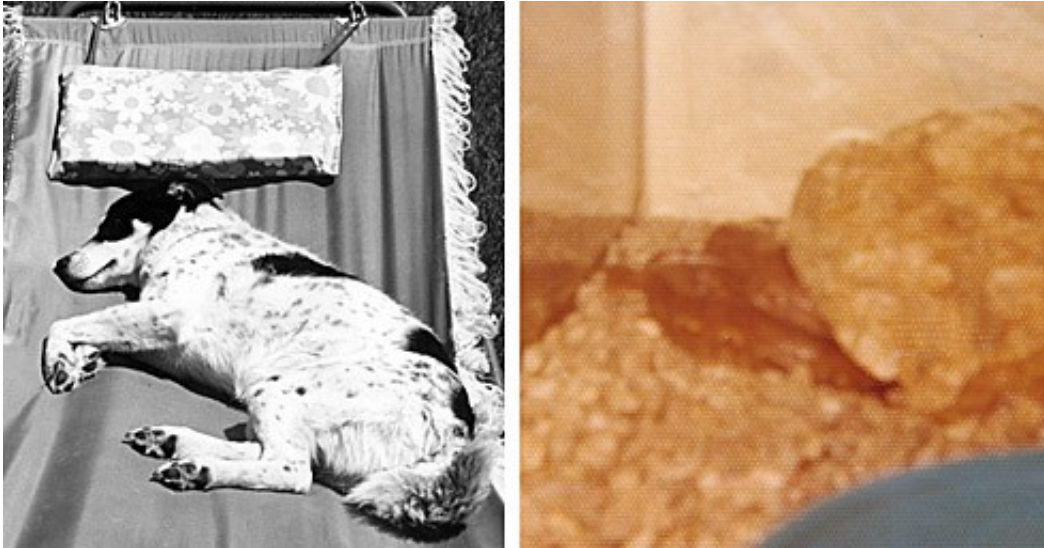


Sandy Reay, Author

## September 2023 Newsletter

The word for this month is plan.

I make plans and the universe points and laughs.



### Times I Didn't Die: Pets

I mentioned to a friend that I had almost died so many times I'd lost count. She asked for details. After a few stories, she told me to write those experiences in my newsletter.

I looked for a file of near-death experiences and found several documents named Times I Didn't Die with categories: Instinct Saved Me, My Father Tried to Kill Me (that will be in my memoir), Doctors Almost Killed Me, and lists of car-, raft-, and animal-related close calls like the time I found myself [lying in a bog under four bucking horses](#).

#### #1

My husband and I got a puppy from our neighbor, the runt of her litter. Our eighteen-pound tuxedo cat, [McCavity the Mystery Cat](#), raised her. We named her when she fell off a step and landed on her head in her water dish. We said, "Savoir Faire." Sarcasm. McCavity rescued a kitten who could stretch out on the palm of my hand.

Faire was half English Setter. Her father was a German Shepherd Husky mix. Faire looked more like her mother and had a gentle mouth. She weighed thirty-five pounds and played fetch the kitty.

My husband and I moved to be closer to his job in Denver. I was alone during the day.

Someone knocked on the door. I opened it to find a strange man holding the storm door open, one foot on the step, ready to launch himself into my house. I tried to close the door, but he held it open.

Faire dashed around me and growled. Her head was the height of his knee. But she growled like she meant it, channeling her father.

My would-be intruder backed up and slammed the storm door shut, yelling something. I closed and locked the door. Faire got treats.

## #2

For Valentines Day, my husband bought me a baby Colombian Rainbow Boa Constrictor. Once a month, we put a mouse in his terrarium, and most of the time, he caught it. One month, he missed so many times, the mouse raced around, sat up in a corner, shivered, and fell over. I think it died of a heart attack.

Years later, the snake reached his full length, about 5-6'. Other than feeding and shedding, he was not an active pet. We called him Walter, after an Old English Sheepdog in an episode of Bonanza, in which the dog laid on his side and never moved.

When we got divorced, Faire moved to a house with my ex-husband. Walter, McCavity, and I moved into a townhouse. As a joke, someone gave me a "Beware of Snake" sign, which I put in the front window. A friend asked how I would defend myself if someone broke in.

"I'd grab McCavity and throw him at the intruder: I don't cut his nails, and he's eighteen pounds of muscle. He'd shred an intruder."

I got my hair permed. Walter loved to crawl around on my head, and I let him out of his cage. He'd hook the tip of his tail under my jaw and explore my curls.

One day, someone knocked on the door. Again, I opened it to find a man poised to enter my house: his foot on the step. He pushed the door farther open. "You don't really have a snake, do you?" He laughed.

"Yes, I do."

Walter raised his head and flicked his tongue. A warm body that's not mine could be food. Until he bit it, he didn't know how big it was. His head shot toward the intruder's nose.

That man recoiled, stumbled off the step, and grabbed the doorknob to keep his balance. The door slammed shut, and he ran away.

### **The Sinister Umbrella**

I'm writing [The Sinister Umbrella](#), a novel about a young woman whose life is destroyed in a car accident and her struggle to build a new life. It's a young-adult horror story, with a touch of humor and a twist (or three). If you want to know more, click on the link above.

I don't want to tempt fate, but I think my bad luck may be ending. I had time to rewrite, using my critiques through Chapter 12, and have more changes for Chapter 13. And I wrote three more chapters. I even sent out docs to my alpha readers. But, I managed to omit a chapter in some of the docs I sent out. Me: Plan. Universe: Point and laugh.

### **Monthly email.**

I don't want to tempt fate, but I think I'm getting caught up on writing and web work. This won't be as late as last month. I hope.

**If you wish to unsubscribe, please reply and put “unsubscribe” in the subject or text.** I won't send another. Unless you reply after the next monthly email, which might be done around October 15, if I'm lucky. Or, in time for Halloween.

**If you want to read past newsletters, check out Archives.**

### **Necessary blah blah**

I add content to my author website when the inspiration strikes and mention what's new on the home page. These days, inspiration strikes are monthly. For those of you who are worried about the “Not Secure” message at the top: that means I didn't pay for a certificate because I don't do online commerce. All my websites display information. I don't collect or save your information **unless you choose to email me.** (I've been building web sites since 1998; I keep 'em simple and watch out for suspicious files on my server.) If you feel more secure, you could follow me on Facebook.

[Sandy Reay, Author](#) – ideas to encourage creativity, where to find inspiration, short stories, micro & flash fiction, true stories, and a memoir (in progress for a decade—don't hold your breath)

[Colorado Sandstorm Music](#) – songs and poems written and co-written by Sandy Reay and Friends, and an online Cowboy Poetry Book: [Another Horse to Saddle](#)

[Colorado Sandstorm Productions](#) – info about all the other websites plus concerts and songwriting workshops by national touring songwriters

[AcousticByLines](#) – when and where you can hear musicians, co-writers, and find Sandy (sometimes)

[Sandy Reay and Friends' songs and poems on YouTube](#)

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## AcousticByLines