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[Home](#) > To Those I Cannot Save

To Those I Cannot Save

Wed, 2012-10-17 11:02 — Robin Olson

Every day whether it be via email, a phone call or on Facebook, I get notified of cats and kittens in dire need of rescue. Some are owner-abandoned, some are found on the street wandering, seriously injured. Others are listed on Craigslist because they have behavioral issues or the family is moving and "can't take them" or mysterious allergies pop up so the cat has to go. If they don't get any help they will go to the shelter---and we all know what that implies---they may be euthanized.

This is a letter to all those cats.

Dear Cat ID# Unknown,

My heart is very heavy. I took it upon myself to open my home to helping cats like you. **Cats who are hunkered down at the back of a stainless steel cage, with dilated pupils, cowering in fear. Cats who are too old to care and just sit, staring in their litter pan, hoping the smell of their own excrement will offer them a sliver of comfort in a place that is not their home.** They are confused, lost, scared, hopeless. **Some have newborn kittens clinging to them for nourishment** and who are trying to protect them from the sounds of the shelter, the barking dogs, the smells of cleaning fluids and untouched cat food.



©2012 Maria S. George's guardian lives in a very bad part of town and had taken him off the streets knowing full well she would get evicted for having a cat. She was also in hiding from an abusive relationship and was risking her own safety if she got evicted. My rescue group, Kitten Associates took him on because his next stop was going to be the kill shelter or being turned back to the streets.

I want to save your life, but I can't. I'm so very sorry. I see your photo and you look like a perfectly nice kitty. You don't deserve to sit there, waiting to die. I wish I knew something I could do to help you. There isn't enough time in the day to send out pleas to everyone I know for every cat I discover who needs help.

I don't want to be cliché and say, *"If I had the space and money, I would save all of you,"* because I don't think that's even possible to do by just one person. **I have to measure what I can do versus what is needed. If I take too many, I am no help to anyone.** As it is, my home is ruined from my own cats suffering from stress from a constant flow of incoming and outgoing cats, but it's just urine-ruined floors. If that's the price I pay to save lives, then so be it.



©2012 Bobby Stanford. 10 yr old Helmet was brought to the shelter. The owners were warned the cat would be euthanized if they surrendered him. Being over 10 years old he had no chance. **I sent out a plea on Facebook and within a day we had three adopters interested. This is a rare WIN.** There are so many requests for help on Facebook cats like Helmet get overlooked.

I'm not saying you're not worth it, because you are. You are SO worth it. You are worth making a fuss over every single one of you. You're a sentient being. You forgive and forget. You can move on with little or no remorse. You are so much better than I can ever be, but I don't have a way to help you so I have to delete this email or ignore this post on Facebook.

Even though I try not to see you, I do. Each time I "pass" on helping another one of you, it puts a little tear in my heart, which is already in tattered shreds.



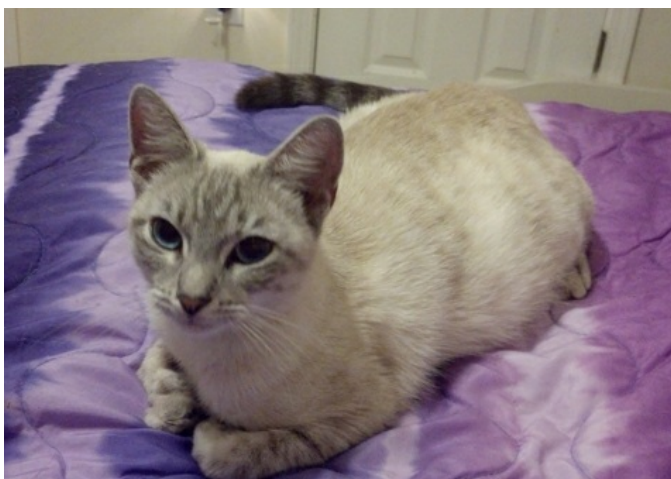
©2012 Bobby Stanford. Helmet, now named, Grayson, with his new, devoted family. I'm told he is doing really well and is already requesting belly rubs.

