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What the Heart Knows: A Kitten Named Wallace. Ch 2.

Thu, 2014-06-12 11:41 — Robin Olson

Continued from [Chapter 1.](#) ^[1]

Instead of freaking out, I sat for a moment and thought about it. What did I need to bring with me? Maybe there was someone who could also help and advise me. I called our vet at the [Cat Clinic](#) ^[2] and asked if there was anyone on staff who could possibly bottle-feed a kitten if my mama-cat rejected him. They put me on hold for a few minutes then told me to call Christine. She would be glad to help. **GLAD TO HELP? Really? I didn't have to make 100 phone calls? I didn't have to beg for favors? All I had to do was keep the kitten alive for 24 hours and she could pick him up the following day.** Even though I was woefully stiff, I got up and started to put together a kit of things for the kitten, energized by knowing that a Vet tech, no less, had my back. This was going to work!

Sam drove us to the Fire Station, while I went over in my head what I'd do once I saw the kitten. **First, see if it was warm enough then give it a small amount of warmed goat milk.** I had some in a baby bottle and in a syringe, covered by a portable heating pad so it would stay warm. I had a cat carrier with a warm blanket. I brought a flea comb but then realized he would be too young to treat with any flea products so he'd have to get a bath-which I still fear doing to little guys.



©2014 Robin A.F. Olson. *Our first look at Wallace.*

Once we arrived at the Station we were greeted by the Dispatcher who called for Lt. K. to bring us the kitten. She arrived moments later carrying an old blue milk crate with a towel inside it. I couldn't see anything more than that at first, but as she placed the crate down, I saw a little kitten's head covered by a towel. The kitten started to cry. I saw stripes. **It was a little silver tabby.**

On the way to the Fire Station, I said to Sam we should name the kitten Wally since he was found in a wall. We both thought that was silly, cute and sweet so when Lt. K mentioned they had wanted to name the kitten Wallace, for the same reason, it was a done deal.



©2014 Robin A.F. Olson. After giving Wallace some goat milk he was so hungry he licked some of the drops off Sam's hand.

I lifted the kitten from the towel. I could feel dirt on his coat from being inside the wall. **He was crying, very thin, but definitely about 3 weeks old-the same age as the kittens I was fostering, but half the weight.** I checked him quickly for fleas while Sam held him. I didn't even realize it but four other firemen had joined us and were watching my every move. As I continued to examine the kitten, one of them asked if it was a boy or girl. I took a look and I was certain it was a boy. They were delighted by that and amazed how I could tell the difference. Sexing kittens is not too difficult at that age, but they had never done it before. **I realized how odd it was to be rescuing a kitten from people who spend their life doing rescue. We were giving back to our community and were honoring what they did every day by assisting them when they needed us. I felt really proud at that moment.**

Wallace had a runny eye and continued to cry. I fumbled around and got a syringe of milk ready. Not even caring that I was the center of attention, I focused on being gentle, carefully urging the kitten to drink. I'd failed completely with Fio. He never took any nourishment no matter how much we tried. Wallace was quite different. He greedily slurped at the formula to everyone's amazement. I quickly got two cc's into him, which is not nearly enough, but I didn't want to drop his body temperature and put him into shock since I didn't know when he'd last had food. Clearly it had been a long time. I wanted to get him home, warmed up and fed again, but then I remembered...had he been voided?



©2014 Robin A.F. Olson. Mabel heard Wally's cries and ran over to be near him. How I wish I could have put them together, but I couldn't risk anyone getting sick or harmed.

I asked if they had helped void the kitten and they hadn't, not clear on what I was asking. Panicked I asked for warm, wet paper towels ASAP. Of course they responded like lightning, and moments later I was gently stimulating Wallace's genitals and rear end to get him to void. Sure enough we got some pale yellow urine out of him. The color was a good sign. Darker urine would have indicated dehydration or possible other problems. With at least some urine out of him and some food in him, he was stable enough for us to get him home.

