

THE DOLDRUMS

Mary Joslyn

I've been feeling blue the last two weeks – in the doldrums, I'd say. We needed to “put down” our beloved friend and companion of 16 years – our loving kitty cat, Quincy. He was almost human in his responses to us. Alan brought him home from the local animal shelter in Utah as a kitten. He was the cutest little ball of fur you've ever seen – grey striped with a large black strip going down his back and a big ruff of fur under his chin. I can remember his first try to climb our stairs to the second floor like you remember your baby's first steps. In time, we could say, “It's night-night time, Quincy; come show us the way.” And he'd dash up the stairs ahead of us. He adored Alan... oh he liked me- after all I fed him, but Alan was clearly his favorite. He'd make visits at night and sit on Alan's chest asking for a little loving. Then he'd retire to the end of the bed or his favorite chair.

In Utah, we allowed him to go out when he asked but always brought him in at night. I had a special spoon and plate that I beat with a specific cadence. He'd come running home through the woods when he heard this. Deer were prevalent on our property, and he made friends with them, and even a moose would appear every now and then. He showed no fear. But of course, with our move to Wind Crest, his outdoor days came to a close. I'm sure he missed it all but he did adjust to apartment living. We became much more important to him. We were willing to let this happen and spoiled him rotten. At the end, he lost weight and drank tons of water – not good signs, the vet said. A myriad of tests, surgeries, poling and prodding could have been done. We decided the kindest treatment was letting nature take its course. And nature did.

We left for an overnight a couple of weeks ago. He ate his food and acted very normal. But when we came home the next morning, he was not there to greet us. He always met us. We raced through the apartment – looking under the bed, in closets – all his usual haunts. We found him behind Alan's toilet, all hunkered down. He let out a mournful cry. We picked him up gently, wrapped him in a big towel and were immediately off to the vet. He was still alive when we arrived. She thought she felt a mass in his stomach and also thought he might have “thrown a clot,” which would account for his sudden lack of movement.

The decision was made to put him to sleep. They wrapped him in a large warm blanket and handed him to us on a couch in a special room with dim lights. A sedative was administered and they let us have a private time with him. They then came in with the real medicine. I asked how long it would take. “30 seconds at most,” she said. It was given and he was gone.

Yes, we lost our dear, dear Quincy. Many of you have gone through the same situation and know the pain. We have a box of ashes we are going to scatter around a magnificent pine tree next to our bedroom window. We will christen it the Quincy Tree

and see him climbing that pine tree and saying 'hello' to us from time to time. We can smile with our hearts at all the wonderful memories we have. He was a HAPPY, HAPPY cat. I won't let the doldrums stay around long.