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[HoTM episode 66.m4a](#)

Transcript

Wynne Leon

Welcome to the Sharing the Heart of the Matter podcast, where we honor the storyteller in us all, I'm Wynne Leon, and in this episode I'm with my co-host, Blogger and author Vicki Atkinson. We are changing. Our format starting with this episode. Vicky and I are big believers in the power of story to connect us, to create intergenerational healing, and to make meaning out of the events of our lives. To set the stage, we will be starting with someone telling a story in each episode. In this case, I tell a story about what happened when my kids and I recently rescued a Bunny. We got to see and learn a little bit about the nature of life, death and our part in the circle of life. Please forgive me for talking too fast as I tell the story. It's part of my learning process to transition between interviewer to being in the spotlight. My nerves push me to rush, so I need to practice slowing down. In this episode that is about 15 minutes long after I tell the story, we talk a little bit about the elements of a good story drawing from the research of Will's store and his Ted talk, we highlight some of the features that come into play in most of our stories, whether they be personal narrative fiction. Or something in between. Vicky brilliantly likens our new route, starting with this episode, Route 66. Please join us for the scenic and beautiful places we go when we share the power of story we know you'll love it. Hi, Vicki. Hi Wynn. So good to see. You.

Vicki Atkinson

Get together. I love this coop. Sorry.

Wynne Leon

I do too. That's alright. We get together to tell stories. Sometimes we have a lot to talk about.

Vicki Atkinson

Yeah. And and I think what we're learning is sometimes these like beautiful little. Scenes and scenarios and stories are powerful and uplifting or thought provoking and and we love offering them up.

Wynne Leon

Right. Yeah, just to see where they go. So I have one for you. Yay, you know, rescuing the money was one thing after another kind of thing. It started because I wasn't as prepared for the first day of Teacher Appreciation Week as I would have liked. But. Amazingly, even though it was a Monday morning, I had a few extra minutes to do something nice for our beloved teachers. I mean, they are so important to my family. I love what they bring, just the richness to my kids life in addition to the skills that they teach. It's just their perspective that matters so much so. I started by writing out some thank you notes and then as I waited, went to pair them with. You know, I saw my beautiful

Violet trees outside the kitchen window. Like, yes, perfect. I'm gonna. I'll aim for something grand grander and later in the week, but at least I have something that the kids can. Take in on Monday. Night. So I grabbed the kitchen, the gardening Clippers from the kitchen drawer, race out the back door, and I'm looking down. So it's not to step in the dog. Loop as I beeline to that like. And I see it. There's a baby Bunny in the grass and it's back. Legs are immobilized and.

Vicki Atkinson

Oh.

Wynne Leon

Oh, Oh yeah. I'm not sure. No. Yeah, and not too far off is our cat. Ohh, yeah. She's circling back to take another swipe at the little. Ohh no no. And that's what I noticed. He has some chunks hanging out to his sides. There wasn't any blood, but clearly some damage had been done. The Dang cat. So I tried to chase her away, but she's really focused on the money. And at one point she even manages to drag him further into the trees.

Vicki Atkinson

Oh. Oh my gosh. Well, you're there.

Wynne Leon

While I'm there and I'm using, other kids come to the back door and I finally chased her off, but now I need to rescue that buddy before she comes back. Yeah, and there's a garden trail. And in a flower pot and a frisbee. So I scooped the Bunny up and I put them on the Frisbee and and Mr. Dds saying, what are we going to do? Let's take it to the vet because last time I took Cooper the dog to the vet, he got to come.

Vicki Atkinson

Yeah.

Wynne Leon

And he really likes the vet. Yeah. And I'm saying I don't know what to do next, but I couldn't let the cat toy with it anymore. Let's be clear. The cat wasn't toying with it. Yeah. No, no, no. And. I gotta get the cat just a little call out here. A friend of hers found her as a four week old living in a dishwasher that was sitting on the front porch of a house that was being remodeled, and they delivered to her to us. And so Miss O and I worked really hard to make her trust us and after initially losing her in our family room for.

Vicki Atkinson

MHM.

