

## Romeo & Juliette

*"The smallest feline is a masterpiece."* Leonardo da Vinci

What comes to mind when you hear the names Romeo and Juliette? Shakespeare's play? Not in my house – Romeo and Juliette are a brother and sister tag team of adorable cats that I adopted from the Animal Refuge League about 10 weeks ago.

I thought that my 2 cats might want a friend or two but I hadn't totally sold myself on the idea yet because I wasn't sure how they would react to new members of the family since they had the house to themselves for 3 or 4 years already. But I went to the Animal Refuge League with a friend who works there, met Romeo and Juliette, and totally fell in love with these two furry sweethearts. They were feral kitties who were brought to the shelter at about 3 weeks of age, and were being socialized with the office staff when I met them. I adopted them practically on the spot.

Bringing them home was fun. Every cat has a different coping mechanism in unfamiliar circumstances and when they came home with me, Romeo and Juliette's coping mechanism was to either hide under my bed or squeeze themselves into a tiny corner in a bedroom closet. Gradually over time they got braver, and gradually the other cats got used to them. Stinker (aka "Tink") loves to chase them around the house, and it almost always ends up with her whacking their heads with her paw, just to remind them that this is HER house and that they are the junior members of the organization. My other cat Petal mostly watches the show from a safe location (preferably high off the ground) but I saw Juliette cleaning Petal's fur coat today, so I know they're buddies now (and I'm pretty sure that Romeo has a crush on Petal!). Watching the four of them play together nearly makes my head spin!

Romeo and Juliette have brightened up and lightened up my life even more than I had imagined they would. And the price I paid for them was more than worth it – and that included all kinds of extras for both cats, such as spaying & neutering, shots, testing and vet check at the shelter, and a free follow-up vet appointment with my vet, etc. But I would have paid twice as much for them because the amount of joy and love they've brought into my life is priceless.

What a good decision I made! Why had I waited so darned long! I wish I had a 100 acre farm or 100 farmhouses because I'd adopt every cat and kitten in the ARL, but I don't, so I can't. But I feel I've helped put some small dent in the ARL's population by adopting Romeo and Juliette and giving them a chance to grow up and grow old in a loving and caring home. They get the best love and care at the ARL too, but nothing beats a real home. I hope other people will make the decision to help out all the other cats and kittens (and other furry creatures too!) that live in the shelter, and give them loving and caring homes too. Don't wait as long as I did! You won't regret it!



Romeo





Juliette



