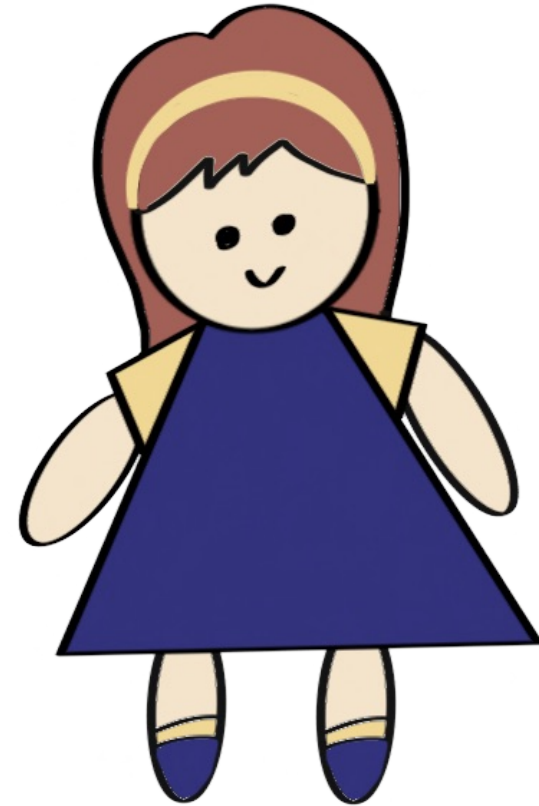


How to Say Goodbye



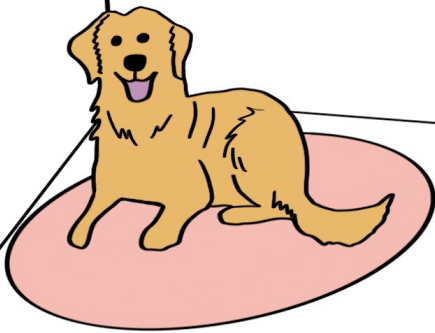
Today started off like
any other Monday.

* illustration of
M.C. getting ready
for school



Lucky is Class 4A's beloved class pet.

LUCKY ♡



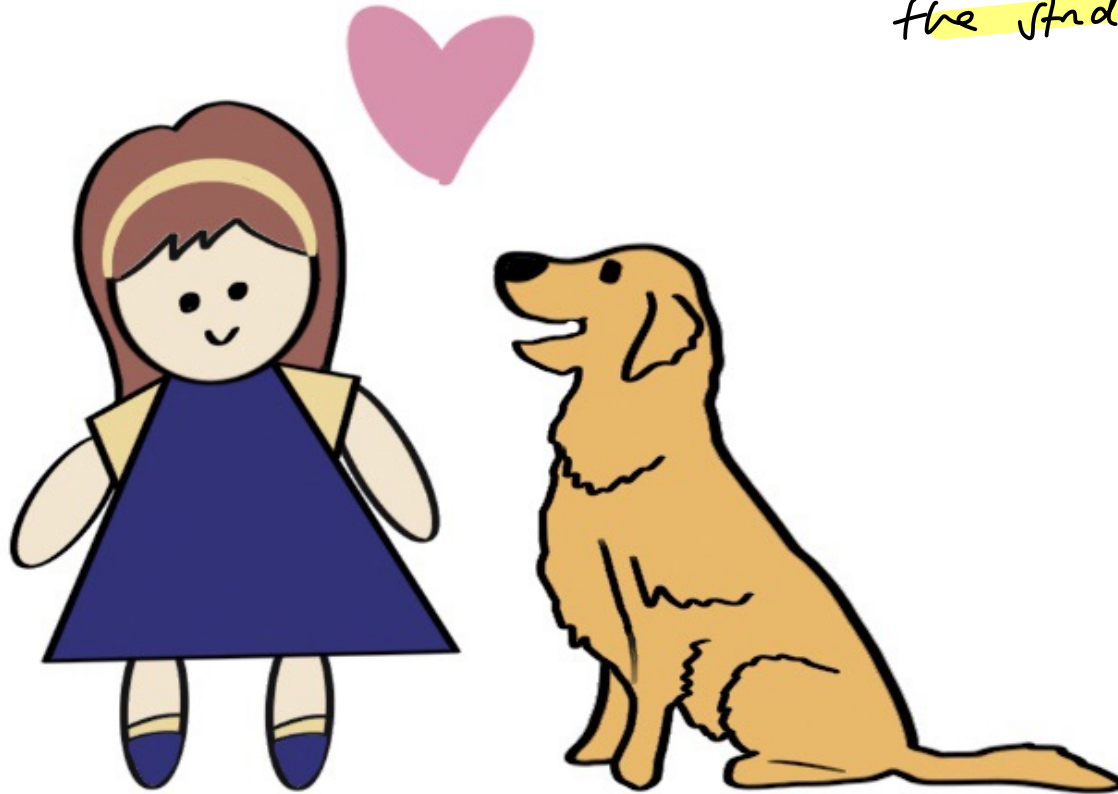
As always, I couldn't wait to go to school to greet Lucky after the long weekend.

