

This is the story of a cat named Eames, who is a big ragdoll cat with very long hair and bright blue eyes. He lives with Alex and Alise in a lovely apartment in the Koreatown section of Los Angeles. With both of them working from home, Alex as an engineer and Alise as an architect, he got lots of attention and ruled the roost.

This is also the story of Petey, an orange tabby cat who was very happy living with David and his girlfriend Elena in Providence, Rhode Island, where the two of them were going to school. They also both worked from home the last two years, so he got lots of attention and ruled the roost.

This is also the story of Hagrid, our big red Rottweiler who guards the house against squirrels, wandering cats, and especially other dogs. With us being retired, he got lots of attention and ruled the roost. Then things changed.

Alex left the consulting world of civil engineering to work for the city of Santa Monica as a water engineer. That meant he had to go to the office most days, depriving Eames of half of his companionship most days. He compensated by yowling, walking on the keyboard and otherwise being disruptive during Alise's Zoom meetings.

Barry accidentally got a job running the Carson chamber of commerce. He said he'd fill in for a month, and that was eight months ago. Hagrid took to shadowing Margie around the house and keeping her company in her office (the eBay room as it is called) where there is barely room to turn around.

David finished his master's degree in architecture, so he and Elena, who finished her master's in graphic design the year before, decided to pack up and move to Los Angeles, staying with us for a few weeks while finding a place. Petey was given a good dose of happy kitty pills for his airplane ride and arrived in a surprisingly good mood. Those were some fine placebos. His carrier was plunked down in front of Hagrid, who took a couple of sniffs and looked at us as if to say, "I wanted another dog. This is not a dog." By the time Petey's medication wore off, Hagrid had already tired of him, and other than the occasional hiss if the dog walked by too fast or startled him, Petey ignored Hagrid as well. They soon became fast friends when they realized they had something in common: a love of food and lots of it.

Hagrid seemed a bit lost when Petey moved out with David and Elena to their new place in Hollywood, so much so that we decided he needed a friend. An acquaintance had recently gotten two kittens from a litter born in August, and we thought a kitten might be a fun addition to the house. The family with the rest of the litter brought the three remaining siblings to visit us so we could pick out one or two. Guess what happened. You guessed right; we got all three of them. Meet Tonks, Luna, and Dobby.

Hagrid was quick to notice they were not dogs. He really didn't know what to think of these very small cats, weighing about three pounds each at the time. And they certainly didn't know what to think of this 85-pound monster who looked like he could eat them all in one bite. They would hiss at him and run away if one of their toys rolled too close to him. He would sit quietly and just watch. Before long, they decided his tail was a good toy. They run under him as he walks. When he gets a dog biscuit, he lets them have the crumbs like little pigeons diving for a diner's bread crust. They dutifully line up for him at the backdoor when he goes outside. He has decided they are puppies under his care – and instruction. If they get too rambunctious around him, he voices his displeasure, and they come to an immediate halt.

Meanwhile, Petey hosted Eames at his new house while Alex and Alise traveled for Thanksgiving. After a little effort, they seemed to decide maybe it's okay to have a friend. Lots more happened this year, but that was all the important stuff. We hope your year was equally memorable and you had some furry friends to keep you company, unless you are allergic of course. Then perhaps a pet rock.

Barry & Margie Waite, 2021



Eames



Petey



Hagrid



Hagrid ignoring the kittens – even at his bowl



Dobby, Luna, and Tonks



At the big family gathering in Providence before David moved back to LA