



Feline Fine

ROSIE's family have agreed to give a home to a stray cat from the local sanctuary. Rosie goes through a checklist with her younger sister Lily, as they wait for their father to return with their new pet.

ROSIE: Pink feeding mat... check. Mrs Drake at school said her cat drops bits of food on the floor next to its feeding bowl. Mum's always mopping up, even when there's nothing actually there. She'll go mad if there's bits of half-chewed fish lying about; I mean, cats don't go around with brushes and dustpans do they? I'm sure I've never seen a cat with a vacuum cleaner.

Pink feeding bowl... check. One side is for wet food and the other is for biscuits. I've tried but I can't open the box. It says on the side 'Easy to open' but I think it's some kind of 'in joke' amongst cat people. It's a job for Dad when he gets back, no, better ask Mum; I think his thumb's still swollen from when he bashed it with a hammer when he was installing the cat flap. It's his own fault. There are professional cat flap installers.

Pink bowl... check. That's for her water. According to Mrs Winn at the post office, some cats can't digest milk, which means they tend to be sick and Mum hates it if she sees sick. She told me that the last time you were sick she was sick herself and was surrounded by sick so she fainted... and we can't have that, Dad hates it when people faint.

Scratch-pole... check. Bed with toys in... check. Litter box with litter in... check. They don't do pink litter, believe me, we tried every pet store in town, Dad said we tried every pet store in the world but you know how he exaggerates. That's why he was sulking last night. Why do men hate shopping so much?

Have you noticed how everything's set out? According to the man from the takeaway, you'll have a happier cat if you set out their things in a certain way. He drew a diagram last night when he delivered their set meal for two.

Pink flea collar... check. All we need to do now is decide on a name. I've got down to a shortlist of twenty-five. We need a family meeting round the dining table at... shall we say seven o'clock? Right, I'll tell mum and don't be late, you know she gets angry when we're late for school and this is far more important.

By Nick Teed