

My dream pet?

Let me find him.

He is lying on the mat my father sewed from old blankets, hot and panting. His head is inches away from the heater. He loves my love, but he loves the fire more, he bullies me out of the way. When I lay down next to him, his body is warm and soft, half the size of mine. I rest my head on his body and he does not mind. He nudges my hands with his nose, quietly but firmly demanding cuddles. He is my most reliable friend.

My dream pet?

Let me find him.

He is sitting on the carpet in the hallway, legs sprawled out across the floor. He shuffles around, always underneath our feet as we pack the car with bags and boxes. He is trying to be as inconvenient as possible. When we open the doors of the car, he clambers in and refuses to leave. He does not want to be left behind.

My dream pet?

Let me find him.

He is looking at me with guilty brown eyes as he emerges from my parents room. He does not like to be left alone, and he makes it known to us. Torn tissues lie scattered on the floor, and the contents of the bin decorate the carpet like ornaments. Oops. When he is left alone and the sounds of the night are too frightening, he barges his way into the chicken coop, and sits inside among the feathers. He likes the company. I'm not sure the birds agree.

My dream pet?

Let me find him.

He is shuffling his way into my room, dropping beside me to lean his full 40 kilos of body weight against me. He licks the salty tears off my face, even when nobody else notices them. Rare is it that I let anyone see me cry, but here he is. I wonder if his ears hear my muffled sounds of sadness better than a human. He has been by my side always, and he has loved me better than any other could.

Black and white and grey, big and soft and silly. A little bit anxious, a little too hairy. He's been with me since I care to remember.

There is no more room in my heart for another because he fills my whole soul.

My dream pet is the one I already have.