*illustration
of Lucky @
diff ages

Mrs. Johnson began taking care of her since she was a puppy, and Lucky's been with Mrs. Johnson and her students for sixteen years now.

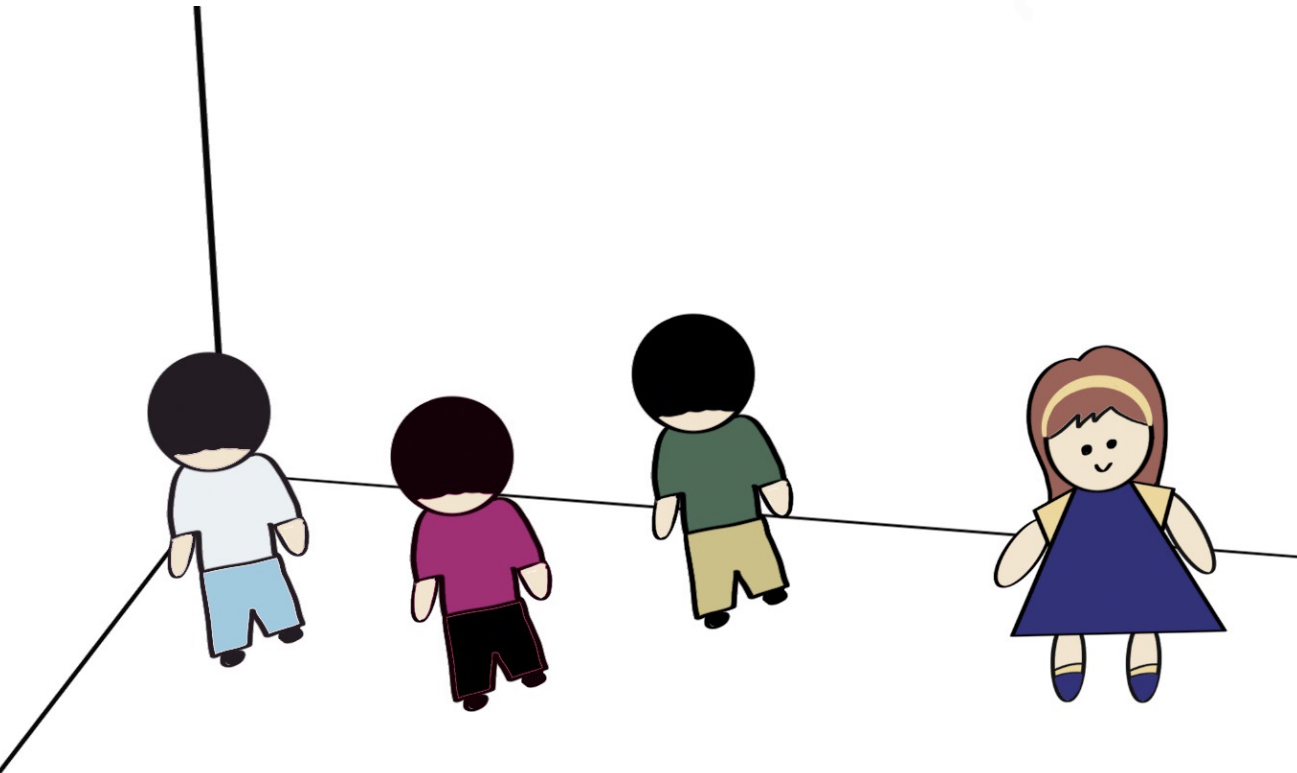
With her shaggy, golden coat and pink nose, Lucky's cuteness wins over a new classroom of students every year.

* illustrations
of Lucky &
the students



Of course, I was won over easily.

* illustration of main
character going into class
& seeing classmates huddled



As always, I saw a bunch of my friends
huddled around Lucky's corner of the
classroom, so I made my way over.

"Hey everyone! I can't wait to see -
where's Lucky?"

Right before the bell struck at 8 a.m., I
rushed into the classroom to see Lucky.

