

# One Meal with Harvey

By North

Many cats know and love Harvey, but no one knows him as well as me. So, I will try and recall one fun meal to you through a story. After reading this, you will be able to feel like you know Harvey personally.

Every day, I end up cooking dinner. Makenna always wants to get takeout, but Harvey says he enjoys home cooked meals better. Makenna argues that Harvey likes his home cooked meals because he puts in too much sugar, salt, and fat. Makenna says that at least the takeout places balance their food's tastes. Harvey just tries to make the food sweet, salty, and greasy.

Makenna hates cooking. I think it is because one time, Harvey was boiling some noodles and Makenna looked in the pot. At that moment, a drop of boiling water flew out of the pot at Harvey. Harvey ducked, and it hit Makenna right on the forehead. She winced in pain as it sizzled on her fur. Then she stalked away, gingerly rubbing the spot where the boiling water hit her. Now, Makenna rubs that spot whenever someone makes a home cooked meal.

The reason I always cook the meals is because Harvey and Makenna can sometimes argue for 15 to 30 minutes. Dinner is late as it is, so I just cook. I'm a pretty good cook, but both Makenna and Harvey can grumble sometimes while eating my meals. I don't think it's about the food anymore.

Tonight is no different. Makenna saw this new Italian restaurant down the street, and she really wants to try it out. Harvey has a new brand of sugar, and he really wants to test it out in one of his meals. I go into the cupboard and quietly decide on a recipe with Smoke and Reposado. Tonight, it'll be crispy butter noodles with chicken and turkey bits and some chopped up zucchini and lemon. It is one of the moderately well liked dishes in this household, and it makes for a great dinner after something bad or sad happened. It can even help resolve arguments, because everybody does like it.

While I'm cooking, I see Reposado stopping Harvey from replacing the salt in the salt shaker with sugar. This happens every night, and I'm starting to wonder when Harvey will realize that you don't put sugar as a topping on your food.

I thinly slice the zucchini, and juice the lemon. The chicken and turkey bits are frying on the stove already, and the noodles are cooking in the boiling water. Makenna is making a point to stay at least 10 feet away from them.

Eventually, Harvey gives up trying to sneak sugar into the salt shaker and goes off to his therapy office. He'll just slide down the slide and then play in the sand pit until dinner. The sand pit is quite fun, and sometimes I am tempted to use it. Harvey makes it available when he isn't giving a therapy session.

When the noodles are done, the chicken and turkey are cooked, and the zucchini is chopped and the lemon juiced, I dump it all into the big pan to stir fry for 5 minutes. I season it with salt and pepper, and after 5 minutes, I turn off the heat and put the food into a big pot. I

serve it out, and give the dinner call. Harvey comes running first, and he puts all the bowls on the table. Eventually, Smoke, Reposado, and Makenna come too.

Harvey has already eaten a third of his massive portion by the time I come to the table. He gives me a nod, which means that he is enjoying his food. Makenna eats her food too, and she seems to be enjoying it. Smoke and Reposado eat too, and like usual, I wait until everyone has eaten a good portion of food before starting a conversation.

“Who’s up for some ice cream after dinner?” I ask, and like usual, Harvey’s paw shoots up. I roll my eyes, and ask again. “Anyone else?” (By the way, there isn’t a rule in this household about no talking about dessert during a meal.)

Makenna, Smoke, and Reposado put their hands up. I smile. “How about we make a special trip to The Frozen Cone?” I ask. This is an ice cream place that is famous for having a two scoop minimum. Makenna tries not to smile, and fails. Everyone loves The Frozen Cone.

I continue eating, and when I am done, I put my plate up on the counter. Harvey and Makenna rotate with Smoke and Reposado with the dishes. I’m the cook. I get off easy. Today, it’s Harvey and Makenna’s turn. Harvey enjoys doing the dishes because Makenna lets him eat whatever is left on the plates. Today, Harvey struck it rich. Smoke had something urgent he had to do, and he left about a third of his original portion of noodles on the plate. Harvey demolishes it in about 2 minutes, and then looks forlornly at the other empty plates. You really can’t satisfy him if you don’t leave at least half of the food on the plate.

When the dinner cleanup is over, everyone mobilizes. Harvey turns off the lights, I close the shades, we lock the door, and step outside into the cool night air.

# The End