

GOLDEN MOMENTS of GOLDEN MOMENTS
in LOVING MEMORY and APPRECIATION of
GILLIAN ROBINSON
1941 - 2023

This is the FINAL edition of Golden Moments and looks back at snippets from the past decade or so of Christmas Moments. It concludes with a couple of stories from this year.



With best wishes for Christmas and the New Year
From the Trustees and Coordinators of

SOUTHERN GOLDEN RETRIEVER RESCUE
(Registered charity Number 1098769)

From Christmas 2010

Some things change - clearly not such a hot year as the past few we've been having, and talk of the 'white stuff' which we haven't seen much of down here for a little while

Some things stay the same – Some of our Golden companions cannot resist the need to rip and investigate those strange looking UFO's – Unidentified Funny (looking) Objects – under the tree...

(NOTE – any reference to 'later in the issue' is a reference to the historical issue, not this one)



"That's all my presents opened"

Well, it wasn't exactly a scorcher, but we hope you and your dogs enjoyed the summer. Apart from a few days in July it wasn't too hot for them. Now we are bracing ourselves for what the winter is going to throw at us!

Our cover picture this time is of Lady, who sadly died a few weeks after this photo was taken at the grand old age of 16. A tribute from her owner Sarah can be found later in this issue.

Now the usual "inter warnings". Dogs like nothing better than to investigate parcels on the floor, so you may find your Christmas presents unwrapped before the big day if you don't put them out of your dog's reach! Watch that they don't get hold of Christmas tree decorations, and of course don't give them turkey bones or rich food, especially chocolate (unless it's doggy chocolate) as this is poisonous to dogs. If your household is going to be extra busy and noisy try to have a quiet place your dog can escape to if it all gets too much for him.

We hope you have a happy time, with not too much of the white stuff we had last year!

From Christmas 2011

A wonderful poem. Sentiments which certainly stand the test of time...



Our Golden Oldie

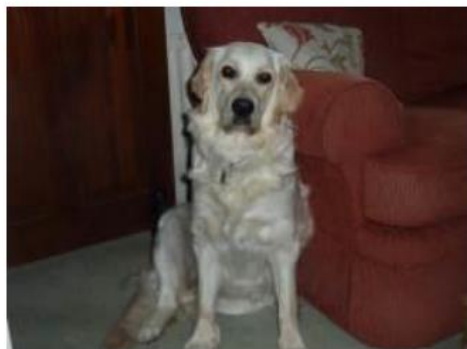
We know you will forgive us/if our pace is rather slow.
She used to bounce and frolic, but that was long ago.
She joined us quite some ago, just when we can't remember.
She settled down and fitted in, she's now a family member.
She loved to play and run with us, we're very pleased with that.
But now she spends more time in bed and shares it with the cat.
She really loves the garden, goes out there every day,
and sometimes find the energy to chase a fox away.
In 3 days she has a birthday, 15 years we're told.
We find it rather sad to say she's started getting old.
When she first joined us way back then, we chose to call her "Goldie".
Now quite sadly years have passed, she's now our "Golden Oldie".
You may quite well have noticed – our stance displays some pride.
For we get enormous pleasure having Goldie by our side."

Harry aged 13 and Kirsty aged 16 (Shipton)

From Christmas 2012

Many of the Golden Moment stories are from over the rainbow bridge, so it was nice to see this one from this side of the virtual crossing ...

Molly



Our world fell apart when last year we lost our beloved Harvey. Luckily it was only 2 weeks until we heard about Molly from Rachel in Kent.

Molly had a rough start being homed and then given up so went to rescue, and the rest is history. We picked up our bundle of fluff from Rachel and we bonded straight away. She was a little submissive but when we got her home she settled in very well. She eventually mastered

Harvey's dog flap and in the end it was a great game going in and out. We have had a wonderful 1st year with Molly. She is full of bounce and has a lovely loyal nature as retrievers are well known for. The home is complete again and all the excess fur and dirty paws are all well worth it! As you can see she is a lovely dog and full of fun. Thank you Rachel for rescuing her and letting us give her a loving home.



Margaret & Graham Taylor.

From Christmas 2013

Not to forget donors from times gone by ...

