

CATS REFUGEES

cat-therapy for children and adults

(translated by Olga Drobotai, song translations by Alex Borovenskiy)

Peachy – red kitten

Marusya – volunteer cat

Busya – funny handicapped cat

Mykola – young fancy breed cat

Overture

Dark stage. Nothing is visible. Only plaintive kitten meow. The light spot appears. It shows a dirty red kitten Peachy. In the first part of overture Peachy and Mykola speak epically like heroes of Greek tragedies up to the point when Marusya comes up.

Peachy tries to walk here and there but we understand that he walks in the dark.

PEACHY: Why it's so dark? And where am I? Why has everything changed so quickly? I've just got used to the great times. My girl scratches behind my ear, gives me toys and rolls into a cozy blanket... And all of a sudden...

All of a sudden Peachy hits some obstacle and gets watered. Starts shaking. There is some laughter from the side. One more light spot shows Mykola.

MYKOLA: There we go. Someone had a shower finally. Cause that smell didn't let me sleep.

Mykola waves in front of his nose to show that something stinks.

PEACHY: Who're you?

MYKOLA: I am the one who loves nice smells and the best food.

PEACHY: And where am I?

MYKOLA: You are where I'm telling you your place is

PEACHY: And where is it?

MYKOLA: Somewhere next to the trashcan that smells just like you

PEACHY: Do I smell like a trashcan?

MYKOLA: You stink like a forgotten trashcan with forgotten rotten fish.

Peachy tries to smell himself, suddenly one more light spot shows Marusya

MARUSYA: Mykola, cut it out. Don't you see it's a kid

MYKOLA: Quite annoying one, doesn't let me sleep

Mykola yawns. Marusya stretches her back and jumps down from somewhere above, the light spot follows her. Marusya approaches Peachy, tries to sniff him, Peachy backs, he's scared

MARUSYA: It's okay tails, don't be scared. Mykola speaks a lot but there's no harm. It's like a dripping tap, a bit annoying but you can live with it.

PEACHY: When I lived in a basement, there was water dripping. Drip-drop. Those were the sound of live, I could drink. And then I lived in a house where my girl took me, and there on the wall was this weird thing, it went tik -tok.

MYKOLA: Oh, dear Lord, one more dummy, how sweet

MARUSYA: Stop it, he's just a kid!

MYKOLA: Meow! I get enough with our Busya:

BUSYA: Who said my name? Who called me? Meow!

Light spot appears, it shows Busya, she's in a wheelchair. She quickly approaches to Marusya and Peachy and nearly hits them. They manage to step away.

BUSYA: Meow! Who's a new little one here? Who's so tiny? Who is so ginger?

Busya approaches to Peachy. Peachy presses himself against the wall. Busya tries to touch him.

PEACHY: Who are you all?

ALL: We are cats-refugees!

A Story of Peachy

PEACHY: What means 'refugees'?

Cats look at each other with surprise. The interior is typical for a cat shelter

MARUSYA: The ones who had to leave their home because of the big bad thing.

BUSYA: If you meet a cat-refugee or a dog-refugee or even an iguana-refugee, it doesn't matter, you have to support them, offer some help

MYKOLA (monotonously, like reciting): And if you are a cat-refugee, so behave yourself. Don't embarrass yourself

ALL except for Peachy: Be polite and grateful

MARUSYA: Those are the rules. Welcome to our friendly company!

MYKOLA: Let's not exaggerate, not that friendly...

BUSYA: So what? Do you need any help? You're also a cat-refugee

PEACHY: Me? I don't wanna be a cat-refugee. I wanna go home.

MYKOLA: Nobody wants to be a refugee

BUSYA: Everyone wants to go home

MARUSYA: But you just have to get used to... *(can't finish)*

PEACHY: I don't wanna get used to anything. I'm sick of getting used to ...

MYKOLA: Oh, look at that. So small and so tired already
MARUSYA: So what's your name, red?
PEACHY: Peachy... Sofiyka named me Peachy
BUSYA: Who's Sofiyka?

PEACHY: The best girl in the world. She took me from the basement. We were living happily in our house and then, once in the morning I woke up because of everyone was running around and packing up... And there was this weird scary sound Wooo-wooo! *(cats get scared)*

MARUSYA: No panic! It's just a siren. it tells to get into a shelter or some safe place. It doesn't necessarily mean something terrible would happen. It's just a warning that you need to watch out

MYKOLA: I hate the siren

Busya gets closer to Peachy, she is interested

BUYSA: What happened then?

PEACHY: Sofiyka was crying, I was hussing in the corner, cause I couldn't understand anything...

MARUSYA: Oh, if we'd met before you'd have known. You had to support your little Sofiyka, get on her lap, purr... Then what?

PEACHY: They got me into a pet carrier...

