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The Incredible Transformation of Miss Fluffy Pants

Mon, 2012-02-13 18:55 — Robin Olson

I was very disappointed when King and Miss Fluffy Pants's (*is this her name? It was just a code name, but I think it might stick*) reunion was not a happy one. It was clear they were never friends at the Palette factory, where they were both rescued from. Perhaps they even competed for the same scraps of food?

King was nonplused at the first meeting, but Miss FP was pissed. She hissed and growled when Maria let her out of the cat carrier, into the small bathroom that would be her new home. We didn't realize it at the time, but Miss FP had just had a terrible 48 hours. She was sedated, then the Vet realized she'd already been SPAYED! She had her blood drawn and we found out she may be FIV+. **She was nose to nose with a big dog at the clinic and she was so distressed when she tried to attack him through the door of the carrier, the momentum of all that energy almost flipped her cat carrier over and onto the floor!** With her life turned upside down, from the routine of living on scraps at the Palette factory, to a clinic full of scary smells and a big dog encounter, needless to say, Miss FP was not a happy camper to be yet at another strange place full of different smells.

If Maria had space in her home, she would not have put Miss FP with King, but we had no choice. We had to make it work until we could figure out what to do.

After Maria let Miss into the room, she let it be known that she did not want to be touched or be anyone's friend. She was so fractious that Maria was scared to go near her. **Fearing for King's safety and with no other options we decided to put Miss into a crate so at least she couldn't bite King. With a disability to contend with, I didn't want King to be exposed to FIV+, too.**



©2012 Maria. S. Miss FP in her little crate.

We were all very unhappy with the situation and I started to scramble, thinking of what I could do to make it better. Maria had to be at work. She couldn't stay home and monitor the cats so Miss was stuck in a tiny cage, probably getting angrier by the minute, while poor King started to cry and urinate all over his bedding.

A day passed and Maria let Miss out of her cage to stretch. She hissed at King, but didn't growl. It was progress, but not much. **King was still urinating around the room to the point where we worried he had a urinary tract infection.** Maria was very stressed and tired-and who wouldn't be from having to do a mountain of laundry and deal with her own cats and work, then come home to a big mess! I was getting stressed out because I couldn't figure out what to do and living 1000 miles away, I couldn't just come over and help-which I desperately wanted to do.

I realized I had to take it in small steps.

Number one: Western Blot test for Miss-ASAP. If she truly IS FIV+ then maybe she has to go to another rescue? I have two rooms in my home for fostering, that's it, and kitten season is almost here and it will be early this year since the weather is so warm. **I can't bring an FIV+ cat who is nasty into my house and hope I will ever find her a home.** I'll just end up not being able to help countless other cats if that happens. It was a terrible predicament. **We even discussed returning her to the Palette factory now that she was vetted. At least we could donate some food for her and a new cat bed, but I knew in my heart that I'd never sleep again if I did that to her.**

I had to find out how to reach this supposedly friendly cat. Bobby had told me she was very affectionate, but all Maria had seen was a cat who would swat at her hand or growl at her.

Maria sent me a photo so I could see some progress in the situation. All of a sudden, alarm bells went off in my head. I realized we had completely misunderstood Miss FP from the start.



©2012 Maria. S. The photo that changed everything for me.

The photo seems innocent enough. King sits near Miss's small cage. Neither cat is looking at the other. Maria interpreted it as King wanting to be close to Miss to be friends, but because he was ignoring her, I looked at it differently. **Was King letting Miss FP know HE was in charge of the room**-after all he's free to walk about and that HE could sit right up next to her crate and at any given moment, **if he wanted to, he could pounce on top of the cage and get her, attack head on or get at her from any side of the crate.** She was completely trapped and completely exposed. No wonder she was freaking out!

Maria also mentioned not being able to go near Miss FP. **Then, I noticed the food dishes in the crate. They were full. Another alarm went off in my head-the food had to GO.** Miss needed to be fed BY Maria, twice a day and that was it. **No free feeding her.** Miss needed to bond with Maria and see Maria as something good, not bad. **Maria was the food provider, not the Dungeon Master!**

Miss needed OUT of the cage ASAP. She needed a place in the bathroom to call her own. The problem is-where would that be in a such a small space? Of course...we needed a cat tree!

A cat tree would add a lot of vertical space to the room. Odds are, King would not be able to climb it, but Miss could. She could have the upper area to herself and feel safe. Perhaps that was what she needed?

In the middle of all this craziness, Maria and I are trying to help a pregnant Tortishell cat who was found by an elderly couple in the area! Maria was running around trying to get the cat some help, run Miss FP to the Vet to get her Western Blot test done AND she had to get to the pet store and find a cat tree ASAP!

I'm very lucky Maria is so devoted to helping cats or this would have been a complete nightmare.