I feel so badly I can't do more, but I aspire to, at least, but it's getting harder and harder to know about all of you because this year is the worst I can remember in a long time. **I know that mamas and their kittens are dying in record numbers this summer and into the autumn and that pains me in a way that nothing can make right again.** I can't stand seeing elderly cats given up by their families who turn a cold shoulder to them at a time when those cats should be cherished even more.



©2012 Bobby Stanford. This lovely pregnant cat was living outside in a very dangerous part of town. The owners of the apartment complex wanted her dumped at the heart stick kill shelter where she would die before her kittens were born.

What ever happened to “when the going gets tough, the tough get going?” **No...you are disposable. I will never understand how anyone can think that of you.**



©2012 Jennifer N. Another miracle rescue-Anastasia was offered a loving foster home ONE HOUR after I asked for help. This is another rare WIN for a sweet cat who deserves the best we can give her.

You are not a cat on death row-you are my cat. You would give me the world, your love, your heart. You would give me all that you are, every single one of you, but I can't give you the same in return no matter how badly I wish I could.

No other rescues stepped forward to help you. They're in the same bind. No one came to adopt you. **You're going to die today. I can't do a damn thing about it other than cry** and hate that we, as a society, decided euthanasia is the answer to overcrowded shelters.



©2012 Jennifer N. Anastasia's due to give birth any time now. Thank goodness she's safe.

I recently learned that in Italy it's against the law to euthanize a cat. The community has decided to take cat care on as a group. Everyone pitches in to help the cats. There are sanctuaries and adoptions and some cats just live outside without a home, but they are cared for and cared about.

Why can't we do this, too? Because we're selfish and don't want cats ruining our plants or peeing on the front door. Or we don't want to deal with spending a few extra dollars to put out food for the strays or ferals because then it becomes a bigger problem. **We'd rather the cats just die, as long as we don't see it happening, so we can focus on what WE want and what WE NEED, who cares about them?**



10/10-3355
Silver/Tabby Mix: An adoptable cat in McDonough, GA

Large • Young • Male

✉ 📧 🐦 📌

👍 Like Be the first of your friends to like this.

It is kitty season once again and because no one thought to get my mom and dad sterilized, I am here at the shelter, lonely, and without a home. I am one of the many kitties here at the shelter in need of a lifetime companion that will give me the love that I so deserve. If you would like to meet me, you can visit me here at the shelter or call my friends at (770) 288-PETS. My ID# 10/10-3355 is and I hope to see you soon.

Lost and stray animals are held at the Henry County Animal Care and Control Shelter for four (4) calendar days (excluding Sundays and county holidays) in order to give their owners a chance to reclaim them. After that time period, adoptable animals are held as long as space allows.

10/10-3355's Contact Info
 Henry County Animal Control Shelter, McDonough, GA
 • 770-288-PETS (7387)
 • [Email](#) Henry County Animal Control Shelter
 • [See more pets](#) from Henry County Animal Control Shelter
 • [For more information, visit Henry County Animal Control Shelter's Web site.](#)

©2012 Betsy Merchant. Three days ago I learned about this kitty and MANY others at Henry County Care and Control. I wanted to help him but I didn't have time. **Why would a cat like that have to be put down?** It never makes sense.

We can shout all we want about spaying or neutering cats, but it falls on too many deaf ears. We can say “no kill!” but we don’t know that it often only means “no killing of adoptable animals” and that shelters can make rules that any animal over 7 is too old to be adopted so they can KILL those perfectly healthy, loving animals and still declare they are “no kill!”

We have to realize that millions of cats will die this year because we’re too lazy to get off our asses and really FIX this problem. It’s not an important issue compared to the economy, people losing their homes, losing their jobs, etc. There will always be another reason that is “more important” to focus on even though we COULD focus on this AND work on those other issues, too.



©2012 Betsy Merchant. I found out that they're putting cats down daily. This photo was haunting me, like so many others. I stopped what I was doing and begged a favor. **As of this afternoon, THIS CAT IS BEING RESCUED by Kitten Associates and Animals in Distress, but I couldn't help the other 15 or more who don't have a chance.**

To my dear cat who will die today, I failed you. We all failed you. We need to stop failing and start putting an end to this madness and start saying NO we don’t accept euthanasia as a solution for overcrowded shelters. We need to start opening our homes and accepting cats in to foster-NO MORE EXCUSES ABOUT IT BEING TOO PAINFUL TO LET THEM GO TO A NEW HOME BECAUSE WE DON’T WANT TO SUFFER THE EMOTIONAL ATTACHMENT BEING BROKEN. Just do it.