"There's no good way to tell you all this, but Lucky couldn't come to school today. She got very sick over the weekend."

* illustration of Mrs. Johnson speaking to class

"I wanted to make sure she had time to rest and get checked up, so she's going to the vet today," Mrs. Johnson said.

"Will Lucky be okay?"

* diff illustrations
of classmates
speaking out,
worried.

"Is it just a little cough?"

"Can she come back tomorrow?"

The class was worried.
Lucky had never missed a class in
all 16 years of her life!

"We'll have to wish for the best... Even if she loves playing around with you munchkins, she's an older dog, you know? Let's just keep her in our thoughts and prayers for now..."

* illustration of classroom
from behind students'
heads

She wouldn't want us to miss out on Morning Meeting, so let's get started with our day. I promise to keep you all updated once I hear back."

* illustration of Lucky's
empty corner

It was hard for my classmates and I to
focus when Lucky's corner was empty.

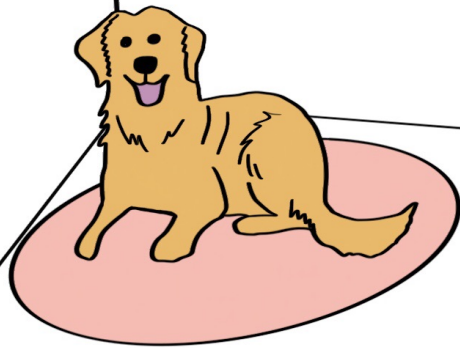
She would usually be snacking through
her kibble during Morning Meeting...

* illustration of
Lucky eating
& snacking

or gnawing on her peanut
butter treat until recess.

*illustration
of M.C. thinking
about lucky

LUCKY♡



I missed her so much, but I still was hopeful that Lucky would be okay.

The next day, I got to school even earlier in case Lucky would be back.

*mushing into
classroom to
see another
empty corner

When I got to class, her corner was still empty.

Mrs. Johnson also looked really sad. All my classmates seemed to notice, but we decided to keep quiet.

* Mrs. Johnson
tearing up
at her desk

The bell rang. We all sat down as we would for any Morning Meeting.

* back of
classroom drawing
to see students'
heads & Mrs. J's
reaction

Right when Mrs. Johnson looked up at us, she started to cry.

"Everyone, I have some news to share with you. I thought about the best way to tell you this, but there is no way I can hide this from you all when she was such a big part of everyone's lives.

* close up drawing of
Mrs. J, crying - or -
of Lucky "crossing"
rainbow bridge

Lucky passed away last night. She had gotten too old and weak, but I know that she lived an amazing life, full of love and laughter, thanks to each and every one of you."

The class gasped.

Some of my classmates
began to tear up.

Some of us didn't know
what to say at all.

*multiple drawings of
students' reactions (crying,
shock, confusion)

How could Lucky be gone?

"I know you are all going to feel a lot of different emotions. There's no right way to respond to news like this.

* Mrs. Johnson hugging some of the students

I'm sorry that we're all going to have to get through this, but we will get through this together."

The school day dragged on after that.

No one really wanted to do anything after hearing about Lucky's passing, so Mrs. Johnson let us read books throughout the day.

* M.C. thinking while
surrounded by books

While flipping through the books, I couldn't help but think Lucky's life was its own beautiful story.

* close up of M.C.
speaking w/ books
in hand

"Mrs. Johnson, Mama once told me that death was a part of life too. She said it's just as important to honor death as it is to honor life. Can we hold a ceremony for Lucky?" I asked.

"I think that's a wonderful idea," Mrs. Johnson smiled.

* Mrs. J holding
onto M.C. &
smiling to class

"Let's all bring something from our families and homes tomorrow so we can say our final goodbyes to Lucky. We'll have this celebration outside in the field and bury a small shoebox for Lucky."

I scribbled down a story about Lucky's life to tell during our celebration.

* M.C. hard at
work writing @
desk

Mama prepared something called incense. She said Catholics use this during funerals that were normally held at the Church.

* incense
burning
near the
field

I told her Lucky wouldn't mind that we were holding her celebration on her favorite grass field.

Mrs. Johnson set up a table with all of Lucky's favorite toys, snacks, and blankets.

* table stacked w/
toys, snacks & blankets
near field

She bought a new set of the tennis balls that Lucky would always use to play fetch with.

She set aside peanut butter treats and chicken wings since Lucky loved them.

She told us these were offerings that her family would usually set up for her relatives on Dias de los Muertos.

Jenny printed out multiple pictures of Lucky for us to hang around the classroom.

