

THE SAGA OF JOELENE THE BEAN

or, why cats hate clean houses



Milli Thornton



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ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Milli Thornton, writing workshop presenter and author of *Fear of Writing*, is the proud property of Caster the tubby ginger tabby and Camille the pretty Siamese. She is seen here making eye contact with Caster. Milli was born in Wallace, Idaho, spent her childhood in Great Falls, Montana, and then migrated to Australia with her family at the age of 12. In 1997 she returned to the

USA to reunite with her scattered family. After a year spent on the stormy coast of Oregon, she fled south in search of sun. Milli met her husband Brian in Taos, New Mexico, where they lived for six years before moving to Canyon Lake, Texas in 2004. Both are cat people.

This is a complimentary copy of an e-book from the
bookstore at my Website.

If you enjoy it, please feel free to pass it on to friends.

—the author

<http://www.fearofwriting.com>



my name is Camille

**MY NAME IS CAMILLE
and I live with my Mommy &
Daddy beans and my orange
brother-hero, Caster, in a big
bean box in the middle
of Outside.**



Human Beans



**My big brother.
Isn't he wonderful?
He's my hero.**

Usually Daddy leaves early every night and Mommy stays home while Caster and I sleep peacefully on the family bed. But tonight is the night Mommy always leaves, too. I take a nap on the bed after Mommy drives away and try to pretend nothing's wrong, but I always feel nervous. Caster just thinks I make a good pillow.



Daddy & Mommy sleep during the day while we play.



Daddy and Mommy work during the night while we sleep.



We always hope that Mommy will decide to stay home this time, but even though we cry “Mommy, don’t leave us!” in our most pitiful meows, she leaves anyway. We watch for her to come back until it’s past our bedtime.



We get so exhausted that we just have to go to bed, but I always have horrible dreams about bottles of Clorox and brooms and The Doopy. That's what Mommy calls the thing the Beans use to unchoke the toilet monster.

Mommy and Daddy always laugh whenever they mention The Doopy, but they're never here to see The Scrubbing Bean with it. If they were, they wouldn't laugh. It gives me nightmares! Caster just tells me to hold still and be a good pillow.

The Doopy in my nightmare





**The dreaded key
in the door**

Then we hear the key in the door and Caster and I bump heads in our panic to get under the bed. It's the Scrubbing Bean that Mommy calls Joelene. After so many hundreds of nights of scrubbing we should be used to the Joelene Bean by now, but we're still scared to death of her.



Joelene keeps her scrubbing weapons at our house. She's very proud of them. She even has a special closet to "keep them safe from the brats."

Caster says Joelene thinks we're spoiled and that we should be put Outside. I'm sure Caster fantasizes that one of these days Joelene'll disobey Mommy and put us Outside so we won't get cat hair on that "squeaky clean" bedspread she's so proud of.



The squeaky clean bedspread. Joelene scrubs it with a Gonza.

Mommy says Joelene is very bossy and that she goes to extremes, so maybe Caster's little Outside fantasy isn't so far-fetched after all.



Mommy says that Joelene is the best bean box scrubber in town, and all her friends want to know what Mommy's secret is for a sparkling shower stall.

(... the secret is vinegar, but even our Mommy doesn't know that. Ugh, vinegar stinks!)



Joelene with The Doopy. Beans use water instead of sand in their poopy box! It makes a terrifying sound and then sucks the poor poopies away . . . but sometimes It chokes, and then It needs to have Its throat cleared.



Me, I'm just afraid of being scrubbed.

Sometimes when I peek at what she's doing, I've seen Joelene with a scary yellow sponge called a Gonza that she scrubs all the cat hair off the furniture with—especially from the bedspread. (I don't think Joelene approves of me and Caster letting Mommy and Daddy sleep in our bed with us.)

I'm frightened that Joelene wants to scrub ALL hair off of EVERYTHING with the Gonza . . . especially off of Caster, who has a much hairier belly than I do.



We crouch under the bed all night and watch Joeline's feet go back & forth. Caster just loves to grab Bean feet (especially stocking feet), but for some reason he never tries to grab Joeline's. (I don't think she'd understand.)



Sometimes we accidentally fall asleep (it's so hard to stay awake all night long!) but we're always waiting for the very worst part, which is when the Scrubbing Bean lets her Closet Monster out and lets it roar all over the house. Caster says he used to spend all



day in that closet when he was in trouble with Daddy & never ever heard it roar. But whenever the Scrubbing Bean lets it out, the monster not only roars, it opens a big eye that blinds us with fiery light when we try to look at it.



Caster has spent a lot of time while we're hiding under the bed trying to figure out how Joelene does this. Back when he used to spend every day in the closet (when Daddy said Caster was naughty for waking them up), Caster said he wasn't even afraid of the Closet Monster. He says that ol' Closet Monster was as dead as a Wal-Mart mouse every time he had to be locked in the closet with it—and that he's even used it as a kitty bar!

Caster even used the Closet Monster as a kitty bar (isn't he courageous?! He's my hero!) He said the monster didn't so much as twitch a muscle or make a peep—let alone a roar.



After thinking about it for a long time, Caster announced that the Scrubbing Bean is magic. He says she probably uses catnip to bring The Monster back to life, and then she kills it again before she pushes it back in the closet and slams the door.

We haven't totally figured out why she needs to let it roar all over the bean box like that, but it seems to have something to do with being angry about the cat hair on the carpet.



The Scrubbing Bean kills the monster by pulling its tail.

When Joelene brings the monster out, that's our cue to come out from under the bed and escape to the other end of the bean box. It's tricky to manage this without running into the Scrubbing Bean in a tight hallway. We have to get our timing just right! We hug the walls and keep our bellies low to the ground. I try to stay glued to Caster, but he doesn't care whether we stay together or



not. He says it's "every cat for himself," and that if I wasn't such a crybaby I'd be able to run much faster. Luckily, I get sucked along in the big wind tunnel that Caster creates as he runs.

There's nowhere decent to hide at the other end of the house, so we mill around out in the open like sitting ducks—but Caster doesn't let out a single quack. He saves all those for when Daddy gets home, and then he quacks and quacks and quacks, trying desperately to tell Daddy about the mean and obnoxious Closet Monster. But Daddy never seems to get it!



Caster TRIES to alert Daddy, but Daddy just drinks some beer and watches the Bean News on a smaller bean box.

If Daddy doesn't get it then we have NO HOPE because Mommy even *pays* the Scrubbing Bean to let the monster



out of the closet. I know Mommy loves us dearly, but she hates cat hair as much as the Scrubbing Bean does, and that's why she gave Joelene a key to our Bean box.



BUT—(thank the Catnip Goddess) at least Mommy won't ever let the Scrubbing Bean clean our poopie sandbox. Mommy always does that herself, right before she deserts us and leaves a check for Joelene. At least that's one nightmare I don't have to worry about coming true.

Imagine what would happen if the Scrubbing Bean was allowed to let the Closet Monster roar in our poopie sandbox! (SHUDDER.) I would never be able to relax enough to poop or pee again.



~THE END~

See more cute photos of me and action-hero shots of Caster at our online gallery: www.Caster&Camille.com