

<p> Today was a very sad day. </p> <p> Today I lost a friend. </p> <p> The friend in question is Bacchus, a 17 year-old black cat. He was Teresa's cat ... and she'd had him since birth, or not long thereafter. Over time, he'd come to accept me as part of his world. Let's face it - cats choose to accept you or not, and not the other way around! Teresa was always going to be his favorite, of that I have no doubt, but it's amazing what happens when they realize that you provide food too. Suddenly, you have a new best friend! </p> <p> <a href="images/Bacchus1?1.jpg" rel="rokzoom" title="Sleepy boy"></a>He was a very laid-back kitty. Oh, he would definitely tell you when it was time to eat, or if he needed more water. But he was always the "purr-kitty" nonetheless. If you were taking a nap, he'd want to snuggle in with you. If you were watching TV, he'd end up sitting next to you. If you were eating breakfast, well, he'd probably hop up onto the table to join you. </p> <p> Time was getting the better of my friend Bacchus. His kidneys were slowly failing him. He was getting older. He didn't have the "ups" in his legs as he used to, though he would always surprise me with the occasional jump from floor to table to remind you that he "still had it". Even after having some surgery recently for an abscess, he made the heroic comeback. He was one tough little camper with a true fighting spirit. </p> <p> This past Monday, we could tell something wasn't right. It seemed like he'd lost his "zip", something that he'd had even when recovering from his surgery. He seemed to lose his drive to thrive. He became lethargic. We knew something was wrong. </p> <p> He made a trip to the vet yesterday for some blood work and some fluids, and I thought he'd make a comeback like he always had. But something was different. It was a long night, sleeping with him on the floor, hoping that he'd awaken me with the sound of his drinking or eating - sounds that would indicate that he'd regained some energy. </p> <p> We went back to the vet first thing this morning to find out that his bloodwork showed he was in renal failure. There really weren't any options for a 17 year-old cat. </p> <p> Bacchus left us peacefully at 9:21 this morning. </p> <p> It's been a very sad day. </p> <p> I can't write this now without feeling the despair of his loss. A lot of tears have been cried, and a lot of wonderful memories have been recounted. I know that my world has been made more loving, more vivid, more enjoyable by his presence. </p> <p> <a href="images/Bacchus2?1.jpg" rel="rokzoom" title="The glimmer in the eyes"></a>At 8:25, just before we headed out, I wrapped him up in my arms and went outside with him. The sun was just barely finding it's way through the trees. The birds were singing, and the squirrels were chattering. It was a strangely beautiful morning. He looked serene, happy, almost like he was ready for another comeback. There was that slight glimmer in his eyes, that look that could incite optimism as it had times before. </p> <p> I am glad he got to experience the beauty of the world around him for one last time this morning. </p> <p> It's been a few years since I've had a cat ("Biscuit") and decades since I've had a dog ("Tiny"). ♦But over the past few days, I have been acutely reminded of how pets become a part of us, an integral and loving part of our world. And in their passing, we are reminded of how fragile life really is, and the inherent beauty of all of our relationships. </p> <p> I'd give anything to hear him purr for me right now. </p> <p> I'll miss you B ... </p>