* Lucky's photos
being hung around
the room by Jenny

She said we should continue for care for Lucky like we did when she was living. She says that'll help our karma for later.

* Jenny reciting
mantra on the
field w/ students
surrounding her

Jenny's mom also wrote down a Hindu mantra for Jenny to say at the celebration. It was beautiful, and I could imagine just how quickly Lucky would wag her tail hearing this.

Tommy talked about karma, too.
He said the more often we are on
our best behavior, the better Lucky
will be taken care of.

* large illustration of
students coming up to
bow to photo surrounded
by white flowers

He asked us to go forward and
bow to the photo of Lucky he
decorated with white flowers.

Tommy even led us through
traditional Buddhist meditation
to help us show respect to Lucky.

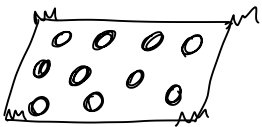
Isabella brought us a shovel
since we all needed to take turns
burying the shoebox.

* students shoveling
earth into plot

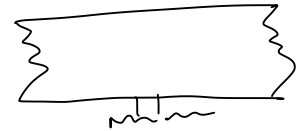


We went around looking for
stones too to place on the field
since Isabella said it would keep
Lucky's soul down.

* stacking stones
onto plot



* Hebrew writing
on small wooden
plank stuck on
the plot



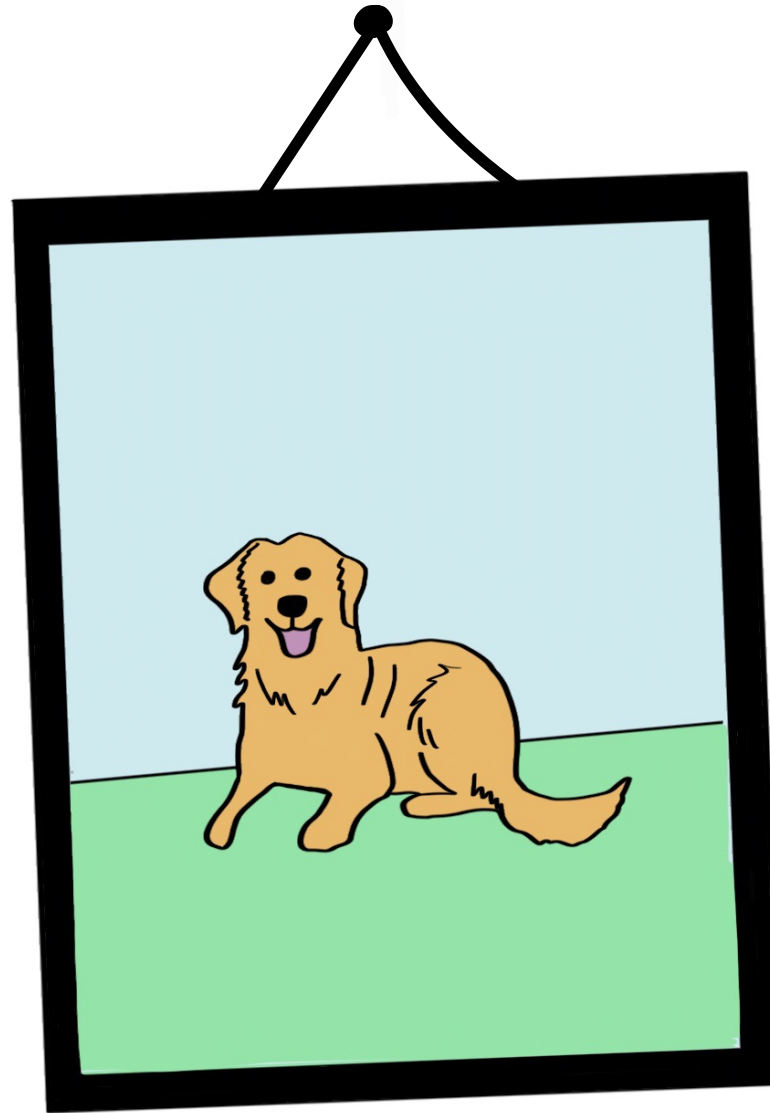
Her mom helped Isabella write
Lucky's name in Hebrew on a
wooden plank that we used as
Lucky's headstone.

Each one of my classmates brought or did something from our families and homes to celebrate Lucky's life.

*illustration
of other
students practicing
religious rituals
near Lucky's
plot

I know for a fact that Lucky felt our love, no matter where she was now.

The next morning, I saw Lucky in her corner and smiled.



*illustration of
M.C. waving to
framed photo &
photo on wall as
last shot

I waved to the photo. "Hi Lucky!"