Wendy's and Leo Love story

In the morning of February 20th, 2022, after taking a red eye flight to go visit my parents something unexpected happened that changed the course of my life forever. Early that day after one hour and a half, I decided to take the scenic route instead of the highway. I drove for a while, and I stopped to take a picture of a tree fern on the side of the road near a state forest. A tree fern like any other tree fern which I’ve seen hundreds of times, in that same road, going to my hometown.

As I am taking a picture I hear a sound. And what happens next, that wasn't something I was expecting at all.

I turn and listen. The sound happened again. I crossed the road to the other side to get closer look. I though sounded like a cat's meow. I didn't see anything but ferns and tall grasses and the edge of the forest. Then I say "Kitty Kitty come out of the forest. If you come out, I'll take you with me".

As the grass began to quiver and the low ferns parted, it revealed an orange cat. Fearless. Determined. He walked directly towards me, stared directly to my eyes and meow.

This was my very first cat rescue and the start of a love story that have changed me forever in ways I am still discovering each passing day.

A cat sitting on a steering wheel

Description automatically generated![A cat standing on a pumpkin

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I put him in the car. I drove down the mountain to the nearest grocery store and got supplies like cat food, litter, a plate and a pan to improvise a litterbox. I watched him devour the food in the floorboard of the rental car, looking at me scared like something was going to happen to him.

I arrived on a red eye flight Sunday morning of a long holiday weekend, so I called around to find a vet on Tuesday and drove to a walk-in vet to get him the medical help he needed. Other than being a little bit thin from living on his own who know from how long, he was in remarkable good health. The vet thought he was about 8-month-old. I got all his checks, vaccines and anything else he needed and I, became his guardian. He adopted me.

For 10 days he traveled with me during this trip. I set a litterbox in each of the hotel rooms I stayed. We went to beaches, we went to cities, we went everywhere together.

A cat eating from a bowl

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And he slept on top of my head as if he needed the comfort.

A cat lying on a person's head

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I didn’t know anything about cats, and I never had a pet before him. We have learned to communicate with each other. I downloaded an e-book about cats and cat behavior, and he rest has been a remarkable life changing experience.

He still meows a lot. He is willful and determined and fearless. And so very loving and affectionate, and just a perfect happy cat that has a funny way of sleeping and make cute poses.

A cat lying on a person's lap

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He is the cat that unknowingly have changed the lives of dozens of other cats because of his encounter with me, because of his trust in a perfect stranger.

Two years later I started a non-profit to help other stray cats like Leo find the love and life they deserve. Today Leo probably doesn't remember much of those days, but I think he still does. Maybe because of that day, he loves the car rides. I will never know if he remembers the day he found me in that road near the forest.

![A cat in a circle with green text

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