

1 The truth was I was still torn about Bob. Despite the gut feeling I had that this cat and I were somehow destined to be together, a large part of me still figured that he'd eventually go off and make his own way. It was only logical. He'd wandered into my life and he was going to wander back out again at some point. This could carry on. So as the passers-by continued to slow down and make a fuss of him, I figured I might as well make the most of it. Make hay while the sun shines and all that.

'If he wants to come out and have fun with me, that's great, 'I said to myself. 'And I'm making a bit of cash as well, then that's great too.'

2 The next morning I was woken by a sudden, loud, crashing sound. It took me a moment to get my bearings, but when I did so I immediately guessed what it was. The metallic, cleaning noise had come from the kitchen. That probably meant that once again Bob was trying to open the cupboards where I kept his food and knocked something over.

I squinted at the clock. It was mid-morning. After the excitement of the previous night I had given myself a lie in, but Bob had obviously decided he couldn't wait any longer. This was his way of saying: 'Get up, I want my breakfast.'

- 3 I found it very hard to fit in at school, mainly, I think, because we'd moved a lot. The chances of me settling into life in Australia disappeared when I was nine and we moved back to the UK and to Sussex, near Horsham. I enjoyed being back in England and have some happy memories of that period. I was just getting back into life in the northern hemisphere when we had to move yet again – back to Western Australia, when I was around twelve.
- 4 I'm no psychologist, although I've met my fair share of them over the years. There is no doubt in my mind that we moved home way too much, and it was not good for a growing child. It made it very hard for me to become socially adept. At school it was very hard to make friends. I was always trying too hard. I was too eager to impress, which isn't good when you are a kid. It had the opposite result: I ended up being bullied at every school I went to. It was particularly bad in Quinn's Rock.
- 5 We continued living in the same nomadic existence throughout my early teens. It was usually connected to my mother's business ventures. She was a very successful woman. At one point she started doing telemarketing training videos. Then she set up a woman's magazine called *City Woman*, which didn't so well. Sometimes we'd have plenty of money and other times we'd be strapped for cash. But that never lasted for long; she was a proper entrepreneur.
- 6 Predictably, I got into drugs, at first sniffing glue, probably to escape from reality. I didn't get addicted to it. I only did it a couple of times after seeing another kid doing it. But it was the start of the process. After that I started smoking dope and sniffing toluene, an industrial solvent you find in nail varnish and glue. It was all connected, it was all part of a cycle of behavior, one thing led back to another and so on.
- 7 My mother tried her hardest to get me off drugs. She could see the damage I was doing – and the even worse problems I was going to cause myself if I didn't kick the habits I was forming. She did all the things mothers do. She went through my pockets trying to find drugs and even locked me in my bedroom a few times. But the locks in our house were those ones with buttons in the middle. I learned to pick them really easily with a Bobby pin.

8 For the next forty-five minutes or so, Bob sat quietly next to me, his face pressed against the glass of the bus window, watching the world go by. He seemed to be fascinated by all the cars, cyclists, vans and pedestrians whizzing past us; he wasn't fazed at all.

The only time he pulled away from the window and looked to me for a little reassurance was when the blare of a police siren, a fire engine or an ambulance got a bit too close for comfort. This surprised me a bit and once more set me thinking about where he had spent his early life. If he had grown up on the streets he would have got used to this noise a long, long time ago.