

On November 30, 1993 I adopted two cats from HAWS. After recently having to put my 20½ year old cat, Clairebelle, down, I needed another cat in my life. Clairebelle and I had been together since the day she was born; she was a kitten from a cat I had growing up. Living alone and working, I decided it would be nice to have two cats so they could keep each other company when I was not home. I had a friend who volunteered at the shelter and called to see if she was going to be there when I came in to look at the cats. Half joking, I asked if they had a two-for-one price. My friend took me seriously and said they actually got in a couple of “older” cats; they were 3 and 5 years old and HAWS would allow me to adopt them for one fee. I laughed to myself since Clairebelle was 20 plus. To me, 3 and 5 year olds were kittens. Their names were Peanut, a short-haired pastel tortoiseshell and Pita, a long-haired black and white. They were roommates, but not blood sisters or close companions. I told my friend that I would come in and take a look at them. I knew before I got there that I would adopt them, but it would be nice to meet them anyway. I went into the room that housed the cats and was looking for Peanut and Pita, but did not see them. I asked at the front desk if there were more places that they were holding the cats and told them why. I was escorted to an area where the animals are bathed and there they were in a big drier not looking happy. Once they were dry, they were brought into an observation room for me to meet with them. As I sat in this room with them for a short time, all they wanted to do was find a way out. I did not get a chance to hold them or pet them, but I knew I would have that time once they were home with me. I filled out the paperwork for their adoption and counted down the waiting period. I was anxious to pick them up. My house was too quiet without a cat.

I brought Peanut and Pita home and let them out of their carrier. I had their food dishes and litter box all ready for them. They checked out the house and approved. During the first week, I could not find Peanut. I looked everywhere, so I thought. I lived on the second floor of a duplex and even asked my landlord, who lived downstairs, if he happened to see her. He had not. In the meantime, Pita was making herself at home. The food was disappearing, so I knew they were eating. Finally, I heard a noise in a bedroom and figured out that Peanut slipped into a closet where the sliding doors would move apart wide enough for her to get inside and then close shut. The bottom of the door did not have a guide on the floor to hold it. She was in the house all this time; what a relief. Peanut spent a little time in the closet and then decided she could trust me and was safe in the house. By Christmastime Peanut was so relaxed that she decided to make herself part of my nativity scene. As I entered the living room, I had to take a double look toward the nativity scene; yes, that’s Peanut in the manger. I had to laugh. Pita was more reserved and laid on the Christmas tree skirt or a piece of furniture.

A few years later I purchased a home with a nice yard. Peanut and Pita loved being outside with me soaking up the sun and watching the world go by. Unfortunately, Peanut got cancer at the age of 16 and once she showed me she could not go on, was put down. Pita now being 18 was very healthy and going strong.

As the years went by, Pita got thinner, but was healthy. I knew I would be without her some day in the not-so-far future. On Sunday, November 8, 2009, Pita was outside with me soaking up the warm fall weather, enjoying chicken from the grill. To my surprise, on Monday morning, Pita was slowing way down. I questioned myself as to whether that was her last day, or if she was just slowing down more. I took the day off of work to spend it with Pita. She was doing fine, sleeping most of the time and not wanting food. I knew it was probably going to be her last day. On Tuesday morning as I got up for work, I found Pita asleep on the living room floor. It appeared she was coming back from the kitchen where she liked to drink out of her water fountain and decided she needed to sleep. I picked her up and put her on a chair and covered her with a blanket to keep her warm. Making that difficult decision, I drove her to the emergency vet and said my final goodbyes. Pita and I would have been celebrating her 21st birthday on November 30th.

I had a great life with Peanut and Pita and miss them very much. I am grateful that I was able to adopt them from HAWS and have them in my life for so long. They were great companions.