

# Tom Cat's Story

*Some pets have a hard life. Read this story and find out:*

*What is this cat's problem?*

My name is Tom and I am a cat. I have a major problem whose name is Felina. Felina is my owner. You see, she doesn't understand how people should take care of their pets. She has very strange ideas about the relationship between people and pets.

Felina treats me like a human child. She worries about me and tells me what to do all of the time. She doesn't want me to go outside and play with the other cats. She makes me sit on her lap every night while she watches television. Boring. And the programs she watches! No taste at all!

There's more. Felina brushes and combs me twice a day. She takes me to the Pet Beauty Clinic once a week for a bath and shampoo. Really. Cats can take care of themselves. Doesn't she know that we have tongues that we use to lick ourselves and keep clean? And the flea powder she puts on me—it smells awful and I think it might give me skin cancer.

Felina thinks she knows what kind of food I like. She doesn't even have a clue. She feeds me this gourmet cat food and she puts it in a silver dish.



Really! Who cares? All I want is some day-old fish that stinks. And a little water. That's all. Is that asking too much?

One time I managed to get out of the house. Did I have a good time! I ran around with some other cats in the neighborhood. We ate garbage and chased a dog. I even killed a bird and ate it. Good fun. But when I returned home, Felina went crazy. She was so angry. She took me right to the Pet Beauty Clinic for a bath and shampoo,

even though I had just been there the day before.

Once I had a relationship with a real sexy Siamese down the street, but Felina stopped it. Then Felina got me fixed. Now I can't be a father and have children, and I have lost all of my interest in female cats.

To make matters even worse, she wants to have me buried next to her! I won't be free of her even when I am dead. What a life.

**WHAT DO YOU THINK?**

What do you think about pets?  
Check the opinions you agree with.

People should respect animal rights. Owing a pet doesn't mean you can do anything you want.



People need pets for emotional support. I think they're great.



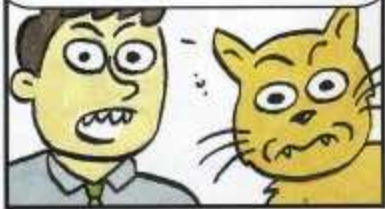
People should not keep pets. They don't belong in people's homes.



People treat pets too much like humans. I think it's silly.



People spend too much money on pets. What a waste! Think of all the homeless people in the world.



Now exchange your ideas with a classmate.

**TURN TO PAGE 84 FOR AN INTERACTION TIP.**

**LOOKING AT THE ISSUE**

Work with a partner. Ask these questions.

- Do you have a pet?  
[Yes] What do you have? What's its name? What is it like?  
[No] Are you interested in keeping a pet? What kind?
- What's good about keeping pets? What are the problems?

Good points

*They comfort us.*

Bad points

*They smell.*

- Which pet is the easiest to keep? Which is the most difficult to keep?

a cat a dog a bird a hamster a goldfish a rabbit