

Sweet Dreams Tattoo



Our tiny kitty Tattoo had plenty of nicknames:



Tootie

Toots

Tootface

Little Itty-Bitty Kitty (she weighed in at less than 7 pounds full grown)

Little Orange Kitty

Gran-maw-maw (she was 20 years old)

Squirt

Ginkobilloba

I wrote a little while ago about how our little cross-eyed kitty had suddenly turned blind. She was having a hard time finding her litter. In fact, her world was shrinking fast as she tried to navigate her way anywhere. She had kidney disease and high blood pressure too. The kidney disease is what really took her.

Lots of older cats succumb to kidney disease. Tattoo hung in longer than normal. Most kitties quit eating when their creatine hits 5 or 6. Tattoo's recent blood test showed her creatine was at 9.2. Her vet was amazed she was still eating. But we knew she was very sick even though she was not in pain. It was time. The reason I am writing today is to describe the most comforting, tasteful, peaceful euthanasia process I have ever experienced. Even in a time of COVID-19 when you have to stay in your car while your pet visits the vet, our vet made this as painless as possible for all of us. I'll set the scene.

Instead of having to kiss her goodbye in the parking lot, all we had to do was wear masks and they let us in. They told us her room was ready. We walked into a far room that was very private. The lights were dim. There was quiet music playing. Candles were lit off to the side. In front of us, in the middle of the exam room floor lay a big puffy pillow about 3 feet in diameter and about 9 inches thick. It was draped in a somber purple-ish brown, velveteen fabric. There were two chairs for us to sit. No metal exam table to be seen. They don't even use those for regular visits. All work is done down at pet height.

We set her in her cage on the floor and the vet (Dr. Katie) came in for a visit. She explained the first thing they would do is

sedate Tattoo. They would bring her back after they gave her the meds and we could hold her while she fell asleep. We waited. The vet technician who had been Tattoo's babysitter when we traveled brought her back. As she reached her out for me to take, I laughed and commented about how Tattoo doesn't like to be held. Not true that day. Tattoo melted in my arms. She laid quietly. I patted her while she fell asleep. It took about five minutes. They left us alone for about 10 minutes so we could just be quiet with her.



Then the vet and another technician entered the room. The vet had the medication in her hands. I handed Tattoo off to the technician and she gently laid her on the big pillow. We were invited down onto the floor to be closer but we chose to sit in the chairs. In a time of social distancing we were sensitive to how close that would be. We had said our goodbyes at home so I didn't feel like I had to crowd in. The vet gently spread her fur to find a vein in her back leg. She inserted the butterfly needle and began to administer the final medication. The technician gently stroked Tattoo during this process. The vet took her time injecting the fluid, but it took less than a minute. She checked her pulse a few times over the next minute or two and she announced that Tattoo had passed.

We were allowed to sit with her again for as long as we wanted. We didn't hang out long. It was over. We had given them instructions to have her cremated so, they told us they'd take care of her after we left. We didn't have to see her carted off. The last we saw her, she was "sleeping" peacefully on that big, puffy pillow.

Keep this in your files if you want. You might want to share this with your vet for them to pick up some ideas. Over the years my husband and I have had to have a half-dozen pets euthanized. The procedures were not all peaceful experiences. We had two particularly traumatic last days at the vet when the procedures they used, unfortunately, didn't work the first time. None of them were set up as sensitively as this one. This was as good as it gets.