

## Charlotte Serelis

(2006 – May 2019)



Beautiful, funny, quirky, sweet Charlotte died on May 16th, cradled the loving arms of her mom. Since she was a daddy's girl, it was only fitting that her last vision was that of her dad's face. She died from a brain tumor diagnosed in February, and we cherished every day of the symptom-free and happy 6 weeks that followed her high-tech radiation treatments in late March. She was 13 years old.

Charlotte seemed like the 'background' cat of the Serelis household – a quiet and calm presence, but quick to give you a purr. She was a contrast to Nellie the drama-queen and Jake the love-bug. She was extremely bonded to Jake and most of the time they were inseparable – napping and grooming each other and wrestling while waiting for dinner.

We had many nicknames for Charlotte: Cha Cha, Charlotte-the-harlot, Cha-chie, and Chacha-lina. She knew her name and would come when called, saving us from having to look for her. She loved boxes, paper bags, and sleeping on the brown filler paper that came in Chewy's boxes. She especially liked to sit in a box on its side, as though she were at a bus stop kiosk – and sometimes her brother Jake would join her, the two of them sitting side-by-side in the box, just "waiting for a bus". She had a habit of following me into the bedroom at PJ time, expecting to play 'catch' the birdie or mousie on the fishing pole, leaping in the air to snag the toy, and then dragging it off with the pole trailing behind her, proud of her trophy. Along with Mario, she was very fearful of thunder – now, every time we have a storm, I'll think of her.....hiding in the powder room.



Charlotte had some funny, quirky habits – like sitting in the laundry room sink (left), but most notably, running into the coat closet and getting shut inside...*time and time again*. She must have enjoyed it in there, because she would sneak in every opportunity she had. Although we did our best to shoo her out, there were many times when she spent a few hours in that closet..... without a peep, only to be discovered when we noticed she wasn't up and about. Sometimes she would jiggle the door to let us know she was in there, and sometimes Jake gave us a clue. But every time we opened the door after she had been confined in the closet, she'd pop out like a rocket and then walk around as if nothing out of the ordinary had happened.

Continuing on the door theme, every morning after Bill's shower, Charlotte would jiggle the bathroom door to be let in and would proceed to do a figure-8 dance around his legs, stopping once in a while to take a love-bite on his calves.

She had an odd trait of taking a big hop like a giant bunny to escape from us when we would try to pick her up. She could hear me - from anywhere in the house - take the laser light pen off the key rack, and she'd come running at full speed to play her favorite game: catch the laser dot. She'd run up the 6 steps to the landing and then jump straight up 3- 4 feet to get the dot that was traveling up the wall. I wish we had taken a video of it....hindsight is 20-20.

Charlotte would drive Bill nuts wanting to go in and then out of the conservatory, where he watched TV behind a closed sliding glass door. She'd scratch at the door with her front paws, standing on her back legs and crying to get into the conservatory, and then after a few minutes of wandering around, would do the same antic to get out of the conservatory. After getting up and down a few times, Bill would pick her up and she'd settle down on his chest as he sat in his chair – the two of them typically falling asleep together in front of the TV, often with her front paws on his face.

Charlotte and Mario (Molly is on the right, below) were great buddies, often found sleeping together on a dog bed. And sometimes, Mario would sleep in (on) one of the cat beds. In February when she temporarily lost her sight from the tumor, she managed to find that familiar dog bed and Mario would gently settle near her so as not to disturb her.



But Jake was her 'other half' and they had an intense sibling bond from the very beginning when they came to us as Animal Advocates foster kittens – Charlotte would cry if Jake was not in her line of sight, as I discovered when I took their photos for the adoption listing. We adopted her and Jake a few months into the foster care period when their kittenhood waned into kitteenagers and it was clear that they had a calming effect on Nellie, the other foster kitten we adopted, who was – and still is – a “wild woman” (the calico on the left). They were my three amigos.



Most of the pictures we have of Charlotte are ones with her brother close by: cuddling with her, squashed together in a laundry basket or cat bed, in the kitty condo perches, or sleeping entwined. Like us, Jake misses her terribly, yowling in the middle of the night – something he never used to do.

My fondest memory is of Charlotte and me playing a form of *1-2-3-Red Light*. As I descended the back stairs, reaching the landing, and turning 90° for the next set of steps, I was eye-level with the upstairs hallway. When Charlotte was in that hallway, all she could see was my head. As I went down a step and disappeared from her view, she'd stalk me by hunkering low and advancing down the hall. When I popped my head up to the landing level again, she'd freeze. This stalking and freezing with my head popping up and down went on until I reached the bottom step and she was leaning into the stairwell. No other cat ever played that game with me and I'll remember her every time I go down those stairs.



We will never forget our sweet Charlotte and her loving gentle quiet funny spirit. Charlotte, with one solid black paw and a single extra long white whisker...what a beautiful cat she was.

We especially miss her now that it is spring and the birds are singing – because now there is no Charlotte to chirp-meow along with them.

Donations in her memory can be made to Animal Advocates – [www.animal-advocates.org](http://www.animal-advocates.org)

*In life I loved you dearly,  
In death I love you still.  
In my heart you hold a place  
no one could ever fill.*

*If tears could build a stairway  
and heartache make a lane,  
I'd walk the path to Heaven  
and bring you back again.*

*"I would give everything I own...just to have you back again...  
just to touch you once again."*

BREAD / David Gates - 1972