

# LOVE. PROTECT. ADOPT.

As a volunteer at an animal shelter it happens from time to time: We fall in love with some of the animals that we're caring for, it's hard not to. But we take satisfaction in knowing that we're finding them the best possible homes. However sometimes that's just not enough, sometimes it needs to be OUR home that we take them to! And that's what happened to me, and to Rosie.

I was doing my normal rounds, trying to give as much love as possible to as many kitties as I could in a day. In the adult cat room I met a cat with a very sweet face and an adorable raspy meow. Immediately I was drawn to her gentle spirit and her mild manners. It only took me a couple of seconds to realize that she was blind due to her eager yet blank stare. Waving my hand across her face without even a twitch assured me of this. I learned that she was 18 years old and was surrendered by her owner's family after the owner went into a nursing home – all around a heartbreaking situation. The note said she had been in a home her entire life. But here she was, at 18, totally alone in the shelter, and in the world. The shelter attendant and I moved her down to a larger bottom cage so she'd have some room to move around a little more. I gave her my typical treatment – a nice warm towel, fresh water, a full bowl of food and a lot of pets (and in this case, yes, a kiss too).

Usually I get home to my own kitties, wash off the day and resume my non-shelter life. But this time it wasn't that easy. This time all I could think about was this sweet no-named 18 year old blind cat alone in a shelter for the first time in her life. How was she doing, what was she thinking, how was she feeling? I knew the answers – she wasn't doing well, she was thinking she didn't know where she was or where her family was and she was feeling scared and alone. It was more of a tug at my heartstrings than ever before.

It was kitten season, and during kitten season even the most adoptable adults take a little longer to place. I knew that this loving kitty didn't have a good chance of finding a home and I couldn't bear to think of the alternative. I thought to myself "This kitty has made it THIS far in life and she deserves to get to the finish line!" I wanted to make that happen for her. When I saw her next she gave me that raspy old kitty meow and glared at me with un-seeing eyes that I still felt could somehow understand. After she cleared the medical exam, she became mine. Or really, I became hers.

Her cage card didn't have a name, but then I realized I didn't really care what her name used to be in the life she used to have. This was her new life, with me. As an older kitty I thought I might give her a more sophisticated name and the name Rose came to mind which turned into Rosie. And it was perfect. Not only the name itself, but the fact that it was also the future I had planned for her – a rosy one! She is now comfortably settled into my home and has turned out to be one little feisty, spirited soul who quickly claimed her own territory in my house. I had originally put up some protective barriers for her but she was having none of that, she wanted full run of the house. And full run she has. She has definitely been a blessing in my life and I am so grateful that she wound up at my shelter. Some things are just clearly meant to be.

