## シロ

シロは描にしては珍しく、とんな犬にも、初めての人でも全く問題ありませんでした。アレルギーの原養のだめに我が家に来ているハロルトとシェリーとも、よく一緒に対んでいましたし、お客さんが泊まりに来たときでも、秋元に行って寝ていました。普段寝るときは、私達の間の一番いい場所を、シロとシェリーが先を争って取り合いをし、結局いつもシロが一番いい場所で寝て、その遠でシェリーが焼きもちを妬いているという状態でした。ハロルトは、涼しい場所を求めて自分の好きな場所で寝ています。

私達がアークから帰って来ると、ます犬だちが「ワオワオワオ〜」と大歓迎をして迎えてくれます。その次にシロがゆっくりと足元に来て、素道の受け身のようにホテッとお腹を見せて転がります。背替えをするだめに他の場所に行くと、まだ足元にやって来でホテッと転かって見せるのです。費に座ったり寝転かったりすると、必す膝の上や背中、お腹に乗って来てコロコロと喉を鳴らしていました。あの仕草がもう見れないかと思うと、本当に寂しく思います。私達が、アークの仕事のことで落ち込んだり疲れたりしていると、

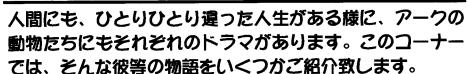
今まて2年近くアークの仕事を続けて来て、たくさんの動物の死を見て来ました。中には、消化器官が弱まり、毎日下痢をし、立てなくなって床擦れになってしまう子もいます。そういった状態になったときても自然死を待つのか、それとも安楽死を決断するのかはとても難しい演択です。長く世話をしていればしている程、安楽死の決断はしにくいものです。素人なからも、腎不全の痛の末期がとのようなことになるのか知っていましたので、シロを引き取ったときから、そういう状態になったときには安楽死を選択しようと決めていました。私は、不治の病を打えた子にとって、それは飼い主か与えてあけられる最後の愛情であると信しています。

ある意味で、シロの死は理想的なものでした。食欲が無くなり、痩せて来ではいましたが、前日までハロルトと書れて遊んでいました 恐らく本当に苦しかったのは、亡くなるその日だけだったと思います。最後の3ヶ月を一つの保証の中で過ごし、飼い主の腕の中で死ぬこと か出来だシロは、幸運だったと思います。

とうかアークの子だちに、最後を暖かい家庭の中で迎えることが出来るチャンスを与えて下さい。アークで一生を通ごすことは、決して 幸せなことではありません。一つの家庭の中で、愛情を与えられることによって、はしめて彼らか彼ららしく生きることが出来るのです。



SHIRO



n the night of July 26th our cat Shiro breathed her last in the loving arms of my wife. Two dogs share life with us in our house, but Shiro was our first cat. At ARK she was diagnosed with incurable renal failure, requiring intravenous medication every other day.

Because we live close to ARK we took her in to our home. The vet gave her six months to live, so we knew what was coming, but that day came three months early.

Shiro was unusual for cat. She loved everyone she met at first sight—both dog and human. She played with both dogs—Harold and Shelley—who came to our home for allergy treatment, and when guests came to stay over Shiro would be found sleeping by their pillow. The usual bedtime ritual was a faceoff between Shiro and Shelley for the space between my wife and me. Shiro would always wind up with the best spot, and Shelley would be lying down nearby with a jealous look in her eye. In summer, Harold always went off to lie down in his favourite cool spot.

When my wife and I came home from a day at ARK, first the dogs would greet us with some raucous barking. Then Shiro would come to us and roll over onto her back, like a judo maneuver, showing us her belly. When we moved into another room to change our clothes, Shiro would again come to plop herself down and roll over at our feet. When we sat down or stretched out on the tatami mats, Shiro would invariably maneuver onto a lap or stomach or back, purring loudly and contentedly. It makes me sad to think that I'll never again be treated to those unique little things she did.

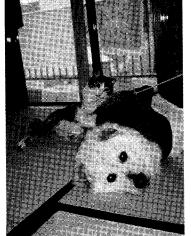
Whenever we felt down after the day was over or we were tired from work, she would be even more insistent on cheering us up, doing her flop-over or rubbing her cheek up against our legs and purring to console us. Shiro always reminded me that animals give us so much.

I have been working at ARK for nearly two years now and I have seen many animals die. I have seen ones whose digestive organs weaken causing diarrhea every day, or those who can no longer stand and get bedsores. When they reach this state it becomes a difficult choice, whether to let them die naturally or to put them to sleep. The longer one takes care of them the harder it becomes to make the choice to euthanize. Even though I'm not a medical expert, I knew what the final stages of renal failure would be like; we took Shiro in thinking that when she reached that point we would put her to sleep so that she wouldn't suffer. I believe that this is the final act of love that an owner can give to a beloved pet with a terminal illness.

The way in which Shiro died couldn't have been better. Although she had lost her appetite and had become thin, even one day earlier she had played happily with Harold. I think that she really only suffered on that last day. Shiro was able to spend her last three months of life surrounded by family, dying in the arms of her adoptive mother. I feel that she was lucky.

If you can, please give a chance to the little ones at ARK by welcoming them into your home. For an animal to live out its entire life at an animal refuge can't be very happy. Only by having a family to give them love and accept their love can they be their natural, loving selves.

Satoshi Ogura ARK Staff





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