Then, another puzzle piece fell into place. Maria warned the Vet Tech at East Lake Vet Hospital, to be very careful handling Miss FP. That she was nasty and might bite. The Tech said she would do her best and took Miss FP into the back of the building to do the blood draw. Awhile later, the Tech came out. Maria was worried something bad had happened and asked how it went. The answer surprised her and gave me a rush of hopeful excitement:

The Tech remarked that in all her years of working with cats, that Miss FP had been ONE OF THE EASIEST, NICEST and SWEETEST cats she'd ever worked with!

What was the difference? Was there a magic pill that she gave Miss FP? No. First, Miss FP was NOT in a room with another cat. Second, Miss FP didn't have to worry about territory. Third, the Tech probably approached her gently-not that Maria didn't do that, but Maria had grown fearful of the cat. **All this adds up to-this cat is NOT fractious-she's ANGRY and SCARED!**

Maria got a great cat tree and thanks to the donations we got for King's care, we could afford to get one right away instead of have to shop for one on discount, then wait a week for it to arrive. Maria set up the cat tree. I told her to take the cage out of the room. **No more cage for Miss. We had to trust that she would not hurt King.** She might take a swipe and him and claw him, but she'd calmed down enough for us to believe she'd not be a risk to give him FIV+. It was a very tough call, but for the sanity of Miss, we had to do it. **Unfortunately, King cried with her out of the crate, then urinated on his bed. Was his sick or scared?**

I can't explain how I knew what to do, but I can say that within moments of letting Miss investigate the cat tree, it was VERY CLEAR it was what she needed all along.

©2012 Maria. S. There's no footage of Miss FP being fractious because it was too dangerous for Maria to shoot video. She needed to protect herself and King. This video shows what happened after we put the cat tree into their room.

Miss FP climbed onto the top of the cat tree, nervously licked her mouth for a moment, then laid on her side and started to “make muffins” into the carpeting on the cat tree.

Maria didn't hesitate. She reached out to give Miss FP a pet. **Her bravery was rewarded with a head butt into her hand.** Maria overcame her reluctance to get close to Miss FP and had the simple joy of getting to know her as she really was all along.



©2012 Maria. S. Safe in her new space, Miss FP enjoys some sunshine.

Miss FP relaxed. Her eyes were soft. Her movements were slow and easy. Her tail did not whip around or even move. **She was HAPPY and with her happiness came more surprises.**



©2012 Maria. S. The posture and "soft eyes" of a happy cat.

Miss loves to be brushed. She loves to be petted. When her anger and fear washed away; a sweet lady emerged.

King stopped peeing on the floor.

King stopped crying.

King is still lonely and still loves Maria's cat, Kahlua, who comes in to visit for a few minutes once in awhile. **King has also perked up now that he has some toys and the cat tree base to play with!**

Although Miss and King are not best friends, they both have safe spaces to live in and places they can call their own. I'm sad that King wants a friend, but can't find one in Miss FP, but with all the surprises we've had, perhaps there are more to come?



©2012 Maria. S. We may make changes for King after this but we'll see how it goes. What do you think?

For now we wait for Miss's blood test results and we hope she is not FIV+. Tomorrow, King goes to meet Dr. Alan Cross, an orthopedic surgeon, who may help us understand what happened to King's back feet and what we can do to help him live a more comfortable life.

We couldn't have done ANY OF THIS if we hadn't gotten the support from so many of you. You honor King with your love and your donations. His success is due to your support, Maria's love and devotion to cats in need and my determination to unlock the mystery of what these cats are thinking and how to provide what they need.

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Comments

Mon, 2012-02-13 20:50 — [AnnaMeow \(not verified\)](#) [22]

Just like on TV! [23]

This SO reminds me of an episode of My Cat From Hell. Like so many of those shows so much negative behavior is squashed with providing cats vertical space. I hope and pray miracles continue. You and Maria are angels and blessings to the world of cats!

Tue, 2012-02-14 07:46 — mk (not verified)

Miss FP [24]

She is a beautiful kitty. She reminds me of my foster cat. She is 9 years old and declawed..has never been around other animals. When she was taked to the vet, she went crazy and they had to sedate her. When I brought her home, and put her in her room, she was the most loving kitty ever. When I take her to the shelter for adoption day, she is very nasty in her cage..she is cage aggressive and freaks out if she sees another cat. So it will be hard getting her adopted. The first time I let her out of her room to walk around, she freaked out when she saw my cats. When i tried to pick her up to put her back in her room, she went crazy on me. But it has been a couple of weeks and she can now walk around my house without screaming at my cats..it just takes time. It does help that my foster door is a screened door so she can see my other cats. I think Miss will get better. she has had a lot of changes in a short period of time..once she settles in, I bet her and King will be fine together.

Sat, 2013-03-09 15:16 — Catnynouse (not verified)

Miss FP [25]

I adopted Miss FP in Georgia. She is very happy.

Tue, 2013-03-12 16:11 — [Robin Olson](#) [26]

Really! [27]

We'd LOVE to see photos and find out how she's doing! Thank you for giving her a good home!

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