his chair a little.

Cecil observed the bottles and found a way to carefully climb atop the bottles and pull the ribbon off. He was lucky that the adhesive on the ribbons wasn’t too tough. He repeated this with the other two bottles and had ribbons in his mouth.

“What a steal!” Cecil thought. He tried looking around the chair to see if there was anything else but then he turned his head to the window, seeing that the sun was setting. He got off the end table and tried to find something to carry all his stuff found. He noticed a medium sized shopping bag lying on the floor and put the ribbons into it before taking the handle of the bag in his mouth and dragging it with him out the door.

He went back to the other trailer and put the cartridge, slingshot, and floral curtain into the bag as well. It was slightly heavier, but nothing that was too much to handle. Cecil went back to the road and checked to make sure no cars were passing by. Getting the all clear, he slowly dragged the bag with him, so that it wouldn’t accidentally rip on the asphalt

Meanwhile, in the trailer with the floral curtain, the mother was scrubbing the countertops. She looked out the window and noticed Cecil dragging a bag along the road.

“There he is! That no good...” She stormed out of the trailer and to the other one, banging on the door incessantly. “Mark! Mark! Get your ass out here!”

Cecil heard the commotion and picked up the pace.

The man finally answered the door, “Yeah?”

The mother pointed her finger at the road while still looking at the man, “Over there! There he is!”

The man looked over the mother’s shoulders, “I don’t see nothin’.”

The mother raised her eyebrow and turned around to find out Cecil was nowhere to be seen, “But...but I just saw him.”

“You were probably just seein’ things. Don’t worry, we’ll get him.” The man shut the door, leaving the mother feeling completely hopeless.

“No! I’m telling you he’s out there.” She was met with no response. She sighed and turned around to go back to her trailer until at the corner of her eye, she spotted Cecil on the other side of the road, standing up on his hind legs, blinking at her, with the bag handle still in his mouth. A second passed and he scurried his way back into the forest.

“You damn rat!” the mother shouted.

“Weasel!” Cecil wanted to shout back.

The next day, noon had approached once more and Cecil was just returning home after an hour of hunting and eating stray insects. He got back to his tree to see the two squirrels were on the branch again, with acorns in their hands, just waiting for him to get closer. Cecil looked at the slingshot he had planted into the ground handle first and ran off. The squirrels were wondering where he went off to.

Just a few moments later, he returned with a small rock in his mouth and put it into the slingshot that was purposefully facing the branch that the squirrels were occupying. He bit onto the sling and pulled it back, letting go at just the right moment. The rock shot out and hit the acorn out of the squirrel’s hands, nearly knocking the squirrel off the tree. The two of them didn’t know what kind of weapon Cecil had in his possession and they certainly didn’t want to stick around for him to get a better shot. They scurried down the tree and out of sight.

Satisfied with the results the slingshot had given, Cecil went back to his hole. The floral curtain was draped over the entrance, as another way of showing off his home. He slid out of his sash and placed it on the pile of the three others he now owned. He got onto his leaf pile and smiled at the game cartridge that was now his sculpture/painting.

Feeling a wave of happiness flow through him, Cecil nestled into the pile and shut his eyes for a well-deserved nap.

“Home sweet home...”