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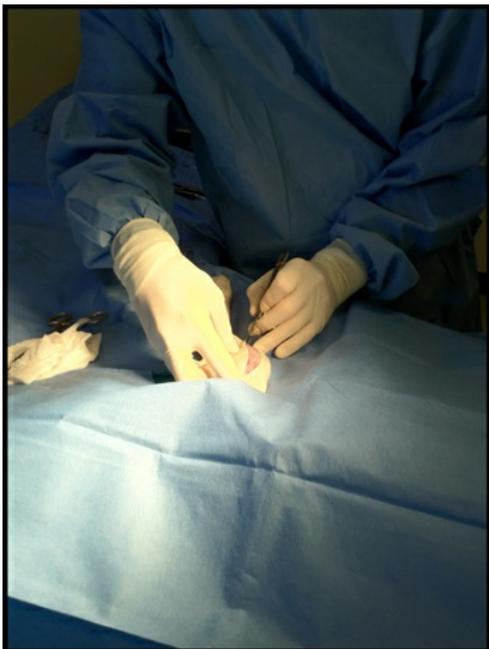
Bobette's Surgery & Post Op Life. Part 2 of 3

Thu, 2012-01-19 09:52 — Robin Olson

WARNING: THERE ARE GRAPHIC PHOTOS OF BOBETTE'S SURGERY IN PART TWO OF THIS POST. WHILE THEY ARE NOT CLOSE UP OR VERY GORY, PLEASE VIEW WITH DISCRETION. THIS IS PART TWO-YOU HAVE BEEN WARNED.

The monitor attached to Bobette continued to beep in a steady rhythm as Dr. Mixon prepared to make the first incision into her left rear leg. I held my breath as he pressed the scalpel blade into her flesh. For some reason I expected a lot of blood to shoot out all over the room. I guess I've watched one too many horror movies.

The skin gave way, with little blood escaping from the opening. Right away I felt sick to my stomach. It was partly due to having only had some apple juice for breakfast; I first thought, **but as the Dr. kept working the blade, it dawned on me that this thing he was cutting into looked a lot like a raw chicken leg. It was deeply disturbing to me to be hit with the mixed emotions of my brain recognizing "food" versus my conscious mind being completely DISGUSTED with myself for even thinking that. I wanted to throw up.** It was clear to me why Dr. Mixon is a vegan. I started to seriously think about giving up meat, myself, but never thought I had the fortitude to stick with it. Maybe now I did.



©2012 Robin A.F. Olson. *The first incision.*

Dr. Mixon was very focused on what he was doing. I focused on staying out of the way. The Tech was at attention, ready to hand him something or adjust the lamps. I learned that once the patient was draped, the area that was blue was NOT to be TOUCHED or even LEANED over. Being a chubby monkey, who is far from a limber ballerina, I was even more worried that any second now I'd crash into something and take the contents of a shelf down with me. The room just had enough space for all of us and the equipment. I also didn't want to distract Dr. Mixon so I just stood still and tried not to want to sit down. We'd already been on our feet for a few hours and had a long while yet to go, but my back complained. The Tech stretched her legs and arms. I guess I wasn't the only one who was already getting tired.



©2012 Robin A.F. Olson. I'm not sure what Dr. Mixon is doing here. Eww!

An alarm sounded on the monitor. Bobette's blood pressure was too low. This is the part in the TV show when someone yells; "Code Blue! Get the paddles!"

I asked what was going on. If Bobette was OK. Dr. Mixon looked at the monitor and said casually; "the monitor isn't always accurate...maybe Bobette's lines are kinked."

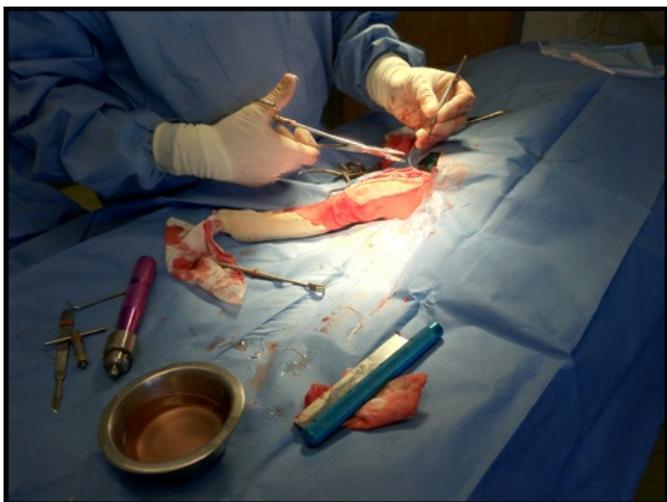
Or maybe Bobette was going to DIE ANY SECOND! OHMYGOD!!!! I wanted to jump out of my skin while the Tech peeked under the layers of blue fabric to check on Bobette. She acknowledged that things looked all right, but Dr. Mixon quickly had her adjust the settings on the amount of fluid that was going into her IV as the monitor alarm kept going off. **I bit my tongue, but I wanted to yell; "DO SOMETHING YOU'RE GOING TO LOSE HER!"**



©2012 Robin A.F. Olson. Code orange! Watch that blood pressure!