Farlington Fun Day



This picture shows some of the dogs and owners who took part in the Rescue Parade at the Fun Day organized by Wendy Mercer and her band of volunteers from Farlington Dog Training club who have been running this event for our funds for many years, and to date have raised the wonderful total of more than £7,200. We are extremely grateful for all their efforts. This year, as well as the scurry and various games and stalls Carole Carter and her helpers gave a short demonstration of gundog training, demonstrating steadiness, walking up and retrieving. This proved very interesting, particularly to those who had never seen gundog work before. Some of the dogs were very young so didn't always do as they were told, but this only served to demonstrate the amount of patience needed in training the dogs.

The poem below was written by John Obbard for his neighbour's new rescue ... Holly Shipton



She joined us some three months ago, her name was
simply Holly
Whilst seeming rather glum at first, she's now become quite jolly
At first she was so quiet, you never heard her bark
She's grown to enjoy the car rides, and loves it in the park
And then there's fun with water, like splashing in the stream
She wasn't very sure at first, but now she's grown quite keen
She loves to get quite comfy, and spreads out on the mat
She's now become quite friendly with "Charlie" our pet
cat
There's been a change in those few months, such fun to have
around
From silent, scruffy, saddened "Holly" a happy pet we've found

From Christmas 2014

This is a lovely reminder of the love and companionship that can come from an older rescue dog

Tribute to Chloe

Chloe came into my life on Saturday 3rd January 2008. We live by the coast and she quickly gained many doggie friends (and their owners). She was cute, cunning, loveable and highly intelligent, but of course this describes all Golden Retrievers.



She loved the car, and was most reluctant to share her back seat with even the smallest of bags. She had her own settee but NO! her greatest achievement was if she could remove the cushions from the forbidden leather furniture and snuggle down to nap.

I think Chloe enjoyed our winter 3 mile daily walks to the beach café, most of all on our return the ritual was “treat time”. I cannot exactly say what this treat was for fear of being accused of encouraging “under-age drinking” – just 1 teaspoon!

Sadly I lost Chloe on 8th January 2014 – aged 15 years and 3 months. She has left a void in all Chloe came into my life on Saturday 3rd January 2008. We live by the coast and she quickly our lives; a house is not a home without a dog, it is far too quiet, too bare of beds and toys and bits of unchewed doggie chews.

I thank you Chloe for 6 years and 5 days of sheer joy and happiness.

I LOVED YOU SO VERY MUCH.

Pat Bishenden

GREAT ADVICE! A perfect Golden Nugget ...

Care when waking a dog

(Based on an article in “Sporting Shooter”)

“Let sleeping dogs lie” is very true, and so many people get bitten, especially youngsters, from ignoring this. A dog should be able to sleep in peace, free from fear of disturbance of animal or human origins. If you must rouse a sleeping dog, and sometimes it is necessary, do not touch the dog but speak to it until it awakens. If the dog’s hearing is not so good, gently tap on the floor so that the vibrations disturb it. Some dogs sleep more deeply than others so allow for this and do not take any risks, for the nicest of dogs goes to another place in its sleep, and may react aggressively if it is woken suddenly, as it may think it is being attacked.



From Christmas 2015

Was it really 8 years ago ...

Our new website is well up and running and I hope you have had the chance to have a look at it. The "Events" page gives up to date news of what is happening. We are also now on Facebook at "Golden Retriever Rescue Southern", with the web address <http://www.Facebook.com/GoldenRescue.Southern>

The Kent Fun Day was held in May and the sun shone on us, which was lovely. It was well attended and 35 dogs took part in the Parade of Rescue Dogs. The photo shows the Holly Trophy for the oldest Rescue dog attending on the day being presented to Jane Bannatyne's Bracken, who was nearly 16 years of age. Next year's Fun Day is on Sunday 29th May.



The Seminar in memory of Joan Lavender was well attended, and much was learnt about first aid for dogs. There was also some very useful information about bloat, which can often be a killer, and there is more information about this later in this issue.

We wish you all a very Happy Christmas, and please be careful your dogs don't eat the decorations!

The seminar was about Bloat ...

Bloat, The Killer

Bloat is a true emergency, which requires **immediate** veterinary attention. If you experience a combination of the following signs be prepared to drive to the surgery straight away. The chance of survival decreases alarmingly if you delay more than 60-90 minutes after the first signs.

