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[Home](#) > BREAKING NEWS: TEDDY RETURNS

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Fri, 2012-01-20 10:22 — Robin Olson

It's a good thing I check in with adopters after a month or so has passed. This is the point at which issues can come up after an adoption and it eases my mind to make sure all is well.

I couldn't wait a month to find out how Teddy Boo, one of the [Pumpkin Patch kittens](#) ⁽¹⁾, was doing because **I placed him into a home with a newly married couple who had a gigantic 2 year old Great Dane. I had some concerns and warned the couple that even with the best training and intentions, their dog could see the lively kitten as prey and go after him.** We decided to put Teddy in his own room, away from the dog who spent the day on a separate floor of the home while the couple was at work. I couldn't underscore enough how important it was to be extra careful when introducing the kitten to the dog.

I had a gut feeling that I should just check in sooner, rather than later and it was a good thing I did. **Apparently the dog "forgot her training" and went after little Teddy,** who they had renamed, Peanut. Peanut didn't care for the dog, either. I'm sure he was intimidated by the sheer size of the beast. The dog got the door to Teddy's room open. Thankfully, Teddy could hide out of the way under the bed, but he must have been terrified.

I don't know or want to know how close Teddy came to becoming a snack, but I do know that the couple called the Vet and he said the kitten would never be buddies with the dog because he wasn't raised with dogs-which I found to be completely unfair. Put the blame on a KITTEN? I've seen plenty of them cuddle up with dogs and one even was close to a Great Dane. Let's watch where we point the fingers here.

The couple felt that after less than three weeks, it wasn't a good fit and they felt it would be better to return Teddy. I was relieved. I wanted Teddy back partly for his own safety and partly because poor Jakey, who was now alone with his other brother Mikey being adopted, was crying and not eating. I knew once Teddy returned, Jakey would be happy again--- or would he?

©2012 Robin A.F. Olson. *Teddy's first moments back home with Jakey.*

At 8:30 this morning, Teddy returned. The adopters donated a cat tree and cat carrier to us. I guess they're not getting ANY cats any time soon. **I had her fill out the Surrender Form-the first one in Kitten Associates' history.** The woman started to tear up. I told her not to feel bad and that I'd much rather take him back and know he was safe. The whole event took less than 5 minutes. I was anxious to get Teddy back with Jakey, who had been crying since we'd gotten up an hour ago.

As you can see in the video, the reunion went well. There was some growling after the video ended, but what was truly lovely was when I brought them some breakfast. **They both ran over to me, tails up in the air. I placed a dish in front of each kitten and side by side they enthusiastically ate their food.**



©2012 Robin A.F. Olson. Jakey waiting for Teddy to return.

I thought I'd leave them alone to get reacquainted. An hour has passed since Teddy arrived and I haven't heard a peep out of either cat. **I imagine they're sleeping together on their heated blanket; one relieved to be out of danger and away from that DOG and the other, no longer lonely and heartsick.**

It's a good way to start the day.

CICH Content Categories:

[Announcements](#) ^[2]

[Kitten](#) ^[3]

[WTF?!](#) ^[4]

[Goggies](#) ^[5]

[Who Approved That?](#) ^[6]

[Cat Rescue](#) ^[7]

[Brain-Eating](#) ^[8]

[You've Got to be Kidding!](#) ^[9]

Comments

Fri, 2012-01-20 11:11 — [acninee](#) ^[10]

In case it helps other cat/dog homes in future: ^[11]

I agree that this was not the kitten's fault. Kitten is at the age when 'growing up with dogs' takes place.

I have some experience training dogs to accept cats.

We have 2 dogs, about 70lb each. The wolf-dog is pretty gentle. The female is guessed to be part lab, part brittany. She has a prey drive AND she spent a long time in city streets, I imagine competing with feral cats for whatever was available to scrounge. She definitely had an attitude with cats.

So, when she entered the home she was secured 1.) in a crate that would function as her den and allow her to feel safe. 2.) when not in crate she was secured with an effective but light weight chain to an immovable piece of furniture. She had about 3 feet of play in any one direction. We sat with her.

