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## Foster Cat Journal: The Princess & the Pig

Mon, 2010-09-20 11:15 — Robin Olson

Last night Connie, Sam and I went to visit Princess Fifi. We knew her temperature had started to climb again and we were very worried about her. Her temp was at 104.7°F. The Vet decided to move her to IV antibiotics as they would help her feel better, faster, if she has some sort of bacterial issue. If it was a virus, there wasn't a whole lot we could do except give her supportive care and wait.

VCA Shoreline VREC is a big, fancy building. You can tell by walking in the door that it's going to cost big bucks to bring your animal inside. Before we even took a step, we saw a big pit bull standing in the center of a circle of bloody paw prints across the floor. The dog's left front paw was a bloody mess. The dog seemed to be relaxed and content, even though he was bleeding. He owner was stuck to a cellphone, talking about something. Of course I assumed the dog was used for fighting, but then stupidly realized why would they bring it to a Vet if it got hurt in a dog fight? Then the dog turned around. He had big, dangly balls. Connie and I both got pissed when we saw this. Why this dog is running around intact? We both wanted to yell at him, but realized we'd be outmatched if we spoke up.

We sidestepped the blood, told the receptionist who we were visiting, than sat down and waited. An exam room door was open and we saw a small, white bichon or poodle sitting on the exam table. Her right leg was bent oddly. Connie gasped and said; "oh no, neurological problem!" Then I started to worry they were going to put the dog down. We both agreed we hated sitting in this waiting room. I whispered under my breath; "close the door." A Vet Tech walked over and shut the door. Neither of us wanted to see what was going to happen next.



After a few minutes, we were escorted through some doors, into the heart of the building. Princess was being held in isolation.



The room was small and filled with a huge bin of used sharps, a garbage can, a table with yellow dressing gowns all over it and a small bank of four steel cages. Three were empty. Each one had a card that read: CLEAN. The fourth, held our Princess Fifi.



When we approached the cage, Princess was sleeping. They set her up on a pretty pink bed. Her food was next to her. There were some signs that she ate a bit of it. We all called out to her, but she did not respond. My heart sank. We were told we could hold her, but just to be careful of the IV line into her front leg. Sam reached into the cage and gently took her out. She was limp.



As he began to pet her, she started to wake up. I looked at her face. It was a filthy mess. I grabbed a cotton pad from a dispenser on the table, wetted it and began to try to clean the gunk out of her eyes. At first, she didn't protest, but as she felt the cool water, she began to stir. There was a fan blowing on us and she began to shiver.



I kept trying to get her cleaned up, but the food and discharge was crusted on her pretty well. I was glad to see her react to us holding and cleaning her. I tried to mimic how her mother might have licked her face as I wiped at it with the pad.



A Vet came in to talk to us. She was about 15 years old. We asked her question after question. She was thinking Princess has a URI. That she is not at death's door, but she is not in great shape, either. That she would eat, but only if someone stayed with her while she ate. That her chest and heart sound fairly normal and her blood work was basically fine. She turned the fan off, realizing it was making Princess feel worse. Princess stopped shaking and just enjoying being held by Sam.

I asked if we could try to feed her, so the Vet got some fresh food and I offered it to her. She turned her head away, refusing my offer. I asked the Vet to warm it up, which she did. It didn't help. I rubbed a small bit on Princess's face. She licked at it, but still refused to eat. I put the food bowl down and focused on petting her. I didn't want to think that this might be the last time I see her alive. If she didn't eat...well...she was already too thin to begin with. I tried to be positive and not "go there."



Connie and I continued to pet Princess and talk to her. She began to react a little bit more and more, then longer we were with

her. I held her for a few minutes, but I was scared I'd hurt her. She was hot in my arms and her coat was not in the best shape. I wanted to just find a comfy chair and hold her for the rest of the night. None of us wanted to leave. We could see our being there was helping her feel better.

A Vet Tech came in to take Princess's temp. Sam helped hold her while Princess fussed. Her temp was down a tiny bit..down to 104.3°F. Her weight was up by 2 ounces in 4 days! We were all cautiously optimistic that maybe Princess would continue to improve.