The firemen thanked us and I promised to give them updates. It was such a strange situation. **There I was, possibly seen as a true cat rescuer for maybe the first time in my life. I knew what to do. I got the job done. I asked, in parting, if I provided them with a kit of information and supplies on how to care for kittens would they make use of it and they eagerly agreed.** They'd even share it with their other stations so in the future perhaps any kittens discovered would get better care until a rescue could be called upon. I felt like the seed of an idea was born at that moment that would allow Kitten Associates to be more involved with our community and would help save more lives. I'd even make up a kit for our Newtown Fire Dept, too, but first we had to get Wallace home.

As Sam was reaching the car, I realized I forgot my purse and turned to get it. Lt. Katherine was there holding it in her outstretched hand. I thanked her and smiled awkwardly, then turned back to the car. I almost ran into who I assumed was the Captain as I turned. He asked me a few questions about the kitten and if I thought he would be all right. The Captain was

clean cut, muscular, with richly toned skin. His uniform was pressed and spotless. **Seeing him made me realize I rarely ever see men doing rescue, let alone one who was so handsome. I'd been so wrapped up in Wallace, it never occurred to me to take a moment to enjoy the thrill of being near so much testosterone** (excluding Lt. K, of course!).

I told the Captain I'd keep them updated and he thanked me for helping them. I looked up and one of the fire trucks was pulling out of the bay. Some of the folks who had been with us moments earlier were on the rig. I raised my hand to wave, feeling a tickle of delight when they waved back. For those few seconds, I was part of the team.

Wallace cried as Sam drove along the highway. I took the tiny kitten out of his carrier and held him. He squirmed and wriggled, then got very quiet. I flashed back to Fio, how he would be so vibrant, then nearly dead after he was fed. I knew Wallace had a very big day and had just been fed so I tried not to be upset when he seemed to pass out in my arms. He was just tired. Let him be.



©2014 Robin A.F. Olson. *The little guy purred for us right away.*

We got home and checked Wallace for fleas. I didn't find any or any flea dirt. His ears looked good. I opened his mouth. He had a few baby teeth and no visible sores. Another good sign that he might be fairly healthy, other than very thin.

Sam and I discussed putting him with Celeste. I was still very fearful of being the sole caregiver for this kitten after just losing Fio, so we decided to try. We brought Wally to Celeste. He was crying. **She saw him, sniffed then backed off, growling. I tried to pet her and pet Wally but she was far too angry to give it a chance. Even if with a scent swap she accepted him, I'd have to stay up all night out of fear she could turn on him and kill him.** We decided to not risk it, but instead pull an all-nighter to make sure he was fed when he needed it.

One of our Facebook friends shared a link with me to [Kitten-Rescue](#) ^[3] (thank you JodiAnn!). **This web site is not fancy but wow they have great, simply prepared info on kitten care. I'd read other books about it and frankly they fell very short. This one gave me the info that I couldn't find elsewhere—a clear cut amount of formula to give the kitten and WHEN. It's 8cc per ounce of kitten.** Since we could only guess at Wally's age, it looked like some time around every 4 to 5 hours we should feed him. Void him first, then feed, then wait 15 minutes then void again, then a warm place to sleep.

Thanks to one of our donors we had a big case of evaporated goat milk. Another donor sent us special nipples for the baby bottle and our friend Joanne McGonagle sent us a SnuggleKittie,™ a plush cat toy that comes with a battery operated heart beat. I'd had it on hand for months and now I could put it to use.

Sam held Wallace while I tried to bottle feed him. It just didn't work well at all. I used the syringe and that was a bit messy but it got the job done. I gave him 7cc of milk and he seemed full. He was so thin I didn't want to push it. I'd give him a few hours before feeding him more, but for now it was time to pee and get some sleep.



©2014 Robin A.F. Olson. I honestly believe that without his *SnuggleKittie*TM, [4] Wallace never would have had any sort of comfortable time sleeping. He got as close as he could to the artificial heartbeat and fell fast asleep.

