

## Amazing Grayson: A Shelter Ferret's Story

**A shelter ferret tells the story of going from a life of misery to a life of love.**

*By Teri Treen-Danahey*

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Grayson the ferret lost his ears and back toes to frost when previous owners left him outside in the cold.

Photos Courtesy Teri Treen-Danahey

Grayson the ferret is now in a good home and enjoys snuggle time with his mom and dad.

My name is Caco. It means thief in Spanish. I am a ferret. The first three years of my life have been difficult and lonely. Once I thought of warm, snuggly blankets, fun toys and loving touches, but those thoughts are long since gone. I have been kept outside in the cold, forgotten for the most part. I don't know what I did wrong. I have lost my ears and back toes to the frost, and my front teeth to abuse. I have been passed on to strangers, like hand-me-down clothes, more times than I can count. Each time, I don't know what I've done wrong. I have abandoned hope and exist because I have to.

My latest home is a rescue shelter. The people here are kind, but I am one of many.

Someone has come to see me. A young couple with their three ferret children. The woman holds me close and whispers to me. Strangely, I feel comforted. I don't understand the movements of the ferret children. They seem bouncy and carefree. Perhaps this is happiness.

They take me to a new home and put me in warm blankets. I try to hide, alone, but am gently put back among the other ferrets each time. It feels warm and safe. I am often held close and softly spoken to. I wonder if I dare let myself feel something.

It has been two weeks since I was brought to my new home, and I am being taken to another rescue shelter. I thought the couple and their ferret children liked me. What did I do wrong? The woman is holding me close and whispering to me. I lie very still against her chest, listening to her heartbeat, memorizing each pulse. I pray with all my might that she will not leave me. I was starting to love my new family. She hands me over to the shelter owner and walks away. My heart breaks. No one wants me.

I lie despondent in my cage until I am taken to a place where my broken teeth are taken out. Now I am sad and hurting. Back in the cage, I cannot imagine my life getting any worse.

In my misery, I am picked up and wrapped tightly in a blanket. New hands take me, and I am pressed gently to someone's chest. I hear the heartbeat and recognize the sound. I dare look up and find myself staring into the loving eyes of the woman again. She has come back for me! My heart fills with joy, and I snuggle against her to show her my happiness. Someone wants me!

My name is now Grayson. The woman I know as Mom named me after the song Amazing Grace. I was told it was a fitting tribute to my life: "I once was lost, but now I'm found ..."

I am truly a ferret. I live in a comfortable home with my mom, my dad and my ferret brothers and sister. I am still learning how to be carefree and play. These actions are foreign to me, and I don't know if I will ever fully understand them, but I am working on it. My favorite moment of the day, by far, is the time that Mom and Dad sit and snuggle with me. I can do that for hours!

I have found hope and it consists of plenty of warm, snuggly blankets, fun toys and loving touches.

It is called home.

Teri Treen-Danahey has been a "ferret mom" for three years. She specializes in depressed or abused ferrets that need a safe home.

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