Your dog retches from the throat but nothing is produced other than a small amount of frothy mucus

Your dog tries to defaecate unsuccessfully

Your dog adopts the "Sphinx" position

Your dog's tummy goes hard and/or swells up like a balloon and is as taut as a drum

Your dog is trying to bite, or worry, the abdomen

Your dog is very unsettled

So whether you're about to catch a plane, serve a meal or go to bed - DON'T. Take your dog to the Vet.

From Christmas 2016

Another Golden Nuggett ...

Caring for the Older Dog

With luck our pets will live a long and happy life, but, like us, as they get older they undergo changes in their organs and joints. One of the most important ways we can help them is by not letting them put on a lot of weight. This can creep on as exercise levels decrease, so it may be necessary to reduce the amount of food they have. It is important, however, to keep them moving so don't give up on the exercise.

Some older dogs find slippery floors very difficult, but putting down a mat will help with this, and a ramp may be useful to assist them getting into the car or coping with steps in the garden. It can also be helpful to help their joints by ensuring they have a thick and comfortable bed to sleep in. There are many joint supplements on the market which may also be useful.

Southern Golden Retriever Society – founders and ongoing supporters of SGRR

The Southern Golden Retriever Society's annual Fun Day at the end of May was once again a great success. The sun shone



and 35 Rescue dogs took part in the Parade, and many enjoyed entering the Fun classes and doggy games. The Holly Trophy for the oldest Rescue dog present on the day went to Marion and Adrian Palmer's Alice, who was 13 years old.

The Fun Day was a rather bitter sweet occasion as it marked the retirement of two of our longest-serving Co-ordinators, Pat and Peter Marchant. There is a short tribute to them later in this issue.

From Christmas 2017

Couldn't have said it better myself ...

Once again the year has flown past and it's time for the Christmas Newsletter. It's quite true what they say – the years really do go more quickly as you get older!

The evidence is out ... love at first sight can happen at any age ...

Hamish

Hamish was 13 years old and in a loving home with his owner who rescued him at 6½ years from a centre in the Western Highlands, but circumstances changed and he was now in a flat. Hamish has arthritis in his legs and shoulders so stairs were becoming an issue and his owner made the brave and heartbreaking decision to re-home him. I got a call in July 2016 saying Hamish was in foster care nearby and would I like to see him? That was it, "love at first sight".

Hamish can be a bit vocal when he first meets people but soon settles down. He has a very gentle nature and wonderful temperament. He's a joy to take out, meeting and greeting people and any dog like long lost friends. He enjoys nothing more than a goo roll, especially if it is wet, muddy or smelly!. One word – "stubborn" shone through on his adoption sheet. This he lives up to. If, while out, I change our route or try to do something out of the norm, he just lies, refusing to budge until I give in and go his way.

He is small for a golden but makes up for size with huge character and fighting spirit. Despite on-going health issues he enjoys life, although at a slower pace. He is completely spoilt but at 14 I think he deserves to be.



He is my shadow, my rock and my very special little man. Special thanks to Rachel and Wendy and Southern Golden Retriever Rescue for giving me a wonderful and loving, loyal companion.

Kay fish.

From Christmas 2018

A – behind the scenes – reminder. The workload isn't all golden and fluffy ...

As you are all aware the new General Data Protection Regulations came into effect in May. These caused a great deal of work as everyone had to be contacted to ensure they were happy for the Charity to hold their details. The bulk of this work fell on the new Administrator, Rachel Clark, so thank you to her and her team for sorting it all out!

A lovely snippet – in the eyes of Billy Bob. He had epilepsy and was 11 at the time of this story ...

My name is Cesar, although my family have nicknamed me Billy Bob – something to do with being silly apparently as they sometimes say I'm a "silly billy" which I think is a compliment as they are always laughing when they call me it! I live with my adopted brothers and sisters – Abbey, who is a bit like me in that we're the quiet, calm ones and then Ziva and Tali who are completely and absolutely bonkers!!

Every morning we go for a walk. I love this time of year as my favourite thing on the walk is puddles!!!! We go to different places but my all-time favourite thing is to find a puddle and lie down. For some reason, my Dad doesn't approve - I think humans must shrink if they touch water as they seem to cover themselves up with ridiculous clothing including these huge rubber shoes at the first sign of rain!!



So I have a very happy time. My human family is very well trained and my sisters are loads of fun. I don't remember much about my old life but I do know that I'm safe and loved in my new one. Life is good!!!!

From Christmas 2019

Good to know ... sometimes it works, clearly sometimes it doesn't ...

