

My Poor Little Bird

JJ, my parakeet, is very sick. I had parakeets when I was younger, and I know enough about them to know that we are lucky that he's still alive. His chirping and squawking gradually decreased until I realized the other day that he doesn't vocalize at all anymore. He is very lathargic, and sits puffed up on his perch where he loses his balance every few minutes. His tail is bobbing when he breathes, which is a sign of respiratory distress, and he has some discoloring around his cere (nose), which indicates discharge. The other day, I noticed that he was sitting on the bottom of his cage, which is a sign of imminent death in parakeets. Based upon my research (past experience, the internet, and bothering the heck out of the local pet store), JJ seems to have a respiratory infection – something that is often fatal for small birds.

But he's hung on a few days now from when I first believed his death was imminent when he was at the bottom of his cage. After all, parakeets' instincts are to hide their illnesses. If they show any sign of being sick, wild birds will be cast out by their flock, so if captive birds allow signs of illness to show, it's often too late to save them. I got some birdie antibiotics, and I'm hoping that he is drinking his water where the meds are. He is still eating, and that's a great sign. We put a blanket over the cage, and are trying to keep him warm and calm so he can rest and get well. It's just touch and go at this point, so I'm praying for my little bird. I got so attached to the little guy! I got him right after my beloved dog passed away, and seeing my happy little bird helped me feel at least a tiny bit better. And now I'm watching him suffer; it's hard. I want to move him back upstairs where it's a little warmer and quieter, but I'm afraid of stressing him out too much, which is basically the same reason I don't want to take him to the vet. I guess I'll

wait for him to improve a little more before moving him upstairs; that's the only plan I have right now.

Like I said, he does seem to be improving – the loss of balance on his perch seems to have subsided anyway. But he still does not look well, and he is not vocalizing. He is less than a year old, so maybe his youth is keeping him strong and resilient. Poor JJ! He is just a little parakeet, but he means a lot to me. If you could send out a little prayer for JJ, we'd appreciate it. And pray for my husband while you're at it; he's fighting a nasty cold. Obviously, Hubby's health is a billion times more important than JJ's, but if I wrote a blog post every time Hubby got sick... well, I wouldn't have time for that! Besides, Hubby's illness is not life-threatening. I wonder if Hubby and JJ have the same thing? That's one thing that stinks about this time of year – all the illness! Wish I could transfer some of my super-immune system over to Hubby, who seems to get EVERY single thing that comes our way...

Crazy, Rain Day Of Late Winter

I kept telling people that the 60+ degree temperature and sunny skies of last week was premature. This weekend saw a return to more seasonal weather. Saturday, I tagged along to the zoo. Since I had to be back for mass at 6, I drove myself. I did fine until I exited the turnpike and took the wrong branch off. Fortunately, my mistake was remedied quickly as all I needed to do was turn around and head back.

Upon paying for admission, I decided to get a membership to

the place since for some reason, I have been quite a bit of zooing lately. Not that that is a bad thing... as the slogan goes "I Love My ZOO!" and not a bad deal either. Discount prices to many zoos throughout the country plus I can bring a friend free each time. Plus, I got to help a complete stranger by allowing him to get in on my pass.

Because the weather was cold and rainy, our band spent most of the few hours in the indoor exhibits. The little ones spent a large part of it at the indoor play area. They even took part in an activity in which they made toys for the birds! The little one occupied himself with chalk and a beehive. My little buddy!

After the zoo, we checked out Crazy Prices! A very cool store with CRAZY Prices! I picked up a fleece OSU blanket for \$5 which usually runs upwards of \$30. Will come in very handy later tonight! I looked at some hooded sweatshirts that were just as reasonable... BUT... wouldn't ya know... the largest they had was a Medium. I'm sure I'll be back!

After returning and singing at mass, a friend and I closed the evening by watching *Night at the Museum: Battle of the Smithsonian*. And this leads me to wish everyone a Happy Pi Day. If you don't get the connection, watch the very fun film! We won't get into the hour loss. Just happy that is behind us and can now catch up on a bit on the rest! What a Super Saturday!

