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[Home](#) > That Which Doesn't Kill Us...Part 1

That Which Doesn't Kill Us...Part 1

Wed, 2012-12-12 09:57 — Robin Olson

The past 24 hours have squeezed the life out of me. I could barely make it to my bed last night I was so tired.

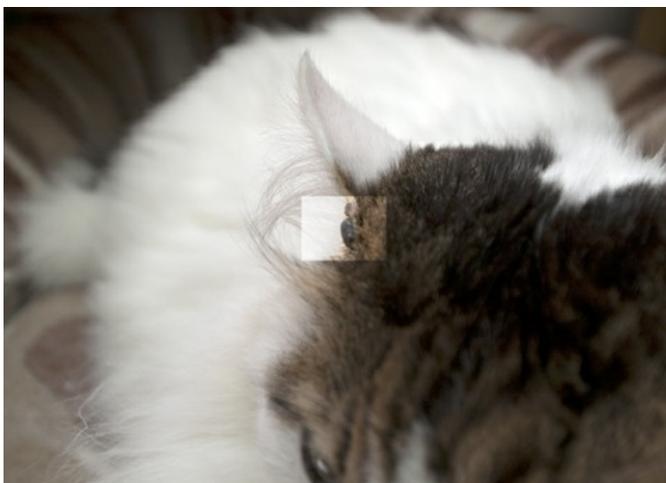
The morning started off too early. I wanted to go back to bed as soon as I left it, but I pushed myself to get into the shower. Get dressed. Get going. I had to get ready to leave for Dr. Larry's with Spencer in tow. **It was finally time for Spencer to get his MUCH NEEDED dental cleaning done, as well as the removal of an ugly black growth from the edge of his right ear.** Spencer also had a small growth INSIDE his left ear that had to go, too. **It was these two unwelcome guests that I was most worried about. Was it CANCER?**



©2012 Robin A.F. Olson. My baby.

Was this the beginning of the end for my sweet boy?

I got dressed and put on a new pair of jeans. I managed to get them half price on Cyber Monday. It was the first new pair of clothes I'd had since I could remember. They fit great but were a bit too long. As I walked I kept catching the ends under my feet, causing me to hike up my jeans as high as they could go, but then they'd slip back down. I'd get them hemmed later, but it made me crankier.



©2012 Robin A.F. Olson. Growth highlighted. Was VERY difficult to notice this until it was bigger due to Spencer's coloring.

Spencer was a dream to get into his cat carrier, but once we got into the car, his pupils dilated and he started to, well, not meow, per se, but sort of squeak. **Spencer doesn't meow. He never has. I call what he does "air meow"** because he WILL look at me, then open his mouth; it's just that nothing comes out but some air from his lungs.

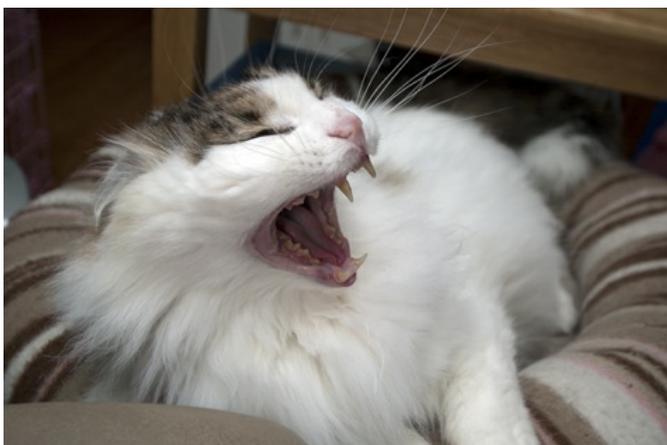
I took the back roads instead of the highway, determined to keep Spencer as comfortable as possible. Just before we reached the Clinic, a cop car whizzed past us, lights and sirens blaring. I knew from the days when I volunteered with EMS that it had to be bad news, the more noise and fuss the car was making, the worse the situation. I wondered where he was going as a sense of dread filled my heart. **I hoped this wasn't a bad sign of things to come.**



©2012 Robin A.F. Olson. This is Spencer's favorite spot, right next to me when I'm working at my desk.

It was quiet at the Clinic so I asked if I could set Spencer up in his cage and to spend a few minutes saying goodbye. **I've been a client of Dr Larry's for over 15 years so I get to go in the back where client's aren't usually allowed.**

There were two big dogs barking loudly. The Tech got them to quiet down, but it ticked up my anxiety wanting to protect Spencer from these beasts. Spencer didn't want to come out of his carrier. I couldn't blame him. **I ended up having to tip the carrier up on its edge hoping gravity would do the trick and it did.**



©2012 Robin A.F. Olson. Dirty, yucky, teeth and gums.

I spent a few minutes talking to Spencer, petting him, kissing him, somehow trying to capture this moment because of the fear under all the other fears—that I would never see Spencer again. I realize it may sound dramatic, but over the past few weeks so many cats have died that I just felt this sense of impending doom. **I kept thinking about Bobette and how we all thought she was going to be fine and she didn't survive her surgery.** I pushed back my fears as best I could, but I wasn't raised to have faith, my parents feeling we should decide our own path to religion (*if we had one at all*). **It left me struggling with my feelings.**

I didn't go straight home. I decided to go grocery shopping, get just a few things. I was tired of being hungry and broke, but I certainly had enough to buy some bread and eggs, maybe some soup. The store was not crowded, being that it was not even 9AM. **I enjoyed the meditative quality of walking up and down the aisles, looking at all the food, wondering what was on sale and what would make for an inexpensive meal while my tummy rumbled reminding me I'd skipped breakfast.**



©2012 Robin A.F. Olson. *Not comin' out!*

As usual, I bought more than I anticipated, but took advantage of the sales and saved \$40.00, for which I felt quite proud. I distracted myself long enough to forget my worries about Spencer. He was in good hands. I had to wait and see how things would unfold, but I couldn't fool myself completely. I was really cranky from being tired and from struggling to not to be worried. **By the time I got home I was in a bad mood .**



©2012 Robin A.F. Olson. *Too fluffy for feet? Spencer in his cage.*

I got the car unloaded and Sam helped me put the groceries away. He didn't say anything to me until we were done.

