

Gracie's Colorful Language

Well, I have been called every name in the book and then some. My lineage has been questioned back to pre-recorded history. I really don't know where Gracie learned her ugly language, but I feel sure it was from the two cats we lovingly (sort of) call the flying monkeys. After all, Figaro and Mystic were found in a trash dump. They may have associated with some lower-class critters and learned their cussing there.

Our little Gracie is the baby of the feline livestock who live with us. All of them were foundlings. That's a nice way to say feral, thrown away, unloved cats. There is a special place in Hell for those people who toss animals aside or abuse them. Mama called them Sweet Old Boys or Sweet Old Biddies, but that's because Mama didn't cuss. (SOB)

If our son James had his way, we would be running a rescue center for animals. Snell and I are lucky that we have only four cats. James would have brought home every critter known to man. When a muskrat got hit in front of the house, he wanted to bring it back and nurse it to health. Let me set that scene for you. Imagine me in a pale pink linen suit trying to capture this injured muskrat. James is calling his daddy telling him to come help us. Thank goodness, the muskrat ran into the woods. James did tell his daddy that if he saw the muskrat and it was dead to put it in the freezer. He would mount it for posterity. Sigh. You do remember he has studied taxidermy, right?

We have been using Gwinnett Animal Hospital in Snellville for over forty years. Dr. Bill Connolly was our primary physician there until he retired. He forgets that we know where he lives. We have been known to take a dog over to his home for treatment using his kitchen as a medical triage center.

We don't actually have "cats." We have furry babies in our family—all four of them. They should have a personal physician, so we now see Drs. Padgett, Zadspinner or Churchill. We take whoever is available when we can catch a cat. Don't laugh. If you have cats, you know what I am talking about. If you have a dog, you just say, "Come on."

Dr. Katherine Padgett was the vet Gracie and I saw on this particular visit. I love that woman. She was there for us for our little Ramona. That is another story in itself. Ramona inhaled a bot fly larva and was brain-damaged. By the time we had finished treating her, we had bought the University of Georgia a new veterinary wing.

Before we went to the vet, I played classical music for Gracie and spoke soothingly to her. On our way, I prepared her for every turn the car was about to take. The inside of the car was filled with such vicious ugly language that I think blue smoke was coming out of the rear windows.

We arrived at the vet's office and went inside. All the time, Gracie was saying, "NOOOO" in an ear-piercing shriek. When we enter the consultation room, Kat, one of the vet techs, met us there. I had just told Gracie that it would be "Okay," and she had just told me, "NOOOOOOOO, ^()*\$&%\$&%\$#\$(&, it wouldn't." Kat took Gracie from the carrier and went into the back room. No sound at all. Total silence.

Kat and Dr. Padgett returned with Gracie. They began telling me what a sweetheart she was. How easy it was to trim her nails. I have been trying to give that cat a manicure for three weeks. I get one nail cut, and then someone bleeds and Gracie escapes. "She is such a cutie, just a sweet little thing," Kat continued to sing Gracie's praises.

This demon from Hell is a cute, sweet little thing??? When we are trying to tend to her or trim her nails at home, she is six pounds of venomous rage.

I paid the bill, still in shock that Gracie was being so nice. The moment I opened the door and got outside, her gutter language resumed. The litany of foul expletives escalated as we got closer to the car, and she talked ugly all the way home.

"She is such a cutie, just a sweet little thing," the doctor had said. With me, Gracie was screeching at the top of her lungs. I just knew she was screaming in one long

piercing threat, “NOOOOOO, I will get you for this.” That sweetness business was all an act. Gracie, the angry voice of Satan, had returned. Linda Blair had nothing on this little cutie. I was considering stopping at the closest church that performed an exorcism.

The moment my husband Snell got the carrier into the kitchen and opened the door, she became silent. She didn’t try to come out. She just sat there like a royal personage surveying her lowly servants. Then, she slowly stood, exited the carrier and flicked her tail. She walked straight away from us, tail held high, and with great distaste. I am positive she was saying, “Kiss my fanny, peasants.”