Pets Talk Back

Is it really love? Or do you just stick around for the treats?

July 1, 2003 By Kayreth Williams and Liz Galst

Snowball on life with Rosemary Brown-Muhammad, 47
Diagnosed ’02
Albuquerque, NM

What do you like to do best?
Put out candles with my paws, get my long, white hair on Mommy’s clothes, and snuggle a lot with her. We are all each other has.

Josh on life with Richard Goldman, 54
Diagnosed ’85
San Francisco

Are you in it for the love or the food?
It’s almost always about the food—or some petting.

Are you two the same animal?
We both like to sleep, and we’re both clean. But anything I’d eat raw, he cooks. Why bother?

Butch, Noha and Whitey on life with Jack Young, 27

Butch, Noha and Whitey on life with Jack Young, 27
Diagnosed ’95
Albuquerque, NM

Like master, like dogs?
Well, we can clean our plates, and he can’t. Plus, Butch is the only truly butch one of the four of us—even though Jack thinks the three of us were born bi or gay. He considers us his kids, though, and his partner as our other daddy. And we love him back, especially when he takes us for rides in his car.

Sunshine on life with Carie Broecker, 37

Sunshine on life with Carie Broecker, 37
Diagnosed ’87
Pacific Grove, CA

Have you two shared any mystical experiences?
We visited a psychic once. She told Carie that I’d said, “Do not worry. You are healed. You will be around for a long time.” The psychic knew nothing about Carie’s health condition. That confirmed that I am Carie’s guardian angel.

And how do you fill that role?
I remind her that an afternoon nap with me is a very good thing.

Joey on life with Jeffery Lactaoen, 37

Joey on life with Jeffery Lactaoen, 37
Diagnosed ’85
San Francisco, CA

Are you guys the same animal?
We both tend to get really hyper and bounce off the walls.

Is there anything you want to do for Jeffery that’s beyond your power?
I would give him a stronger arm so that he can throw my toys better. I would also take away his virus and make sure he is never alone.

Maggie on life with Kelly Tracy, 40

Maggie on life with Kelly Tracy, 40
Diagnosed ’02
Decatur, Illinois

Do you make Kelly laugh?
One day she took a lot of pictures of me in a raincoat she bought me. The hood was too big and I couldn’t see where I was going. Whenever she looks at them,she cracks up.

Harry on life with Ron Sherman, 55

Harry on life with Ron Sherman, 55
Diagnosed ’89
San Francisco

Just who chose whom here?

When Ron opened the door to my cage at the SPCA, I crawled up and kissed him on the nose. He smiled and announced, “The hunter has been captured by the game.”

Do you have any special talents?
Ron says I can fetch like a dog, though I don’t appreciate being compared to those creatures.

Kim-Chi on life with Luis Santiago, 61 (and wife Carolina)

Kim-Chi on life with Luis Santiago, 61 (and wife Carolina)
Diagnosed ’86
Adjuntas, Puerto Rico

Why are you named after the pungent Korean pickled cabbage?
Because I’m both stinky and wonderful. My dad found me lonely and hungry on the street. Now I’m queen of the house.

How do you spend your days?
Chasing the neighbors’ chickens. And when the neuropathy in my dad’s legs gets him down, I make him laugh with one of my tricks.

Chester on life with Pali Boucher, 40

Chester on life with Pali Boucher, 40
Diagnosed ’93
San Francisco

How have you improved Pali’s life?

When she leans over to look out the window, I give her a little bite on the behind. She never sees it coming.

Are you two the same animal?
We’re both full of love and happy to be alive and well. Also, she might be getting gray like me, but you’d never know it with that Lady Clairol she uses.

Cheyenne on life with Kory Montoya, 37

Cheyenne on life with Kory Montoya, 37
Diagnosed ’01

Albuquerque, NM

Are you two the same animal?
We like to watch the same TV shows. But I haven’t learned how to use the remote yet, so that might change.

How’s the food?
I love it. But when I’m upset that he’s left me alone, I’ll hide my food behind the door and eat cookies instead.

Kimoko on Stephen Miller, 49

Kimoko on Stephen Miller, 49
Diagnosed ’83
Washington, DC

What do you really think of Stephen?
I love him! He spoils me—steaks for dinner when I’m good and walks twice a day. Most dogs would kill to be in my paws. P.S. He’d also want me to mention he’s looking for a boyfriend.

Maggie on life with Kelly Tracy, 40

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