

A Tale of LOVE and TRUST

"Annette, have you seen the cat with no tail?"



Denny's lips were quivering nervously as he asked his question in a hushed, urgent voice. My neighbor had discussed this animal with me on several occasions. She was a stray who had been tossed out of a moving vehicle in front of my house during the preceding winter months. Denny and his family were feeding her when she

sought refuge from the cold behind a wind break they had protecting their front door.

"Yeah, she's been living on my porch for the past three days," Denny wept softly, thanking God for her safety. When I asked him why he was so upset, it took him a moment to respond.

"One of the neighbors has been looking for her, he has been taking the stray cats from around here into his garage and shooting them. He wanted to get her because she has been hanging around his house and pestering him."

"Denny, do you know this for certain?" I was cautious for I didn't want to upset him further. *"When did you hear about this?"*

"About four days ago", he said. *"I was talking with Dave and when he told me he was looking to shoot her, I just got so worried when we couldn't find her. Even my dad and mom are upset."*

I couldn't answer right away for I was thinking about the feeling which had come over me the night I let her onto my porch. It was something I just could not ignore, the sinking feeling something bad was going to happen to her.

***That feeling hung onto to me like
Spanish moss in the Florida trees***

and the only thing I could do to shake it off, was DO SOMETHING.

Do something, everyone wanted me to *do something* about my empty home. I had just had my Scamper kitty, my dear companion of 15 years, put to sleep and it was an hellacious parting. I was a wreck and nothing seemed to comfort me. Naturally people were trying to be kind, offering me everything from their own personal animals to pointing out free kitten signs. Even the Vet tech offered me a stray which had just been dropped off a couple days ago as I was leaving Scamper's body behind.

"If God means for me to have an animal, it will walk up to my house and tell me it lives there!" became my standard reply when someone would attempt to give me another cat.

So, imagine my surprise when over a year later this sable colored tabby, with no tail, was waiting for me one night when I came home from work. As I opened the door to my van to get out, she jumped in and sat on the passenger floor, as if waiting for a ride somewhere. *"No, I said as I lifted her out and deposited her on the ground, you don't live here, go away."* She very promptly turned and walked away. Cool!



Next day, there she was again, only this time she didn't jump into the van, she just sat there, staring at me. I got up the steps to my door and gave her the same

command as the night before. She turned, once again and left.

The next night, as I went into the house, she snuck by me and like a shot, trotted right to my bathroom. She looked so funny sitting there on the white tile floor looking around at what she must have perceived to be a human litterbox. I snatched her up, like luggage under my arm and toted her to the screen door.

"Bye-bye kitty, you don't live here, go away."

Okay, this went on for several nights, in fact it got to be a game, how long would she wait until I would tell her to leave. One day, she brought a friend and I shoed them both away.

Of course Denny was all chatty about the cat with no tail during this time frame. We'd stand in the yard and watch her chase birds, run around like she owned the street, just happy to be alive. We'd smile and I was happy to know he and his family were feeding her and that she had shelter from the rather chilly early spring nights. I just knew God was watching out for this spunky stray.

It was a normal night at work, wasn't thinking about anything in particular as I got into my van for the 15 mile ride home. As I was leaving the parking lot, this intense feeling came over me, the cat with no tail was in danger. I turned up the music on the radio and the feeling passed. Not two minutes later, the feel was stronger than before and I began to wonder if there was some validity to it. The more I thought, I wondered how I could help.

Along the route home was a drive thru market, I whipped in and asked if they sold cat litter and hard food. The clerk handed me the bags and I drove off hoping and praying she would come to me when I pulled in and that she would trust me enough to follow me onto the porch.

Of course, she was nowhere in sight when I pulled up and my heart sank. I felt goofy as I hauled the litter and food onto the porch, still no cat. I was unlocking my door when something told me to look one more time, here she was prancing up the driveway. I opened the screen door and she waltzed in as though she belonged. We looked at each other for a minute and I told her to wait right there.

When I came back out, I had dishes, water, Scamper's old litter box and a blanket. She wandered in and through my legs, rubbing up against me, marking me as hers and I was beginning to melt. I admonished her, she'd be a porch cat until I could find a home for her, so don't be getting used to this high off the hog treatment. As I went inside, she was munching food and drinking water, I felt good. By the time I ran into Denny, three days later, she **was** home.



"Baby" (what she wants me to call her) has allowed me to live with her for four years now. She is the darling of all who meet her. The nub where her tail would have been wags like a dog's tail when she is happy, flits when she is flirting and flops around when she is agitated. She eats fresh baked chickie-woo, summers on **her** porch and allows me to have company as long as they visit with her also.

Honestly, I don't know where I'd be if this furry bundle of joy hadn't kept showing up, trying her best to introduce herself, after all, didn't I make the statement to the Universe of how things needed to happen, an animal would show up and tell me it lives here? Duh, yeah! Okay, I wasn't remembering my end of the bargain. I was so caught up in the fear of my heart being broken once again that I wasn't willing to cooperate.

But Spirit knew my overwhelming need to protect her would over ride the need to protect my heart.

Neither of us have tails, but we have hearts which tell everyone who meets us a tale of love and trust.



Annette Aben says, Life is good! I believe those words and live those words. Through creativity, I find peace and balance. Because I allow myself to vary the activities, writing, drawing, painting, jewelry crafting and photography, I am always enthusiastic about what I am doing.

My furry companion, Baby, is featured in many ways in my projects. I photograph her, draw her, write about her and am so grateful to have her energy in my life. Website: <http://innerchildartwork.com>