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[Home](#) > Bob's Battle with Lymphoma: The Last Day. Part 3 of 5

## Bob's Battle with Lymphoma: The Last Day. Part 3 of 5

Wed, 2011-09-07 18:48 — Robin Olson

I couldn't eat much or sleep. I had a constant knot of fear in my gut. Every morning I wondered if I would find Bob dead. A few mornings ago, I got up and I could not find him. I called to Sam, urging him to come down stairs to help me find Bob. We looked all around the downstairs, searching frantically. We knew Bob could no longer make the trip up to our bedroom, but where was he? I panicked and started to cry. I thought Bob tried to go downstairs to the litter pans—instead of using the one nearby in the kitchen. We found him at the base of the stairs one night, struggling to get back up the steps. I envisioned him lying there, unable to make it back, but he wasn't there...so I blocked off access to make sure he couldn't do it again.



©2010 Robin A.F. Olson. *Blitzen and Bob.*

After 20 minutes, I found him in my office, calmly sitting on a cat bed between two filing cabinets. I was so glad to find him, but knew that one day I would not be so lucky.

I got to a point where I hated to get up in the morning. I dreaded coming down stairs to start my day...to look for Bob—then the relief of finding him still alive. Getting him fresh water for the bowl, scoop the pans, clean up any messes the other cats made, get Bob's food ready, get Bob fed.



©2011 Robin A.F. Olson. *Blitzen and Spencer watch Bob eat in case they can sneak some off his plate.*

Some days when the weather was nice, I'd ask Bob if he wanted to "go outside?" He would walk over to the sliding door and I'd let him out onto the deck. I often had a dish of cat grass waiting for him to munch on. Oh how he loved it! Bob couldn't get

out into the yard, but he could enjoy the fresh air and summer sun. It was my dream that if Bob had to die, he would do it on his chaise lounge, on the green cushion, with the sun in the sky and the birds singing sweetly nearby. I knew it was a long shot, but that's what I wanted for him.



©2010 Robin A.F. Olson. *Bob in his happy place.*

Some times Nicky would keep him company and the two would hang out all afternoon. A few days before he died, four crows flew near Bob, cawing wildly. I got up and grabbed Bob, brought him inside. I knew the Crows knew Bob was getting close. I was NOT going to let them NEAR HIM! The next day the same thing happened with a big hawk. It flew past my office window, screaming, flying towards the deck. I got up and saw it swoop over Bob's head! I ran outside and screamed at it to go away. It flew off, but I knew that it would be back.

Bob never went outside again after that.



©2009 Robin A.F. Olson. *First time on the deck in 2009.*

Bob was so thin. I could see his ribs, all the bones in his spine. He lost the fat padding in his cheeks and around his eye sockets, but he could still walk and still purred a tiny bit and still used the litter pan. He seemed happy after the syringe feeding was over. I would always wash his face and coo and fuss over him, telling him he was a good boy. I wanted him to have some good, after the bad, that even if we had to syringe feed him that something nice would happen when we were done. Some times I brushed him. When he had his full coat-before the ringworm destroyed it, he loved to be brushed. Now I could only brush under his chin and his chest. I used soft bristles on the rest of his body. It was shocking how much fur he was losing now. There was more of his fur on the floor, than on him, but he was still Bob.



©2011 Robin A.F. Olson. MacGruber making friends with Bob.

I got to a point where I wished Bob would die. I hated myself for feeling that way. I couldn't take the stress any more. Seeing him broke my heart. I couldn't sleep or eat much. I asked Sam to call Dr. Larry just to find out if we could book an appointment. It was right after the hurricane passed through and they had plenty of openings. We didn't book a time. I just kept going back to understanding it was my fear motivating me to do this. I had to do the right thing for Bob. Sam and I talked about it all the time. We checked with each other-do we do it now? What about today?



©2011 Robin A.F. Olson. Bob used to be much bigger, but now he is dwarfed by Nora and Nicky-who were his best buddies.

Bob survived the hypo incident, but the next day he was more frail than ever. Sam had to go to NYC to see his Mother. I didn't want him to leave. He promised to come back as soon as he could. I knew Bob wasn't going to live much longer. He was just too thin to survive more than a day or two and I was getting ready to call Dr. Larry.



©2010 Robin A.F. Olson. Blitzen and Bob enjoy naptime.

Bob was a bit uncomfortable. He couldn't walk very far so I brought him water, which he drank and I carried him to the litter pan-and he used it. I washed his feet and I fed him. I kept reminding myself to be GENTLE, to LOVE BOB, to just feel my heart connection to him, despite the anguish of seeing him near death. I had to ride this out with him. These were my last days with

him. It was my way of honoring Bob's life by making sure the end was as good as it could be. Yes, it was KILLING ME inside. My heart was breaking. I took a breath and just looked at Bob. Then, I noticed...one of his pupils was dilated and the other was not. My heart sank. He'd probably had a small stroke. My poor baby. It wasn't going to be much longer.

...end of part 3...

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[Memorials](#) <sup>[3]</sup>

[Zombie](#) <sup>[4]</sup>

[Rainbow Bridge](#) <sup>[5]</sup>

[Rest in Peace](#) <sup>[6]</sup>

## **Comments**

Thu, 2011-09-08 02:59 — kittencatt (not verified)

### **Oh Robin, I am crying just** <sup>[7]</sup>

Oh Robin, I am crying just reading this. It hard to imagine what you have been through and how much it hurt you. Thank you from all cats everywhere for doing so much for Bob.

Thu, 2011-09-08 06:13 — [Lizzie \(not verified\)](#) <sup>[8]</sup>

### **Dear Bob.... I'm glad to read** <sup>[9]</sup>

Dear Bob.... I'm glad to read this, but it is sad. Made me cry. Thank you though, for sharing this with us Robin. I know it must have been hard to write. Good to make a permanent memory for yourselves.

Thu, 2011-09-08 10:22 — Stephanie (not verified)

### **This is so heartbreaking. I** <sup>[10]</sup>

This is so heartbreaking. I cry imagining you carrying him and washing him and feeding him - all the ultimately important things you do for someone you love. I would do this for my kitties and I will when the time comes.

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[1] <https://coveredincathair.com/taxonomy/term/33>

[2] <https://coveredincathair.com/taxonomy/term/38>

[3] <https://coveredincathair.com/taxonomy/term/66>

[4] <https://coveredincathair.com/category/cich-content-categories/zombie>

[5] <https://coveredincathair.com/category/cich-content-categories/rainbow-bridge>

[6] <https://coveredincathair.com/category/cich-content-categories/rest-peace>

[7] <https://coveredincathair.com/comment/3887#comment-3887>

[8] <http://lizziemade.blogspot.com>

[9] <https://coveredincathair.com/comment/3888#comment-3888>

[10] <https://coveredincathair.com/comment/3889#comment-3889>