First though is a bit of advice for anyone adopting a dog. Although it's a new beginning please don't be tempted to change the animal's name. In our case it was changed and recall disappeared as the dog was confused. We changed back to her original name and things are much better. Now that Milly has settled in, she has started to come to work where possible. This means a ride in the van which is good fun with Mollie on the seat and Milly sitting on the floor looking out of the window. Their favourite customer is Grace where they can get up to mischief. There's a nice park nearby for their walk. There's always plenty of squirrels to chase in the garden with various treats available. Doris, Grace's neighbour, comes in for afternoon tea so the girls meet and greet.



Christmas was exciting with plenty of wrapping paper to be shredded. They did well for gifts especially as most of them were food. Our morning walk sees us visit a couple of nice shops. One sells hot meat sandwiches and the other pies. We're known by the owners of these shops but as yet haven't been given any free samples. The garden at home is always fun and both like digging. They both like the same spot so it turns into a crater to be filled in (we then have to start again). Any digging required leave it to the girls!

A Yule tide tale ...

Let me set the scene. No foster dogs at home and we have been busy this year, a beautiful autumn morning, lets go on a new walk.

We printed the details of the walk from www.Kentramblers.org.uk. This is a really good site for mid Kent dog owners and walkers. We know the area well and agreed our lunch spot, at the end of the walk and not far from the car.

Arriving at the pub after a super walk I chose a table in their courtyard area away from the road and other visitors and settled down with our three dogs. Noel collected us each a glass of good local beer and the menus. Lilly and Cosmo were eating windfall fruit close to the table, "don't eat that" was my unenforceable weak command and they continued. They have been eating berries and haws recently and I was not concerned. However I glanced at the ground again and studied what they were actually eating and slowly drama dawned. I looked up at the huge tree that we had settled under and realised it was a yew tree and the dogs were nibbling their way through the fleshy berries.

We instantly moved the dogs away and carried on with our lunch plans, me constantly muttering how careless I had been.

I spoke to our vet practice and was of course advised to take the dogs in for emergency "possible poisoning" procedures. Darcy had definitely not eaten any which was some relief.

The flesh of the yew berry is not poisonous but the seed, if cracked, can be lethal.

Noel and I spent over an hour in a vet's consult room collecting the vomit from Cosmo and Lilly as the emetic injections did their job. Careful examination did confirm that they had both eaten the berries. I could not determine if there were any cracked seeds. The drug used does eventually make the dogs drowsy and we left them both sleeping in the care of the vet so that they could each have 5 doses of activated charcoal syringed by mouth every two hours.

I am very pleased to say that this episode will now enter our archives of "do you remember when...?". I collected both companions from the vet, happy as ever and none the worse. Could we have taken a chance and done nothing?

What would YEW have done?

Rachel Clark

A "wise after the event" co-ordinator!

From Christmas 2020

Research is showing our memories are playing tricks on us with the timing of events within the pandemic era. Possibly due to a lack of event association...

Well we shan't forget 2020 in a hurry! I do hope you have all stayed safe and well, and avoided the dreaded Covid-19. It must have been very hard on those of you unable to take your dogs for a walk.

It was so disappointing that the Fun Day had to be cancelled. I know how much you enjoy bring your dogs along and taking part, not only in the Parade but also in the various classes and games. We are keeping our fingers crossed that it will be able to go ahead next year, but of course nothing is certain.

Of course they had another Goldie ... although I doubt she'll trump the hill wriggle dance ...

As I'm sure that you all know the feeling, we were both devastated at losing our previous Goldie (Harvey) who had problems with Cruciate Ligaments in both rear legs at the age of 9 years. We took Harvey to Noel Fitzpatrick's clinic in Godalming for treatment and several operations over the course of 3 years but in the end we had to face up to the situation as Harvey was so poorly. Harvey was our fourth Goldie and we built our whole world around him. Our first Goldie, in 1986, was actually a Southern Golden Retriever rescue dog (Barnaby). He was a BIG boy ! Barnaby adored children but, amongst other things, hated Milk Floats with a passion ! The London Marathon, at that time, used a Milk Float for time keeping and Barnaby used to attack the TV when the Milk Float appeared! We took him to the Lake District with our caravan and, on one occasion, he amused other holiday makers, and us, in a most unusual way. Barnaby found a long steep sloping bank at Windermere. He then stood at the top, rolled onto his back, and wriggled until he slid still on his back, all the way to the bottom of the slope! Once he reached the bottom he ran up the slope and repeated the whole thing several times !All of our Goldies have had their own funny little characters. Our second Goldie (Ben) was a real gentleman but unfortunately he contracted Cancer very early in his life and we lost him before he reached two years old. Toby was our third Goldie and he just wanted to act the clown all day, he had such a sense of humour. As I said earlier Harvey was our fourth Boy and we just could not face not having a Goldie in our lives after we lost him in January 2019.