Then, Connie took a turn holding Princess. By that time, we'd been with her for about 45 minutes. Princess perked up and gave us a "meh." She began to fuss so I grabbed her food. Connie put her down and showed her the bowl and she started to eat! It always comforts me to see my cats eating, especially the foster kittens. It was even more meaningful to watch Princess lick carefully at her food. Connie put out her hand so Princess wouldn't fall out of the open cage. Every mouthful Princess took, would help her gain the strength she'd need to survive whatever was making her so sick. I wanted to cry. We all urged her to keep eating!



On the way to the hospital, we stopped at Walgreens to buy Princess a little toy. They had a lousy selection, but they did have these big, squeaky toys for dogs. One of them was appropriately pink and Sam and I both thought it might keep her company. She'd have to really squeeze the toy hard, to get it to squeak, so we thought she wouldn't easily be able to set it off. I also found these really cute pet beds. It looks like a grey cat, turned into a cat bed. Very soft and plush. Very cute. I promised myself that Princess would be sleeping in it when she comes back home to us and in the mean time the weird pink pig toy might be a stand in for a playmate.

Sam placed the pig next to Princess. She just stared at it. I thought that maybe she was frightened of it, but then she did the most wonderful thing. The pig has a black cable coming out of the top of it's head that's used to hang it on a display in the store. Princess reached out for the cable and started to PLAY!!!! She tapped at the cable and bit it, then wanted to eat more food. Wow! We were all bowled over when we saw her reach out that paw. It was such a significant sign that she's still fighting and she's still a kitten who wants to play! I wish I'd bought her a box full of toys!



Princess was clearly getting tired again, so we decided to leave. She snuggled down next to her toy pig. We each told Princess we loved her and that she should fight to get better and that we would see her soon-we promised.



**We were all reluctant to leave. I made some jokes so we wouldn't start to cry. Just as I turned to leave, I noticed something in Princess's cage. Her blanket had her name on it! I had to ask myself, is this a sign she's in the right place? Was this destiny or just a coincidence? I can't help but wonder if all this was meant to be? But if so, what is next? What is to become of Princess? Will her temperature come down and STAY down? Will she begin to perk up, eat better and get back to the business of being a kitten again? I just don't know. I don't know if this WAS our last visit with Princess.**



The night passed without any calls from the Vet. This morning Connie called me and said that Carole had called and found out Princess's temp was "down." What that meant, I don't know. Was it down a few tenths? Was it down to normal? I have to wait until after 10am to call to get an update. I have a stomach ache. I want to know, but I don't want to know. This has been a rough road and Big O, Little Maria and Pauly have to be picked up in New Jersey today! I need to get ready, but not sure for what. I need to get those new foster cats, but I need to stay home. It will be sorted out. Thankfully, Sam and Connie are going to pitch in and help. I couldn't function without them, but really, I just want to go to sleep, wake up and have everyone be here, happy and healthy.

**If you've gotten this far, there's one last thing. I'm going to post a fundraiser here, to help recover some of the money we've spent to get Princess the care she needs. Her Vet bill is over \$1000.00 and it won't surprise me if it goes up from there. I've set up at Chipln widget (above) that will go STRAIGHT to [Animals in Distress](#) <sup>[1]</sup>. If you can help out with a few dollars-whatever you donate is tax deductible. We all know money is tight and I've had**

to ask more than a few times for help from everyone, so I understand if asking again, so soon, is a problem for many of you. No worries. We're going to try and those that can comfortably help us-even if it's \$5, it does make a difference. If you can't donate, maybe you can forward this to your friends and they can't pitch in a dollar or two? Thank you all your prayers and support during this difficult time. It means a lot to all of us-especially little Princess.

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## **Comments**

Mon, 2010-09-20 12:04 — [Amy and The Hou...](#) [16]

### **Prayers for Princess** [17]

Well, it sounds like she is doing better - I really hope that is the case when you call this morning still. We will send her lots of purrs and prayers to get better! I wish I could donate but right now money is super tight - but I will put the chip in up over at my blog and hope it helps out! She is such a beautiful girl - I really hope she will be ok!

Mon, 2010-09-20 12:19 — Joni (not verified)

### **Princess Fifi** [18]

I know the heart ache you are feeling and the nervousness of the unknown future at this point; as I went through trying to figure out what was wrong with then losing a tiny little girl foster kitty (we named Ophelia) a couple months ago and it hasn't left my heart yet. So, hopefully this small donation will help in some way.

