

Of humans and cats: who owns whom?

IQRA L. QAMARI

I have always had a love-hate relationship with my cats. Underneath those irresistible coats of fur, lurk ego-crushing and demeaning beings who will make one's heart go mushy and then squash it into pulp with its very demeanour, like your ex. These moving balls of fur have got the whole human race at their paws. Even though the social pyramid has placed humans at the pinnacle, the reality depicts a feline dominance over them. Speaking of pyramids, ancient Egypt appraised their feline friends as demi-gods and killing them would result in death penalties. These cats would be given their own private tombs and probably would have a laugh from 'kitty-heaven' while the owners shaved off their eyebrows to mourn.

During the middle ages, cats were treated as sinister beings, affiliated with witchcraft, and as a result they were burned to get rid of bad omen. This scenario began to change during the early 1600s which brings us to today, when cats are deemed the hotshots of this era. From being Godfather's pet to Schrödinger's mystery pet, they are superstars with their own line of products, movies and of course memes.

Although listed as the second most popular pets worldwide, cat owners often complain and whine about the tantrums they have to put up with, gradually succumbing to frustration over their indifference. Shortly after being adopted, they are quick to establish authority over the households. Your hard earned furniture, including yourself will be quickly converted to their scratch posts which they usually do to inject their scent in marking their territory while your laundry becomes their favourite spots to get cosy in. The term 'an immovable object' will come under a new light when you will come back to your room to find them sitting on your keyboards and not giving a care in the world. Further domination is decoded as they develop their way of vocalisation around humans, meowing their way into ordering us for instance, to open doors for them.

According to a few theories, a cat deems human as a big, dumb cat who they can summon to give them a head-scratch and food. This assessment is further fortified by the fact that when cats bring dead rodents for their owners, they are basically rubbing it on their humans' faces that they are the superior hunters and that we need to learn.

Their very posture also demonstrates supremacy. Being the epitome of grace and agility, they think of us as clumsy creatures as we trip over them and not vice versa. They will often lie on their back, prop their head up, putting their tummy on display asking for a rub from their peasants aka humans. Reshad, currently studying at Tufts, agrees with this, saying, "My cat Pootin looks over in Sphinx-like posture from the highest perch – usually shelves or cupboards – signifying an air of royalty." Even after all the services and libations offered, men have to get used to the constant feeling of being looked down upon, being laughed at by those judgmental eyes and getting blanked in public raising the amount of embarrassment even further.

These 'aristocats' are enjoying their reign in the current world, triggering dilation of eyes and a melting of hearts from humans. Further, studies have shown that owning a cat, or perhaps, getting owned by a cat boosts one's chances of being found attractive for dating. Finally, while these felines demean us whenever they are presented with an opportunity, they sometimes consider us worthy for a 'purrfect' warm snuggle and that takes away all the hurt and humiliation and we happily provide ourselves for another day of servitude.

Iqra likes to think about spending the rest of her life with her one true soulmate, a Belgian Blue cow named Shoikot who has a degree in Feelosophy. Send her pictures of your cow to iqralaqa@gmail.com



Reasons Not to Date a Friend

FATIMAH AKHTAR

The unmerciful onslaught of Disney movies, *Kuch Kuch Hota Hai*'s and the other various rom-coms has left the common man with the need for something more – specifically, a romantic partner. No one really wants to be single anymore.