Luckily Joan Coppin found Mollie for us, our first girl Goldie. Mollie has been an absolute delight, she is so polite, except when meeting new people when she gets very excited ! We found it very difficult at the handover, Mollie's previous owners were very upset and we felt like we were stealing Mollie. She has settled in with us beautifully though and we love her to pieces. We are so grateful to Joan for finding us our Golden Girl and look forward to many years together.

Pat and Dave Rowcliffe

From Christmas 2021

We were in full swing pandemic and many activities were again cancelled. Rescue still worked with emergency cases where they could, but there was no Winter or Christmas Golden Moments edition. There was a summer one though, so a snip below of a truth well said ...

What a strange and difficult year this has been for us all! One of the most significant changes that we have all experienced in the last decade or more is the development of the internet, with its many uses and benefits. 2020 would undoubtedly have been more isolating without it. However, being able to buy and sell a range of animals using a few lines in an advert which then reaches thousands of people in minutes is one of the less than happy developments. We are certainly seeing fewer people asking for our help to find a new home for their Golden Retriever, but that genie is out of the bottle and we are making sure that we are here, ready to help whatever the consequences of these changes.

We love the cheeky ones really ... a golden snip of Rosie ...



Her coat grew thick and glossy, her tail a typical retriever plume. She could be left off the lead in the park and woods and was so good. In turn she was an excellent thief, one day even standing on her back legs and stealing my dinner from the kitchen unit while I got something from the fridge she, I might add, was standing next to me. There were many things like that but she did improve. I put it down to a deprived childhood as they say.

From Christmas (Winter) 2022

Walter and Henry – what a super reminder of how different they all are ...

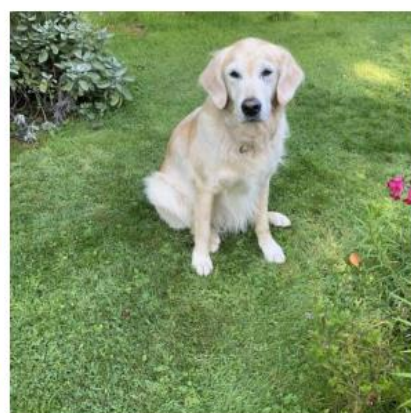
Walter, who came to us in March last year, is our second dog from the Southern Golden Retriever centre. I was expecting Walter to be just like our previous dog “Henry”. After all, Walter is exactly the same breed, so I assumed he would be very similar in behaviour and temperament. Like getting a replacement car I thought - same characteristics - just a wee bit different in colour perhaps and the name changed of course. How wrong I have been! Whereas Henry was extremely extrovert - prepared to bound over an entire field just to greet another human being - Walter is far more hesitant. In fact he is nervous of small dogs in particular and shies away from them. He likes companionship but familiar faces suit him best.

Henry loved being curled up in his bed when at home – tucked away privately in the larder space where he would, as it suited him, occasionally open an eye to see what was going on. Walter, in contrast, has only just taken to using a dog bed and this sporadically. Walter is happy to lie down anywhere and he is certainly not bothered if this impedes our view of the TV set or makes it impossible to serve up a meal as he prostrates himself in front of the dining room table!

The main difference between the two dogs, however, is them being on the lead. Henry would pull ahead all the time and almost propel you up a hill, his muscular body always inching forward in desperation to see something new. In contrast, Walter likes to amble along slowly sniffing at the ground and taking in all the smells. A plodder in contrast.

Other than this, the two dogs are very similar to one another, with all the lovely traits golden retrievers possess, being companionable and strikingly adorable.

There is one difference I do want Walter to possess that Henry did not have – the ability to live a long and healthy life. Henry got cancer and passed away, too young, aged 9. Walter has just reached this milestone. I do want him to thrive for many more years yet.



Good to know ...

