

They ALL DESERVE Love

*Tails From the Past to the
Present*



Debra Schueller

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Author's Note

Feral/stray/farm kitties are very different from domestic house kitties. These felines spend their entire life looking over their shoulder. Danger lurks around every bush, tree, or road; predators such as coyotes, mountain lions, humans, illness, or vehicles cause them to have a shortened lifespan.

Basic needs such as food and fresh water can come from many sources and is almost never delivered by a human hand. Winter time is the worst; small game such as field mice or lizards are tucked away waiting for spring to come and water is in the form of frozen snow or ice.

The sleeping quarters are not a cushy sofa or an expensive cat tree; a roadside ditch or a woodpile may be their choice for the night. If they are lucky an old barn will provide shelter especially in the winter or during a heavy rain storm.

Only the heartiest of these felines will survive to die of old age.

Preface

The kitties come out of the shadows, uncertain of what reception they will be given. Precious souls thrown away like trash or whom have never known the love of a human caretaker. Your heart goes out to them upon seeing their sad hesitant faces; a rush of empathy over takes you, however, you must take it slow. Trust is something you have to earn from them.

Over time, they will come closer; fleeing when you make a sound they do not like or take a wrong step. When they lie at your feet, you know that someday soon, they will allow your hand upon their fur.

After many days of familiarity to you, they will rub up against your hand. Feelings that are so overwhelming flood your heart. Trust and love. Two of the most basic of emotions, but so hard for a stray/feral kitty to give freely.

Now, the kitty readily comes when called or upon sight of you. They have found a human caretaker, one who knows "They ALL DESERVE Love."

Acknowledgement

First, I would like to thank my daughter Rebecca for helping me write some of these stories. Also, for listening to the ones I have written, repeatedly.

Secondly, a big thank you goes to my husband Marvin for not only caring for all these deserving kitties, but also for encouraging me to tell their story.

Introduction

Throughout these pages you will discover the many kitties that we have taken in and have loved or continue to love and care for.

Our adventures started with one beautiful Siamese cat, Amanda, and continue with each and every precious soul we save. The stories are humorous, sad, scary, and loving; each kitty has its own story to tell.

In the beginning . . .

Amanda

The kitty that started it all!

Our story begins on a beautiful spring day in 2007...

The piercing blue eyes of the beautiful Snowshoe Siamese followed us unwavering as we bumped along our winding gravel lane. She sat on our wooden back step like a statue, only moving when the van came to an abrupt halt.

The feline quickly made her way under the vehicle to my side as I exited. Down by my feet, she wove around and around wanting to be petted and to hear a kind word or two. Luckily for her, we had bought some more cat food at the store. We shook some into a makeshift bowl and proceeded to carry our groceries inside.

Lately, she had come around for food regularly. I am not sure where she came from; I just knew she couldn't stay. While we all adored her, she had singled me out for some reason. I always spoke kindly to her, but I did not encourage her to stay.

Please, do not misunderstand; I have always loved cats, I just could not bear to love another one. In the year 2000, I had buried my beloved cat Tiger; I was heartbroken at his passing. We had spent sixteen wonderful years together and had traveled over eight thousand miles during our adventures. We also shared a birth month; most people do not know exactly when their furry companions were born, but I did.

All of the previous empty years were coming back to haunt me. My family wanted to share our life with a furry companion, but I was hesitant. Now this very persistent feline was threatening my broken heart. Like it or not, we had one; a visiting one that is.

As I watched her, I could feel the strings tugging at my heart. When the feline had eaten all of her food, she stretched out in the cool shade watching us; meticulously cleaning her face and ears. Little did I know she was slowly healing my broken heart.

One day, my daughter asked shyly if we could give her a name. Mama kitty was not good enough for her she thought. So, she called her Amanda. The name suited her perfectly. From that day forward we would greet her with "Hello there, Amanda".

It didn't take her long to get used to her new name. Amanda would come running like greased lightning when she heard it shouted. Over the terrace, down the lane, or bounding out of the hay; as fast as her four little legs would carry her.

In time, she decided to stay and call our farm home. It was alright with me; she had found her way into my heart. Little did I know she would become my savior. When my mom died two years later, Amanda became my best friend. She was a very good listener; blessed with a calm loving nature she was very comforting.

That winter, as I shoveled the snow off of the sidewalk, she would curl up in the cold snow drift and talk to me, I called her "My snow buddy". I often wondered what people thought as they drove by; it must have appeared that I was talking to myself.

Amanda's first litter of kittens were born on our farm in November 2008. Somehow they all managed to survive the brutal Iowa winter, however, only one of the four stayed with his mama. We allowed them to set up permanent residence in our garage. She and Scamper were always waiting to welcome us home, it did not matter what time of day it was or the temperature outside.

The following year, Tigeress and her sibling, Treasure were born, sadly only Tigeress made it through the winter. In the spring Moony became part of our family, his litter mate Stary passed away. We are not sure what happened to Moony, we saw him only a few times.

Since two of Amanda's kittens had passed away, we were very anxious when she became pregnant in May. While I realize you should spay and neuter all free roaming kitties, we did not spay her. We only had the three kitties living here and felt we had room for a few more little bundles of joy. Amanda's last litter of four were born in July 2010. This is now their forever home...