



Wags



Racer



Lucky

Dear Friends,

The sound of the doorbell ringing always brings a smile to my face. I know that there is a good chance that pretty soon one of our cats will be on her way to her forever home. I know that our cageless, no-kill shelter is a great place for a cat to live, and I know that each and every cat that comes to us is wanted, loved and well taken care of. But I also know that there is one place on earth that would be better for them, and that is in their very own home.

So, when the doorbell rang one Saturday afternoon a few weeks ago, I jumped to my feet as I wondered who I might be saying goodbye to that day.

“Welcome to Felines Inc.” I said.

“Thanks. I’m here to adopt a Special Needs cat. Do you have any?” the woman at the door responded.

“We sure do. Come on in.”

As we walked through the shelter together I started to introduce Linda to some of our cats as I asked her what she was looking for in her new companion. She told me that she’d been hoping to find a nice cat that was not quite perfect to look at, perhaps missing an eye or a leg, “someone who won’t get adopted, who really needs me”.

I thought back to the Special Needs cats I saw leaving the shelter in my early years at Felines Inc. Mariah, who had no eyes, was adopted after spending six years at the shelter. Bunny, with paralyzed back legs, spent five years hopping around at Felines Inc. before she went home. And Dee, who was missing a front leg, spent almost four years with us.

I smiled to myself as I realized just how much things have changed for these so-called special needs cats and I shared some recent adoption stories with Linda. I told her about Lucky, who was born with 3 legs and stayed at Felines Inc. for about three weeks. And Wags, who came to us with half a tail and was adopted a couple of weeks later. She was soon joined by Racer, who was missing his front leg. And Trixie and Wibbles, who each stayed about a month and whose balance was affected by cerebellar hypoplasia.

“Wow, that’s pretty quick for cats with Special Needs.”

“Well, that depends on how you define Special Needs,” I replied. “You see, all of these cats did have a very special need. They needed just the right person to come in and fall in love with them, someone who would take them home, give them some time to adapt, and give them a warm loving home for the rest of their lives. It’s really the same Special Need that all of our cats have.

It’s just that some of them have something that makes them stand out, either in the way they look or the way they behave, that makes a person pick them out of the crowd. To be honest with you, it’s cats like Crystal that really need special adopters.”



Crystal



I'm **Artie** and I'm 4. My special need is to have my silliness appreciated!

I'm **Sally** and I'm 5. My special need is patience.



I'm **Slinky!** I'm about 2 years old and my special need is ward toys!



I'm **Barbie** and I'm 9 years old. My special need is to be the only cat around.

I'm **Bennie** and I'm 2. My special need is YOU!!!



Crystal had been at our shelter for over three years and she was a favorite of mine. Sweet and loving, she was an ordinary looking brown tabby who took her time warming up to strangers. She tended to stay on her favorite perch when adopters came to find a companion, but she greeted me each morning with a rub and a purr. I knew she would be a loyal and loving pet, if only someone would give her the chance.

As I walked around with Linda it became clear that the shelter had no shortage of cats like Crystal; ordinary cats with unexciting markings, two eyes, a tail and all four legs. Sweet, humble cats that have sat back and watched their more extroverted friends go home, waiting on the window ledge for just the right person to come for them. They seem content, but I have seen the way these cats hold their tails up as they prance in to the carrier when their day finally comes. They are content at Felines Inc., but they all have that one Special Need, the need to be chosen, the need for a special person to call their own.

It turns out that Linda is that special person for Crystal. It has been a little over a month now and Crystal spends her nights on Linda's pillow. Linda rushes home from work to be greeted at the door by the ordinary little tabby with an extraordinary amount of love.

It is thanks to supporters like you that we are able to provide a safe, loving, shelter home for cats like Crystal, Wags and Bunny, whether for a week, for three years, or for a lifetime. Please consider making a donation to Felines Inc. to help us continue the important work of rescuing cats and placing them in permanent homes, no matter what their Special Need may be.

Like you, Felines Inc. is feeling the effects of our struggling economy, so we are grateful for any contribution you are able to make.

Wishing you and your family of humans and animals a safe and enjoyable summer,

Abby Smith
Executive Director

Abby, please accept my tax-deductible donation to help all the Special Needs cats at the shelter.

\$25 \$50 \$75 \$100 \$200 Other _____

My check, payable to Felines Inc., is enclosed

Please charge my ___Visa ___Mastercard ___Discover

Card number _____ Expiration date _____

Signature _____ Phone number _____