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And just like that...he was gone.

Sat, 2013-02-16 09:51 — Robin Olson



©2013 Robin A.F. Olson. A week ago we rushed Oliver to the vet. This is the last photo I have of him.

Barely a week ago I learned that my nephew Ryan's cat, Oliver was having difficulty breathing. I saw Oliver's x-ray and it was clear something was terribly wrong. At the time I hoped that perhaps Lasix would move what looked like fluid out of Oliver's chest cavity. I thought back to my experiences with Jackson, his scary x-ray showing an enlarged heart and fluid in his lungs. Oliver's lungs were white on x-ray, meaning they were fluid filled or that there was a mass in his chest. I really hoped we weren't too late and that we could do something to help Oliver.



©2004 Robin A.F. Olson. Oliver was one of the most mellow cats you'd ever meet.

After a long discussion with Ryan we decided to take him to see one of my Vets the next day. That night I barely slept I was so filled with fear. The Vet who had examined Oliver told Ryan to "prepare for the end." They didn't do blood work, they didn't go into what they thought was going on with his cat or if there were any treatment options available.



©2005 Robin A.F. Olson. He has the same "rub my belly" attitude our cats Nicky and Nora have-and that makes sense since Oliver is their "uncle."

Ryan has been around animals his entire life. He has an excellent rapport with cats, in particular. He can hold the most fearful kitten who will melt in his arms. Now that Ryan is almost 20 years old, he's ready and eager to take on the responsibility for his cat's well being and I was proud to be able to offer him advice and help him see that many times there ARE options in addition to simply letting his cat pass away.



©2004 Robin A.F. Olson. Taz, who was waiting for Oliver at the Bridge, gives Oliver a friendly sniff.

The following afternoon we met with Super-Deb and Dr. Mary. They were both really terrific with Ryan-not that they aren't always that way, but in this instance, when it was vital that Ryan learn that getting a second opinion could be worthwhile. It also helped him see that Dr. Mary and Super-Deb were both doing everything they could to give Ryan options for Oliver.



©2004 Robin A.F. Olson. *Santa's Goofheads: Ryan and Oliver.*

Dr. Mary is so cheerful that even when she told Ryan the bad news that Oliver clearly had a large, firm mass in his chest, that it was pushing his organs out of their normal position, that it still seemed like we could help him. Oliver probably didn't have long to live-maybe months. Seeing a Vet Oncologist could help or Ryan could try steroids which may reduce the mass enough to keep Oliver comfortable longer.



©2005 Robin A.F. Olson. *Oliver is no sure he liked what he got for Christmas.*

Looking at Oliver on the exam table with his big, pleading green eyes, it was tough to see he was sick at all. He was bright and sweet as ever. Oliver was 14 and was one of the most easy-going and friendly cats I've ever met. I always found it amusing to tell people that Oliver is the "Uncle" of two of our cats, Nick and Nora. In fact, Nicky and Oliver are very much two peas in a pod.



©2004 Robin A.F. Olson. *Lovey-eyes! We love you, Oliver!*

Dr. Mary felt that Oliver was very stable, but needed to start treatment as soon as it could be arranged. I was grateful we didn't have to put Oliver down and truly thrilled that Ryan felt empowered to do something for his cat.

The next day we were hit with a blizzard and 36" of snow carpeted our town. Ryan began making plans for Oliver, but couldn't get him to a Vet for a few more days. He thought about it and decided to start Oliver on steroids once the roads were open again in the hope that Oliver would have more time.



©2005 Robin A.F. Olson. *Ryan demonstrates the vertical belly rub maneuver.*

Oliver started the steroids two days ago. I don't know if they helped or if they were started too late. I only know that very late last night Ryan's mom picked Oliver up and shortly after that Oliver passed away peacefully. It may have been that Oliver's aorta ruptured when he was lifted. Ryan and I had discussed not picking him up because we didn't want to put pressure on his chest. Maybe being picked up had nothing to do with anything. Maybe he was already dying and his mom lifted him to give him comfort in his last moments? I don't know. I'm not blaming anyone. All I know is within a few minutes Oliver slipped away from us and went to the Rainbow Bridge.



©2004 Robin A.F. Olson. *Oliver with my scarf. Looks nice on him.*

It all seems to have happened so suddenly, but most likely Oliver was sick for a long time. We all know cats are great at hiding illness and Oliver did what Nature dictates. It's just tough to lose another great, big, orange kitty with a heart of gold.



©2004 Robin A.F. Olson. *A big orange tabby; the best gift ever.*

To Ryan, his mom and everyone who loved Oliver, I'm so very sorry for your loss. Oliver was definitely one of the good ones and we will miss him very much.

Fly free, sweet angel. Tell Taz, Bob, Stanley, Squeegee, Sasha, Blue, Chanel and Tugger we send our love and will see them again one day.

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Comments

Sat, 2013-02-16 10:11 — [Lori \(not verified\)](#) ^[8]

What a beautiful tribute to ^[9]

What a beautiful tribute to Oliver. I had a big orange tabby myself who lived to be 17. He, like Oliver, was the sweetest, most mellow cat around and certainly the poster cat/child for the joys of being owned by a feline.

Fly free at the Bridge, Oliver. You were loved.

Sat, 2013-02-16 10:31 — [Cats of Wildcat... \(not verified\)](#) ^[10]

I am so very sorry that ^[11]

I am so very sorry that Oliver left for the Bridge. He was loved and will be missed. Fly free big guy!

Sat, 2013-02-16 11:27 — Cheryl (not verified)

Hugs to Ryan [12]

Hugs and empathy to Ryan. I know what it's like to lose a furbaby you've loved the majority of your life. Orange tabbies definitely have a special something.

Sat, 2013-02-16 13:53 — Anna (not verified)

so sorry [13]

It's so hard to say good bye. Hugs to all who are hurting from this loss.

Sat, 2013-02-16 15:01 — jmuhj (not verified)

RE: OLIVER [14]

<3(((((((^^))))))><3 sweet, handsome Oliver angel! So very sorry for your loved ones who must continue here without your warm, purry presence; but I know that so MANY of our loved ones also greeted you at the Bridge, and that in due time, you will be reunited with your family who grieve their loss of you. Fly free, whole, healthy, and in Perfect Love, Oliver! <3

Sat, 2013-02-16 15:37 — Maria Romano (not verified)

Oliver [15]

My sympathies to your nephew Ryan and you on the passing of Oliver to the Rainbow Bridge. I also had a big red cream colored cat named Pumpkin who lived for 16 years. He was not exactly a "mellow" cat - but I loved him fiercely and he had beautiful plush fur. He too hid his illness. Sunday, I gave him a bath and felt nothing. Thursday, he died at home due to a tumor on his back. He looked a lot of Oliver - I have a special place in my heart for big, red, tabby cats.

Mon, 2013-02-18 11:49 — Catnymouse (not verified)

So sorry [16]

I'm so sorry to hear of Oliver's sudden passing. You get this treatment plan together, you are in full coping/managing mode, and then...everything changes.

There is no blame, no fault, it just is. Sometimes death comes like this and there is nothing you can do.

Take time to grieve and know that your grief is real and valid. Never listen to anyone who says, "It's just a cat." Oliver was family. And you mourn for the loss of family. That is the right and proper thing to do.

Take care of each other. And know that Oliver loved you.

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