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Staying Strong for Gracie: Part 12. The Gift.

Sat, 2015-10-31 14:11 — Robin Olson

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The weekend began with breakfast and gossip with my two friends, Gene and Adria. We'd been meeting for breakfast at the [Sandy Hook Diner](#) ^[12] once a month or so over this summer. Gene and Adria have lived in Newtown (*Newtown is the name of our entire town, though Gene and I reside in the district of Sandy Hook*) longer than I have, which is saying a lot. They know everyone and everyone's dirt. Silly as it might be, it's fun to feel like a local, sitting in the local restaurant that's buzzing with other folks that all seem to know each other, well, they know Gene. I think he's the unofficial *Mayor of the Sandy Hook Diner*, if not all of Sandy Hook.

It was a welcome break to get away from the stress of life at home. I could forget for a little while as we all told each other stories and got caught up on current events. **I guess it's a sign of my own life changing that a good deal of our conversation was based on talking about our health issues and diagnosis each other's maladies.** I'd been struggling with discovering I was a Type 2 Diabetic in July and worked hard to change my diet. I'd lost a good bit of weight (*but have more to go*) and I announced that my Diabetes was GONE. I probably never had it in the first place because the A1C blood test I took a few weeks ago had dropped down to 5.6 which meant I was in "normal" range. I just had to be very careful for the rest of my life because I can become diabetic (*my Mother was late in her life so I have a genetic predisposition*), but for now I dodged the bullet. **I really wanted to celebrate this milestone, but in all honesty, while I was beyond grateful, it would take Gracie feeling good for me to be happy again.**

You need to understand that I live a very quiet life. My day is spent caring for Gracie, the foster cats, our cats. I start early and end the day very late, around 1 a.m. I don't go out other than to get cat food, people food, or do a Vet run. Going out to breakfast is akin to attending a Gala. I rarely go out to eat or to the movies or to the mall or go on a *what are those things called*, a "vacation?" I'm pretty much always home.

It sucks.

Sam and I are woefully unhappy. We hoped to be able to finally get away for a weekend this month. It would have been the first time in 5 years we had some time to ourselves. I'm not complaining. It just didn't work out. We need to continue to be home, but the toll it's taking on us is palpable. **You know something is deeply wrong with your life when you have a breakdown because some of your cats won't eat their breakfast, yet again, and you have to fuss with their food, yet again, and you can't take it one more second, yet again.**

There have been a lot of tears lately-a lot of breakdowns-but I must go on.

That's why when Adria and I spontaneously decided to go to a local craft fair after breakfast that I experienced a moment of joy. It was something I used to do with my mother and hadn't done since she passed away in 2006. The fair itself was small, but FREE admission (*yay!*). Adria and I had a lovely time and even chatted with a few of the vendors. It really helped my soul to see pretty things and not think about cats. It took less than an hour to walk the show, but it gave me enough fuel to keep going.



©2015 Adria Henderson. I'm never far from cats.

Kendra, who adopted four cats from us over the years (*the most recent one being Tink*), has also become a good friend. About an hour after I got home from the craft fair, she came over to help me prepare a mailing for my rescue, [Kitten Associates](#) ^[1,3]. Kendra is very cheerful and being around her always gives me a lift. Instead of doing our work straight away, we, of course, went to the store to buy cat food and a big dog bed (*Kendra is bi-petual*). We had a lovely chat in the car as we drove along the tree-lined roads. The autumn colors were at their peak and it was hard not to be mesmerized by them.

Since Sam was covering for me with Gracie while I was out, I had a chance to unwind a little bit. I think I may have even laughed a few times, which is a rarity these days.

Kendra and I decided to get a coffee (*and lunch for Kendra*) so we went to another local eatery where I ran into none other than Gene, who was there with his wife Marilyn, and his daughter's mother-in-law. Clearly Gene is quite the social butterfly and I guess for that day I was, too.

By the time we returned home to get our task done, it was mid-afternoon. I peaked in on Gracie and she looked good so I gathered up the materials to do our mailing. I cleared a space for us to sit in the kitchen at the table, which is normally piled with cases of cat food. We went over our to do list, then began working, but shortly after we'd begun I heard Gracie meow.

She was sitting on the floor right next to us. She'd gotten up to see what we were doing. This was not the Gracie I'd known a few days prior. She barely left her special area in the living room and here she was matter-of-factly complaining that her dinner was late.

Before I could get up, Gracie dashed under the table, then jumped onto the bench next to Kendra! Kendra and I locked eyes. We were both thinking the same thing; "Oh my GOD, Gracie just jumped! Gracie wants to sit on Kendra's lap! Gracie never sits on anyone's lap!"



©2015 Robin AF Olson. Kenra and Gracie.

I raced over to the living room and grabbed a clean towel (*I go through a lot of them for Gracie so I have a stash*). I eased it under Gracie so she'd be more comfortable. Meanwhile Kendra sat there almost too stunned to know what to do. **After a beat she did what she does best, she gave Gracie some lovin'.**

The steroids must have given Gracie a big boost. Maybe she need the extra dose all along? Maybe she'd be feeling better for some time to come even with the dire news?

Gracie, restless, got up and jumped onto the table! I hadn't seen her jump on ANYTHING for over a month. This was an amazing sight. I had to call out to Sam to come and see our girl showing us that she still had things she wanted to do and still had the heart to do them.

Kendra and I worked around Gracie as she kept us company. Even in her prime, Gracie never did things like this. You see Gracie was abused by her former guardians (*and "guardian" is a polite term for what I'd really like to call them*). I got Gracie as a rescue because her life was in danger (*the man told his wife he was going to kill Gracie if she didn't get rid of her. He'd already kicked and otherwise abused her, so Gracie needed to get out, fast.*) **and this was right after Gracie had given birth to three kittens.** Gracie was timid for a good part of her life, but Sam and I worked with her and over the years she'd come to trust and love us, though she never would fully sleep on our laps. **That's why it was an amazing gift to see Gracie feeling good, feeling happy, wanting to be part of our life, wanting to be with us as much as we wanted to be with her.**



©2015 Robin AF Olson. My gift, Gracie.

I wanted more days like this with all my heart, but I knew we were running out of time if we couldn't come up with a diagnosis.

next up...with no diagnosis in sight, three Vets join forces to reach a conclusion about Gracie's future.

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Comments

Sun, 2015-11-01 13:40 — jmuhj (not verified)

RE: GRACIE ^[19]

Awww, what a precious girl! It's wonderful that Gracie seems to be feeling better with the steroids. I know they helped our beloved Sun, too, for many years after his being diagnosed with dry-form FIP. His quality of life was excellent thanks in part to the steroids. *PRAYERS* ongoing for your beautiful blue fluffy princess.

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