

A Tale of Two Tonks

Lily - her adoption story told by her new family

All of our cats have come to us as rehomes. For the first thirteen years we were under Burmese rule but in 2016 we welcomed our first Tonk, a beautiful but shy three and a half year old brown girl called Roxy.



Lily enjoying outdoors

We didn't hear a peep out of her on that first journey home. We set her up in a spare bedroom on her own to allow her to get used to her new surroundings. For the first few days she was very timid and would often just hide in the wardrobe. However, with patience we gradually drew her out of her shell. Having come from a multi cat household she loved feline company and soon developed a strong bond with our other two furry housemates. It took ten weeks for her to gain the confidence to come and sit on our laps. After that, she never looked back.

Over the following years our bond with Roxy grew deeper. She loved being with us and even liked to eat at the same time as us. She enjoyed watching TV – her favourite programmes were Springwatch, anything with cats and, for some reason, motorcycle racing.

In January 2020 Roxy was diagnosed with megaesophagus. The initial prognosis wasn't good and we were devastated at the thought of losing her. We did everything we could to help manage her condition, including putting raised water bowls around the house and feeding her from a height. She soon got used to the routine and coped very well.

We had always promised Roxy a Tonky friend but initially held back due to her megaesophagus. As she was doing so well, we had contacted the breed clubs and a Tonk breeder in early 2021 to put out feelers for a suitable companion.

Last October, after a particularly healthy and happy summer, Roxy suddenly and unexpectedly became unwell. Tests were carried out and she was diagnosed with advanced kidney failure. Sadly her decline was rapid and we lost her less than three weeks later.

By coincidence, a few days before Roxy died we had a call from Christina Gordon. A three and a half year old lilac Tonk girl called Lily was in foster care undergoing treatment for an abscess beneath her eye and would soon need a new home. The Tonkinese Cat Club was generously funding her treatment.

We talked it over amongst ourselves and with Roxy, explained our situation to Christina and agreed we would be interested to learn more about Lily. We all explored the options and everyone agreed that this could be Lily's forever home.

Loretta Smith kindly brought Lily down to us in mid-December 2021. By all accounts Lily had lots to say on the journey from the West Midlands to our home in Devon. It was obviously a real wrench for Loretta saying goodbye to Lily after all the care she had put into getting her ready for adoption.

A month or so on Lily is boisterous, confident, lovable and very chatty. Her eye has healed and she is in fine health. As Lily was previously an only cat, she is having to adjust to sharing her living space with our twelve year old Burmese girl, Cleo. It's a learning curve for Lily but she is adjusting very well.

We have managed their introduction very carefully – separate rooms to start with, sharing scent, letting them hear then see each other, supervising any interactions etc.



Loves to snuggle in our bed

Our patience is paying off as Lily and Cleo now regularly chase each other around the house in a happy, bouncy way, skidding round corners and diving into their tunnels to hide before repeating the game.

They are not quite ready to cuddle up together but the signs are good. In the past couple of weeks we have allowed Lily to venture outside in the large Protectapet enclosure that we had installed shortly after we moved here in 2019. She loves going outside and will no doubt spend a lot of time out there in the coming months and years. In the meantime, we are keeping the family of her former owner updated on her new life in the country.

It's such a shame that Roxy never got to meet Lily but we feel that we have Roxy's blessing in allowing another wonderful Tonk into our lives. If and when Lily and Cleo are up for us adding another Tonk to the mix, we know we'll be ready too. Watch this space...



Lily & Cleo waiting to be served



Our beloved Roxy

Written by: Jo and Julian Counsell
January 2022

Lily got a wheel!

Lily's adoption story was written a month after she was rehomed in January 2022 and we felt we needed news from Lily's world to bring us up to date on her progress. Here is the latest:

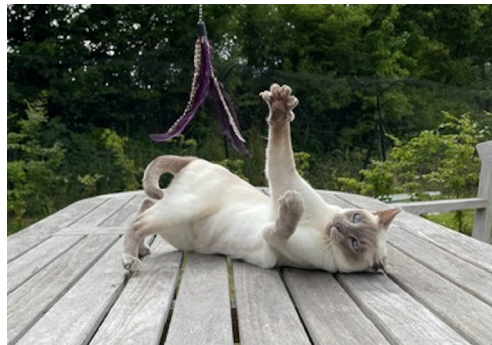
"All is well here in sunny Devon. Lily and Cleo had a minor cuddle a few weeks ago when Lily decided to join Cleo under our duvet. She carefully made her way in and settled next to Cleo with their back ends and tails lightly touching each other.

It didn't last more than a few minutes but it was good to see. Since then things have cooled a little - nothing bad but they just seemed to have reached their limit for now. We have therefore started to feed them close to one another again, so they associate being together as a positive.

This afternoon they stalked the pheasant together when he paid us a visit. The stalking was all done from the other side of the glass of course.

Lily continues to make us laugh every day, with her confident attitude, back chat and charging around playing. We are looking forward to spending lots of time in the garden with her and Cleo over the summer.

Written by: Jo and Julian Counsell



BEING A FOSTER MUM TO LILY

Lily was a very special welfare case. As a rule we don't foster cats as we don't have the facilities, nor do we take on sick cats, as the cost of veterinary treatment is a huge drain on our very limited club resources. However, her owner was undergoing tragic personal circumstances and then Lily became sick. Lily had an escapade in her garden that resulted in a nasty lump under her eye.

Her owner had already paid for a succession of costly, invasive treatments and operations without success. Additionally the vet had intimated that it could be something very rare and serious. Further invasive treatment was needed but with no guaranteed success - sadly it was too costly for her elderly owner and she asked us to take Lily.

Written by: Loretta Smith

On hearing the heart wrenching story of this poor 3 yr old Tonk, the club had to step in to help.

When I picked her up, Lily clearly had swelling under her eye that worsened over the next couple of days. My vet June was painstakingly thorough in her treatment and Lily was the perfect patient. The operation to drain the abscess left her with an open wound under her eye which needed bathing each day till it healed and eight weeks of antibiotics and indoor rest.

As the cause of her injury was unknown, she had detailed blood tests and biopsies sent away for analysis. Eventually we knew it was a very deep rooted abscess and nothing more sinister. Lily was a star patient, a strong minded, feisty, chatty cat with a great love for attention, tummy tickles and play. At no time did she moan or misbehave during our many vet visits, but showed immense resilience.



It is undeniable that she made a huge impact on me and my vet and her new owners are sooo lucky!!