

How My Cat Helped Save My Life

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One morning a serial rapist slipped into my home.

It was a normal Sunday. Kitty sat by the sliding glass door to the backyard waiting for the door man (me) to open it so she could go play on the patio. When I didn't come instantly she began meowing her "Hurry up! Can't you see I'm waiting for you?" meow. I tried to stall her because letting her out meant I'd be stuck "babysitting" her and I had groceries to put away.

Although the patio was enclosed by a six foot fence, sometimes stray cats had jumped over it and tried to attack Kitty. Kitty, a declawed indoor cat with no fighting experience, needed a protector – me.

I wanted Kitty to be happy, but I had other things to do besides watch her sun herself and eat grass. As a compromise, I'd watch her for a while, go do a quick chore elsewhere, check on her, go do another little chore and so forth. I'd always leave the sliding door open a little so that she could run inside just in case an animal came onto the patio while my back was turned.

I never left Kitty alone for more than three or four minutes at a time. Little did I realize that it only takes that long for someone to quietly unlock the fence door, slip through the open sliding door and sneak into the house.

That particular Sunday I didn't feel like letting my cat rule my life. But Kitty was seventeen years old. She wouldn't be with me much longer, so I gave in to her. I was watching Kitty chase a bug when I remembered that I needed something from upstairs and galloped up the steps to get it. Within minutes, Kitty came galloping up the steps too.

I'd never seen Kitty run so fast in all her life, not even when she was a kitten. Now that she was older, diabetic, crippled by arthritis and weakened by heart, thyroid and kidney problems, her movements were usually quite slow and labored.

Then Kitty began circling around my feet making eerie sounds.

"What's going on?" I wondered.

Usually when Kitty was afraid, she'd go hide in the nearest closet. But now she had dashed up the steps like a wild woman and she'd never run in circles around me or made the kind of sounds she was making now. There were hisses and growls, but there was another element – howling; and her howls were combined with moans that seemed to emerge from the core of her eleven pound body. Within seconds, their message, "Danger! There's evil in the house!" penetrated every pore of my body.

I flew down the stairs to check if indeed there was evil in the house and I saw a quite unfriendly looking man in my kitchen. I began screaming. I didn't decide to scream. The screams just came out, each one louder than the next, and the man fled.

The police arrived in minutes. My description of the intruder matched that of a serial rapist whom the police had been trying to catch for over two years.

"You're lucky," one of them said. "If your cat hadn't tipped you off, that man could have snuck into your house, hidden somewhere and come up behind you. You'd have been caught off

guard and he could have done whatever he wanted with you ... even killed you.

“But because the cat alerted you, you were aware and able to be on the offensive. The intruder didn’t expect you to come down looking for him – and – luckily – your screams scared him off. Whatever you paid to get that cat – it was worth it.”

I hadn’t paid a dime for Kitty. My daughter had seen her at an animal shelter and fallen in love with her. Over the years, however, I spent thousands of dollars on Kitty and was often called a fool for doing so. But now it’s clear that I wasn’t a fool at all. I helped to save Kitty’s life and in return, that Sunday morning, she helped to save mine. After this incident, more lights were installed in the neighborhood and other safety measures were adopted. So perhaps Kitty helped others as well.