Wynne Leon

A couple days. I did. I managed to get her into the yeah, I managed to get her into the guest bathroom upstairs and we'd go in there and talk and sing to her while she has stabbed us. Yeah,

Miss O recited pumpkin cat to her every day for. Week because she miso was three years old and she couldn't read, but she'd memorized all the words and she'd sit there and she'd hold out the pictures and the cat's mom was a really well known feral cat in in the area. Our kitten was found and well, she's come to trust us. And and like us, her feral roots are not too far off.

Vicki Atkinson

Oh.

Wynne Leon

She doesn't really cuddle with us. She hunts and while I was able to initially keep her inside, she made it absolutely clear that she had no intention of being an inside cat. So that's, you know, just to. Hmm. Like there's not too much of A. Villain. So. I've chased her off now and the kids and I are racing through the house to find her like that carrying case. We let our Cooper the dog into the car to get him out of the way because he thought this was really exciting too. No more creatures. I I opened the crawl space downstairs and miss it's all over being helpful. I don't see the cat carrier, but she does miss, so does. And she darts in and gets it and we line it with some faux sheepskin and then just put the Bunny on the Frisbee in and and we put the carrier on the front porch. And and Mr. D is asking, are we going to take it at the vet? That's how he likes to say at the vet. And Mr. was asking, can we name him? Can we keep it? And I keep replying and we've got to get to school.

Vicki Atkinson

Oh.

Wynne Leon

You know, somewhere in all this, I actually did cut down a couple of lilac bunches to go with our card. Well, and I've leveraged the funny situation to get the kids to put on their school clothes, and she's in in record time because they wanted to help. But now I need to get them settled down enough to go.

Vicki Atkinson

Ohh my gosh.

Wynne Leon

Mm-hmm. To school, so yeah. Each small section of celery to put in. The bunnies cage. MHM. And by the time we get the celery there, the Bunny has moved off the Frisbee, so I pull it out and settling into the sheepskin. The kids drop off their salary and say goodbye before getting into the car for school. It's kind of looking hopeful. Yeah. Yeah. And Mr. D spent a whole story about how we'll build an indoor jungle and the. And he can come live with us. And I remind him that the cat tried to kill it. And he's like, well, that's OK cuz the cat could just live outside. And I'm thinking, God help all the creatures outside if that's the case.

Vicki Atkinson

Yeah. Right, right. My gosh.

Wynne Leon

So when I returned from dropping the kids. I visit the money and I bring him some water and he's looking pretty good, but I need to work so I leave him and the question of what we'll do with him alone for a few hours. But then my midday, it's kind of windy and cold, so I pick up the cage and I take it up to the back porch, where there's sun. And then right before I go to pick up Miss O, so I take one more peek and Bunny Bunny looked pretty dead and.

Vicki Atkinson

Ohh God yeah. Of.

Wynne Leon

At some point I saw the cat jump up on the table and look into the carrier. He probably scared the Bunny.

Vicki Atkinson

To death. Yeah. Yeah, the final blow.

Wynne Leon

Yes. Yeah. Even though he didn't have, she didn't have any way to hurt the body. So I felt a little sick. I'm like, if he was gonna die, perhaps I was totally wrong to interview in the methods, you know? Did I make the money suffer more? He wasn't making any noise, but. I thought it was best if he died while somebody was trying to help him instead of the violent death the cat intended. Yeah. Yeah, I believe that enough that that's what I told the kids. Ohh my gosh. I love that. Yeah. So when I picked myself up from school, her first question she asked is how's the Bunny and?

Vicki Atkinson

At least.

Wynne Leon

Know her third grade friends are all crowded around, and I shook my head and I. Said I don't. Think you made it like ohh, maybe he's sleeping and she and all her classmates have spent all day naming him. They come up with Buttercup.

Vicki Atkinson

Ohh.

Wynne Leon

Show her the cage and she agrees. He's probably dead. Yeah. Then Mr. D looks when he comes home from Aikido and he's kind of, you know, he's 4, so he's a little fascinated, but he's thoughtful about this whole thing and he's not seeming to pay much attention. But every once in. Ohh. A while he. Comes out and visits. The Bunny and he come back in the back. Don't worry, Mama, the Bunny's still dead.

Vicki Atkinson

Ohh my gosh.

Wynne Leon

Ohh starts to explain what that is. She said she's first looking at the ceiling and saying he's up there and he's not in pain anymore and Mr. D's looking up at the ceiling like she's crazy. Yeah.

