



Published on *Covered in Cat Hair* (<https://coveredincathair.com>)

[Home](#) > Foster Cat Journal: Seeing Dancer & Donner Again

Foster Cat Journal: Seeing Dancer & Donner Again

Mon, 2010-03-22 15:12 — Robin Olson

I've been avoiding writing about visiting Donner and Dancer last Friday. Part of the reason is I feel that I didn't say the right things when I was there and I didn't just scoop those kittens up and run off, once I saw them. I've also been going back and forth over this entire situation, waaaaay too many times. For some reason, distilling all these thoughts into bite sized pieces seems impossible, but I owe it to you to let you know what happened.

Ryan and I went to visit the kittens. It was a lovely sunny day and coincidentally, the kittens live down the street from Ryan's house, so it took only a minute to get there after I picked him up. The new "mom and dad" met us in the driveway at the gate to their back yard. It was odd not to go in the front door of their small single story home, but we followed their lead.

The yard was quite large with only a few trees. They had to be cleared to make room for the impressive stonework that surrounded a nice sized in-ground pool. I was told they did most of the work themselves and that they were planning on adding Brazilian-something wood benches to finish off the area and provide seating. They also had built a huge stone surrounded outdoor fireplace. There were some young fruit trees planted and a small outbuilding/shed. They spoke of their plans to put in a flower garden and showed me their fenced in yard and talked about how it saved so much money to do it with just the two of them and the kids as laborers. I was impressed with their efforts and ambition to turn their yard into a family oasis, though I couldn't quite figure out why they were showing me this, until we got indoors.

We walked up a few very worn wooden steps into a room that appeared to have been added on to the back of the house. Perhaps it had been a screen porch converted for all-season use? There were a few desks with 6 or so flat screen monitors and computers. The Mr. Adopter said that was his office. He does IT work for a big company. The room was cluttered and very run down looking. There were a few fish tanks, one was in the sun. Not sure that was a great idea. Then he pointed out a big iron stove and said they heated the house with wood. As I looked around I realized there was a huge fan near the stove, then another fan in the next room over, which would direct the heat towards the back of the house. Sorry, but it was creepy and I thought the folks in the back of the house had to be cold. He made a comment about being glad they were able to keep the heat off. Yeah I would not want to have to stoke a wood stove. I have one. It's a pain in the butt.

We were ushered into the house. Everything was very tidy, but run down. The carpet was worn and with few windows, it was rather dark. Mrs. Adopter cheerfully said to be quiet that the kids were sleeping-she meant the kittens, who she now calls kids. It could be endearing, but I think she was doing it for my benefit. I can't be sure.

Before we got to their room, we passed a section of the hallway that was covered with plywood. What are these people up to? It was floor to ceiling-basically covering over a doorway. The last room to the left was where the kittens mostly stay. I saw Donner and Dancer sitting on a well made bed in a tidy, but run down room.

Donner looked like all the life had drained out of her eyes. She was not abused, but she was no longer lively. I petted her and she let me, but she didn't purr or react as she normally would have. She was wearing a collar with a bell, but Dancer was not. I asked about it and Mr. Adopter said something about looking into GPS collars but that they were too heavy. Why it did not dawn on me to drill him about GPS when he promised to keep the cats indoors is beyond me. It nags at me that I didn't say something.

Dancer was still shy as ever, but was willing to play. They have ONE toy in their room. The food bowl had that awful crap in the bowl, it looked uneaten. There were no scratching pads, cat beds or any toys to stimulate the kittens. No wonder they were brain dead! BUT it didn't HIT me until AFTER I left that that was what was wrong!!! I am such a jerk!

Ryan took a few photos which I'll add as soon as I get them. Then we excused ourselves. I asked them if they had any questions or if they needed anything and to always feel free to contact me. We walked into the living room. There was one sunny bay window full of plants. Mrs. Adopter said her friend told her to make some room for the cats so they can sit in the sun and look out the window-which I agreed with and she is going to do. As we spoke, Donner walked up to the tiny spot of sunshine on the carpet and sat and looked at me. I wanted to die. Here she was, in this tiny puddle of sun in this otherwise dark, dreary house, with no toys and a collar around her neck, but it was not so bad that it would be considered cruel, yet it was not so good that it helped me feel like I could let go of this situation.

After we left, Ryan and I spoke at length about it. It took me another day of running it over in my head to think of a few reasons why it might not be so bad and how I can make it better...

1. I used to have adopters pre-approved and that was good enough for me. For all I know most of the adopters I've gotten cats to are just like this family. It's partially because I have become so involved in screening adopters that I became aware that some are not as great as they appear on paper.

2. I know I am overly protective of Santa's Team, but that's my right after all we went through and that's why I'm beating

myself up about it. I should have done better for them.

3. The cats are in no immediate danger, even though I'm sure they are going to go outdoors one day. The street they live on is very quiet, but the wildlife will be their problem. The yard is fenced in for a dog. The cats will run right through it, but I can't do anything about this. What is done is done.

