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The Squee Diaries. Chapter 6. Happy Family No More

Thu, 2013-07-11 07:59 — Robin Olson

I feel like I really understand the phrase, "wrung out," as I sit here, trying to write about what happened today. My body aches, my head buzzes from an overload of caffeine. I ate stupid junk just to keep myself fueled up with something since I didn't have time to eat until 3pm. I'm not whining, I'm just very very tired.

This morning got off to a terrible start. I walked down stairs, half asleep, I've been staying up far too late then getting up too early. I got to the bottom of the stairs and found a pile of poop. Of course. It was from Nicky. He's been doing this every day for a long while. He drops his "surprise" off in different places, most often the entryway to my office. It's not a big deal, just an irritation, but once I took a few more steps into the kitchen, my heart sank. The cats had urinated into a cardboard cat food tray that was on the floor. It was covered in plastic but the urine seeped under it and RUINED the wooden floor-turning it black. I lifted the tray in disgust. As I tipped it onto the garbage can the urine splashed onto my pajamas. When will I learn? The cats like to sit on the tray in this spot, then others pee on it. Then I get mad and clean it up. Stupid me.

I thought that Sam and I had made great strides in working with the cats so they didn't pee all over the house. Yet the tray was nothing compared to the scene around the island in the center of the kitchen. There were puddles of urine all around the base. I've never seen it so bad. I was furious. Great way to start the day.



©2013 Robin A.F. Olson. Sorry for the yucky photo..just multiply this by 10..it was all over.

Sam and I cleaned up, but I was in a race to get to Minnie's room so she could get fed. I don't like to let her or the kittens go too long without some food so they're always my first concern. I got their food ready and opened the door to the blue bathroom. What I saw didn't click at first, but when the images slowly made sense, I recoiled in horror.

Everywhere I looked there was vomit. Vomit on the side of the tub, in the tub, near the tub, on the floor, on the bedding, on the cat tree, under the cat tree. It looked like a bomb went off. Some of it was clear or pale colored, some was reddish-food colored. The kittens seemed active and normal, but Minnie was by herself looking a bit forlorn. The day before she'd been a bit quiet, but now she seemed even worse. If she had been the only one vomiting, clearly she was very sick. Much of the vomit was in small puddles. The kittens certainly could have done it but they seemed just fine.



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It took about 45 minutes to get the room cleaned up. I took Minnie's temp and it was 101.4°F, not a fever but what was making her vomit? I replayed some of the DVR footage from Squee-TV and at 4am I saw her vomiting violently four times. I called Dr Larry's office and made an appointment. They could see us in an hour. I was to bring the kittens, too.

I wasn't certain, but I thought I heard Minnie growling at the kittens. She wouldn't go near them and didn't seem to care about them, either. I showered quickly and got the kittens packed up into a carrier and put Minnie into her own, worried she would be harmed by the kittens. I had pressed on her mammary glands and they felt subtle and warm, not hot and hard. I'm paranoid about her getting mastitis and have been trying to get the kittens weaned fast to prevent Minnie from getting an infection from their claws or teeth. I tried to sort out what it could be, but I had no idea.



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Dr. Larry examined Minnie. It was clear from his expression that something was wrong. When he said as much I wasn't surprised, but what he said next made me sick to my stomach. He felt that her intestines felt gassy and mushy, as if inflamed. He rattled off a number of tests he wanted to do: X-rays, CBC, repeat her snap test. Minnie's gums were dry and tacky, a sign of dehydration. He wanted to put her on an IV right away so I nodded, hoping we'd be able to raise money for her care. I knew it was going to be expensive, even with our discount.

Then Dr. Larry said it could be FIP. I tried to be strong. I didn't cry, but inside my head I imagined pulling my hair out and screaming, followed by sobbing and curling up in a ball on the floor. I challenged him about it, but he said it's one thing it could be and that it was good that the kittens were 5 1/2 weeks old since they didn't need her any more. I took offense and he quickly offered that he meant that she could be away from them and stay on an IV for the day. "Okay..sure"...that's all I could say back.

Super Deb took Minnie away. I didn't even get a chance to say goodbye. Dr. Larry looked at the kittens and was quick to say how adorable they were and that whatever was troubling Minnie, was unlikely harming or effecting the kittens. Then he wanted me to take a photo of him with the kittens so he could send it to his daughter. He scooped up 4 of the kittens and smiled as I took the photos. At least, for now, they were safe. I just had to pray they'd start eating for me soon. Mel hasn't eaten cat food yet and the others don't eat much of it.



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I didn't have to wait long before I got news-Minnie has a raging White Blood Count. She's at 60,000. High normal is about 5,000. SHE had two other indicators of inflammation/infection that were showing us she has a wicked bacterial infection of "unknown origin." Thankfully, her organ function tests were normal so her liver and kidneys were still working. Dr. Larry wanted to do more tests, but he was very worried. He said Minnie is basically septic right now so we have to hit this hard. He gave her an injection of Baytril, a broad spectrum antibiotic. She'd need a lot more medication and we'd have to discuss whether it was safe for her to ever feed her kittens again at another time.

For now it was sit and wait and hope that Minnie would begin to respond to treatment.



