

"COPPER AND DAISY"

By Steve Garry

info@integerentertainment.com
© 2011-2023

COPPER AND DAISY

FADE IN:

INT. SEDAN - DAY (TRAVELLING)

The annual TOLSON family trek plays itself out, to the sound of tires on smooth pavement, and a tinny-sounding radio in the dash playing classic rock on low volume.

That is, it's a yearly "family move" based on dad's constant job transfers, that result in their nomadic lifestyle.

SAM, 30, is at the wheel, beside RACHEL, 29, with a magazine in-hand. Sam is a grocery store supervisor. She's a dental assistant, who isn't yet employed in their new town.

In the back, BOBBY, 10, blondish hair down in bangs, stares dreamily out his window as the new town passes by. He sits up straight because bags and boxes marked "Fragile" surround him - special things that couldn't go in the moving truck.

Last but not least, crammed in next to Bobby is his Siamese cat, COPPER, 2. The pet stares out from a pet carrier, and appears equally bored the New World outside.

CLOSE-UP - COPPER PREENS A PAW, YAWNS A JAW-CRACKING YAWN

Though a regular cat in other ways, this one's our narrator:

COPPER (V.O.)
So, school's out and here we are,
moving again. This time? Canton,
Ohio. Looks okay. Not that I'll
ever get to see much of it.

ANGLE ON Bobby, bunched in beside Copper.

The cat pokes a paw through the cage to his master's knee. Bobby takes the paw subconsciously, and kneads it to spread Copper's toes. This induces an audible purr from the beast.

While Bobby hasn't otherwise reacted, Rachel does, and peeks over from the front with a grin before she resumes her read.

EXT. TOWNHOUSE COMPLEX/PARKING LOT - DAY

The Tolson older sedan wheels in among a strip of town homes in a less affluent suburban area of town. Most residences' windows are open, as very few have A/C installed.

COPPER (V.O.)

Another new town and new bullies to hide from. I guarantee, that's all I'm going to hear about: "There're these guys picking on me, Copper, 'cause I'm the new kid. And I have no friends 'cause I'm the new kid." But do I ever get to go out, Bobby?

The sedan aims for the far end, where men in overalls empty a moving truck of appliances and big cardboard boxes.

BOBBY (V.O.)

I can hear you thinking, Copper. I promise I won't bug you like that.

INT. SEDAN - DAY (TRAVELLING)

Up front, both parents grin and shake their heads.

SAM

I didn't hear the darned cat answer you back, kiddo.

RACHEL

Sam, shush. Bobby? You and Copper will have a lot more room to run around, in this new house.

EXT. BOBBY'S YARD - DAY

The moving truck rear gate slams. One of the movers hands Sam a receipt and receives a check. Bobby and Rachel cross paths as they move breakables from the car to the house.

A dozen multi-ethnic kids, ages 5 to 12, eat ice cream, chew gum, or just look bored as they watch the new folks move in.

Scrutinizing from her doorstep right next door is a skinny little girl, ALEXA MORNINGSTAR, 9. She's very pretty, with long reddish hair, though her attire isn't exactly ritzy.

A beagle, DAISY, 2, with brown and white patches, sniffs the potted flowers nearby, and snaps at flies that buzz past.

Alexa rises and walks Daisy to the low fence between the two yards. She peers over, as the dog wrestles with its leash.

Bobby swaps a peek with Alexa, as he trots by with a box.

REBECCA, 35, Alexa's mother, calls out from her house.

REBECCA (O.S.)
Alexa? Lunch time!

ALEXA
Let's go, Daisy. C'mon girl.

She ties Daisy up to a fence post and skips inside. The dog sits still as it continues to watch the new neighbors, but perks up when Bobby saunters by with Copper in his carrier.

INT. BOBBY'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The place is only half-unpacked. Sam tries to get the cable going, as Rachel hovers nearby as a consultant, and Bobby observes from the couch: Unfortunately, nothing but static.

Copper sits inside the screen door, sniffing at the air.

SAM
When was the cable starting?

RACHEL
It was supposed to be today. I'll call them. Oh what's the number?

Sam whips up his cell phone and refers to a piece of paper.

Bored Bobby climbs off the couch. Copper joins him, and we follow both across the room into the first door down a hall.

