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What the Heart Knows: Ch 4 Wallace Returns

Mon, 2014-07-14 18:27 — Robin Olson

Read Wallace's Story from the Beginning: [Chapter 1](#) ^[1], [Chapter 2](#) ^[2] and [Chapter 3](#) ^[3].

Wallace has been in foster care for the past few weeks and from all the reports I got it sounded like he was doing well. The next step in his journey were to put him with Celeste and her kittens because as an orphan, Wallace hasn't learned his kitty manners yet and we don't want him to be adversely effected by only being around humans and his Great Dane friend, Nina.

At least that was the plan...

I brought Celeste's four kittens to the Vet for their first vaccination. After they had their exam they would meet Wallace for the first time. If I could mingle the smell of the kittens with Wallace's perhaps Celeste would be more inclined to accept him as one of her own. She wasn't at the Vet so this was a good time for me to be sneaky.

Except there was a problem...

Christine's young adult daughter brought Wallace into the exam room. I took one look at him and knew something was off. **She reported that Wallace was being "violent" and that he really needed some help.** As she spoke I could see him writhing in her hands, nipping at her fingers. She handed him to me and I realized his belly was enormous. I could feel the anxiety building in my chest. What the heck was I going to DO with this kitten? **Did he have FIP? Violent? Last I saw Wallace he was purring, affectionate and now he was thrashing around in my hands. I needed to talk to the Vet about this.**

We went over Wallace's condition. **His fur was thin.** Near the back of his ears he barely has any fur. I imagined Nina over grooming him and him suffering at the end of her big tongue. Was he held captive? Did she groom him too much? Why did he feel so DIRTY? What little coat he had was coarse. I started to worry that maybe he was really sick or had a skin disease at least.



©2014 Robin AF Olson. First look after returning from his foster home.

I knew I couldn't risk putting him with Celeste's kittens, but now what would I do with him? Where would I put him? I had no more spaces for foster kittens left.

I spoke with the Vet. He felt that although it was big Wallace didn't have any other clinical signs of FIP. He'd seen many kittens with fluid filled bellies when he'd done spay surgeries. He never found a cause for this or felt it was a problem. He did not feel it was safe to put Wallace with any other cats until he was a bit older and had more vetting done.

My heart sank. This is a critical time for Wallace. If we don't get him to be socialized he won't be adoptable. I decided to put him in our master bathroom. It's a small space but it was all I had left. **I put a cat tree and some bedding in the room and Wallace already had his "mobile bachelor pad"** (cat carrier with his blanket and stuffed bear friend). I let Wallace

out of his carrier so I could observe him and he came at me swiping and hissing. He seemed more furious than scared. I tried to pick him up but he struggled and made odd sounds. **I put him down. He was so weak he could barely stand. When he did walk, his belly was so big he wobbled...and this is an eight week old kitten. He should have full use of his limbs by now.**

I started to wonder if this was the foster home's fault and not Wallace's. He was so sweet when I last saw him. What had they done to him?

I'm caring for two rooms of kittens, overseeing care of six sick cats in Georgia and now Wallace needs socialization. I'm also trying to work to make a living as a graphic designer, promote Kitten Associates so we can keep the doors open and keep writing my blog (and beg for [Petties](#) (4) votes!). I was already staying up until 3AM just to make sure I was spending enough time with the kittens after trying to get some work done during the day. There never seems to be enough space to get anything done with calls, emails and texts always coming in. **How the Hell was I going to get Wallace into a good place mentally and what if he had Feline Leukemia or FIV?**

For the next day I went over how I was going to rip into Wallace's foster mom for not taking good care of him. I was so upset. How could this angry kitten be "my boy?"

I spent hours with him. First coaxing him to come to me with chicken baby food. He came right over and ate while he sat on my lap. We had play time until he was so tired he wanted to nap. **Within a day he was not aggressive with me, but he definitely needed help understanding that hands were not for biting.** He also began to relax around me and even ran out of his little bachelor pad to greet me on the second morning. There I saw the little guy I'd remembered. **There was that little sweetness in him that mixed with how odd he looks adds up to a kitten with the power to melt the coldest heart.**

Later that morning we were off to another Vet. This time we visited Dr Mary. I decided if Wallace would test negative for FIV and FeLV, then he could be with Mia, instead of Celeste. Her kittens are much bigger but they have been vetted already so they are at less risk of getting sick or making Wallace sick. I would crate Wallace if I wasn't in the room due to his small size (*I want him to be safe from harm*) and let him out to be with the kittens for as long as I could every day. Hopefully the interactions would help him learn about not biting and not attacking but it would take some time.



©2014 Robin AF Olson. With Dr. Mary.

It was Friday morning and we were the only clients. Everyone in the office had to come see Wallace, coo over him, tell him they loved him and basically fuss over him. He was hilarious. He'd be sweet, then reach out and slap someone in the face or nip but not bite their hands. They kissed his big belly and talked baby talk to him, while he looked at them with those big owl eyes. We let him run around the exam room. I'd brought a toy with me so he was chasing after it. **Dr. Mary did her exam while she chatted away, telling me that basically he was fine just the way he was, though she couldn't sort out what was going on with his strange striped coat.** She was mesmerized by him as she tried to listen to his heart. He wriggled around so the intrepid Vet Tech (and friend of mine) Super-Deb helped keep him still so they could finish up. **Deb had no problem holding him up by his front legs and talking to him as though he could understand her words. She'd quickly stretch him out so his belly was exposed, then kiss his belly over and over until he wanted to be put down.**



©2014 Robin AF Olson.

In the end Wallace got his clean bill of health. No FIV. No FeLV. He was de-wormed again and got his first FVRCP vaccination. Dr. Mary felt he should be with other cats and that it was safe to do so and then something unexpected happened.



©2014 Super Deb. In da bachelor pad.

Super-Deb asked me if I like her to foster Wallace for a few days-just over the weekend. He could meet her maine coon kitties and her beloved doggie, Jayne. They'd get his *kitten bootcamp* started and I could pick him up on Monday. If it had been anyone else I would have said no, but with Deb, I knew he would be in good hands AND it gave me a little time to get his crate set up for when he returns.

The other thing I realized is that it wasn't the foster mom's fault that Wallace was so fractious. He really needs to be with other cats, BUT I also do wonder if they were using their hands as a toy. That's a big no-no especially with kittens who can't understand if a hand is a toy or a hand is for petting. When Wallace grows up we don't want him to be confused about that because a ten pound cat going after your fingers is not my idea of a good time.



©2014 Super-Deb.

I've had a few updates about Wallace already. It seems he's having a blast at Super-Deb's house but hasn't had much interaction with Deb's pets yet. Last night he tucked himself in around 10pm when he got into his bachelor pad to go to sleep for the night. Deb was a bit miffed since she wanted him to hang out with her, but Wallace has to recharge his cuteness so he can continue to melt hearts wherever he goes.

It's Monday now and I was supposed to pick up Wallace, except for the fact that Super-Deb has a mad crush on him and asked to keep him until I get back from a quick out-of-town trip I'm going on for two days. I just hope I can get him back when I return.

And now it's time to enjoy this very special video featuring Wallace!

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[5]

Comments

Tue, 2014-07-15 14:48 — jmuwj (not verified)

RE: WALLACE ^[6]

If you can resist this, you have a stone for a heart. *WALLACE* <3!!!

Sat, 2014-07-19 15:37 — jmuwj (not verified)

RE: WALLACE ^[7]

I'm sure I'm not alone in being smitten with this kitten. Sharing his story to my social media friends.

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