MYKOLA: I hate pet carriers. They were taking me to the vet in it for some injection. Still hurts BUSYA: Let him talk

PEACHY: Then we got to that strange place, there were crowds of people, cats, dogs, everyone was waiting for something... And then it came... A huge scary machine "chooo-choo"

MYKOLA: Let's not make those horrible sounds

PEACHY: Everyone started getting into it. We also did

MYKOLA: It's a train, silly. I hate trains

MARUSYA: But to get to a safe place you need to get on the train and try to be patient

PEACHY: That train ...It roared, and then the dog roared at me

MYKOLA: I hate dogs

BUSYA: A big sharp-toothed one?

PEACHY: No, even smaller than you are, but it was unpleasant... I started jumping... Sofiyka couldn't hold the carrier and fell, it opened and I ran away

MYKOLA: Would you look at that! He ran and now he is whining about it

BUSYA: Cut it out! He just got scared...

PEACHY: I was so scared I didn't see where I was running..

MARUSYA: To avoid the situations just like that I teach these classes

MYKOLA: Which haven't helped anyone yet...

MARUSYA: You just can't listen attentively!

BUSYA: What happened then?

PEACHY: Then I hid under the bench, some woman got me out and threw into a box with many other kittens. They were screaming and I was screaming then I fell asleep. I woke here

BUSYA: Come on, Peachy, you're safe now, you can let it go... Nobody will hurt you here...

PEACHY: It is not my home

MYKOLA: Just don't start whining again...

PEACHY'S SONG

*I just wanna go home
Where I know all along
To get back where I was
I would walk on my paws
To get back where I was
I would walk on my paws*

*There's a girl in that home
Sweetest girl in the world
There's a bowl in the corner in fact
With cat food that's intact
There's a bowl in the corner in fact
With cat food that's intact*

*There's a house in that room
Best cat house I assume*

*This is where I curl
And I sleep and I purr
This is where I curl
And I sleep and I purr*

*I just wanna go home
Where I know all along
To get back where I was
I would walk on my paws*

BUSYA: Sad story...

MYKOLA: So NOT epic

BUSYA: Don't listen to him

Mykola takes out his smartphone and starts recording stories

MYKOLA: Hello there, my kitties. Mykola is here and we've got some great news again. Today I saved one more hungry little ...

Starts getting closer to Peachy to get him on screen

MYKOLA: Hey kid, say something grateful for my Meowgram

Peachy blinks his eyes, he's confused

PEACHY: Meow

MARUSYA: Stop it, Mykola. Leave Peachy alone

MYKOLA: Bye-bye, my kitties

Stops recording

MYKOLA: Why are you always spoiling my vibe? Stop devaluing my job, this our common thing

Peachy looks around

PEACHY: What is this place?

MARUSYA: Cat club...

PEACHY: Cat club?

MYKOLA: I told you to come up with a nice name like Cat Club "Mykola's" for example...

MARUSYA: Why it has to be your name? You'll get back home soon. I'm the one who stays here all the time...

MYKOLA: Sure and this is why it needs to be "Marusya's"

MARUSYA: How dare you? I don't care about the name of the club! And I'm here all the time because my owner Petro fights the bug bad thing. He doesn't whatever he can to bring the safety to all the cats and kittens. And while he's doing this, I can help somebody like ...like...like Peachy!

PEACHY: And you'll help me to find Sofiyka?

MARUSYA: Erm... well... I'll help you to adapt here, until Sofiyka finds you

PEACHY: How can she find me?

MYKOLA: She or somebody else. If you get a nice washing up...

PEACHY: No! I don't want somebody else... I need my Sofiyka! I have to find her!

MARUSYA: Peachy, you can't just go out there

MYKOLA: What a nuts...

PEACHY: What if nobody takes me! What if I stay here forever!

Peachy grabs Busya and starts shaking her. Busya freezes in shock and it seems she starts getting hysterical as well

BUSYA: Aaaar...

MARUSYA: Oh, no. Here we go again...

MYKOLA: I can't stand it...

Busya starts going chaotically, hits the walls... Mykola and Marusya look at each other, sigh and get her wheels chair. They take her to the cage and lock. Marusya and Mykola look at Peachy reproachfully. Peachy gets quiet...

PEACHY: I didn't know...

Busya's story

Marusya, Peachy and Mykola stand in front of Busya's cage. Busya hits the wall with the wheelchair quietly howling air alert signal

MYKOLA: I am a noble and purebred cat but I can't stand that sound. I might get nervous

MARUSYA: Busya, honey, look at me. I've got something for you

Marusya takes out a cat treat and shows it to the cage

MYKOLA: If she doesn't want it, I do

Busya keeps hitting and howling. Mykola tries to get the treat but Marusya doesn't give it to him

Peachy shuts his ears

PEACHY: I didn't know. I didn't know that she is ...