When a cat wandered by we would react to the dog's behavior. If there was a negative interaction.. say a lunge, a growl, a bark.. we'd give a sharp 'no' to arrest the behavior, but no other punishment. If there was a positive interaction, which at first was defined as ignoring the cat, there was lavish praise and often a food treat. We did this for a couple months. Which means well after all negative behaviors had stopped, and some friendly interaction had developed between the dog and one or 2 of the cats.

We let her off leash with no problem. We continued to use the den. At night or when both adults were out of the house, dog was confined to the den. The first thing we did was to allow her out at night, she chose to sleep next to our bed. The cats would jump over her to get in and out of bed and she ignored them. The very last thing we did was allow the dog to be free in the house when we were away from home. That was about a year after her introduction to the home. For another 6 months den was there but she began to see it as a place she didn't want to be so we finally removed it. For about the first year, cats were not 'allowed' in the den, dog would bark at them if she saw them trying to check it out. As she integrated more into the home, she began to tolerate their curiosity about it.

We would not trust her with any neighborhood cat without supervision. She now greets the home cats when outside with nose taps, but she's too enthusiastic about foreign cats and I think she'd give chase if they ran. She is always leashed when outside.

I think humans have a lot of control over dog/cat introduction in the home. Introduction is not an event, it's a process and it can be a long one and will take committment from the humans involved.

Mary

Fri, 2012-01-20 22:16 — [Robin Olson](#) ^[12]

Great post! ^[13]

Very helpful info and a good reminder that WE ARE IN CHARGE and need to stay consistent when working with our cats and dogs. We can help shape their relationship to each other in a positive and helpful way-that goes against their natural instincts. I'm glad you're so responsible and thoughtful.

Fri, 2012-01-20 12:26 — Lisa (not verified)

Glad you have Teddy back safe ^[14]

And he didn't become a dog snack. Poor guy. Looks like it was a win win for the boys to have each other again. Maybe next time they'll get adopted together.

Fri, 2012-01-20 12:27 — [I HAVE CAT \(not verified\)](#) ^[15]

I AM SO GLAD HE IS HOME!!!! ^[16]

THE VIDEo and photos are sooo cute Robin!!!! and i'm so happy they are getting a long. So sad that Jakey was crying. WAH!

Fri, 2012-01-20 12:29 — [Sunnys Mom](#) ^[17]

reintroducing kittehs ^[18]

One thing I read that helps is if you take a slightly damp towel and run it over the kitty that is coming back home it can help "reestablish" their scent on their coat quicker. Kitties know each other by scent and Jakey and Teddy are looking for the familiar scent. With Jakey in a strange home with a doggie no less, he will have smells that make Teddy not recognize him.

Anyway, sounds like all is fine now. Maybe something to try in the future?

When our Sunny goes to get his lion cut in the summer, Freya hisses and growls at him when he gets home because he has lost all his smells from the shaving! So the wet damp towel trick helps.

Fri, 2012-01-20 19:27 — Lizz (not verified)

We had a 2 cat 1 Corgi [19]

We had a 2 cat 1 Corgi household a while back.. Initially there was a bit of hissing whilst the small cat(Gatsu) got used to the Corgi (Taf) Taf had actually grown up with cats and finds them fascinating and used to follow my two around the house..

He did like chasing them, but fortunately my two love being chased and would often initiate the chasing session.. There would often be play fights between my older cat (Patchoo) and Taf, which Patchoo often started..

I guess what I'm saying is that, pet interaction can also depend on the breed of the dog involved and the willingness of the cat to want to be chased..

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Links

- [1] <http://coveredincathair.com/content/life-pumpkin-patch>
- [2] <https://coveredincathair.com/taxonomy/term/33>
- [3] <https://coveredincathair.com/taxonomy/term/63>
- [4] <https://coveredincathair.com/taxonomy/term/89>
- [5] <https://coveredincathair.com/taxonomy/term/91>
- [6] <https://coveredincathair.com/taxonomy/term/95>
- [7] <https://coveredincathair.com/taxonomy/term/100>
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- [19] <https://coveredincathair.com/comment/4341#comment-4341>