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The Birdman of Beverly Hills

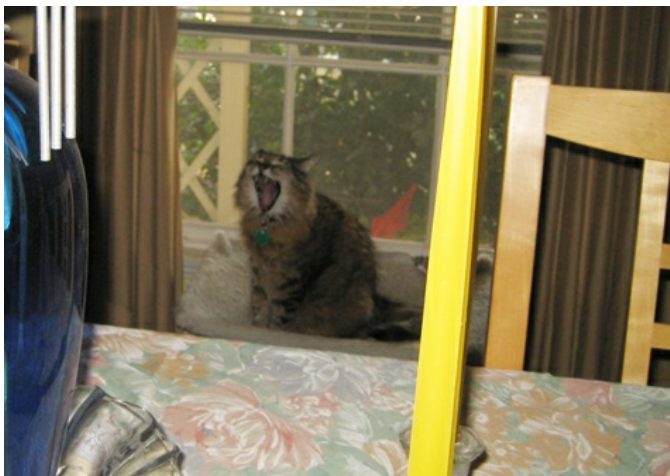
Fri, 2015-11-13 15:34 — Robin Olson

Rescuing a senior cat takes a brave-hearted soul. You know that your new friend may have already given up a few of his nine lives when you bring him home, but maybe because of that you love him even more. Meet Sammi, a very lucky, loved cat who began a new life after the age of 14. He had great joy in his final years living to be 21 years old. The rest of this post is written by his mama, Jamaka, in his honor.



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I had just lost my father and one week later, a beloved cat I had adopted from a local shelter just a couple of months previous (*completely unexpected: her hind quarters gave out very suddenly and X-rays revealed a mass that the emergency doctor said was probably cancer. She was suffering. I had to make "the decision" and I didn't know if I could endure it, but I had to, so I did.*) A dear friend told me that she and her husband had some friends, an elderly couple in Beverly Hills, who were looking to re-home their 14-year-old Maine Coon cat because they were infirm. At the time, I didn't know if I was ready, but after thinking about it, I said yes, if they could wait awhile. When I felt the time was right, I told my friend and she brought him to me.



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I knew he was a Maine Coon cat, but I was totally unprepared for the sight that presented to me upon opening his carrier. **To me, all cats are beautiful because all cats are loved; Sammi was something else entirely.** I had never seen such a magnificent cat! His coloring, in shades of amber, was leonine, as was his massive mane. And I had never seen a cat with BROWN eyes, but his were a lovely shade of cognac. His kit included a sleeping basket, a (*definitely required*) Furminator, and

food and treats in turkey formula/flavor. He was quickly installed in the room I had prepared for him, and our new lives began.



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It took almost a year for this very territorial, formerly solo, declawed cat to adapt to his unfamiliar surroundings and fit in with his large family. There were times when I really didn't know if it would work out -- I only knew that it HAD to, because when I adopt, I adopt for life, and Sammi, as gorgeous as he was, was 14, not a tremendously adoptable age.



©Jamaka. Used with Permission. Sammi's first day in his new home.

Our lives together were blissful. Sammi caught the eye of our queen, Rani, and they were quite an "item", curling up together and indulging in mutual grooming sessions. He enjoyed toys, and played with a lot of the huge variety we have all over the house. Having been deprived of his front claws, he was not much of a jumper or climber; and I fixed "steps" up to the beds so that he wouldn't have a hard time finding his comfort. His favorite spots included his very own faux sheepskin window perch in the dining room and his observation post in the entry hall, where he would watch the world go by and keep tabs on the birds. Twice, I failed to latch the back door completely and was surprised to find him taking a stroll out near where the bird feeder is, on alert. Of course I scooped him right up and brought him in, but he always remembered his trips to the wild, wide world beyond his "palace" and often asked to repeat them. I didn't honor his wishes, because I believe cats, especially those who have been parted from their claws, belong indoors, safe and protected.



©Jamaka. Used with Permission. With friend Sahra.

Although he did slow down some, and his hind quarters were noticeably weak at times, he always seemed the regal and virile "lion kinglet" I met on that day in 2008. His passing came as a terrible shock, and seems very surreal to me. His "harem" are all freaked out and Tarifa went all over the house yesterday, calling incessantly for him. **Every one of us needs lots of contact and reassurance. We are all wondering, I am sure, how we will get through this and adjust to being without our Birdman of Beverly Hills** (so nicknamed because of his former home and his love for poultry, especially turkey). **He will always be in our hearts.**



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Comments

Sun, 2015-11-22 17:03 — jmuhj (not verified)

RE: THE BIRDMAN OF BEVERLY HILLS ^[8]

Thank you so very much, Robin. I've been offline for 10 days with IT-related issues and, yes, lots of grief for us. Thank you for such a beautiful guest post. I appreciate it so much.

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[Robin @ Google+](#)

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