MARUSYA: She's what?

PEACHY: Well... Weird...

MYKOLA (*roll up his eyes*): Oh...

MARUSYA: What do you mean 'strange'? So what she's in a wheelchair, she's faster than you are!

PEACHY: That's not what I ... I mean there's something wrong with her... head

MYKOLA: Ooooh...

MARUSYA: Her head?! Do you even know what she's been through?

PEACHY: No, I don't know

MARUSYA: So why are you saying that

MYKOLA: Marusya, let's not do this... He's just a kid, you said that

MARUSYA: Listen, tails, there are no 'weird' cats... She's just not like you. Everyone's different

MYKOLA: She's not like you, smells much better

PEACHY: I just fell into a puddle, I actually smell nice

Start sobbing, Marusya give him the treat

MARUSYA: She actually doesn't do that a lot

MYKOLA: Well, to be honest...

Busya stops hitting the wall and howling and gets to Marusya and Mykola

BUSYA: What smells so nice?

Peachy gives her the treat. Busya takes it and starts crunching

MARUSYA: You see. It's over

Marusya opens the cage and Busya gets out

Busya (singing joyfully):

Once upon a time there was a cat

Lying in the dump

Thrown off the window, just like that

But I still do jump

Life of mine is like a dream

Nothing is the same

Look at me, the way I seem Since

then I am lame

Hind paws, they're just like a wheel

Moving like a tramp

Front paws sort of made of steel

Your Busya is a champ

Busya does some cool tricks on her wheelchair while singing

PEACHY: Wow, cool

BUSYA: Hop on!

Peachy gets on her lap and she continues rolling with him

Busya:

*Some good hands, they picked her up
Fed from a pipette, and from a cup
Gave her blanket, warm her up
And gave her stomach rub*

*Once upon a time there was a cat
Thrown off the window, just like that
Going to the dump some cat named Busya
Found by the nice kind girl Katrusya*

*Hind paws, they're just like a wheel
Moving like a tramp
Front paws sort of made of steel
Your Busya is a champ*

Marusya and Mykola dance with bored faces (they've heard this songs before)

PEACHY: Did they really throw you out to the dump?

BUSYA: Who?

PEACHY: You were just singing...

BUSYA: Me? Singing?

MARUSYA (*tries to go off the topic*): Heey, let's have a picnic? It's morning and we haven't had any breakfast.

PEACHY: How do you know it's morning? There are no windows, no morning birds singing morning songs? Even when I lived in a basement I heard them

MYKOLA: Morning is here when your stomach starts singing a morning song. Like mine is now

BUSYA: When I lived in a basement we could only hear the sounds of air alarm

PEACHY: You also lived in a basement?

MARUSYA: Everyone lived in a basement. That's why we are cats-refugees, our owners took us to a safer place, so we didn't have to live in a basement.

MYKOLA: I didn't go to a basement, I went to a real bomb shelter. A basement is not a good place to hide

MARUSYA: Not everyone gets so lucky

MYKOLA: I got lucky before I was born. My mother has 6 titles, my father has 8

BUSYA: So did the titles help you in the bomb shelter?

MYKOLA: So... what about a picnic? My stomach starts singing a lunchtime song

PEACHY: My Sofiyka didn't take me to the basement, because I was born there. She took me home from the basement

MARUSYA: Well, it's different. Then your Sofiyka decided to take you to a safer place, far from the big bad thing PEACHY: Which big bad thing?

BUSYA: Which big bad thing?

MYKOLA: Oooo...

PEACHY: Does that mean I'm not gonna see my girl?

BUSYA: Which girl?

MYKOLA: Ooooo...

PEACHY: My Sofiyka

BUSYA: And where is my Katrusya?

MYKOLA: Oooo, I'm not gonna eat soon

Peachy starts crying, Busya joins him

Marusya's story

MARUSYA: Peachy, your bad mood has a bad influence on the atmosphere of the club. It's not good. Get a hold

PEACHY: I don't know how...

MARUSYA: So, look at me

Marusya's song

*To always be in the mood
That Marusya understood
To never be afraid of anything
To do it all, a single thing*

*To get things done
To always have some fun
To believe in catself and catpower
To never allow a sad hour*

*To be a cat is antistressful
That's the feeling dogs can't wrestle
Purring, claws, grace and might
Marusya is always right*

Got that?

PEACHY: Yep

MARUSYA: Let's get to our lesson! The best way to get distracted from your problem is to support others

Marusya starts warming up

BUSYA: Marusya is role model for us... I wanna be like Marusya

PEACHY: She is so brave... How?

