

## Friends

Twenty-one years ago, my husband gave me Sam, an eight-week-old schnauzer<sup>1)</sup>, to help ease the loss of our daughter. Sam and I developed a very special bond over the next fourteen years. It seemed nothing that happened could ever change that.

At one point, my husband and I decided to relocate<sup>2)</sup> from our New York apartment to a new home in New Jersey. After we were there awhile, our neighbor, whose cat had recently had kittens, asked us if we would like one. We were a little apprehensive<sup>3)</sup> about Sam's jealousy and how he would handle his turf<sup>4)</sup> being invaded, but we decided to risk it and agreed to take a kitten.

We picked a little, gray, playful ball of fur. It was like having a roadrunner in the house. She raced around chasing imaginary mice and squirrels and vaulted from table to chair in the blink of an eye, so we named her Lightning.

At first, Sam and Lightning were very cautious with each other and kept their distance. But slowly, as the days went on, Lightning started following Sam--up the stairs, down the stairs, into the kitchen to watch him eat, into the living room to watch him sleep. As time passed, they became inseparable<sup>5)</sup>. When they slept, it was always together; when they ate, it was always next to each other. When I played with one, the other joined in. If Sam barked at something, Lightning ran to see what it was. When I took either one out of the house, the other was always waiting by the door when we returned. That was the way it was for years.

Then, without any warning, Sam began suffering from convulsions<sup>6)</sup> and was diagnosed<sup>7)</sup> as having a weak heart. I had no other choice but to have him put down. The pain of making that decision, however, was nothing compared with what I experienced when I had to leave Sam at the vet and walk into our house alone. This time, there was no Sam for Lightning to greet and no way to explain why she would never see her friend again.

In the days that followed, Lightning seemed heart-broken. She could not tell me in words that she was suffering, but I could see the pain and disappointment in her eyes whenever anyone opened the front door, or the hope whenever she heard a dog bark.

The weeks wore on and the cat's sorrow seemed to be lifting. One day as I walked into our living room, I happened to glance down on the floor next to our sofa where we had a sculptured replica of Sam that we had bought a few years before. Lying next to the statue, one arm wrapped around the statue's neck, was Lightning, contentedly sleeping with her best friend.

□by Karen Del Tufo

## 友谊长存

2 1年前为了帮助我减轻失去女儿的悲痛，我丈夫给了我山姆。那是头才8周大的德国

髯狗。在以后的14年间，山姆和我形成了一种十分特殊的亲密关系。似乎无论发生什么事情都无法改变这种关系。有一年我和丈夫决定从纽约的公寓搬到新泽西州的新家。住下一段时间后，邻居的猫下了小猫，问我们想不想要一只。我们有点担心山姆会嫉妒，会因领地被侵占而有何举措。不过我们还是决定冒冒险，答应养一只。

我们挑了只毛茸球似的爱玩的小灰猫。家里像是添了只跑得飞快的走鹃。她到处追逐想像中的老鼠和松鼠，一眨眼的工夫就从桌子上跳到椅子上。所以我们管她叫“闪电”。

一开始，山姆和闪电互相戒备，保持一定距离。后来闪电逐渐开始跟着山姆，上楼、下楼、进厨房瞧它吃东西、进起居室看它睡觉。随着时光的流逝，它们俩成了形影不离的朋友。总是在一起睡觉、一块儿吃东西。我逗一个玩时，另一个也随之参与。如果山姆冲着什么东西吠叫时，闪电就会跑去看个究竟。我带一个出门，回家时另一个总会在门前等着。多年来始终如此。

然而，有一天，事先毫无任何预兆，山姆开始出现痉挛。经诊断是心力衰竭。我别无选择只有让它毫无痛苦地死去。我做这个决定是痛苦的，然而，这与我山姆留在兽医诊所独自一人走入家门时的痛苦却是无法相比的。这一回，再没有让闪电迎接的山姆了，我也无法跟她解释为什么她永远见不到她的朋友了。

在以后的日子里，闪电像是心碎了。她无法用言语向我们倾诉她的悲痛，但每当有人打开前门时，我从她眼神可以看到她的痛苦与失望，每当她听到狗叫时，我从她眼神也可以看到她的希望。

日子一周周过去，猫的悲痛似乎也逐渐减轻。有一天我走进起居室，无意中朝沙发旁的地板看了一眼，那里摆着几年前买的山姆雕塑复制品。闪电一只前腿缠着它的脖子，心满意足地躺在雕像旁边，和她最好的朋友睡在了一起。

### NOTE 注释：

schnauzer [ˈʃnaʊzə] n. [动]髯狗(德国种,刚毛浓眉)

relocate [ˈri:ləʊkeɪt] v. 重新部署

apprehensive [ˌæpriˈhensɪv] adj. 忧虑的，担忧的

turf [tɜ:f] n. 领地

inseparable [ɪnˈsepərəbəl] adj. 不能分的

convulsion [kənˈvʌlʃən] n. 惊厥，痉挛

diagnose [ˈdaɪəgnəʊz] v. 诊断