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On the Eve of the Birth of Freya 2.0. Part 7.

Mon, 2014-12-08 10:16 — Robin Olson

In writing the last post about Freya before her surgery, I realized after it was proofed and ready to share that I forgot a very important bit of news. Freya's life was saved because our friends at Animals in Distress offered to have her family sign her over to their rescue, then I stepped in to begin providing care and do fundraising until they could sort out a foster home for her. As you know Freya's never left my home since arriving in September. With AIDs help I was able to have them do some of the leg-work required to get appointments set for Freya in Boston. AID also helped provide me with some towels and rugs early on and for that I am most appreciative.

As the days passed and it seemed silly for me to continue to care for Freya as only a foster home since my rescue, Kitten Associates, was paying for a good chunk of her care. I'd done fundraising for her already, too, and in many ways she was already part of our rescue. A few weeks ago it was decided that Freya would become part of the KA foster family. AID has signed her over to us. Though their legal ties to her are over, AID continues to cheer us on and support our efforts. Without their being willing to help this kitten, there would be no story about Freya and she would have already been long gone.

It's time. This defining moment in Freya's life has come. From her rescue as a tiny 2-week old kitten with a mysterious condition, she's now a 16-week old with a rare birth defect called Atresia Ani with Recto-vaginal Fistula. Her care has required constant, diligent monitoring, frequent baths and endless loads of laundry. Every second of it has been worth it because Freya has taught me a lesson about unconditional love that has changed my life.



©2014 Robin A.F. Olson. From the early days with Freya.

My latest task was to keep Freya going until mid-January when she was finally big enough to do the surgery that would create a rectum for her and a real way to pass stool. There were difficulties beyond the obvious risks of surgery. **How could I keep Freya's nutritional needs met, but not cause her to build up a great deal of stool?** I consulted with MANY feline nutritionists and Vets. Every one of them gave me different advice. What I'd been doing seemed to be okay, but I feared it wasn't helping Freya get enough nutrients since the mixture was more for weaning kittens. I chose to change her diet to a very watery re-constituted dehydrated raw with some probiotics. Freya LOVES raw food and even watered down, being low carb and grain-free, I thought would do the trick. I fed her this diet for two weeks, then we re-did her x-rays to see if there were any changes.



The thick sausage shape you see is stool. It's very well defined on the top x-ray and the volume isn't as severe as the "two weeks ago." The most recent rad shows much softer looking than before. Hopefully it's enough to keep Freya comfortable for a few more days until maybe...the next x-ray after the surgery will NOT show all this stool any longer!

I noticed that Freya seemed more comfortable and certainly had great energy. She also seemed less bloated. I felt very sure that her x-rays would be newsworthy, but I was VERY WRONG. **The x-rays showed she had gotten MUCH more loaded with stool-dramatically worse.** I felt horrible about taking a risk with her life by changing her diet, but Dr. Potanas assured me that this may have happened no matter what I did.

It was time to give Freya a stool softener called Lactulose. It's very gentle and takes a few days to kick in. It's a type of sugar that is not absorbed by the body, instead it absorbs water and draws it into the colon so stool can pass more easily. We also had to give Freya sub-Q fluids daily to keep her hydrated. With any luck we'd halt the buildup, but I was also warned that she would have to have surgery much sooner than January. Being early December I knew we had to do something sooner, rather than later. Dr. Pavletic, the surgeon at MSPCA-Angell in Boston who will help Freya, would take some time off at Christmas and not be available. As each day passed, we'd be one day closer to winter and traveling would become an issue. By our next two-week x-ray appointment we had the answers. **Freya needed surgery ASAP.**



©2014 Robin A.F. Olson. After a few days of lactulose. I'd never seen Freya this messy, ever. It was alarming but good. She must have felt better once she was cleaned up.