BOBBY
I'm going to bed. Night mom.
Night dad.

SAM
Did you unpack the boxes in your room, Bob?

BOBBY
About ninety percent.

RACHEL
That's okay for now, honey. We're all so tired.

INT. BOBBY'S ROOM - NIGHT

Bobby's bed is set up, but boxes still line the walls. He opens one box, looks in, sighs, and flips it back closed.

BOBBY

I might just give away some of the stuff still in the boxes.

SAM (O.S.)

The time to give it away was before we had to move it here, kiddo!

LATER

In his pyjamas, Bobby fills Copper's food bowl in a corner, but the cat is already ensconced on a corner of the bed.

Bobby yawns and crawls under the blankets. As his feet find a comfortable spot underneath, Copper cocks his ears and watches the mysterious mound of toes that move beneath him.

BOBBY

Night, Copper.

COPPER (V.O.)

G'night, Bobby. Big day tomorrow.

BOBBY

Mmm. Sure.

COPPER (V.O.)

I see that little girl has a dog.

BOBBY

It's a beagle, I think.

Copper meanders up, and curls into Bobby's arms.

COPPER (V.O.)

It looked like a cow. Hope it's not a yapper.

BOBBY

Mmm. Small dogs. Yappers.

COPPER (V.O.)

The girl was cute though, don't you think?

BOBBY

Huh? Red hair.

COPPER (V.O.)

And?

BOBBY

I dunno. Go to sleep.

EXT. BOBBY'S YARD - DAY

Sam and Rachel chat up Alexa's parents, CHARLIE, 35, and Rebecca, who's six months pregnant. Alexa's folks look nice, but it's obvious they're stuck at the poverty line.

REBECCA
Charlie works the assembly line at the plant down the street.

CHARLIE
I'm sure we'll bump into you at your grocery store, Sam. You keep long hours there?

SAM
No, luckily. One reason we moved.

As he eavesdrops from the front steps, Bobby looks bored. Behind him, Copper stares out through the windscreen.

CHARLIE
One advantage of being supervisor: You get to pick your own hours, eh.

Likewise, at the steps to her mirror-image townhouse that's next in line to Bobby's, Alexa sits and plays with Daisy.

SAM
Sort of.

RACHEL
It's so important to have time with family, isn't it.

REBECCA
(pats her tummy)
Absolutely, and we'll have Alexa here to help when baby comes in a few months.

CHARLIE
That's the thing. An extra kid means it's tough to turn down the overtime, but then --

REBECCA
Then you miss seeing your babies grow up.

RACHEL
How long are you going on maternity?

REBECCA

Six months. I start in two. Can't wait. I feel so big already.

RACHEL

I didn't think I'd forget what it was like, when I had Bobby. But I guess you do after a few years.

Bobby eyes the empty boxes piled at the corner of the yard.

REBECCA

Yeah, just roll me to the store. Roll me off the couch. But I'll keep an ear to the ground for any dental assistant jobs, Rache. Hey Charlie, what about Liz? Her dad's a dentist in town, isn't he?

RACHEL

Oh thanks, Rebecca. It's hard to make it on one income these days.

Bobby saunters over to the sky-high stack of boxes.

SAM

Speaking of, I start tomorrow but said I'd report in and say hi.
(pecks Rachel on cheek)
I'll see you later. Bobby?

BOBBY

Bye dad.

SAM

How about you drag those to the curb for the garbage pickup, eh?

As he waves back to his dad, Bobby's eyes come upon Alexa as she wanders over to him with Daisy, on the leash.

ALEXA

It sure is a lot of boxes. Did all that stuff fit inside your house?
I'm Alexa.

They shake hands. Two little kids shaking hands is cute.

BOBBY

Bobby Tolson.

She bends down to cuddle Daisy, and Bobby leans over to let the mutt sniff his fingertip.

ALEXA
So, what's your story? Do you have
a pet?

BOBBY
Yeah, that's him in there: Copper.

The forlorn cat stares out from behind the screen at them.

ALEXA
Oh, a cat. They're okay, I guess.

BOBBY
What?! Copper's my best friend.

Daisy moves in to do the crotch-sniffing thing on Bobby.

ALEXA
No! Down, Daisy.

Bobby leads Alexa over to his doorstep.

BOBBY
How long you lived here?

