

Lucius



Dear SAHS Staff,

This success story is long past due to reach your hands, but here it goes.

Today, my husband and I will celebrate the third birthday of our beloved Lucius, who we adopted from SAHS in October of 2010. Lucius is a flame point Siamese kitty, who's information was posted under Michaels Medical Fund, as he has a visual impairment. He was known as "Cormic" at the time, which we still call him and he responds to.

We found Lucius on our newsfeed, through a SAHS Facebook post one morning. We saw that post in the morning and adopted him the same evening. His photo and description, we've found, fit him perfectly.

We weren't sure what to expect in adopting a blind kitten: Would our other kitties bully him? Would he be able to find his food dish on his own? Would he be able to move around the house without hurting himself? Would he be able to play with toys? Would he have a good quality of life? All of those questions have positive, happy answers: The other kitties did not bully him. Rather, Lucius is the alpha cat and has done a fair bit of play chasing. He knows where everything in the house is - his food and water dishes, routes through and around furniture, and where he is able to climb. He has never gotten hurt in the process. He does play with toys, doing best with those that have an easily detected smell to them, as well as rattles within. And, I believe he has a great quality of life. Lack of vision aside, he is very much loved and doted on constantly. He always has his tail up, is always purring, and he is very, very smart. He responds vocally and comes running each time his name is called, asks to be picked up regularly, and stacks his toys in the same area (as a child would, cleaning up then stashing their toys).



Though we were fully prepared to care for any additional needs that he may have as a result of his visual impairment, we quickly found that he didn't have any additional needs. Initially (literally just the first time for any piece of furniture), he would be "helped" down from anywhere in which he'd become stuck. We supported his body as he would feel his way down from any given place. He somehow developed a system for measuring distances. Without getting a look at his eye area, one would never know that he's blind, he is as self-sufficient and behaves the same as any other cat that has their vision intact.

There were only two things that we found difficult after adopting Lucius. The first was separation from him. We expected the mandatory eleven day quarantine from the other kitties. During that time, he still had company all day and evening. He was placed in our sewing room and I (his human "mommy") was in there working. He received a lot of attention. The night was difficult, hearing him cry as he wanted out. So that difficulty was on us, missing him at night. The second difficulty was in the pessimism of others. Again, nothing that Lucius had done, we were disappointed in others for not seeing the value that we saw in him. On our first visit to a veterinarian (a week after adopting him), the doctor brought our attention to a potential illness as well as an additional birth defect: a kink at the end of his tail. The doctor ran through a list of surgeries that she wishes to perform, telling us that she was surprised that Lucius had survived several months. She wasn't the only one. Shocked and distraught, we wanted a second opinion. The second doctor made no mention of surgeries and did not speak grimly of the future, but he too did not understand the value we saw in Lucius. Asking "Why this cat? What kind of quality of life can he have?" I felt myself physically react with a shudder, as if to ask "Did you really just ask that?" The veterinarian assistant, looking disgusted, shook her head as well, in disagreement with the doctor.



In the end, Lucius received his medical care. His first six months were rough, for him. But for me, it was an honor to care for him. My husband (fiance at the time) were married a month after adopting Lucius. Until that point, we had planned to have our honeymoon out of state. We opted instead to stay in-state so that Lucius could accompany us, so that he could be cared for personally and have his medication administered by us. I wouldn't have it any other way.

On the first night that Lucius was allowed out of quarantine, he slept cuddled up beneath my chin. Every night since, he's slept in the bend of my knee, staying with me until I wake up. He's next to me all day and all evening, either laying on an arm rest next to me, or lying in his kitty bed under my sewing table as I work there. He is my "little white shadow," my fur baby, our little boy.

I recently saw a post on Facebook, a plea for a blind kitten that was turn in at ACS, a plea for someone to save the kitten. The post was updated that night - no one had stepped up for him. I saw that post too late, and it broke my heart. I read through the comment below his picture and realized that there were people who were afraid to foster the kitten, due to the same concerns and misconceptions that I had before adopting Lucius. I have since started a Facebook page and blog about Lucius. My hope is that through his story, people (or even just one person)

who have similar concerns and/or misconceptions, will see the value in special animals, how rewarding saving them can be, and maybe even reach out to save one.

We will never know who abandoned Lucius as a baby, but the same as we are grateful to the veterinarian who cared for him before transferring him to the SAHS, we are grateful to the SAHS staff who cared for him, who made it possible for us to adopt him.

Thank you so very much.

Sincerely,
Juan and Stephanie Rosales

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Lucius-a-blind-feline-fur-baby/165106367008673>

<http://lifewithlucius.blogspot.com/>