After we got Wallace cleaned up we put him back into the small cat carrier with his new plush buddy. I slipped a heated pad under the blanket in the carrier, but placed it so only half the space was warm in case he wanted to get off it. He didn't want to have anything to do with it. He wanted OUT of the carrier and weakly stood up, crying with all his might. **Sometimes he only opened his mouth, but no sound came out. I found it unnerving. Maybe he was getting weaker? I hoped to God I hadn't messed it up and that he was too cold to be fed and was going to die.**

Mabel ran over, jumped on the garbage can next to the counter where we had placed the cat carrier. She pawed at the cat carrier door, wanting to get at Wallace. Her mothering instincts were in high gear. Wallace saw her and tried to get at her, too. I so wanted to let her soothe little Wallace, but I had also just discovered that Mabel has ear mites so I couldn't risk it-also if Wallace was sick, then Mabel would get sick or vice versa and all our other cats could get sick, too. **I felt terrible so Sam and I took turns holding little Wallace and soothing him the best we could.**

I put him back into this carrier and after a time he went over to the plush kitty and fell asleep. He tucked himself next to the toy, as close as he could to the heartbeat. It was working. He was warm and comfortable, though I should have wiped him down more, he'd had enough for now. Time to rest.



©2014 Robin A.F. Olson. Feeding time was a bit messier than I imagined, but together Sam and I got the job done.

It was almost 10pm. Sam and I talked about what we'd do for the rest of the night. We worked out a plan then grabbed a quick bite to eat. I kept checking on Wallace. I had to make sure he was breathing-he was.

I couldn't let this one die. No way.

I slept fitfully between feedings and had bad dreams about Sam's clients chasing us down and forcing us to hide in the bathroom to get away from them. I was holding Wally in my dream and we were hiding in the shower stall. When would these people leave us alone? In truth, Sam has been so busy with work it was a small miracle that he was willing to help with Wally. I hated to ask for more but between my back problems and this kitten in crisis I had no options.

Chapter 3 is next...where we find out how Wallace fared after his first night and what lies ahead for our latest foster kitten.



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Comments

Thu, 2014-06-12 13:05 — [Random Felines \(not verified\)](#) ^[12]

what a wonderful story.... ^[13]

what a wonderful story.... LOVE the idea of care kits for fire stations for kittens....what a great idea!

Thu, 2014-06-12 17:01 — [jmuhj \(not verified\)](#)

RE: Wallace ^[14]

I'm on pins and needles waiting for the updates -- what an adorable baby Wallace is! and how wonderful everyone involved is, for being there for him and bringing him to this point! You must be very proud and happy ;) btw, I bought a Snuggle Kittie years ago when I rescued a little snowshoe-y kitten who was in our yard. That kitten thrived with her "friend" and grew into our beloved Seesh. She left us just a couple of years ago after having a happy, healthy, and LOVED life. I still have her Snuggle-Kittie, which is on the window perch she loved so much. It reminds me of her every time I see it.

Thu, 2014-06-12 17:09 — [Catnonymouse \(not verified\)](#)

Wallace ^[15]

My heart was in my mouth reading those 2 chapters and praying there was no bad ending for little Wallace. I am crossing everything in the hope that chapter 3 tells us that he is doing well and that Mabel is able to give him some motherly love.

It was great you were able to take charge of the situation at the fire dept. and all your wealth of knowledge about cats served you well even with an audience of firefighters! Love your idea of a Kitty Care Pack for future rescue situations and glad it was well received.

I'm sorry to hear you have been suffering some health issues and I hope you soon see some improvement.

Give little Wallace a tender cuddle from me xx

Barbara UK

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Links

[1] <http://coveredincathair.com/content/what-heart-knows-fire-dept-asks-us-help-ch-1>

[2] <http://www.danburycatclinic.com/>

[3] <http://www.kitten-rescue.com/>

[4] <http://amzn.com/B001V7UHG8>

[5] <http://petties.dogtime.com/nominations>

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