

Unexpected Fate

-Life's uncertainties bring many surprises-

At ten years of age, Buddy was a much loved feline, secure and confident in his daily life. Buddy's housemate, Dan, worked from home which allowed Buddy to spend nearly every waking second by his side. The two seemed inseparable as Buddy even had his own plush heated feline bed in Dan's home office. Dan's wife often commented playfully that he loved Buddy more than her.

It was a typical Ohio winter day when everything changed for both Buddy and Dan. No one could have known that when Dan went out for dinner that evening, *everything* would change.

For days, Buddy wandered around the house in a fog. It seemed as if he were pacing in anticipation for Dan's arrival. Every time the front door opened, Buddy would trot towards it. *Was Dan home?* Every time human feet neared the home office, Buddy peered around the corner, only to be left with a feeling of emptiness. Countless people seemed to be coming and going through the home, day after day. Buddy's food bowl had been left undisturbed, by both Buddy and the humans. Just seven days after Dan's accident, Dan's wife decided that Buddy was "*too much to handle*" and she reasoned that because he was a senior feline, he would be okay to live the rest of his days outdoors on his own. She moved out her own belongings as she left to live with other family, and Buddy was left outdoors on the front step with one measly bowl of food. One bowl of kibble meant to last him the rest of his senior days.

Advocates 4 Animals Rescue & Rehabilitation was contacted by a family member of Dan's several weeks later and the story of Buddy was shared. It was quickly learned that Buddy was still standing on the same front porch, with an empty food bowl, declawed paws and a severely broken heart. Advocates 4 Animals co-founders spoke with Dan's wife who showed a strong lack of remorse. Buddy was rescued by Advocates 4 Animals Rescue that very day.

Outsiders assumed that because Buddy was a senior feline, he would remain with Advocates 4 Animals Rescue for the remainder of his years. While this has been the case on a few occasions (one being a twenty-two year old feline!), most senior felines are highly adoptable through Advocates 4 Animals Feline Seniors to Seniors Program. Buddy was treated for dehydration and other minor health ailments upon entering the rescue, and placed in a volunteer foster home where he received daily love, attention and affection. He shared his foster home not only with humans, but also with two dogs and two other foster cats. It was clear that Buddy preferred to be an *only child* if he were able to create his new reality. Of course he missed Dan dearly, but in his heart he knew it was time to write a new chapter in his book of life. His loving, affectionate personality appeared to be most at ease when he was one on one with a human. After getting to know Buddy and the type of environment he would most thrive in, Advocates 4 Animals Rescue located a five-star home for the once unwanted feline.



At ninety-years young, Eloise continued to live independently in her home (with her daughter and son-in-law as her neighbors). For as long as she could remember, she had shared her home with a feline and she wished to continue the tradition, with a cat in need. When Eloise's daughter met Buddy- she knew instantly that it was a match made in Heaven. Through Advocates 4 Animals Feline Seniors to Seniors Program, senior humans are matched with senior felines for adoption. If anything should happen to the human, the feline can re-enter the rescue program at anytime, no questions asked. Eloise was excited to share with Advocates 4 Animals Rescue, however, that if the need should ever arise for her to enter a nursing home facility, the designated nursing home would allow her to bring Buddy to live with her.

Months after the adoption, Eloise and her daughter provided an update on their new life with Buddy. Buddy sleeps by Eloise's side every night, he helps her fold the laundry and he follows her around the house as if he is her Guardian Angel. Perhaps Dan may be watching over Buddy, as Buddy tends to Eloise. It is with utmost certainty that Buddy is grateful for his loving life with Eloise and that he can live out the rest of his years with a true sense of safety and security. Never again will Buddy be left on the door steps of an empty home. Never again will Buddy go without food. Instead, Buddy is surrounded by a person who loves him dearly, and a family that cares deeply about him. Buddy will be forever loved with a dedication that is deserved by all members in a loving family.

While it remains true, that the adoption rates remain highest among kittens and young felines, senior felines can also be adopted into wonderful, loving homes to each call their own, if the right amount of creativity and innovation are utilized by rescue organizations. Adoptions are about making the right match for the pet *and* for the adopter. Senior felines have a volume of benefits. Senior felines love to snuggle, love to plop down in your lap and they love to share the vibe of total relaxation with their human companions. Unlike young kittens, who are often found biting cords, scratching your legs and who are the possessors of unlimited and boundless energy, these are not typical traits of senior felines. When looking to adopt your next rescue feline, consider your energy level and your life-style. What traits are you searching for in a cat? The color of a cats fur or the number of years in age should not be the deciding factor. Instead, personality and demeanor should preside over all else. When adopting a new feline family member, personality is what counts. Age is just a number and colors are just a visual. Labels (ex: Seniors) are only terms. Our energies are what sustain us on a daily basis. Our hearts are what connect us to one another. And our souls guide our desires to live a life full of love, happiness and a life of purpose.

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