



Monroe the Cat



WRITTEN BY
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ESQUIRE

Through the years, I have had many reasons to be proud of my father and law partner, Paul R. D'Amato. He would talk about the people he had successfully represented who had been severely injured and had their lives altered. He volunteered his time and energies in various local organizations. He became Mayor of our City of Linwood to again give his time and energy to the community we were growing up in.

So it came as no surprise when he came into the office and told me he was representing Monroe the Cat of Margate! Of course he would offer his full talents to help someone wrongly accused, even one with four legs!


For those of you who don't know the story, and for those of you who are smiling now in delight because it brings back a great memory, my dad and mom were having dinner in Steve and Cookie's in August of 2000 when Paul noticed Cookie visibly upset. He asked if she was okay and she said no, that the local gray cat was being threatened with death. Cookie explained that a customer leaving the restaurant did not see the cat and stepped on it. The cat, in self-defense, bit the woman's leg. The husband wanted the cat euthanized to see if it had rabies. Cookie, in the interim, had brought the cat to a local veterinarian, who quarantined the cat and assured the husband the cat showed no signs of rabies. The husband threatened legal action against the veterinarian if he did not euthanize the cat and have his brain tested. The veterinarian

called Cookie to say he would probably have to put Monroe down.

Not on Paul D'Amato's watch! Paul immediately, that night, accepted Monroe as his client and explained in the spirit of the law that Monroe was entitled to due process. Paul explained to Monroe the Cat that he would not charge him and would represent him pro bono!

Monroe purringly accepted Paul as his lawyer and the rest is history! Monroe was adopted by the veterinarian who had quarantined him. So he had his life and a new loving home because Paul did what he always does—reached out his hand and expertise to help someone (we all know our cats and dogs are human!) who needed a voice.

In the spirit of Monroe, my husband, boys and I rescued two kittens whose mother was found under the boardwalk pregnant. In honor of Monroe the Cat, their first names start with an "M" – Mickey and Minnie.

If, after reading this, you feel compelled to reach out your hand and heart to save a shelter dog or cat, Monroe and our firm would be so happy that Monroe's legacy continues! 



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