

Carlos Stanfield

About 700 Words

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Housewarming

By Carlos Stanfield

Michael reclined on his couch with a proud grin on his face. Everything was finally in place; the furniture, the appliances, even the pile of filthy laundry already beginning to accumulate in the corner. It was finally sinking in that he had his own house! If only his parents could see him now. Still, they were off jet setting and seeing the globe. More power to them, Michael was perfectly fine with the little slice of Earth he had right here. He peeled his socks off and tossed them in the corner. Just as he was about to turn on the T.V., he heard the door ring. *Just when I was getting comfortable.*

With a groan, Michael got up and strolled to the door. When he opened it though, whoever did the delivery was already gone. *These guys. They always just drop the box and jet. At least they didn't just leave a slip.*

Michael looked over the delivery. It was a wooden crate with holes drilled in the side. He didn't remember making any orders. Maybe it was a gift? Either way, he pulled it inside and cracked the lid off easily enough. That was great because the easy part of his day was officially over.

Michael peeked inside the box and couldn't help but let out a shocked, but quite manly he would assure you, scream. Within was a cat. Well, it had a head that resembled a cat more than anything else, yet it was hairless and its skin was black and leathery. It had six segmented legs somewhat like an insect and a long rat-like tail.

The thing looked up at Michael, blinking its three green eyes before it let out a hiss. It was out of the box as quick as a flash. It skittered over to the wall and climbed up the side like some demented spider, rushing this way and that. All the while, hissing and barking as if it were looking for something.

Michael looked up at it in shock, before leaping into action. He wasn't exactly sure what was going on, and truthfully, he wasn't too curious. Whatever it was, it had to go. He reached for his broom and started swatting at the hell beast as it ran across his walls.

The creature, however, seemed none too bothered. It hopped from the wall to the roof to the floor and back again, barking and hissing all the way. It climbed up onto the couch, raising its tail and lowering its ears.

Michael, now sweating and with quite a few pictures and a lamp knocked to the floor, got the message. Whatever this thing was, it wasn't going anywhere. At least not right now. Maybe he could wait till the creature fell asleep and stuff it into a pillowcase or something?

With no small amount of annoyance, Michael walked back over to the crate, trying his very best to ignore the three-eyed monster that was now biting at his discarded socks. Considering the surprise, he hadn't checked the box carefully. Inside was a brown paper

package. He winced as he opened it, half expecting a swarm of mutant mosquitoes to fly out. Instead was a book entitled “The Proper Rearing and Care of a Thaxal for Idiots” and a note.

“Hello, Honey! We’re so proud of you taking that next big step! Sorry, we couldn’t be there for you, but we thought we’d send you something to keep you company! We hope it’ll help make your house a home! Love, Mom and Dad!”

With a groan, Michael sat down and buried his head in his hands. He knew his parents were taking a trip, but where the hell did they find this thing? Was there any chance he could just send it back? Somehow, he doubted that the pound would pick it up. Michael peeked through his fingers, as he felt a weight on his lap. It seemed the Thaxal had decided he would be its new napping spot. *You know when it’s not running on the walls and hissing it almost seems cute. Well, in a creepy sort of way it’s cute.*

Giving a looked around at his considerably messier living room Michael grabbed his remote, leaned back, and turned on the TV. He wasn’t going to risk getting up while this thing slept on him. Besides, he was missing his show.