

Bye-bye Roxy, and a piece of my heart

I wasn't going to write this, but I had to. All dog lovers may want to grab a tissue. The worst day of my life was weeks ago when I had to say goodbye to my soul dog, my best friend and MVP of the family. Honestly, I'm sharing this experience because it's cathartic and the only way I know how to process the pain. Also, this is a tribute to all dog owners and will validate the strong bond we all have with our beloved pets.

Roxy's final hours started with a dream buffet consisting of a burger, fries, banana, ham sandwich and a long session of licking peanut butter off a spoon. Her last meal was compliments of Angel Pets, the in-home euthanasia vet. Before the final moment, they treated her to a Starbucks breakfast sandwich. Roxy licked every bit of the melted cheese that dripped on her bed. She enjoyed every morsel of life, literally, to the last second. She snored for a few minutes before drifting away to a better place.

It was humane, peaceful and the best possible way to go. I massaged her ears and stroked her wavy locks until her last breath. She will be pain free, and I will have PTSD. She's at peace, and I'm not. My heart is shattered, and I just lost a piece of my soul. Yes, I did the right thing. It wasn't easy. I was doled out an extra dose of emotions when I was born. I sometimes cry at graduations on TV. So, how do you think I reacted to this? I couldn't breathe was an understatement. The whole day was a blur, yet I remember every detail because it plays back in my head like a nightmare.

A week later, I could finally say her name without crying. I still can't be in my house for long periods of time because it feels so empty without her warm presence. I'm missing my daily dose of therapy, which was multiple hugs and petting sessions with my furry therapist.

When I walk in the house, I still call her name. When I go to bed, I say good night. I know I'm a little crazy, but I can't give up these rituals just yet. There are many things that make me cry daily such as finding her tumbleweed of hair on the wood

floor, looking at the corner where her dog bed once was and having no one to feed the scraps left on the rotisserie chicken.

Roxy's memory will always surround me because her photo is printed on pillows, a blanket, canvas prints and in multiple frames. She was the princess, and that's why she's the only one in the family with a commissioned portrait.

I walk around the house missing my furry shadow that had to be with me every second. She needed me as much as I needed her. I'm not sure when the empty feeling will leave, but I know there will always be a little ache in my heart when I think of her sweet soul and 14 years of unconditional love.

I am thankful for the compassionate care from Golden Paws and Angel Pets in Roxy's final days. I'd like to leave all my dog people with one piece of advice. Love on your pet every day, and when he/she does pass, don't clean the floors too quickly. My happiest moments are finding little sightings of her hair scattered on my floors. Also, listen closely to the silence in your home. You will still hear faint noises that sound like your sweet pup.

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