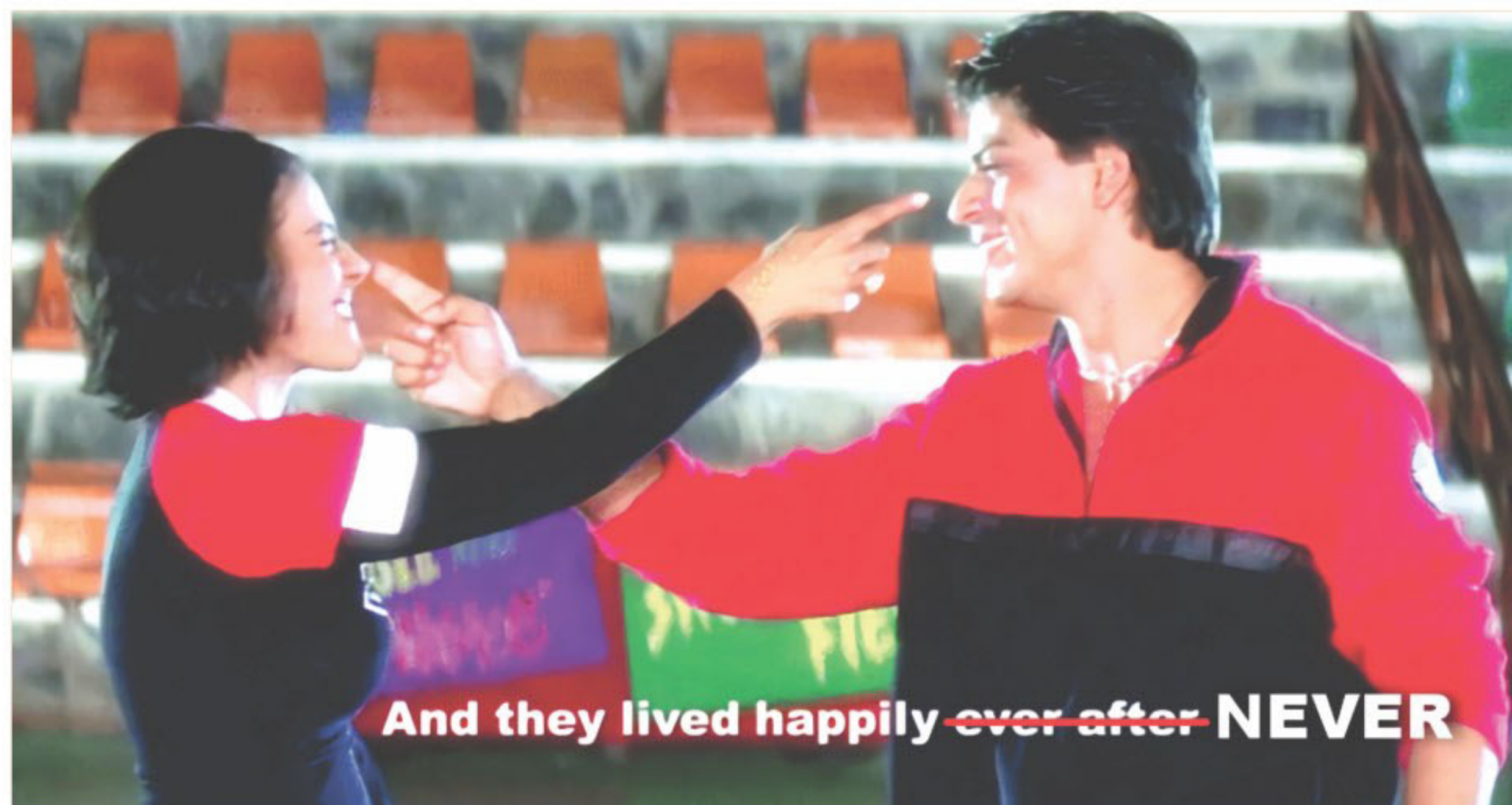
Everyone's always seeking a romantic prospect, if not a proper relationship. And while looking for these prospects, there are times when certain friends just feel like ideal matches. For good reasons, too; you and your friend already have natural chemistry, he already knows about the things you like, and all your other friends want you two together. But dating a friend might actually lead to bigger disasters than anything *Kuch Kuch Hota Hai* shows.

Your Friend Knows Too Much: It sounds romantic in theory. But in practice this is the boy who knows some of the grossest details about your life. You may have even opened up to him about your diarrhoea, once. He knows the guys you crush on, and there's nothing stopping him from being insecure when you hang out with these guys in question. Moreover you know the kind of boyfriend your friend makes, along with all the terrible ways he has treated his significant others

in the past. There's no guarantee that just because he made a great friend that he'll make a great boyfriend.

Think About the Group: If you've been friends for a while, chances are that you have a lot of mutual friends, or even a

fight, you'll notice that your group has become divided – even if slightly. Life is no episode of *How I Met Your Mother* where exes can remain friends after a breakup. It's more likely the group might disband entirely, if not pick a side. And



"squad" as it's called these days. It may seem like your friends will be extremely supportive of your relationship. In fact, they may even have wanted it from the very beginning. But the instant you and your friend-turned-significant other have a

that's worse.

The Friendzone is great: It seems the friendzone is always played up as a bad thing, as though no one really wants to be in it. Although, we are all in the friendzone – that's how we have friends. In

the friendzone you get all of the love and affection, with much less drama and complications. You get to still talk through the night without feeling the obligation to text him good morning or good night every day. Also, being in a relationship comes with unreasonably high expectations. Now when he shows up to Dhanmondi at 7am to have Star Kabab with you, it's nice and thoughtful. In a relationship it'll be expected, and there will be days when he won't make it and you'll be disappointed.

These conditions only apply of course if they're a very close friend. If they're more of an acquaintance though, it somewhat mitigates the complications that may come your way. When it's all said and done, it depends on your dynamic – whether or not you think it's the kind of dynamic that can stand the test of an exclusive relationship. Because if it is one that does, you might have found the Rahul to your Anjali or the Harry to your Sally. And provided it is one that doesn't, if there's anything 90s' kids movies have taught us, it's that friendship is the greatest treasure of all.

Fatimah Akhtar is a food and fiction enthusiast with a soft spot for bulldogs. Redirect all your complaints, queries, and feedbacks to her at fatimahaakhtar@gmail.com