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The Trouble with Buddy

Thu, 2010-08-26 10:21 — Robin Olson

Three years ago I trapped three feral cats. I thought I was trapping only one, but to my surprise, I ended up catching three! I thought they must all be related, and maybe in some ways they were. Clearly one female was older than a second female. They were always seen together- they had to be Mother and Daughter. I named them, Bronte and Madison. A third cat, I named Buddy, was a big, gray Tom who'd been in plenty of fights in his day. He was ragged and rough, with devilish golden eyes, yet he was far from fractious, just as the other two. I think they'd known human contact at some point in their lives, but over time those memories had been replaced with their primal, wilder urges.

I detailed the story of my first trapping experience, capturing Buddy, Bronte and Madison [HERE](#) (1).

Fast forward a few years...

You know that Buddy showed up injured a few weeks ago and since then we've tried a few different methods to trap him. Thankfully, Karlyn is a super-trapper and builds her own traps. This was what eventually did the trick, not only trapping Buddy, but Bronte, as well. Since neither of them had been to the Vet for years, I decided they could both get their shots updated and have a checkup and we'd finally be able to help Buddy with his leg injury.



©2010 Robin A.F. Olson Bronte and Buddy (rear) in Super-Karlyn's trap.

There was a bit of a problem.

It **wasn't** Buddy.

Recently, when I saw this cat, he was a big gray Tom with lovely golden eyes, but his ears weren't ragged and he had a sweet look to his face. He looked more like a lover and less like a fighter. I started to wonder if Buddy had long since left us and been replaced by a *Buddyganger*; a feral cat-double!



©2010 Robin A.F. Olson Who are you, mystery cat?

Even after we trapped him, it just didn't look like the same tough guy I once knew. That left me feeling both sad and curious. When had Buddy left us and who was this cat? Where did he belong? He couldn't be a neighbors cat, could he? It would be a lousy neighbor if they ignored their injured cat for weeks on end—also, **this boy really WAS a LOVER. He was still INTACT!**

So our dear friend, Buddy is gone. What his fate was, we will never know. I don't even want to guess as my home abuts a State Forest. My neighbors are wild animals. 'nuff said.



©2010 Robin A.F. Olson Our new feral, Austen. What a face! Look at that BIG TOM head!

And who is this new cat? He's in need of a name. Since we have Bronte, already, how about **Austen**-in honor of Jane Austen, author of our perennial favorite 5-hour-mini-series-version-only, the one starring Colin "Hottie Pants" Firth, "*Pride & Prejudice!*"



©2010 Robin A.F. Olson Poor Bronte! She was so scared she cried. I wanted to pet her and tell her it was going to be okay, but I realized that would only make her feel worse. Poor baby!

Luckily for Austen, upon exam there was no sign of injury . Austen must have had soft tissue damage or a thorn that he worked out of his paw. Whatever it was, there was no old or new break and he had full function of his limb. His shots were updated and he was tested for FIV/FeLuk (neg/neg). **Sadly for Austen, he is not a LOVER any more** . I had him neutered-even if he **IS** someone's cat. Tough! (*I really doubt he's someone's cat, though!*). So no more yeowling in the yard, no more stench of cat spray, just a nice de-balled kitty with a very forlorn look on his face. *At least he won't be fighting any longer or making little Austen's.*

Bronte, poor dear, cried in her trap. I felt so bad for her. She just needed her shots. She got scared and peed in the car on the way back from the Vet. I can't get the smell out of my nose. Hope I didn't pee up there, too, in some freak accident I didn't notice. Whew...yikes!

While the cats were gone, I cleaned out their room in the screen porch. I set out a fresh bowl of water and lots of food. When we put the traps down, I got two photos-one of each of them. Austen, shot out of his cage like a rocket after I moved out of his way. Bronte was much more cautious. She went to the opening of the trap and reached out one paw towards the floor, but did not touch it. It was if she was testing to see if the trap would close on her if she tried to get out. She held her paw an inch over the floor for a long, few seconds. Then, carefully touched the floor. Nothing happened. And then she was gone, like a ghost, without a trace.

I hope they return as soon as they find a way to forgive me or their bellies get empty, whichever comes first.

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Thu, 2010-08-26 11:14 — [angie \(not verified\)](#) ^[13]

good job ^[14]

don't you wish there were some easy way to tell them they're okay and safe with us, they'll be back out free in a few hours, and they don't need to be scared? i think that's one of the hardest parts about dealing with wild animals. stupid instincts, lol!

i love bronte's face! she looks so sweet.

Thu, 2010-08-26 15:03 — Catnonymouse (not verified)

OMC Austen has a fat face! ^[15]

I don't think I've ever seen a cat with that big a face and head. Now that's an intimidating tom. - meowmix

Fri, 2010-08-27 09:01 — Sydneymom (not verified)

Austen ^[16]

With his copper eyes, big jowl and the thick dense coat, I bet Austen has some British Shorthair in him. My cat Sydney is a British Shorthair, and Austen looks just like him! What a beautiful kitty!

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