©2012 Betsy Merchant. Three days ago I learned about this kitty and MANY others at Henry County Care and Control. I loved this cat's face. What a serene and beautiful cat. **This post is dedicated to her and the thousands like her who didn't make it. She was euthanized two days ago because there wasn't enough room in the shelter.**

I would much rather cry because my foster cat got adopted then if it died in a shelter because I refused to open my home up to fostering cats.

I'm so very sorry, kitty. Rest in Peace. Fly free.

If you want to help the cats of [Henry County](#) ^[1] or the cats in your town, please consider opening your home to foster a cat for a rescue group or shelter. It's a magical thing to realize you truly are SAVING a LIFE.

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[Announcements](#) ^[2]

[Needs a Home](#) ^[3]

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

[Cat Rescue](#) ^[5]

[One I Hold in High Regard](#) ^[6]

[Georgia Rescue](#) ^[7]

[Rainbow Bridge](#) ^[8]

[Kitten Associates](#) ^[9]

[Rest in Peace](#) ^[10]

[Animals in Distress](#) ^[11]

[Not On My Watch](#) ^[12]

Comments

Wed, 2012-10-17 11:18 — Jody Vernay (not verified)

Kitties we can't save... ^[13]

Robin,

This is a wonderful, yet heart breaking tribute to all the innocent lives lost daily. Thank you so much for all you do....you are a kind and brave angel...

Wed, 2012-10-17 11:59 — [Connie & The Crew \(not verified\)](#) ^[14]

Very well written. I ^[15]

Very well written. I couldn't agree more that it sucks that too many people refuse to accept the role they play in this problem with their "oh it is just one litter of kittens" mentality. We can yell at them till we are blue in the face but all they can see is the cat in front of them and the cute kittens by her side... they never see or even contemplate the thousands that are dying because of all of those "just one litters" (not to mention the fifth or the 10th litter from people who really don't get it or

those not in a home)

Wed, 2012-10-17 14:41 — jmuwj (not verified)

RE: TO THAT CAT [16]

I read your article with tears, of course, because it is moving and because I work every day on social media, sharing those very cats. You can, too, with whatever time you have. You can crosspost with us. Tag, remote tag, contact rescues.

Donating is also possible for those so fortunate. Fostering, too, as you know, and adopting for life. Everyone, everywhere on the planet, with an internet connection and social media accounts (mainly facebook and twitter, but of course there are others) can join in this life-affirming work. WE HELP SAVE THOSE LIVES. You can, too. Thank you!

Wed, 2012-10-17 17:07 — Roxan (not verified)

Kitties we can't save [17]

Your words are so right on in expressing my feelings also. Most people are so selfish and don't look at cats as sentinet biengs. I want to do more. I sometimes donate money that I needed to pay one of my medical bills. They can wait. I sponsor a kitty at The Cat House on the Kings. I have 7 of my own that I've rescued. I'm holding 1 spot open.....I've put a limit of 8 for our family.....to either foster or adopt. Luckily I live in Austin, TX which has a very low kill rate and is aiming to become no kill. Our Humane Society is wonderful here and goes to outlying shelters to take the adoptable animals to help prevent more deaths. But, my God, it feels like we're emptying a swimming pool with an eye dropper. I share everyday on facebook trying to get people to take action, make donations, help find homes. I hope it does some good. Feels so futile. Anyways, thanks for your words. I know they weren't easy, not felt pleasant, writting.

Roxan

Wed, 2012-10-17 18:13 — HollyAnne Dustin (not verified)

Thank you for this post [18]

My heart breaks daily to see the posts on Facebook or petfinder. This post explains so much what is in my heart. I wish I could rescue. I don't know how I could foster, I wish I could. It isn't that letting them go part, I just don't know how I would do it with 9 of my own already in a small house working two jobs. I admire what you do so much, I wish I could do the same.

Thu, 2012-10-18 13:30 — RobinLee Ritchie (not verified)

God Bless all of them [19]

I had a hard time getting through the article without crying. It's what I feel everyday when I see their sad little faces. It's just not fair! They ALL deserve to have a forever home. I admire and appreciate everything you do for them. I wish I could do and maybe soon I will. Maybe that is what is missing in my life.

