

If you think I was going to let my servant - that's what Mama is, after all - have a website without having my say, you must be a dog lover.

I am, to paraphrase Henry Higgins via Lerner and Lowe, "an ordinary feline who desires nothing more than just the ordinary chance to live exactly as he likes and do precisely what he wants." I was not consulted about this move to Pennsylvania.

However, after a very strange stay at the Richards' Kitty Vacation Spa - Mama doesn't stay there with me, so I knew something out of the ordinary was going on! - I was unceremoniously dumped into my carrier and loaded into the car, which was loaded to the top of the back seat with stuff. I knew after a few minutes that we weren't going to the vet, which was a relief. I knew after a few more minutes that we weren't going home, either which was upsetting but not enough to interfere with a good catnap. We drove and we drove and we drove, then we slowed down and Mama brought something that smelled like chicken into the car. She didn't share it with me. Lucky for her we got on the road again; I took another catnap instead of yowling at her to share, not that she would have. Something about cats not needing people food is her excuse, but I don't buy it.

The next time we stopped, my favorite male human, Bill, came and sat in the car with me. I don't know where Mama went, but at least she didn't come back with anything appealing that she wouldn't share. I don't get into French Fries; I'm a patriotic feline, after all! Mama fussed with stuff in the car for a while before we got on the road again for more catnapping pleasure. The traffic jam we encountered only just got my attention, although the talking back and forth on the walkie-talkies was getting annoying. Just when I was almost unconscious, either Mama would talk to Bill or Bill would call in and I'd have to fall asleep all over again.

The next time we stopped, it was on a great big hill. I found out quickly that this was my new home. Well, kind of. It turns out it was an overnight stop at Bill's sister Nancy's house, the Ephata Annex of the Richards' Kitty Vacation Spa. Poor Nancy. She's allergic to cats. Poor me! Nancy's allergic to cats. That meant being confined in the bathrooms, first a fairly big one, then a much smaller one. But there were sinks, so I was as happy as I could be under the circumstances. Sinks, you see, make good beds. Mama talked to me through the door a couple of times and let me get a look at Nancy, but she held on to me tightly to make sure, I guess, that I didn't get out and deliver dander (it's an ugly problem, but it's reality) all over the house. Bill played with me under the door, too, which was fun.

I think it was the next morning - the small bathroom didn't have a window - that I was again unceremoniously dumped into my carrier (Mama only thinks I went in willingly!) and set outside on the porch. That's cruel and unusual punishment, to set a cat outside without letting him explore! Anyway, Bill was running a vacuum cleaner inside, so outside was the much better option. Then they put me in the car again and we drove some more.

Not for as long, though. I only got 4 catnaps in and it wasn't even noon when we stopped again. This time, they got me out and locked me in a big blue room with my litter box and my food and water. I'm no fool. I stayed in my cage because I just knew that we'd be driving again soon.

Mama and Bill checked on me a lot for a little while. Mama put my cage on the countertop with the food and told me it was okay to eat and that I needed water. Duh! Of course I needed water. But have you ever used a litter box on the road? I haven't, but it certainly didn't look appealing on the trip.

Then Mama did something extraordinary: she took the top off my carrier. I didn't even know the top could come off! That deserved attention. I stood up and stretched, then the water and food got my attention. I figured we weren't going anywhere for a while, so I climbed down and did some exploring in this big blue room before Bill opened the door and left it open.

Oh, was I happy to see him! Mama, not so much, but I made nice to her because she feeds me and because I need her to do my bidding. Bill is my playmate and I needed to play. But there was so much to explore! Lots of big rooms, a whole lot of windows, and these really cool winding stairs that are narrow and steep . . .

Not, mind you, that I wasn't thoroughly confused. Clearly, this was not home, nor was it the Richards' Kitty Vacation Spa, nor was it the Ephrata Annex. But if it wasn't home, what was Mama doing here? If it wasn't the RKVS, why was Bill here? Discombobulation is not a pleasant state.

Mama and Bill settled in to watch movies that first night, which gave me one place to curl up where I could get succor from them. And nap, of course. They were gone most of the next day, but movie watching again gave me a place to be consoled. The next day, Mama was kind of sad, I think because Bill left without her, which I thought was very strange. Why were we still here? We drove an awfully long time to get here, which it finally dawned on me means . . .

THIS IS HOME NOW.

Luckily, I have determined that Pennsylvania is a very pleasant state. I've had an adventure or two in the 11 days we've been here so far, which I will write about another time. Meanwhile, you are welcome in my home. My servant will do everything in her power to make you feel welcome, while I will ignore you until I decide whether you're worthy of my attention or not. You will be among the privileged if I decide to grace you with my affections.

I'm a cat. You expected otherwise?

Apollo
(as painstakingly dictated to my "amamauensis")