The latest x-rays showed at least Freya wasn't worse and her stool appeared much softer, but the problem was it still wasn't coming OUT as much as we'd like to see. She had one day of very scary "blow outs" of stool so I backed off on the meds for a half day, but I should have kept them going. **In these last days before surgery I don't see Freya moving much stool**

at all. I'm grateful her spirit is strong, her energy is good, she's eating well and otherwise a normal kitten, but there's a dangerous buildup inside her. Surgery is in three days. I feel fairly hopeful we didn't wait too long, but things can always take a turn in a heartbeat.



©2014 Robin A.F. Olson. Freya looks longingly at Nicky, who's not really sure about her just yet; with Blitzen and the DOOD in the background.

I've written previous posts about Freya's journey and my fears. While I wrote them I cried. I know what the obstacles are, the possible post-surgery complications, the things we won't know about Freya until the surgery has begun, but I feel like it's far out of my hands now. I feel sick with worry that will only grow worse as the day arrives, but I'm trying to look forward to this with a positive outlook and not be a tearful mess.

©2014 Robin A.F. Olson. Freya loves to help with the laundry...or something like that.

At our last visit with Dr. Potanas here in Newtown, Dr. P reached out to shake my hand and wish us luck. He was smiling ear to ear, clearly excited about the BIG DAY. I asked him why he was so happy and he replied because Freya is finally going to get her surgery! **For me it's been a day to dread, but for Freya I hope it's the day that begins her life version 2.0.**



©2014 Robin A.F. Olson. Freya has "jellybean" toes-black and pink.

Freya's old life and our old ways of caring for her will be a thing of the past. What is yet to come we'll just have to wait and see. No matter what, we'll continue to love and care for Freya whatever it takes...and maybe, just maybe, we'll have a reason to celebrate Wednesday as being the best, most important day of her life.

On Wednesday, December 10th, I hope you'll take a moment to send Freya your good thoughts, prayers, wishes. I'm ever so grateful for your support all these months. It's gotten us to this day and that is something to be excited about. You can leave a message for Freya on our [FACEBOOK page for Covered in Cat Hair](#) [1] and on Freya's FACEBOOK page called [For Freya](#). [2]

If you'd like to read Freya's backstory you can do a search using the Search box on the right side of this page. Type in "Freya" and you'll see her stories.



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Comments

Mon, 2014-12-08 11:20 — Chrisa (not verified)

For Freya [3]

I for one am on the other side of the country but have followed your journey from the start. I am very nervous, excited and hopeful that this surgery will be the beginning of her having some relief from this birth defect. Its astounding how normal she seems in the videos although I know she is one little bundle of various issues inside. You have Robin, done an amazing job of caretaking for Freya with all the other jobs you have and we know your plate is full, but your heart and soul are far more full of love for Freya and all you foster kids... Prayers for Freya and prayers for you. May your journey be a safe one and the outcome a new beginning for sweet sweet Freya. God Speed.

Mon, 2014-12-08 11:39 — Judy (not verified)

Dear Freya [4]

No matter what the outcome of the surgery Wednesday, you have done a wonderful thing for her. She's known what it is to frolic and pounce on her bigger buddies, be coddled and cooed to, gently bathed as if her own mother were doing it and what it's like to be an online celebrity who is adored by so many. She's received the best medical care possible. She knows it all and will remember.

Mon, 2014-12-08 12:10 — Catnymouse (not verified)

Freya [5]

Good luck sweet girl, prayers from me and my 8 cats. We love you and are positive that this surgery will go great and give you a new way to live. ♥♥

Mon, 2014-12-08 13:31 — jmuwj (not verified)

***PRAYERS* for a successful** ^[6]

PRAYERS for a successful surgery and rapid recovery, a "normal" life, and every goodness for tiny, brave Freya! *SAFE JOURNEYS* there and home again! <3

Mon, 2014-12-08 16:18 — [Save Samoa \(not verified\)](#) ^[7]

WONDERFUL NEWS! ^[8]

What an amazing journey this has been! I am sorry she's struggling despite everything - but thank GOODNESS she's off for surgery now. We hold you and Freya close to our hearts, and our thoughts, vibes, prayers, and healing energy go with you! And WOHOHO she is officially a KA kitty now!

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