4. Ryan agreed that they showed us the back yard so we could see that they are in the process of making their home nicer. The plywood is over the bathroom. Apparently, they are renovating that, as well. We thought we needed to think of the home as a work in progress and that the situation may improve for the cats in time.

5. I still owe these folks a tiny bit of paperwork, so I went to the Pet Shop and bought a bunch of toys, catnip, a scratcher and am going to drop it off for them. I'm just going to say I got it as a donation and not make a big deal about it. I will leave it at the door and not bother these folks any longer. At least I will know the cats have some toys, okay, and a few extra cans of cat food I have laying around, too. It's not much, but it's all I can think to do.

I will always look back on this adoption with regret and will hope to learn from this lesson. They are nice people. I'm not looking down on them as though I'm better than they are because I have a furnace and central heat. It's not about how fancy the house is, it's about how the cats looked. If they were feeding crappy food, but the cats were bouncing around, thriving, happy, I would be FINE with that...but they weren't. They were okay. Not great. Not terrible. Just okay. And for the next 10 or 15 years of their life, knowing they are just OKAY...that just doesn't cut it for me.

CICH Content Categories:

[Santa's Team](#) ^[1]

[Georgia Rescue](#) ^[2]

Comments

Mon, 2010-03-22 15:59 — [ZoeEmEffGee](#) ^[3]

Oh my ^[4]

Looks like your gut feeling was right after all. :-/

Kittens need toys and fun! Maybe you should call them up and talk to them more...explain that they aren't stimulating the kittens properly. Also they had better not be thinking of letting them outside. Make sure they know the terrible things that happen to cats outside...

I may have been playing "devil's advocate" before, because I know how bad I looked on paper when I adopted Rayne, but not anymore. They need to step up and take better care of the kittens!

Mon, 2010-03-22 18:03 — Bob (not verified)

Did anyone play with or pay ^[5]

Did anyone play with or pay attention to them at all while you were there? Didn't sound like they were paying attention to them at all, as for letting them outside.. BAD idea and I haven't even seen the area.

Go with your gut feeling.. .. Those dolls might need saving again. Just me.. but after everything they went thru, they deserve the best.

Mon, 2010-03-22 19:00 — [Amy & The House...](#) (not verified) ^[6]

Reading this broke my heart ^[7]

I have to be honest I had really hoped that your feeling was wrong. But when I read that Donner had lost the light in her eyes, I seriously almost cried. I don't even know what else to say - I really wish there was more you could do.

Mon, 2010-03-22 23:06 — [debrue](#) ^[8]

get them back! ^[9]

don't worry about how the people feel about you - you have to be able to live with yourself. This whole thing has been depressed as hell, so I can't even begin to imagine how you feel. Poor babies.

I've got my fingers crossed that the people will do the right thing for the kitties.

Tue, 2010-03-23 16:05 — Julie (not verified)

Devils Advocate ^[10]

Just gotta devils advocate a little here... I don't think this sounds like a tragic situation by any means. It's possible you were projecting that the kitties looked sad. And it's quite possible these people love those kits very much! Plus, they have each other!

Also, the toys were very likely under the bed. Toys in my house don't last very long in the main walk ways, they get batted

under the couch/bed within hours.

Remember, these guys have each other, and are likely very loved. Not every adopter can be as awesome as we are, and we have to remember that "pretty good" is a heck of a lot better than they would have been without us.

And as far as collars... I get upset when I see cats WITHOUT collars! However this one would make me happier if it had tags on it, but it's a start.

Sounds like nearly every issue you have is one that the adopters can pretty easily change! This is a GOOD thing! Make a list of suggestions, drop off some toys/scratchers... offer to help clear a spot in the plant window for the cat bed you bring. Stop by periodically (joyfully!), stick around to see how they interact/play with the cats. Reiterate how important it is that they not go outside (due to immune system just tell them). This is a frown that can so easily be turned upside down!!

Sounds like they just need a little nudging in the right direction. A little guidance. I remember the living situation I was in when I got my 1st kitten. I'd NEVER have adopted to me! But she turned out to be the most awesome cat ever. And *I* learned and became a better cat parent along the way. If they have good pure hearts and love on those kits, they're gonna be ok!

CICH @ [Google+](#)
Robin @ [Google+](#)

Source URL (modified on 2010-03-22 15:12): <https://coveredincathair.com/content/foster-cat-journal-seeing-dancer-donner-again>

Links

- [1] <https://coveredincathair.com/category/cich-content-categories/santas-team>
- [2] <https://coveredincathair.com/category/cich-content-categories/georgia-rescue>
- [3] <https://coveredincathair.com/users/zoeemeffgee>
- [4] <https://coveredincathair.com/comment/1723#comment-1723>
- [5] <https://coveredincathair.com/comment/1724#comment-1724>
- [6] <http://houseofcats-amy.blogspot.com>
- [7] <https://coveredincathair.com/comment/1725#comment-1725>
- [8] <https://coveredincathair.com/user/191>
- [9] <https://coveredincathair.com/comment/1733#comment-1733>
- [10] <https://coveredincathair.com/comment/1738#comment-1738>