

paws for reflection

All You Need is Love

by cara meglio



WHEN DOES LOVE BEGIN? Some say at first sight; others say at the first kiss. For Kristen and her Great Dane, Egon, it was love at first lick. Their meet-cute moment occurred at the home of a breeder in Washington state. Little Egon was the first puppy in the litter to stick out his tongue at Kristen and her partner John, so they decided to bring him home.

After making the choice to adopt their first dog together, Kristen and John diligently researched reputable breeders, hoping that generations of health history could avoid any unpleasant surprises with their new puppy. They researched pet insurance, too, and Egon was insured with Petplan a week before he even came home — just in case!

Determined to be the best pet parents possible, Kristen and John did all they could to be prepared. But the course of true love never did run smooth. When Egon wasn't crashing around the house like a 110-pound wrecking ball, tripping over his comically large paws, he was showing early signs of health problems. By 13 weeks of age, he began having bloody diarrhea, then projectile vomiting. Though Great Danes are prone to tummy troubles, Kristen and John knew there was something wrong.

According to Egon's veterinarian, his condition was one of two things: chronic but manageable inflammatory bowel disease (IBD), or the deadly cancer lymphoma.

Kristen cheered when the call came that Egon had IBD. It was treatable! But life with IBD isn't always easy — especially if you're a "walking test case" like Egon.

away, or even left alone for more than a few hours. But they have no regrets about life with Egon.

"I'm so glad he's the puppy we picked," says Kristen. "I'm not sure other people would have had the flexibility, patience or financial means to take care of him.

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Since his diagnosis, he's been back to the vet for a host of adverse reactions and side effects from his many medications.

"Just about every time we take him to the vet with a new complication, their reaction is, 'Oh, I knew this was possible but I've never seen it before,'" Kristen laughs.

Love is patient, and love is kind — as evidenced by Kristen and John's commitment to Egon. The Dane's four-times-a-day medication regimen means he can't be boarded when the couple goes

He could have ended up put to sleep or in a shelter." They say love doesn't cost a thing, but Egon's chronic condition has led to staggering vet bills. Luckily, Kristen's decision to purchase Petplan protection from the start meant they'd be covered.

Egon's health has done a "complete 180" in the year since his diagnosis. These days he's back to zooming happily around the house — proving that puppy love conquers all!