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Fri., June 22, 2007



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Mild-mannered pit bull recovering from feline attack

By Peter Cox, Enterprise special correspondent

Rascal the cat lived up to his name this week.

A 10-month-old Brockton pit bull named Willow was taking a leisurely stroll with her owner on a quiet street in nearby Stoughton.

Suddenly, Rascal leaped out of the grass, scratched the much-larger pit bull across the eye and nose, and landed, ready to fight, according to the dog's owner.

"It was like a drive-by," said Andrea Dineen of Brockton, owner of the dog. "The cat came out of nowhere."

Willow stared at the orange tabby, not making a sound. Her owner said she quickly chased off the feline fighter and took the cowering canine inside.

"My big pit bull was attacked by a cat," Dineen said. "That's not supposed to happen."

When Willow was safely inside, the family noticed she was bleeding on the nose and around the eye. They rushed Willow to the vet, who put her on antibiotics and eye soothers.

The pooch is OK and back home on Sunset Drive in Brockton, but the family was shaken after the incident Sunday afternoon.



"She shrugged it off like it was nothing, but we were freaking out," said Dineen.

Rascal's owners are currently on vacation, but the cat is behind bars at animal control in Stoughton, where he will spend 10 days in quarantine to make sure he doesn't have any dangerous diseases. Stoughton animal control was not available for comment.

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Feisty felines like Rascal have been seen elsewhere.

On June 14 in Mount Holly, Penn., a terrier was seriously injured when a neighborhood house cat lunged at the dog's face.

Earlier this year, a small black cat attacked a pit bull in Sacramento, Calif., leaving the dog with a wound on its face. The owner of the pit bull is lobbying for a leash law for cats in California.

"I've never heard of a cat attacking a dog," John Kostka, an animal control officer in Brockton, said when told of the Willow-Rascal brouhaha.

Doug Brum of the state MSPCA said an aggressive kitty is usually defending itself.

"It's not uncommon for a cat to attack a dog," said Brum. "But it's usually when the cat is provoked."

Willow's owner said the incident shows people that pit bulls "are not these huge, vicious animals."

Some communities have tried to ban or muzzle pit bulls, saying they pose a danger to the public.

"They're real sweet, friendly dogs," Dineen said. "It's how people train them."

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