

My Food Chain Gang – Restored!

I have a wonderful tale to tell – a God story, and I love those.

A few weeks ago now, I met a friend for lunch at McD's. Later that evening, as my hubby inquired about my day and asked how my lunch was, I talked about how much I enjoyed hearing my friend's updates on her beloved cat, Mya. I even lamented, "I wish I could have a kitten." I seem to be an animal person you say (I AM) – so why don't I just get a kitten? Well, I'm allergic to cats, otherwise I would probably have a cat (or two or three or...). I actually had one for 10 years and loved her very much, but I was very allergic to her and that was tough for both of us. But anyway – back to this Friday night a few weeks ago – I'm wanting a cat. Saturday morning, the early risers in our family were alerted by an "alarming" sound in our backyard. They found 2 cats fighting on the fence, and across the yard, 3 baby bunnies crying out in alarm. Sammie was dispatched to alert me (still in bed, allowed to sleep-in, THANK YOU Hubby!), and in the now-calm backyard I found 3 exhausted baby bunnies resting while my kids were comforting one of the stray cats. The stray was a friendly fellow; he had black and white fur, green eyes, and a few extra toes. I couldn't believe the obliging attitude – pleasure even – that this cat was deriving from the attention my kids were doting upon it.

I couldn't resist petting this friendly kitty, and when I did, something strange happened. Well, actually, it was nothing at all that happened. No sniffles, no itches, no hives – no allergy symptoms. How could it be that I wasn't allergic to this cat? For the record, Hubby is also allergic to cats but didn't react to this one either. So anyway, we let the super friendly tuxedo cat in the house. He walked right in and

looked around, and it really did seem as if he had lived here for years – and he's been here ever since! Just fit right in with our entire family, and it's not an easy feat to forge a seamless transition from outdoor feral cat to indoor family cat, especially when the new family = 5 kids (3 girls ages 12, 8, 5 and 2 boys ages 3 and 8 mos.), a dog, a parrot, a rabbit, and 2 rats. But saying we've had a smooth transition would be an understatement!

What a gift he has been. A gift from God for our family... to bring us together as we welcome a new member for however long we're allowed to take care of him. A gift for us to cherish together while we play with him. A gift for me to help ease the mounting stress I've felt lately. Have you seen the medical research on how a purring cat relieves stress? It exists, trust me!

So to acknowledge this gift for us and to honor our God, "Mittens" became "Moses" – and it is cute when the kids rhyme about "Moses with the extra toe-ses". Moses seems very adept at using his paws, and he acts very cat-like around the house, which I love – just why I wanted to have a cat around. For now, we are enjoying Moses and his company. He gets along with all of our other pets and is wonderfully tolerant of the kids – he fits in our family like the missing piece of a puzzle; not that any of us realized there was a piece missing before Moses came. So could it be that "my food chain gang" has been restored?

Both an article I read and a devotional I heard recently happened to be about the same subject: knowing and having the faith and satisfaction that God sees you, even if you feel invisible to the world. God uses many aspects of His creation to bring people closer to having meaningful relationships with Him and to help us receive His messages, even animals. My family was getting burnt out from a busy schedule, and it really rejuvenated the kids' spirits to get to have this cat. And they aren't the only ones ☐

“...You are the God who sees me...” from Genesis 16:13



This is a picture of our oldest daughter holding the cat. No, my 12-year-old does not normally wear make-up; this was “spa night” ☐

God is so good!!

A Most Blessed Day

Tuesday September 27 2011 was an amazing day. Our entire family was up before the crack of dawn because it was my husband’s big day in Findlay Ohio – his meeting and official interview with the church conference that was going to decide if they agreed with the local church board’s recommendation that my husband be their new pastor. We allowed plenty of extra time that morning because we weren’t sure what bumps we might encounter while rousing 4 kids out of bed while it was still dark outside. But it went perfectly – all the kids were agreeable and all were ready before it was time to leave, unprecedented! No one complained about going to the babysitter’s; actually, they seemed excited about it. My husband and I dropped off the kids, and as we turned onto the long country road that would take us most of the way there, I noticed a stunning effect of the sunrise. A beam of orange

light was coming down from the clouds – not in the east where the rest of the sunrise was visible, but off to the west. It was really more like a column of soft orange light – an orange rainbow. It was beautiful, unlike anything either of us had ever seen, and we enjoyed it together until it faded into the dawning of the new day.

The almost 2 hour drive was most pleasant; my husband and I always enjoy each other's company. Plus our spirits were buoyed by the kids' great behavior that morning and the blessing of the orange rainbow.

My husband's meeting went well while I explored Findlay by myself a bit. I found an African Grey Parrot (my favorite kind of bird!) at the pet store, so I played with her for a while and checked out some other stores. We ate a wonderful lunch, and then my husband got the call – the conference approved him; he is the new pastor of Union Chapel! Now the waiting is over, and we know for sure the direction that God has been pointing us. We finished out our day in Findlay with a movie and another peaceful long drive, just the two of us. As we left the town of Findlay and headed out into the Ohio countryside, there was a full-size, full-color rainbow in all its glory. Two rainbows in one day (occurring almost 12 hours and dozens of miles apart)? They seemed to perfectly epitomize God's blessings on this day for us, beginning with the kids being so great, followed by our long drives going safely and smoothly, and finally, the good news about my husband's new calling. Does God speak to people using rainbows? For sure, He used a rainbow to illustrate his promise that He will never destroy the earth with flood again in Genesis 9:11-15:

"11 I establish my covenant with you: Never again will all life be destroyed by the waters of a flood; never again will there be a flood to destroy the earth." 12 And God said, "This is the sign of the covenant I am making between me and you and every living creature with you, a covenant for all generations

to come: 13 I have set my rainbow in the clouds, and it will be the sign of the covenant between me and the earth. 14 Whenever I bring clouds over the earth and the rainbow appears in the clouds, 15 I will remember my covenant between me and you and all living creatures of every kind. Never again will the waters become a flood to destroy all life.”

And, God loves it when we notice His works of art in nature and offer praise to Him – there are more than a few examples of this in the Bible as well. My husband and I saw the rainbows as messages to us from God; reassurance to us as we embark on yet another new journey at this stage in our lives, stamps of approval for a very blessed day and extra nods of encouragement from Our Heavenly Father as we might be tempted to be distracted by our uncertainties.

It was a very blessed day spent with my favorite person in the whole world. I am so proud of him for everything that he is, everything he is becoming, and for his being hand-picked by God to take on this incredibly awesome responsibility. And to say that I am honored to realize that I am the one who gets to experience this life by his side is a gross understatement. For these reasons and others, I thank God every day.



Unfortunately, this isn't either of the rainbows we saw the other day because I didn't have my camera with me to take pictures. But I figured that I needed a

picture of a beautiful rainbow on this post! □