

# A Eulogy for Ginger Louise Duffy,

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By Tammy Duffy



**W**e lost one of our best friends today, Ginger Louise Duffy.

She is survived by her furry sisterbuddy, Margarita Louisa and her Mom, Tammy Duffy of Hamilton, NJ. Ginger Louise was an amazing old soul. She died at the age of 15.3 years old from complications from advanced heart disease and Cushing's disease. She was a quintessential trooper even in her final days. She was loving, loyal, and beautiful inside and out. Not to mention the quintessential fashionista.

We had to make a difficult but loving choice today to end her pain. No words can ameliorate the sadness we feel at the loss of our beloved girl, Ginger Louise. Tonight, she is resting peacefully in a warm bed, surely with home-baked treats, gourmet home cooked food nearby and planning her next launch of her new fashion line. When she wakes up, Ginger Louise will move around without pain or murmur. She'll be happy.

Doggie Heaven is a wonderful place.

We will think about the lessons she taught us. We will cherish the walks, the cuddle sessions, the pats behind the ears, and the last lick upon my face even as she took her last breath today.

Somehow, Ginger Louise did so with grace, and with strength, and with love. We released Ginger Louise from her pain and sent her on into her peaceful future. We gave her back her life today.

By saying our final goodbye, we actually made our greatest pronouncement of love. Even though today we cannot feel this properly, for our hearts are so heavy and broken. Surely something as momentous as the dark magnitude of death must give us some kind of epiphany, reward us at least with a moment of transcendent understanding of life - of what it means to be not just a human but any living thing on this shared earth - provide us some insight into the relationship between man and her kindly mentor and willing servant.

Surely it should give me words to express these acute insights and so ease my pain and make her quiet sleep worthwhile. But all that came out of my mouth as I stroked the thick soft still-warm ears - holding her little paws - was, "I'm sorry. I'm sorry. I'm sorry. I'm so sorry. I love you so much sweetie."

I am sorry that I had neither skill enough nor prayers strong enough to fix her broken heart and broken little body from Cushing's and advanced heart disease - to prolong, pain-free - and dignity intact, the life that had given me such pleasure.

What I wept for, selfishly, was not just a dog, though there is no such thing as "just a dog" anymore than there is "just a child" or "just a wife" or "just a father".

But rather I wept for an irretrievable part of my heart, for 15.3 years of my life that were immeasurably enriched by her presence and ultimately for the godlike forgiveness of sins, heartache, illness, washed away by a soft pink tongue, absolved by the swaying of a loving tail. How ironic, how incredible, that in the relationship between man and dog we should be given the role of God, for we are so woefully miscast.

In the end what you're left with is doubt and pain. Doubt of your own judgment, your own motives. Could I have done more? Should I have tried something else? And pain - exquisite, excruciating pain. If life is a system of balances, of yin and yang, birth and

death, light and dark. Then the proof of the great pleasures she gave me lies in the quantity of pain her passing has caused. For 15.3 years she was my best friend, my true and constant companion, my mentor, for God knows I learned more about life and love from her than she ever learned from me.

Moments of triumph and a thousand other memories common to all pet owners and all who love Dogs - nothing unique, nothing extraordinary. And yet, and yet.

And yet there will always be galloping toward me a joyous Ginger haired dog with eyes the color of a dark brown, her supermodel long legs, with a toy in her mouth and an outfit that most humans could only wish for. I remember having her in NYC walking her through the art galleries and a woman said,

"I wish I could dress as good as her." I bet she did.

And dogs deserve nothing less from us. They deserve as much love as it is in our capacity to give. For they give so much and ask for so little. It is their essence.

I've loved dogs for as long as I can remember. We had a family dog growing up. I have never navigated the choppy waters of the real world without a furry friend. Margarita Louisa and I will traverse the choppy waters of the real world together without Ginger Louise and remember all her wisdom and love.

A lot has changed in the time Ginger Louise was here with us. People have come and gone. Residences and jobs have changed. Habits and hobbies have started, been abandoned, and started again. But the one constant, through all these years, has been girl, Ginger Louise. Her love for everyone. (Okay, and my family too, but they aren't there wagging their tails every day when I visit.)

And yet even with all of the appreciation I have for what Ginger Louise has meant in my life, I've been able to grow even more fond of dogs over the years. Dear sweet Ginger Louise passed on today, but she did not make her way into Doggie Heaven in vain. On her death bed she was in the most amazing outfit dreaming of what new designer she will wear next. Still kissing me and giving me love, helping me through her journey to the end.

Having to say goodbye to her filled me with sadness, but the happy memories will soon win out, and they will live on forever. And more generally, Ginger's passing shall remind all of us that we owe it to our dogs to show them love as often as we remember too.

Of course, even if we succeed in doing this, we'll still be operating at a love deficit of a factor roughly equivalent to 100 to 1. Because while we humans, busy as we are with the hustle and bustle of our lives, sometimes need to be reminded not to take our dogs for granted, they never need the reminder. They are always there.

They love unconditionally.

Incredibly, just by being what they were born to be, dogs teach us to be better versions of ourselves. Because every single one of us can learn to love a little better, a little deeper, a little more fully. Dogs do it already, as naturally as they breathe.

It's why they are the greatest creatures on earth

Rest in peace my baby, Ginger Louise, We will love you forever!

Love,

Margarita Louisa and Tammy