

Autumn's Story

(As told by Autumn, with help from her Mom, Wendy Gardiner)

I was cold and hungry, lonely and scared; a tiny kitten, begging for the attention of strangers to help me. I'm not certain how I ended up at the Shell Station on Roscoe Boulevard in Los Angeles on October 14, 2005. Car after car came and went before I saw a lady get out of a truck and run over to me. She petted me and went into the store. When she came back out, she had a can of cat food that she gave me. While I hastily ate the food, she scratched my ears and silently cried. And before I was done, she was gone.

About an hour later, I was picked up and taken to an Animal Shelter. I was labeled and photographed and placed in a cage where I was given food, water and a bed of shredded newspapers. Days passed and no one came. On the seventh day, someone was adopting me!

I was being adopted by the man who was with the lady at the gas station. He fed me and cared for me for days, and on October 26, I met my new Mom. It was the same lady who fed me the can of cat food. She had only been off an airplane from Atlanta for a few minutes before I was in her arms and being hugged and kissed.

My Mom later told me that she reluctantly left me at the Shell station that day because she and Dad were doing a 100-mile bike ride the following day, and that she had no way to care for me since she would be flying back to Atlanta. She told me she regretted leaving me and asked that my new Dad find me at the Animal Shelter. Dad said he found my picture on the internet and made a special trip to come get me.

My new Mom and Dad put me into a harness and tried to teach me to walk on a leash. I didn't like the harness, but they wouldn't take it off me. They would gently tug at the leash, encouraging me to, "Come on."

About one month after I was adopted, I was put in my harness and placed in my pet carrier box. Mom carried onto an airplane headed for Atlanta. She was taking me to her home, where I was going to be living. Dad came along, too. I was a good cat and was quiet and slept most of the trip. I didn't even have to use the litter box!

I now live in Atlanta with Mom, while Dad lives in California. Although we live apart, I know that Dad loves me. I don't know what would've happened to me if I had not been adopted. I am so grateful to have such loving parents, so whenever I get the chance, I cuddle with them and love them as much as they love me.