I may not know you personally but it's not hard to tell the love you have for these babies and the hope fullness that you keep near to your heart.

Thank you for all you do for these babies and may the Big Guy & Saint Francis keep your baby close.

Mon, 2010-09-20 14:20 — meowmix (not verified)

### **The Princess & The Pig** [19]

Funny picture of the Fifi looking at the pig.

Princess: You're big, so they brought you here too.

Pig: Meh

Mon, 2010-09-20 17:11 — [Jan Kozlowski \(not verified\)](#) [20]

### **Princess & Pig** [21]

Robin, thanks so much for the photos and the update. What a little fighter she is! Playing is SUCH a good sign. We had a little one much like Princess, on the edge like this, but the first time I saw him play, I yelled to my husband and we both just stood there in awe of what felt like such a miracle. I know she's not out of the woods yet, but I feel so heartened by this report and the beautiful pictures. Sending continuing thoughts, prayers and Reiki to you, Princess and all involved in her care

Mon, 2010-09-20 17:14 — Dawn (not verified)

### **prayers as always** [22]

Robin, I had just posted my concern that we had not heard from you when this popped on FB. I hope today will bring more of the same as far as her trying to eat and play. Poor little thing I can see her eyes and how lousy she feels. Having been through this with so many of my formerly ferals I know the pain of feeling helpless and waiting.

The little Princess is a fighter no doubt. Eating as she did and seeing that picture of her sitting up facing the pig was a wonderful thing :-)) I have a feeling that little girl is not going to give up so don't you give up in her.

Hugs and Prayers to all the furbabies. Forehead rubs too with nose and paw kisses

Dawn and her formerly feral

Mon, 2010-09-20 17:45 — munford (not verified)

### **Princess** [23]

I hope Princess is better today than last night. I am praying that she is eating and that her fever goes down and stays down. Do you think this illness could have been in any way caused by her vaccine shot that she took because she is so tiny for such a big vaccine?

I, too, want to thank you for all you do for cats and kittens. You are a very special person who has a really big heart. Thanks for helping Little Princess Fifi, too, and not giving up on her since she was so little and so ill. My donation was not much but I hope it helps to reach the goal of paying her vet bill.

Hugs to you and Princess (also Sam and Connie) and many blessings.

Mon, 2010-09-20 19:54 — [Lisa \(not verified\)](#) [24]

### **Purrrayers for the little one** [25]

And for you and Sam, Robin. I'm sure you're both exhausted emotionally and physically. Hugs and purrs from everyone at the Casa!

Tue, 2010-09-21 14:17 — Marian (not verified)

### **Let me see where I am when I** [26]

Let me see where I am when I get my social security on the 1st. I may be able to scrape up \$5-10 if I don't have to drive up to MI to deal with my house. Right now I've been forbidden to even think about it by my dr. A disability rights is involved and my attorney is back in his office on Thursday. Please God.

In the meantime I can say prayers. Which I am doing fervently. I do know about specialty clinics. I have this cat named Meezer. She's 3. We call her the D-Day cat as that's probably as close to her birthday as we can get. The vet assigned her 6/7/07 as her birthday. She looks Siamese but she isn't. Mom was a torti feral who hung around, Dad was a big black MC mix feral. I saw the dirty deed. Mom abandoned her and her sister at the age of roughly 3 weeks and I took them to the local vet (not mine) and he tried to save both. The litter mate died. My vet wanted to put Meez down but she started eating off of a cotton swab with gusto so I took her home, fed her around the clock and she thrived.

However, she took exception to the move down here and went on a sort of hunger strike. She was eating people food off of my plate but hiding and ended up in Carolina Veterinary Specialties. Carol and I bankrupted ourselves to save her. She was very sick, had a blood transfusion, etc. She weighed 5 pounds, was roughly 18 months old. They got her well and her vet was thrilled to see her last year. She is now 15 pounds--probably too fat--and eats well and is healthy. It was fatty liver.

So I can relate and I am holding Princess close to my heart.

And Tansy is out on that porch again. Nice to know they love that porch more than us. LOL.

Mon, 2010-09-27 10:03 — [Ingrid King \(not verified\)](#) [27]

### **get better, sweet Princess!** [28]

Sending lots of healing energy and good thoughts to Princess. What a sweet baby. And what a wonderful post.

[CICH @ Google+](#)

[Robin @ Google+](#)

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