BUSYA: Well... *(gets interrupted)*

MYKOLA: She is just a good actress

MARUSYA: Wow, so strange to hear a compliment from you, Mykola

MYKOLA: It wasn't a compliment

BUSYA: Petro, Marusya's owner, is a true hero. She is really worried and sad but tries to be like him

MYKOLA: I think she just likes to be the boss

MARUSYA: Mykola, stop chattering. Let's start our class... So, if we feel sad and want to go home. Or one of our friends is sad. What should we do?

BUSYA: We should think about some nice things!

MARUSYA: Correct! We can imagine what we may do first when we get home! I will crawl up my favorite window. I'll sit there, look at the city and count little sparrows.

BUYSA: I will run around and smell all the things I missed... How about you, Peachy?

PEACHY: Me... I... I don't know...

MYKOLA: I will have a proper meal!

BUSYA: You do that all the time

MYKOLA: Eating here is one thing, having a proper meal at home is totally another

ALL: Oh...

PEACHY: There... I wanna cry again

MARUSYA: You know what?! You wanna cry – cry. Sometimes you just need to let it out. It's good for health

MYKOLA: Oh no (shuts his ears)

PEACHY: (tries to cry) I... I can't

BUSYA: Well, it happens. You know, you just can't cry if they're watching. It has to go on its own.

Suddenly Marusya starts crying

MYKOLA: Hey, Marusya, what's that?

Marusya runs away to the pet carrier, closes it and starts crying louder

PEACHY: Maybe she needs help?

BUSYA: Stop! Just hold on, wait...

MYKOLA: Surprise... I'll get some water...

Marusya cries it out and comes back to the guys. Mykola bring a glass of water. Everyone thinks it's for Marusya but he drink it himself

BUSYA: Marusya let's breathe a bit. Come on, remember, just how you've taught us. Sit up, inhale and count...

MYKOLA: One, two, three, four...

BUSYA: Exhale...

MYKOLA: One, two, three, four...

BUYSA: Peachy, wake up

PEACHY: I don't get it!

BUSYA: Imagine a butterfly on your paw, it's cold, you need to warm it. We breath it out on a little butterfly... like this...

Peachy starts breathing with everyone. Marusya joins them

MARUSYA: Good job, guys. I see I didn't waste my time trying to teach you

MYKOLA: Oh, here comes a teacher, welcome back

BUSYA: And Peachy will know what to do if someday meets a scared kitten like he is

MYKOLA: How are you, Marusya?

MARUSYA: Better now, I've cried it out

MYKOLA: Great then

Mykola gets his phone out

MYKOLA: Wow, my stories about Peachy's saving got 15000 likes in Meowgram. Let's get one more

Starts recording a video

MYKOLA: Hi-hi-hi my kitties. Your Mykola's here with you. Good news: we got one more great lifesaving story in our club

Gets closer to Marusya to get her face into the camera. She turns away hiding crying face

PEACHY: Hey, maybe you shouldn't do that now?

MYKOLA: Listen, you, ungrateful dirty face, there are many subscribers willing to take you

PEACHY: Sofiyka?

Mykola looks into his phone

MYKOLA: No, no Sofiyka. But there is one elderly lady, pani Matylida from New York. Hey, pani Matylida! Say hello to pani Matylta

PEACHY: I don't want to go to pani Matylida

Mykola turns the camera off.

MYKOLA: Damn, why don't you just let me do my job. My kitties are waiting for some good news

BUSYA: Your kitties can wait

MARUSYA: And more, neither me nor Peachy gave you the permission to turn us into a news piece

MYKOLA: Do you have any idea how many subscribers I have? Do you know how many cats would know about you? You're wasting your chance

MARUSYA: I'm fine without fame

MYKOLA: Such a dull life... No fame, no breed...

BUSYA: What's that supposed to mean?

MYKOLA: Nothing

Mykola's story

Everyone looks at Mykola

MYKOLA: Or maybe something

MARUSYA: What are you talking about?

Mykola's song

*You wanna live like a king really
Get the best food a cat can find
Look at this world realistically
You gonna be alright*

*Excuse me for being poetical
I'll tell you above all might
Success is very genetical
You gonna be alright*

*Everybody follows your feed
Then you got your luck at sight
If you're really a good breed
You gonna be more than
alright*

PEACHY: What's that thing? "Breed"?

MYKOLA: Well, kid, it is when you have a special document and they take you to cat shows where you can get medals and trophies.

MARUSYA: Medals and trophies have to be deserved. Like my Petro does. He protects our city from the big bad thing

MYKOLA: You can deserve them by nice ears and a good-looking tail. I got them from my pure-breed mother and father

BUSYA: Can I get a medal for my wheels?

MYKOLA: Do you have a special document?

BUYSA: For what?

MYKOLA: For your wheels.

BUSYA: I don't know...