Yellow Dog Project

This project, which has been mentioned in some of the glossy dog magazines, was created to bring awareness of dogs who need space while training, recovering from surgery, or being rehabilitated. If you see a dog with a YELLOW ribbon, bandana or similar on the lead or on the dog, it means the dog needs some space. Please do not approach this dog or its people with your dog. It is an indication that the dog cannot be close to other dogs, so maintain distance and give them time to move out of your way.

There are many reasons why a dog may need space:

- It may have health issues
- It may be another rescue dog being rehabilitated and lacking confidence
- It may have had a bad experience with another dog, or just not be very friendly
- It may be a bitch on heat
- It may be in training
- It may be very old and arthritic
- It may be very shy or nervous

You can read about the project on www.YELLOWDOGUK.co.uk

Lastly this Christmas – 2023

Introducing a 'Gorgeous' companion –

Jackson: Our new best friend



We lost our last rescue Golden at the end of June, at 15, and were not sure what to do next for our next dog. We are of an age where coping with a puppy is too much, and many of the various animal charities, Golden retrievers were ex-breeding and untrained. Then early in September we received a call from SGRR enquiring if we might be interested in rehoming an 'elderly gentleman' not quite ready for his 'pipe and slippers'!

Jackson is our 7th Golden.... he can be described as a gentle giant, and settled in brilliantly, as if he has always been here. He still needs multiple grooming sessions, and Librela for his arthritis, but otherwise full of life and fun

Walking round our village Jackson meets and greets everyone. Everyone says how generous we are to take him in. However, we respond that it is us who are fortunate to take in what can only be described as a gorgeous companion.

Many thanks SGRR.

We are really sorry to report that Mr & Mrs Caplan had to make the hardest decision we dog lovers face and let Jackson be put to sleep since writing this, his age finally giving in.

We, in our small charity, are immensely grateful to Mr & Mrs Caplan for adopting Jackson. It is so sad that they all did not have more time together. December 2023.

A 'Lucky' love story ...

Our eldest son Sam died in 2022 unexpectedly. His loss naturally had a significant impact on the whole family. This included our dog, Trevor, who had been used to Sam's dog Nala arriving each day to be looked after whilst Sam worked as a teacher in one of the local schools. He spent much of his day looking out of a bedroom window waiting for Sam and his dog, a Golden Retriever, to arrive. It was so upsetting to see.

One day in February, as my youngest son and I were working from home, my wife picked up the phone and called the Southern Golden Retriever Rescue. She told our story to June, the area co-ordinator, who asked if we would consider adopting a Retriever looking for a forever home. She explained the process including having garden & house checks first.

Two weeks later our new edition arrived with a bed, and an abundance of toys and there was an instant connection of love and compatibility. She and Trevor hit it off instantly and quickly became the best of friends. She has given our dog a new lease of life and he now loves to play with all of Lucky's toys! She has helped him lose weight and regain his appetite for life.

As for us, she has helped us enormously. In many ways she has a similar personality to Sam - loving, caring, calm, playful and always hungry!! We do feel that Sam helped the Rescue to send Lucky to us!

She enjoys her days spending time with us and Trev, and meeting new friends when she is out on her daily walks with Trev by her side, giving her confidence and showing her the ropes.

We have only ever had dogs from puppies before but this has been a delightful experience managed so well by the Rescue. We will always be grateful to them and we will give Lucky a wonderful life full of love and fun!'

Simon Arthur

A Fabulous photo from the FUNDAY 2023



AND FINALLY – although it's heart wrenching when the times comes to say goodbye to our beloved furry friends – one hopes this poem captures their sentiment, and helps lift our hearts just a little ...

If It Should Be

If it should be that I grow frail and weak
And pain should keep me from my sleep
Then you must do what must be done
For this last battle can't be won

You will be sad – I understand
Don't let grief then stay your hand
For this day, more than all the rest
Your love and friendship stand the test

We've had so many happy years
What is to come can have no fears
You'd not want me to suffer, so
When the time comes please let me go

Take me where my needs they'll tend
Only stay with me until the end
And hold me firm and speak to me
Until my eyes no longer see

I know in time you too will see
It is a kindness you do to me
Although my tail its last has waived
From pain and suffering I've been saved

Don't grieve that it should be you
Who has to decide this thing to do
We've been so close, we two these years
Don't let your heart hold any tears

Anon