Thu, 2012-10-18 13:44 — Barbara UK (not verified)

Heartbreaking [20]

What a moving and heartbreaking post that was. I could hardly bear to read it to the end. You are feeling overwhelmed with feelings of hopelessness about not being able to help each and every cat in need of a caring home. Yet you are doing so much - and there are others just like you and together you are making a difference - a real difference. Sadly there will always be folks who don't treat animals as they should, who think they can be added to a home then tossed aside when they turn out not to be just like toys, who allow their children to tease and torment - then rehome the cat because it scratched Little Johnny, who turn out the cat because it ruined their furniture, made a mess or cried too loudly, who don't care if their cat has litter after litter. Sadly we may never change those people's attitudes - if only we could.

Please don't be despondent Robin - focus on all the success stories you have had - you and everyone else who rescues. You have done an amazing amount of good in this world and your kindness and devotion shine out of these pages.

Barbara UK

Thu, 2012-10-18 14:37 — Catnymouse (not verified)

Brought tears to my eyes [21]

I wish I could do more to help the poor, unwanted animals in this world. If it were a perfect world, every pet would be spayed and neutered and no animal would be brought into this world unwanted.

Thu, 2012-10-18 23:01 — Debby (not verified)

Keep Pushing [22]

Dear Robin,

Your post makes me cry. Every day my emails and FB pages are too full of homeless cats. I share them with whoever lives in that town, hoping they will share too until a new home is found. I've been able to help save a couple, but there are too many more that I know are languishing forever in shelters, and those are the lucky ones.

I volunteer with CT Votes for Animals; and am trying to brainstorm ways we could promote spay/neuter. The trouble is that we are always "preaching to the converted" -- our messages are broadcast to the animal lovers, to the people like us who already have a house full of cats, who volunteer at shelters, etc. I have been awake nights trying to figure out how we can get that message out there to those who don't know or care. You are making tremendous inroads by increasing awareness for foster homes. I wish we could rent a billboard or two and get these messages out while people are sitting captive during their daily commute on the interstate. Some PSAs during primetime TV would be really good, but I think only HSUS or ASPCA could afford them. I think ASPCA has just started a campaign with posters in the malls. This is just me grasping at straws, because I am so heartbroken for those cats who need and deserve so much love, and have so much to give.

Thank you for all you do. I'm sure you're exhausted and much in need of rest, but please take some comfort in knowing all of the cats that you have been able to save, and the ones you have yet to save. That is no small number! Blessings to you for each of these lives...

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

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Links

- [1] <http://www.petfinder.com/pet-search?shelterid=GA67>
- [2] <https://coveredincathair.com/taxonomy/term/33>
- [3] <https://coveredincathair.com/taxonomy/term/68>
- [4] <https://coveredincathair.com/taxonomy/term/89>
- [5] <https://coveredincathair.com/taxonomy/term/100>
- [6] <https://coveredincathair.com/taxonomy/term/102>
- [7] <https://coveredincathair.com/category/cich-content-categories/georgia-rescue>
- [8] <https://coveredincathair.com/category/cich-content-categories/rainbow-bridge>
- [9] <https://coveredincathair.com/category/cich-content-categories/kitten-associates>
- [10] <https://coveredincathair.com/category/cich-content-categories/rest-peace>
- [11] <https://coveredincathair.com/category/cich-content-categories/animals-distress>
- [12] <https://coveredincathair.com/category/cich-content-categories/not-my-watch>
- [13] <https://coveredincathair.com/comment/5378#comment-5378>
- [14] <http://kittyblog.net>
- [15] <https://coveredincathair.com/comment/5379#comment-5379>
- [16] <https://coveredincathair.com/comment/5380#comment-5380>
- [17] <https://coveredincathair.com/comment/5381#comment-5381>
- [18] <https://coveredincathair.com/comment/5382#comment-5382>
- [19] <https://coveredincathair.com/comment/5383#comment-5383>
- [20] <https://coveredincathair.com/comment/5384#comment-5384>
- [21] <https://coveredincathair.com/comment/5385#comment-5385>
- [22] <https://coveredincathair.com/comment/5387#comment-5387>