But again, this was not new to them as it was to me. Bobette's pressure went up very slightly. Dr. Mixon told me not to worry, but I worried anyway. Bobette wasn't his cat. (Of course this is where I start wondering what the heck I'm doing in an operating room in the first place.)

Eventually her pressure went up to with an acceptable range. I thought about how fragile Bobette was at this moment. The twist of a dial, a kink in a tiny plastic line into her front leg, could mean her death. Thinking about this put me on edge even more.



©2012 Robin A.F. Olson. Suturing up the leg.

As Dr. Mixon teased some of the muscle out of the way, looking for Bobette's kneecap, he made some familiar sounds. I was transported back in time to my childhood, when my dad was trying to fix the faucet. I was to hold the tools and hand them to him when he asked. **He must have realized he forgot a part or encountered something he didn't expect because he unleashed a torrent of profanity. While Dr. Mixon is far more reserved, I could tell from his sighs and grunts that he was having difficulty. As he worked, he began to describe what he saw.**

Bobette was in far worse shape than we anticipated. Her patella, may never have been in place or was not in place for very long. There was no groove in the joint for her kneecap to float into. He had to use a small saw to shape a space for the kneecap to go. **He also said her leg had twisted outward as she grew, so the muscles that wrapped around the leg were very out of place. Ideally, what should happen is her femur should be cut through and turned into the correct position-this was NOT something we could do in a few hours time and with only one tech. I imagined the recovery time from doing that would be very difficult, as well.**

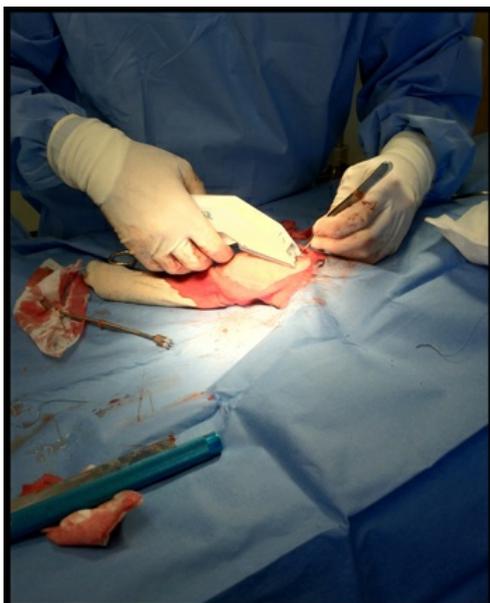
What he could do was after creating the groove for the kneecap, he would re-work how the muscles attached, pinning them down in places with nylon sutures, which would never dissolve and would permanently keep the muscles from popping back out and into their old position.



©2012 Robin A.F. Olson. All sutured up. Whew.

He used a chisel, then some sort of uber-nail clippers to trim away some bone. Each sound made me shiver. To me it looked like he was just carving up her leg and I couldn't imagine that what he was doing would help her at all. How would she ever walk on that leg after what he did? I also thought about Bobette. **She was going to be in immense pain when she woke up.** He kept teasing the muscles to release them in some areas. I didn't look too closely and just tried to take photos to get my mind off what he was doing.

It was nearly 2pm and we had started around 10:30am. Dr. Mixon had to pick his son up from school to take him to the Doctor. I offered to go get him, but of course, I can't due to security issues. Dr. Mixon said (*thank goodness*) that he did not want to rush the surgery so I left the operating room and got his phone. He had the Tech dial a number and put the phone on "speaker." I guess he called his ex-wife who was not too happy to hear from him. I felt really guilty, but I also didn't want him to rush. He had done as much as he could, but needed time to suture Bobette's leg. **As with everything else, it took a lot longer than I expected it would, but Dr. Mixon was very careful about making sure everything was done properly.**



©2012 Robin A.F. Olson. Wait...STAPLES, too? EEK!

