

YET ANOTHER CAT TALE

9/16/97

My first column was about a faux pas that happened to myself. This is about the latest I will publicly admit too for several reasons, chief of which is that my wife says I haven't the hair to do it.

It began this past September 4 when the UPS guy delivered my latest brainstorm. It was one spot flea treatment for dogs and, I presumed, cats. Our two dogs and cats had been on a similar program, ably administered by Dr. Meg Brooke, since early spring. Lacking, enough for a final dose, it seemed convenient to order it from my latest unsolicited pet supply catalog.

The treatment was given and the directions read two hours later as I threw the cartons out. Caution: Do Not Use On Cats. Well, thinks I, what's done is done, and what can happen to a cat, they're tough.

I had my answer two hours later at 9:45 p.m. Boxer, our male cat, staggered across the kitchen, eyes glazed, voiding his bladder over himself and the floor.

Knowing, Dr. Brooker had two small children to care for and not really wanting her to know how stupid I am, I needed another alternative, and quickly. A call to the Countryside Veterinary Clinic in Lowville was answered by Dr. Dawn Simmerman, who was on duty. Get both cats there as soon as possible, I was told.

Cleo, the female, was placed in a pet carrier and the nearly comatose Boxer wrapped in a towel in a laundry basket. The sound of the pounding rain and wind was accompanied by Cleo's incessant yowls as I headed down the Moose River Road. Turning onto Rt. 12 in Port Leyden, a more ominous sound was added to the cacophony. Old Box began to thrash uncontrollably in what sounded in the dark cab of the truck like his death throes. My thoughts of how I was going to amend to my wife and granddaughter for my latest dumb move were suddenly interrupted. Fifteen pounds of screeching cat began to hurtle around the cab of that truck and my neck. It ended when he wedged himself between the seat and passenger door and the air was permeated with the unmistakable smell of cat droppings.

Boxer arrived with heavy convulsions and Dr. Simmerman soon had him stabilized, then tended to Cleo. Boxer was left in her care and Cleo returned home with me to be returned two days later after exhibiting signs of stress.

Both cats are back home and well. I feel I have learned another lesson, and it will be the last dumb stunt I will ever do. Past experience has taught me otherwise, and I can only hope they will not be as serious as this one. The \$293.58, time, anxiety and humiliation It cost can only be added to a long list of others I have accumulated as I stumble on through this life. This, like most of them, was not pretty.

I can bear the ripping and tearing of the furniture and of the sixteen hundred-dollar big screen TV. The daily victim body parts and hair strewn throughout the house.

To make a long story short, if the cats make the two women in my life happy I am too.