

Tattle Tails with Emmanuelle Vaugier

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Emmanuelle Vaugier knew all the way back in elementary school that she was going to be an actress. "My mom told me I should have a back-up plan, and I told her that having a back-up plan is planning to fail. I think that scared her a little bit," she laughs.

Her mom had nothing to worry about: Vaugier's list of TV and film roles is expansive, with spots on *Two and a Half Men*, *Lost Girl*, *Mistresses*, *Covert Affairs*, and *CSI:NY*.

When she's not busy on set, Vaugier focuses on her other passion: animals. She is a dedicated dog mom and equestrian, and the founder of The Fluffball Foundation, an organization that holds an annual event—aptly named the Fluffball—to raise money for rescue organizations.

We talked to Vaugier to learn more about her pets, her charity work, and her dreams for the future:

TAILS: Tell us about your dogs, Jack and Bella.

Emmanuelle Vaugier: Jack is a five-year-old Maltese Poodle mix. I acquired him when he was one. I was in Toronto for work and riding in a barn on my days off, and there was a lady there who had this dog she couldn't keep. I had just put down one of my older dogs, and I said, half-joking, 'I'll totally take this one off your hands.' She was like, 'Actually it's funny you say that...' It was all I could think about for the next day and a half, and finally we talked and I went and picked him up.

A few months after my other elderly dog passed away, I was thinking I would really like to get Jack a friend. I'd worked with some dog trainers out of South Carolina and I mentioned that

I was looking for a young female Toy Poodle. Two weeks later they called and said they had found one [through a breed specific rescue]. I flew to Tennessee to pick her up, sight unseen. I brought her home and named her Bella.

Jack wanted nothing to do with her. I was like I've been through this before, this will take about thirty days and then they'll be best friends, and that's exactly what happened. Within six months they were inseparable.

Is it hard balancing life as a busy actress and a pet parent?

It can be. Most of the time I take them with me, but if I can't, I have wonderful friends that take excellent care of them and have three little dogs of their own. I don't think Jack and Bella remember who I am when I come back—they're like, 'We're leaving? These aren't our new parents? But we love it here!'

How did you first get started in animal welfare work?

In 2009 I decided I wanted to give back to the community, and my passion has always been animals. I threw a small cocktail event at my house to raise money for animals and called it the Fluffball, and it grew from there. This is our first year doing it on our own as The Fluffball Foundation, an official non-profit.

In the beginning the Fluffball benefitted Best Friends Animal Society. Why did you decide to choose them as your beneficiary?

I really like what they represent. They have a sanctuary in Kanab, Utah; a beautiful property with amazing people.

Tattle Tails

Emmanuelle Vaugier



Vaugier with Jack (left) and Bella.

The animals are well taken care of and have a great temporary home. I just really fell in love with that place, so for three years we supported them and partnered with them. It helped us build our brand and create a network of people who know what the Fluffball is and what we do.

This year's Fluffball supports The Animal Hope and Wellness Foundation. Can you share more about them?

Marc Ching from The Animal Hope and Wellness Foundation became a friend of mine through the people who dog sit for me. He runs a severe abuse- case rescue out of his shop. I asked him how he funds it, and he said he does it out of pocket. He has a heart of gold and he's probably the most noble person that I know; he's like an angel on earth. I'm really proud that's who we're supporting this year, because if I'm not passionate about who I'm supporting it kind of defeats the purpose.

What has been the best moment of success with the foundation?

I've been doing a lot of Comic Cons because of *Lost Girl*, and there are panels where the fans come and ask questions. At the end of the panels I've been auctioning off different items. I was in Kansas City and within ten minutes we'd raised \$13,000 [for the foundation]. I was shaking I was so happy. I was just floored by the support and the generosity that people had. I realized this is important—we're doing something really great. I look forward to being able to do even more.

What are your dreams for the The Fluffball Foundation as it continues to grow?

I want to support the smaller, local animal organizations that need more of a voice. I would like to see the foundation grow to a point where we start holding Fluffballs in different cities, and perhaps at some point create a rescue where we take in animals. That's a little far off right now, but it's something that I see in the future.