

The Time I Spent Valentine's Day Putting Down my Ex-Boyfriends Dog

Yeah, unfortunately it's exactly how it sounds. I spent Valentine's day a few years ago putting down the beloved childhood pet of a family I had never met before. I think about this every time valentines day rolls around and no matter how tragic my love life is at the time, I count my blessings that cremation will most likely not be a topic at the dinner table.

I will start by saying I'm a very nice person, too nice sometimes. So when my ex-boyfriend who I had broken up with only a few weeks prior called me and asked me to drive him three hours home because he didn't have a car at school, I didn't say no right away, as I probably should have. Obviously I asked the occasion as I figured he wouldn't ask unless it was something important, which it was. He told me their childhood dog was sick and that they had to put her down. I thought of my own pets and how sad I would be if I couldn't be with them for their last moments so I decided I could put up with my slightly annoying but harmless ex for a few hours.

Now as I said, I'm nice, but I think I might also be a little dumb because when he told me I was driving him there I didn't even think about the fact that I would have to stay there and drive him home. It wasn't until I got to their house and was led by his sweet mother to his childhood bedroom with both bunk beds made up for the night. Shit. I don't know what I thought was going to happen. I guess I assumed his family would drive him back up the next day after the dog, you know, passed. Once I realized I was in for the night I tried to make myself as comfortable as possible. However, when it came my turn to tell my favorite memory of a dog that I was meeting for the first time, there's only so much comfort I could fake. I think I'd have to go with when I

walked in the front door and she tried to greet me but couldn't really get up so she just barked a few times and laid back down? Good times.

We played a few rounds of charades, painful, and then called it a night. Me and, we'll call him Wyatt, because that's his name, returned to his room for the night. I don't know when it's appropriate to make a move on your ex-girlfriend but the eve of putting down your dog is not the time.

I had forgotten about Valentine's day all together until I woke up in the morning to a Valentines themed brunch that his little sister had made complete with heart shaped pancakes and waffles.

“Happy Valentine's day love birds!” my jaw dropped. Wyatt hasn't told his parents we broke up and I was being ambushed with a Valentine's day celebration along with his parents, his sister, and her boyfriend. We were on a triple date and for breakfast we were having chocolate covered strawberries with a side of euthanasia.

After breakfast his mom announced it was time to say goodbye. It really was sad and even though I didn't know these people, anyone with a heart would've teared up at this. His mom insisted that the family gather around the dog for a last family picture together. When she invited me into the picture I insisted on staying just the photographer. I didn't think Wyatt needed a picture showcasing everything he lost that year. After that everyone said their final words to the dog and I kept waiting for them to load her into the car to go to the vet. That's when it happened. The vet walked through the front door with his toolbox (I don't think that's what it's called...) and I knew I was in for so much more than I bargained for.

I had heard of people putting their dog down at home. It actually is a sweet way to do it, I think, to keep the pet comfortable in their final moments. Me, however, who does not do well

with death and who *didn't know these people*, was severely uncomfortable. The next part was terrible and I'll skip the details because pet death is arguably one of the last topics people want to hear in detail. All I'll say is that I cried more than Wyatt.

After that horrible gloomy afternoon we did what any mourning family (and ex-girlfriend) would do, we went sledding. I'm not going to judge anyones grieving process, but when his mom was handing me a snow bib less than 5 minutes after they took their dog away, I had to work very hard not to laugh. We then all packed into their family car to go to their favorite sledding spot down the road and actually had a very nice afternoon of sledding, a refreshing turn from the traumatic and awkward morning I had just endured.

Since that day I feel very close to Wyatts family. I'll definitely never see them again but if they ever have to put another dog down, I like to think they'll call me.