

## Serena the Cat

*by Kenita Gibbins*

My favorite animal lives with us, and if I could choose to be an animal, I would want to be Serena. Serena has the run, literally, of our entire condo. Her daddy plays with her off and on all day. He talks to her more than me. She wakes me up at 4:00 a.m. because that is when she expects her treats. She knows that my newspaper arrives and I won't have a hissy fit.

Serena has never been outside. Our dearly departed Sammy would tolerate a harness. Neither of us has the nerve to attempt to put a leash on our feline. She has two perches where she can view the outside on the lanai. She can see eyeball to eyeball with birds and squirrels. The geese and planes that fly by are very noisy and entertaining.

After we adopted her, she immediately took over the household. It took her two years to decide to become a lap cat on her terms. Her Highness prefers if I have my very soft robe on when I read the newspaper. Her purr calms me when reading the editorials.

When the Chewy box comes, she can hardly wait for George to empty the box. The box usually contains food, litter, Greenies, and a new toy. She prefers to play with the paper and climb in and out of the box. One time the FedEx man said to me with a smile, "What is wrong with you? All I ever deliver here is cat food and wine." I thought to myself, and our orders make perfect sense: I sometimes need wine to tolerate the cat.

We chose not to change her name since this is all she owned. After three years, we still wonder why anyone would think this cat deserves a name that implies being serene. We also like the sound of her name, if not the reality.

Serena is a gray, Bengal looking Tabby. There is a legend that Baby Jesus was crying in the manger. Mary had done everything she could think of to make Him quit crying. The cat sitting by the side of the basket hopped in with Jesus. He immediately went to sleep. Mary marked the cat with M on her forehead. All Tabby cats have an M.

Yes, I want to be a cat named Serena. Purr.