

Cat in the Rain Summary

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Beginning of the Story and the Rainy Atmosphere: Ernest Hemingway's "Cat in the Rain" is based on the experience of an American couple staying in a small hotel in Italy. The rainy weather, the quiet hotel, and the view of the sea, the garden, and the war monument create a mood of isolation and loneliness. Their room is on the second floor, from where they can see the sea, the garden, and the bronze war monument. It rains all day.

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In this rainy loneliness, the American wife looks out through the window and sees a small cat curled up under a green table, trying to protect itself from the rain. The sight fills her heart with deep affection and pity. She says, "I'm going down and get that kitty." George, her husband, is lying on the bed reading. When the wife says she wants to go down to get the cat, he casually says, "Don't get wet." His words show no concern or warmth. So the wife goes downstairs by herself.

The Hotel-Keeper's Courtesy and the Wife's Emotional Depth: As soon as the American wife comes downstairs, she sees the hotel-keeper bowing his head respectfully to greet her. The old hotel-keeper is tall, serious, and very polite. His calm behavior and gentle manners make the wife feel a sense of safety and respect. His serious face, large hands, soft voice, and sincere care for guests impress her deeply. She feels that the hotel-keeper genuinely values her. He listens carefully, understands her needs, and wants to help in any way he can.

But her own husband, George, is the opposite. George only cares about his book. He does not pay attention to his wife's feelings or desires. He shows no care, no tenderness, no understanding.

While the wife stands in the doorway looking outside, suddenly an umbrella opens behind her. It is the hotel maid who has come to keep her from getting wet. Smiling in Italian, the maid

says, "You must not get wet." This concern also came from the hotel-keeper's instructions. This makes the wife feel even more respected, because someone is thinking about her comfort.

But when they walk along the path to the place where the cat had been curled up under the table, they find it gone. The green table now looks brighter because of the rain, but the cat has disappeared. Seeing this, the wife's heart breaks. She had imagined she would at least get a small creature to hold close. But the cat's absence fills her again with loneliness, emptiness, and longing. Her disappointment is not only about the cat. It symbolizes the deeper emptiness in her life, her unmet desires, and her silent pain.

The Wife's Unfulfilled Desires and Inner Conflict: When the wife returns to the room with a sad heart, she quietly sits on the bed beside George. After a moment, she softly says, "I wanted it so much." Her voice shows disappointment, but the sorrow inside her is much deeper. She was not only asking for a cat. She was asking for care, love, importance, and the right to have something of her own. Then, suddenly, her long-suppressed desires begin to come out one by one. She says she wants to grow her hair long and stand before the mirror to comb it slowly. By doing this, she wants to feel like a woman again, something she has suppressed for a long time.

She wants to eat at her own table with her own silverware. She wants to eat under candlelight, wear new clothes, and feel her identity and beauty in the sunlight of spring. Finally, she says she wants a little kitten that will sit on her lap and purr while she strokes it. She wants something she can love, care for, and receive unconditional affection from. The wife's desires are not simple wishes. They symbolize her suppressed emotions, her neglected womanhood, her unsatisfying marriage, and her longing for affection and respect. Every desire expresses the emptiness, loneliness, and identity-hunger inside her.

The Husband's Neglect and the Symbolic Ending: But all her words, her wishes, her pain, none of it catches George's attention. As she keeps talking, George irritably says, "Oh, shut up and get something to read." He goes back to his book again. His neglect, indifference, and lack of feeling make the wife even lonelier. In her heart, she understands that her husband does not really see her, does not understand her, and does not want to value her. Just then, there is a knock at the door. George looks up from his book. When the door opens, the hotel maid is standing there. She is holding a large tortoise-shell cat pressed against her chest. With respectful politeness, she says, "The padrone asked me to bring this for the Signora."

This simple sentence carries a deep meaning in the story. The cat the wife was looking for may not be the same one, but the hotel-keeper understood her desire. He respected her feelings and sent a cat to ease her loneliness. In this moment, the American wife realizes that the hotel-

keeper has given her more importance than her own husband. He valued her wish and understood her heart. This small event makes the wife feel, perhaps for the first time, that she is important, worthy, and deserving of affection. This final moment becomes the central symbol of the story. Love, care, respect, these are like that “cat” we all want and search for. And when someone truly understands and gives it, the heart finally feels full.

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