Freedom And Jeff

I received another touching email forward, and I have to admit that I [snopes-ed](#) it because it sounded so fake. It's the story of Freedom the eagle and her friend Jeff – here is their

story:

Freedom and I have been together 10 years this summer. She came in as a baby in 1998 with two broken wings. Her left wing doesn't open all the way even after surgery, it was broken in 4 places. She's my baby.

When Freedom came in she could not stand and both wings were broken. She was emaciated and covered in lice. We made the decision to give her a chance at life, so I took her to the vets office. From then on, I was always around her. We had her in a huge dog carrier with the top off, and it was loaded up with shredded newspaper for her to lay in. I used to sit and talk to her, urging her to live, to fight; and she would lay there looking at me with those big brown eyes. We also had to tube feed her for weeks.

This went on for 4-6 weeks, and by then she still couldn't stand. It got to the point where the decision was made to euthanize her if she couldn't stand in a week. You know you don't want to cross that line between torture and rehab, and it looked like death was winning. She was going to be put down that Friday, and I was supposed to come in on that Thursday afternoon. I didn't want to go to the center that Thursday, because I couldn't bear the thought of her being euthanized; but I went anyway, and when I walked in everyone was grinning from ear to ear. I went immediately back to her cage; and there she was, standing on her own, a big beautiful eagle. She was ready to live. I was

just about in tears by then. That was a very good day.

We knew she could never fly, so the director asked me to glove train her. I got her used to the glove, and then to jesses, and we started doing education programs for schools in western Washington. We wound up in the newspapers, radio (believe it or not) and some TV. Miracle Pets even did a show about us.



In the spring of 2000, I was diagnosed with non-Hodgkin's lymphoma. I had stage 3, which is not good (one major organ plus everywhere), so I wound up doing 8 months of chemo. Lost the hair – the whole bit. I missed a lot of work. When I felt good enough, I would go to Sarvey and take Freedom out for walks. Freedom would also come to me in my dreams and help me fight the cancer. This happened time and time again.

Fast forward to November 2000, the day after Thanksgiving. I went in for my last checkup. I was told that if the cancer was not all gone after 8 rounds of chemo, then my last option was a stem cell transplant. Anyway, they did the tests; and I had to come back Monday for

the results. I went in Monday, and I was told that all the cancer was gone.

So the first thing I did was get up to Sarvey and take the big girl out for a walk. It was misty and cold. I went to her flight and jessed her up, and we went out front to the top of the hill. I hadn't said a word to Freedom, but somehow she knew. She looked at me and wrapped both her wings around me to where I could feel them pressing in on my back (I was engulfed in eagle wings), and she touched my nose with her beak and stared into my eyes, and we just stood there like that for I don't know how long. That was a magic moment. We have been soul mates ever since she came in. This is a very special bird.

On a side note: I have had people who were sick come up to us when we are out, and Freedom has some kind of hold on them. I once had a guy who was terminal come up to us and I let him hold her. His knees just about buckled and he swore he could feel her power coarse through his body. I have so many stories like that.

I never forget the honor I have of being so close to such a magnificent spirit as Freedom.

Hope

you enjoy this.

Jeff

Awww, that eagle sounds so sweet! So how did we get stuck with this big red jerk?



Can you dance.

I think I will have to admit this video shows someone who can dance better than I do. It doesn't really take a lot.

[Dancing Parrot](#)

I thought I knew how to embed a video, but I can't seem to make it work. Oh well, it is worth the time to click on it.

A post about a big spider

It is a seasonal thing... I was going to post a news article about a big spider in Australia, but after seeing some of the pictures, I decided not to. If you really want to look it up, it was about a spider the size of a person's hand dining on a bird.

What really interests me is that there are so many different arachnids around the world. I always thought of the tarantulas as the big spiders. The tarantulas are not web weavers in general. But here was a rather large spider in Australia that actually spun a web that caught the bird.

Anyway what caught my attention to this story was the bird being the victim here. If I remember the song correctly the bird ate the spider, after it ate the fly....

Now who started going through the rest of the song???