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Later in the day, I got another call. Dr. Larry was worried that Minnie has pancreatitis which is very tough to diagnose. I asked about Minnie's uterus-was it infected? Not even KNOWING about Pyometra! He said, yes, it could be that, too. He didn't bring up FIP and I didn't ask. I asked about doing an emergency spay surgery on her, but he felt she was too sick to risk it.

He asked to run more tests on her urine and a FPL Idexx Test on her pancreas so I said yes, while my mental adding machine went haywire adding more and more figures to the mix. Those tests would take a day to get back, but in the meantime he wanted Minnie to come home (since they don't have overnight hours) with her catheter in place. She would come back in the morning for another day on an IV while we waited on test results.

I just want to save Minnie's life and I feel sure that we need to spay her-which would also allow us to do an exploration of her abdomen and see what the infection is from. It's a careful balance of doing it too soon and not doing it soon enough. We don't want to make the infection worse, but we need to get that uterus out if it's indeed the culprit.

I asked if Minnie could still nurse the kittens after her spay and was surprised to learn that she could. I couldn't imagine her doing that after having her belly laid open, but I'd leave it up to her to choose to do that or not. I loved watching Minnie care for her kittens. She was so loving and watchful and it's heartbreaking to think those days are over so soon.

I brought Minnie home, hoping for a happy reunion, but what I saw next broke my heart. I saw Minnie lash out at little Mel, trying to kill him. (I didn't know this was going to happen as I

shot a video of what I thought would be the happy reunion. It's too upsetting to watch) He was shocked and upset. The other kittens took off and hid, cowering from their once loving mother. Minnie growled and hissed at them, then at me, too. I tried to imagine how much pain she's in and I told myself that she just needed time to heal and feel like herself-maybe even better than that and it would be okay.

For now Minnie is alone in the last tiny space I have in the house. The kittens are crammed into one cat bed comforting each other. They won't eat so I will syringe feed them tonight. We had 5 weeks of bliss, Minnie, the kittens and I, and it's tough to see that vanish overnight. I can only hope it won't always be this way.



As for our fundraiser, THANK YOU to everyone who raced to offer us donations. We made our goal and then some in LESS THAN 12 HOURS. Yes, we may STILL need more, but I'm holding off on asking until I have more information. **For now, I need to brace myself for what waits for me in the foster room. Will Minnie attack me when I try to medicate her? Will she be stable tonight? Will the kittens start eating? Have they been traumatized after all the weeks of my being so careful with them?** I can't say..I just have to hang on and hope for the best.

Thank you for being there with me through this difficult day. I couldn't do this on my own.

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[Puke, Vomit, Spew](#) ^[3]

Comments

Thu, 2013-07-11 09:28 — Catnynouse (not verified)

Huge comforting hugs. ^[4]

Robin, you and your precious 6 are in my thoughts and prayers. Hoping for better news about Minnie when I log in in the a.m. It is nearly 11 p.m. in Australia and I am heading for bed. Sending hungry vibes so that those precious babies will eat for you.

Thu, 2013-07-11 11:28 — Regina Peterson (not verified)

I am so sorry that this has ^[5]

I am so sorry that this has happened to your Minnie- and so soon after Sweet Fred had FIP and all of the sadness

hugs

Regina

Thu, 2013-07-11 11:55 — [Random Felines \(not verified\)](#) ^[6]

Robyn - I left you a comment ^[7]

Robyn - I left you a comment on facebook as well, but this really does sound like the inaception a momma cat had here. Hopefully the surgery will show something that is easy to fix....

Thu, 2013-07-11 12:58 — jmuhj (not verified)

RE: FAMILY ^[8]

Oh, Robin, I'm SO very sorry. My thoughts and *PRAYERS* are with Minnie and her family -- and that includes you and yours -- and with Nicky, too. *Better must come!* <3

Fri, 2013-07-12 22:10 — [Lee County Clowder \(not verified\)](#) ^[9]

So sorry for Minnie. She ^[10]

So sorry for Minnie. She must really be in pain, and just lashing out at anything close. Purrrrrrrring that this is something treatable, and not too expensive.

Sat, 2013-07-13 15:50 — [Deb Barnes - Ze... \(not verified\)](#) [11]

Sorry Again... [12]

Oh dear God, Robin. I just don't even know what to say. Zoey also went through a haywire period with her kittens when they were around 8 weeks old and positively hated them. Growling, hissing, etc. and eventually she stopped doing it, but it was very disconcerting in the meanwhile, although I don't think it was ever as bad as what you are going through with Minnie. I pray this will turn out okay for all...

Sat, 2013-07-13 17:48 — kolekea (not verified)

Hugs to You - Healing for Minnie - Love to the kittens [13]

Robin,

I am SO sorry to hear about Minnie. I am saying lots of prayers that she will pull through and be healthy again. She couldn't have been in a better place when she became ill, and you are making shre that she is getting the care that she needs. With you care and love, the kittens will fare well. I will also pray that they begin to eat on their own. I have been watching them since the day you first posted, and have grown quite attached to them and to Minnie. Please let us know when you need donations. There are many of us out here who are willing to help. Thank you for all that you do.

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