

## Fearful, Forlorn Feline

*How did this happen to me?*  
- Feline

In recent encounters was a small cat - a feline - and an inspiration on a path from fearful and forlorn to, well, something better. It was a wonder to watch this lone animal pass from its poor, pathetic place to a pet of sort - almost domesticated but not quite ready for close contact with others. The inspiration is simply the step-by-step succession observed with each passing day as the heart warmed for both the feline and its new friend - me. Oh, and as usual, a picture to add to the thousand words or so.

Yes, the cat was a fearful, forlorn feline at first; trembling and terrified, he had set-up home beneath a shipping container in my workplace. Far from being a friend, I was made aware of its presence by the usual cry of a cat interpreted as a mix of hunger, anger and general distress; but little did I realize the impression and inspiration that would develop from our relationship - however brief it lasted. To see someone or something improve - and to accept that I had a part in it - was nothing short of miraculous.



The first two or three days showed little progress in the cat's behavior; it continued to show itself for a brief but cautious offer of food - but nothing more. Then, as though the animal was replaced, domestication began to show in the form of bold walk-by's and even tenuous approaches - crying for attention (having already

been fed) but not willing to accept anything closer than a few feet - not even a touch! Yet, taking on a new form both in appearance and accommodation, he was taking on a new role as pet or maybe something more.

Following in the pattern of partnering with a pet, I developed a bond with this once-vagabond varmint. Feeding the thing no longer was enough but progressively came the trap of characterizing the critter and giving attention and action for closeness beyond a few feet or distance further lengthened by the distress of its young life. Annoyance gave way to affection and within a few days my role was purposely set on that of a pet owner with all the accolades in our present society. And in this endeavor came the brief but lasting impression that the cat offered more than simply companionship but the wonder of healing for the fearful, forlorn feline. Enough from the human experience, let's let the cat tell you the rest.

*Oh, how did this all happen? Where is my mom, my family? What am I going to do to live - who will take care of me now? I cry and I cry, I run and hide, and try to stay clear from big things and mean things;*

*Oh, how did this all happen?  
... What am I going to do to  
live - who will take care of  
me now?*

*but I am hungry and angry because I want my family back. I want the warmth of my mother's milk and her tongue that cleans me - that made me purr and rest; but all this has gone away and I don't know what will happen.*

*In this dark hidden place, there are small things that crawl around and other things that block my eyes; sometimes water flows in and gets me all wet....I hate that! But some of these big moving things are leaving me food and water (to drink) - this really helps even though I want my mother and family back - even though I want things to be the way they use to be.*

*I am eating a lot now and leaving the hidden place. These big moving things sometimes cry like me and move about as though to catch me; but I'm fast and*

*always fly away when they get close. Still, they seem interested in me and that means something; I do not have anyone else and have not seen my family for some time now. Maybe they will take care of me and help me to purr again. Maybe the next time I will not fly away or cry in anger - maybe I will cry for home - for a home.*

*Today I did it! I let one of those big moving things touch me; yes, I jerked away and let out a cry - but I was afraid it*

*might hurt me. Later that day, I got even closer and the thing reached out and scratched my chin; now I have my purr back and don't feel so afraid and alone. I still*

*The purr was a sure sign that the cat was on the mend....*

*miss my home and family but this big moving thing seems alright. Each time I come up, he pets me and plays with me; now, this hidden place does not seem so bad as I get food and friendship. I feel better and purr often; I'm going to be alright too.*

As the "big moving thing", I watched the cat move about with increasing ease and comfort. The purr was a sure sign that the cat was on the mend and that it was somewhat content though still keeping to the hidden place at times.

Characterizing the cat came initially with naming it; and given a distinct but incongruous white marking on its face, I named it "Lambda". One of several Greek alphabet - left over from my years of math - Lambda simply stood for an unknown (or yet to be determined). I thought the name was fitting for this so-called vagabond varmint. But characterizing would not stop with a name; no, I had to identify with its circumstances and try to personalize it - as every pet owner is inclined to do despite the inherent differences of people and pets.

Perhaps with time and further attention, Lambda would have become more domesticated as a pet and even further determined as a personality; but as events would happen, the cat has been removed and I am the lesser in its loss. Where I

have gained however, or attained a lasting impression, is in the miraculous work of love in the healing of even a cat; or that time and attention can replace the fearful and forlorn with a friendship if just from a feline. I loved Lambda only because it had needs for which I could help, did help, and will likely still...