Vicki Atkinson

Oh.

Wynne Leon

And then we're snuggling into bed and he asked, do you think the Bunny needs another blanket for the night? I say, well, the Bunny doesn't feel anything cause it's dead and he says. We'll see you in the morning. Whatever the little optimist, right? Yeah, yeah. And and I broach. What? What should we do with it? And miss, I would suggest that we throw it away. And I suggest digging a hole. Mr. D doesn't like that either. He's like, but then it's mom, like Mama can't find it. Ohh yeah, so we get him to agree that if the money is in the same position in the morning, yeah, we'll agree it's. OK. But you know there is a small part of me that hopes it's just sleeping. Yeah. And the other part knows that a Bunny with paralyzed highlights doesn't much have a feature. No, I don't really have it in me to take care of another creature. But The funny thing is that I. Mm-hmm. Wishing it wasn't so as well. With each look, I hope Buttercup would change the position of or was sitting up higher or.

Vicki Atkinson

Mm-hmm.

Wynne Leon

You know, and and he is shifting a little bit over time. I think as he's falling over. But you know, I kept on thinking of pack weathers, who's a mountain climber that I've followed the story, you know, he was.

Vicki Atkinson

Yeah. Mm-hmm.

Wynne Leon

Part of that Everest film was about him and you know he he was left for dead four times on Everest and he kept on coming back. And yeah, he maybe if the Bunny had lived, we could have called him back or buttercup back. In the end, I think. You know, life is a great teacher and maybe it was a fitting way to start teacher Appreciation Week.

Vicki Atkinson

Ohh yeah.

Wynne Leon

Resident.

Vicki Atkinson

Mr. buttercup? Ohh. My gosh. Yeah, the reminder that lessons are everywhere. Yeah, they will. So sweet. So sweet.

Wynne Leon

Are.

Vicki Atkinson

But I what I like most about what you just shared is the compassion and the the desire to help, even though you didn't know that it's the not knowing and letting your kids see that the potential you know and navigating accordingly. If if things were done and Buttercup wasn't going to make it, at least he had a sheepskin.

Wynne Leon

Yeah.

Vicki Atkinson

And some people around him that. Did he give him out? Mm-hmm.

Wynne Leon

Yeah, I think I think about the, you know, the Brutalist interpretation of the world and I think dying admits violence, which clearly is what the cat had in mind.

Vicki Atkinson

Yeah. Oh my gosh.

Wynne Leon

It it just somehow that bothers me more than I mean, I hope he wasn't in pain, but.

Vicki Atkinson

Yeah. Well, but you couldn't have stopped it. Right? And and yeah, another tale from.

Wynne Leon

All the parenting goodness, right? Just that. And it's such an interesting story to me of just all the things that happened to us on a day-to-day basis and going back to the will store Ted talk that I love about the power of storytelling. You know, that's how we understand our lives. Is is these Nuggets of stories. And when we look at change, life and death. And we look at moral outrage, you know, having a villain, the cat. In this case. I mean, these are just little ways that my kids, but also me. Yeah, but the way. That we get to understand our world and even that hope of not.

Vicki Atkinson

Yeah.

Wynne Leon

Wanting the Bunny to have died, you know, and that that I kept. I kept on looking. I kept on looking right before we recorded this.

Vicki Atkinson

Yeah.

Wynne Leon

That finality of death, that was really hard to accept at any age. Yeah.

Vicki Atkinson

And watching the kids trying to help each other right. So looking up, you know, Mr. D, trying to understand that their their little little micro moments that they'll remember forever and you will forever hold in your heart. You know Mr. D saying we we can't bury Buttercup because how will his Mama find him?

Wynne Leon

Yeah.

Vicki Atkinson

Right. Oh my gosh. So much sweetness there. Yeah, all on the way to school. Great. On the way to school dot dot dot right, exactly one thing after another. Ohh, my gosh. Well, thank you so much for sharing. That was a beautiful story. Thank you for listening.

Wynne Leon

Thank you for listening. Our music is composed for sharing the heart of the matter by the exquisitely talented duo of Jack Canfora and Rob Koenig for show notes and more great inspiration, please visit our site at sharingtheheartofthematter.com.