"I need to talk to you about Jackson."

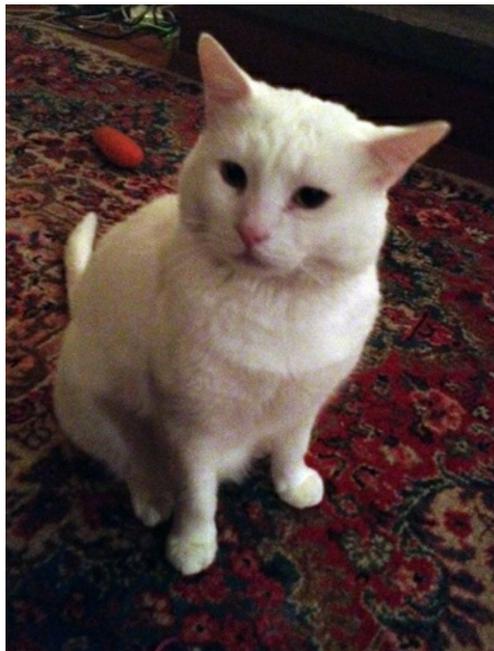
I felt a ice pick in my gut and my legs go wobbly.

"He didn't eat this morning and is hiding in your office. I can't get him to eat. Something's wrong."



©2012 Robin A.F. Olson. This makes me sick-I think of all the "urgent" cats who need to get out of shelters and I look at this photo and see my sweet kitty-how much I love him-how easy it could be for him to be one of those cats.

I began rattling off questions as we walked into my office. **Sure enough there was Jackson with his front legs tucked under him. It's called "meatloafing" and it's an indicator that Jackson was in pain.** I squatted down and petted Jax. He didn't respond. Normally Jackson would press his head back into my hand and start purring right away. He just sat there in stone silence.



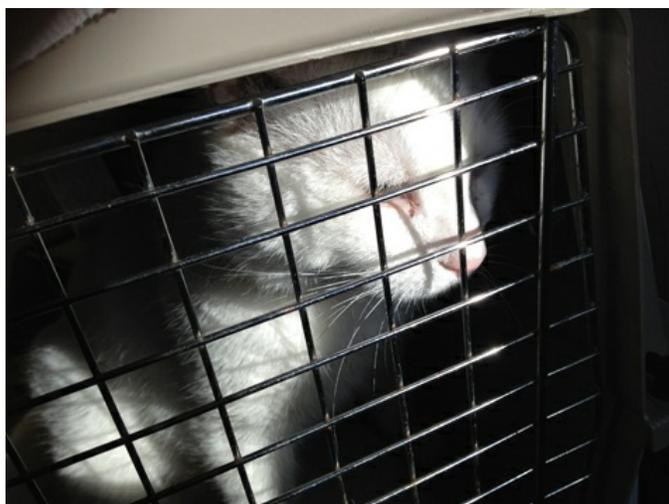
©2012 Robin A.F. Olson. The day before he was a bit "off."

I hustled back into the kitchen, my jeans getting caught up under my feet. **I wanted to rip them off and throw them out.** My mind racing, I thought of things I had on hand to tempt Jackson to eat. Nothing worked. I even brought out the big guns- DRY FOOD. He wouldn't even sniff it.

I called Dr. Larry and they said to bring him in-of course, but HOW could I do that? With Jackson's bad heart, the stress of the trip could kill him.

Once at the Vet we wouldn't be able to do anything to him other than an exam because the stress, again, could push him into heart failure. Jackson was only to have home visits from Dr. Larry, not trips to see him!

We started to get ready, then I stopped Sam. We both sat down in the living room, looking at Jackson, who'd relocated along with us. I didn't want to rush a decision. He'd only missed ONE meal and we were running him to the Vet. How nutty did that sound? Maybe we should wait a day and see how he does? Maybe he's in trouble and we need to bring him in right away?



©2012 Robin A.F. Olson. We chose to risk the trip to the Vet. It was up to Jackson if it could make it.

We went back and forth weighing the pros and cons.

My gut told me to GO. Jackson was NOT behaving normally at all. We had to try for his sake.

We offered him the cat carrier and he got up and went right inside it-no fuss-no stress. It was a good start, but would we MAKE it to the Vet?

I asked Sam to drive slowly, to take the back road I'd just been on an hour before with Spencer. We stopped part way into the trip because Jackson started to cry. **I was sitting next to his carrier with the door open, my arm snaked around the door so I could offer him what comfort I could.** He was sitting awkwardly, crying as I scratched his neck. I wondered if I'd made a terrible mistake and if this trip was sending Jackson's heart into dangerous rhythm.

Stay tuned for part two...the shocking news about what ails Jackson and an update on Spencer's surgery results.

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Comments

Wed, 2012-12-12 16:09 — jmuwj (not verified)

RE: SPENCER & JACKSON ^[15]

Obviously this sounds ominous, so I send *PRAYERS* up and *healing thoughts of wellbeing and love* out to them. They are such handsome, fine cats! <3<3

Wed, 2012-12-12 23:13 — Shelli ^[16]

Love to ALL of you! OY! ^[17]

Love to ALL of you! OY!

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