ALEXA
Just over a year. You're lucky you
had your cat before you moved in.
Same as me, with Daisy.

BOBBY
What.

They stand outside the screen door: Copper begins a stare-down with Daisy, who's motionless except for a wagging tail.

ALEXA
Rules. They don't let you bring in
a pet after you move here. Very
strict about it. But if you
already own one, they don't force
you to get rid of her. Some law
stops them from making you do that.

BOBBY
Yeah, that'd be pretty mean.

ALEXA
I know all about everything and
everybody here, so you can ask me.

She holds Daisy, as he slides the screen door open a bit for Copper to peek out. Alexa offers her finger gently to him.

ALEXA (CONT'D)
How old are you?

BOBBY
Ten.

ALEXA
I'm nine, but in two weeks I catch up and I'll be ten. When I grow up I wanna be an engineer, and take over boy's worlds. How about you?

BOBBY
I dunno. Till two year's ago, I still thought I could grow up to be Superman.

She snickers: Instant friends. Copper enjoys Alexa's attention, but he eyes Daisy cautiously. Bobby notices.

BOBBY (CONT'D)
What. It's just a dog, Copper.

Rachel arrives and steps past the kids to go into the house.

RACHEL
Excuse me, Alexandra.

As Rachel disappears inside, Alexa peeks in after her: From her p.o.v., Copper wobbles over to a water bowl.

ALEXA
Copper walks funny.

BOBBY
He broke his hip a year ago.

ALEXA
How'd he do that?!

BOBBY
I don't know, he didn't tell me.

Alexa reacts to the remark with a little frown and snort.

BOBBY (CONT'D)
He throws up a lot, too.

ALEXA
Daisy threw up once. But she does the biggest dumps every day.

They turn to watch Daisy: Tied up with a 20-foot leash, she leaves them to run after a bee, stop, turn, jump and spin.

BOBBY

Talk about Copper - your dog's a funny runner. Low to the ground.

ALEXA

Isn't that how beagles run?

BOBBY

She looks like a torpedo going through the grass.

ALEXA

Here, Daisy. Come here girl!

CLOSE-UP - DAISY ARRIVES, AND SITS BEFORE THE FAWNING KIDS

Not exactly a show mutt, Daisy has a big mole on her snout where a whisker ought to be. But she's very contented, and happy to be alive and owned by this particular little girl.

A sharp CLINK emerges from the house:

RACHEL (O.S.)

Bobby, will you come get Copper?! He's right up in the cupboard with my cups and saucers!

BOBBY

Okaaay.

EXT. BOBBY'S YARD - DAY (DUSK)

Bored Bobby watches his dad, Sam, break apart the first of the cardboard moving boxes. There are at least 40 of them.

SAM

You were gonna move these, kiddo?

Bobby perks up, as he realizes an alternative use for them.

BOBBY

Dad, don't!

SAM

What.

BOBBY

Can I have them?

SAM
I gotta break them down, or else
the garbage guys complain like --

Bobby races over and starts to stack boxes neatly here and there. Alexa appears at the fence to watch - Daisy in tow.

LATER

Bobby joins Alexa at the fence, to admire his work:

Under a setting Sun, all of the boxes are stacked in a few neat towers, ready to be turned into something amazing.

INT. BOBBY'S ROOM - DAY (DAWN)

While his master snores, Copper basks in a ray of sunshine that comes in the window and lands at the foot of the bed.

EXT. ALEXA'S AND BOBBY'S CONJOINED YARDS - DAY (DAWN)

As Alexa putters at her garden, Daisy slips around the low fence between the yards. Outside the window to Bobby's room, she hops onto a deck chair and leans up at the sill...

INT. BOBBY'S ROOM - DAY (DAWN)

Daisy's head appears at the window screen. She announces herself with four rapid, atrociously loud yappy barks!

Copper scatters blankets and flies off the bed to a corner. Bobby lurches and stumbles out of bed in only his underwear.

Just as Alexa's face appears in the window beside Daisy's!

BOBBY
(tries to cover up)
Whoa!

ALEXA
(giggles)
Oh, sorry!

Bobby dives back under the covers, and Alexa and Daisy disappear from the window.

ALEXA (O.S.)
Here Daisy! C'mon girl. Let's go home.