

## Guided to Encourage



We didn't have a walk in the morning as it was raining, but planned to walk to the shops around sunset. In the last minute, we decided to instead take a walk to the nearby park just outside the village and shop with the car the next day as we were going to be out and about anyway.

We started out, keeping an eye on the clouds overhead. The path was partially flooded, thus we didn't get very far into the park. It started lightly raining as well, so we turned back toward home. As we walked back into the village, the rain stopped, and we decided to walk around a longer block on the way home. We passed a few villas and a lady we had met a few weeks ago, Jane, was just coming out with her small, adorable dog, Molly, to check the mail.

The last time we saw Jane, not that long ago, the little dog was happily walking – acting younger than its age of 15. Today, it was sitting in a soft dog bed and being wheeled on her mobility walker. Jane told us that she has just learned from the veterinary hospital that, sadly, Molly's body was riddled with cancer – in the liver, spleen, as well as gall bladder – and it would have been in pain. Seeing the dog with its big friendly eyes looking at us, we wouldn't have thought it was suffering.

Jane shared that two days later, Molly would be euthanised by a veterinary surgeon coming to her home. They would first administer a sedation through an injection into the dog's leg. This will help the animal fall asleep while being held. The euthanasia injection would then allow Molly to peacefully die. An hour later, Pet Angel Funerals (who provide pet cremation services in the area) will help Jane say goodbye to her beloved pet with grace and dignity.

Jane's heart was breaking at the thought that she would soon be losing her 15-year-old furry friend. Our hearts went out to her as she lives alone and Molly has been her only remaining life companion.

Alex offered to take a couple of photos of the dog and we then sent them to her by email, which she appreciated. The next day, we arranged to have the photos printed with a special border, suitable for dog photos. We brought the prints to Jane in the evening, and she was touched and very appreciative. We were grateful that the previous day, we were guided to change our plans and walk past Jane's villa just at the time when she walked out the door, and that we were able to offer her some comfort and encouragement.

The loss of a dog, or any pet for that matter, is very painful because the creature that was a part of its owner's life for many years was a daily source of unconditional love, friendship, and joy. Grieving for a beloved pet is a highly individual experience – just like any grieving. The grief needs to be acknowledged and expressed so that recovery can take place in its own time.

We pray that Jane be comforted, encouraged, and strengthened during her time of grieving for Molly. Life is indeed precious and fragile — may we cherish the miracle of each day as it comes to us.

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