

the price of love

There's a beautiful story on the internet that every pet lover needs to read. It's called "A Living Love." Beautifully and so poignantly, the story talks about the three most memorable days in loving a precious pet. The first one is the day he comes home to join the family. He's finding his own way, and the family begins to settle into their new normal as a unit. Full of memories and freshness as this new life together begins.

Time flies, with days filled of life, adventure, and memories. The second day is one that creeps up with almost a slow, abruptness. It's the day a loving pet parent looks at their beautiful friend, and sees age, or the tolls of an illness. Maybe these changes ease in, or possibly they come crashing in, but they come nonetheless announcing themselves as the beginning of a pending day waiting around the bend, or hopefully around many bends. But the beginning of a reality lurking.

And, the third day. The day every pet lover can almost recite. Every move that day, every minute that day, every strike of the second hand for years to come will be a reminder of the events of this third day. Whether our beloved pets make the decision for us, or we dig into our broken yet loving hearts to help a friend out, that day will come.

That day will be the one that will very clearly showcase exactly what the price of love looks like and feels like. It's a day where so many pet lovers will proclaim "I can't do this again," as a shattered heart tries to craft what the new normal of life without this love will look like.

However, I ask of you to look deep into your heart and know that without this third day, the other two days would not have happened either. The price of love IS grief... but the price of love in sharing a bit



IN MEMORY OF ELLIE MAE
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of time with a beloved pet is so much more. It's memories. Laughter. Unconditional love. Learning life lessons as taught by a fur, finned, or feathered friend. It's learning how to speak another language, one that only you and your special friend knew. It's having a bond, free from societal expectations as it's a relationship all based on love. It's learning about forgiveness and living in the now. It's about enjoying life and seeing the beauty it has to offer. It's having your heart proclaim, "I never knew I could love anything so much!"

Yes, foregoing the third day is one that, too, comes with a price. So, I'll take that third day, as not having the other two is one where that price is too big for me to pay. I

know just by being in the presence of these amazing creatures, I become a better person. For me, the pure definition of love is living life just like they do... Unconditionally, full of joy and ready to forgive, and knowing how to live life in the moment. 🐾



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