

If Mere Stories Could be Memories, and Memories Could be New Again

I can still recall how he would have wild brawls with his toy mouse and rattle around crazily in his paper bag all over the place. It makes me smile to visualize the memories Tucker left behind before he was peacefully put to sleep. If I could choose to go back to any day in history, it might be the day that Dad brought the fuzzy orange tabby kitten home. I could meet Tucker in his childhood days, get caught up in the excitement of a new playmate, and have more time to build my relationship with an old friend.

Now, most of the time you've probably heard of kittens referred to as adorable, but as I'm told, Tucker was so madly fuzzy that he was nearly ugly. Although, I think that he would have been wonderful in his own way; Mom says that when she met him, he was perfect. And cuteness goes far beyond just looks, you know. Tucker taught us a game in which two players sneak around the island in our kitchen until one opponent hustles around the corner to startle the other player. He was good at that game as well as the one where he would pounce on Mom's and Dad's feet at every move they made in the middle of the night. I have seen some memorable things myself, but I still wish I could have been a part of some of the tales I've heard.

I can imagine the look on Mom's face when she received Dad's call from Home Depot. Utter shock and giddy approval would be written all over her expression. I wish that I too could share in the ecstatic expectation of meeting the small creature whom Dad had found in a box at the Home Depot parking lot. The adoption of Tucker was a strange and new thing for Dad to propose up to this point, so the exploded ball of fur that would soon arrive was probably worth double the excitement. This lovable little guy would become the center of many memories, and I would be one of the first to meet him.

Tucker was an extraordinary pet in a sense that I think is uncommon to most animals. Some pets are special because of personality or friendship, and Tucker had both, but can you recall a cat that consistently walked into the room at those important times of prayer? Have you looked into his eyes and felt a sense of peace because you think he somehow understands the love of his Maker in a way that many humans neglect? When we put Tucker to sleep in order to stop his suffering, I think I realized just how special and close he was. Oh, if only it wasn't so late for me to see this perspective!

Indeed, I do miss Tucker being around. But I still smile at the bond I had with him my whole life, even though I sometimes didn't show it like one ought to. At times I ponder how much he really understood. I'm sure he was a delight to the one who crafted him; his personality and manners expressed that. So then, maybe you can see why I would rather go back to the day when Tucker moved in than any other day. I see that pets are special, temporary gifts; from experience, I deeply suggest you love them as such.