The monitor kept on beeping. I glanced over and saw that all Bobette's vitals were within safe limits . As Dr. Mixon finished suturing he swore. **The kneecap had already moved out of place.** He was able to get it back by pushing it in place, which he hadn't been able to do before the surgery. **I asked him what her prognosis was and he wasn't very optimistic.**

He thought it was likely her patella would pop back out. Perhaps it would not pop out too far and would pop back into place; he wasn't sure. I asked if she was going to lose her leg-soemthing I had feared all along. He said yes, probably, but not right now. My heart sank. After all this work to have it fail before she even got off the operating table was very disappointing. That said, we really had to wait and see.



©2012 Robin A.F. Olson. My poor baby!

The biggest hurdle now was to keep Bobette from bending her leg-at any cost. Bend the leg and the surgery was going to fail. She had to keep that leg straight for a week, at least.

But first things first-Bobette had to wake up from surgery. She'd been out for hours. We were all really tired from being on our feet for so long. Dr. Mixon left us to clean up the room. The Tech did most of the cleaning and I stayed with Bobette. We had to furiously rub her to get her to wake up after all the life support was removed. **She was left her intubated until she swallowed for the first time. I don't know why that is, but I do know it took a long time for her to be ready for the tube to come out. I worried she wasn't going to wake up.**

Once she was awake, she was very crabby and started moaning. It was difficult and frightening to hold her down. **She started to thrash violently in her cage and I called out for help. I was so worried she would break her leg she was writhing around so hard. We wrapped her in a towel like a kitty-burrito.** She quieted down, but moaned a great deal more earnestly. I held her paw and told her it was going to be all right. I could only imagine how terrible she had to be feeling at that moment. I wondered if it was all in vain. I prayed it would work out in time.

©2012 Robin A.F. Olson. *Waking up after surgery. Poor sweetie.*

We gave Bobette another pain killer and she quieted down. The Tech said it was okay for me to go home-which I did gladly.

I got home around 4pm and finally had something to eat. As I started to unwind, my eyelids grew heavy. I dragged myself upstairs, took off some of my clothes and fell, exhausted into bed. **I slept until 7pm-the beep...beep...beep of the monitor still ringing in my ears.**

...up next...part three, Bobette's Post Op Life...stay tuned...

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Comments

Thu, 2012-01-19 10:37 — [Bobbie](#) ^[16]

[You](#) ^[17]

Are very brave. I would have probably hit the floor when the wonderful Doctor Mixon picked up the scalpel. How worried you must have been through it all.. and as well afterward.

Such a precious little Momma Cat, I wish her the very, very best.

Waiting for the next volume and hoping she is better and finally out of pain.

Thank you, Maria and Bobby again for saving her and her beautiful 'Bob's Pumpkin Patch' babies!!

Thu, 2012-01-19 13:07 — Catnonymouse (not verified)

[You hit the nail on the head](#) ^[18]

You hit the nail on the head regarding the muscles looking like chicken. Been vegetarian for about 5 years now, after gwatching a few ortho surgeries on kitties. Glad she made it through the surgery, hoping for the best as she continues to heal.

Thu, 2012-01-19 18:07 — [Daisy the Curly Cat \(not verified\)](#) ^[19]

[Poor Bobette!](#) ^[20]

The photos of the surgery did not bother me, but it was very difficult to see the video of her moaning in pain. I hope she is

feeling much better by now!

Thu, 2012-01-19 23:24 — Val (not verified)

Poor Baby, Seeing Bobette ^[21]

Poor Baby,

Seeing Bobette "waking up" after surgery brought back memories of Tinker the cat we had as a teenager.

One day while at the vet, my mom got nosy and looked at Tinkers medical record. In big read letters on top, it said "MEAN." For some reason, poor Tinker needed more than normal number of sedated procedures. I guess he got so scared that he would hiss and put up a fuss.

My mom was so upset because Tinker was her baby that my Mom would stay with Tinker until he was sedated and would be there for him when he woke up. Since my mom had medical training, he would be barely awake when they would let my mom bring him home. Mom would bring him home, put him in the cat bed and pull out his tongue and watch him. Once he started to move around, she would follow him ready to support him as he did his "drunk" walking to the water dish or litterbox. My mom still misses Tinker even though he passed almost 20 years ago.

Mon, 2012-11-19 08:52 — Heewitiere (not verified)

Hello! I'm new here, so just saying hi :) ^[22]

I really like your forum here. So I decided to be a part of it :)

And here I am saying HELLO EVERYBODY!! :D

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