

## The Story Of Milo The Ferret

**Remembering Milo and other wonderful ferrets that were taken too soon in a heat wave that turned deadly.**

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Photo Courtesy Abbie Perrin

In happier days, ferrets Milo (white) and Simba enjoyed playtime together.

This summer, Milo and my other seven ferrets stayed with their favorite pet sitter while I was on summer vacation. When I stayed at my pet sitter's house to take care of her animals and mine while she was on vacation, I saw how happy they were.

The last day I was there, I sat with all of my ferrets in the ferret room watching them play and giving them kisses. I watched Milo jump off from his favorite toy and wrestle with his brothers and sisters. I held him when he came to me, and I specifically remember putting him and his sister Mina on a towel and dragging them across the floor, watching them dance, begging for more.

Before I left, I picked up Milo and gave him a kiss and told him I'd see him soon. I saw him watch me leave the room with his paws on the cage bars. That was the last time I ever saw him; my biggest regret is not going back to say goodbye one more time.

When my pet sitter was away from the house for a few hours, the power shorted out; the house was without any power for more than five hours. I'm not sure exactly how long it was. The heat of the summer quickly made the temperature inside the ferret room skyrocket. The ferrets that were trapped in their cages had no way to escape the heat. Of my pet sitter's 13 ferrets, there are now only two survivors; and of my eight ferrets, four passed away. If it weren't for her quick reaction, even more would have died. My survivors owe her their lives.

I guess it's obvious that Milo was one of those four that didn't survive. When I first found out what had happened, I replayed my day in my head trying to figure out what I was doing when heatstroke was claiming the lives of the ferrets I love. My boyfriend reminded me the next day that I had an emotional breakdown the night before, probably two and a half hours before being informed about the loss, and I had not been able to explain it. Putting it all together I know that there was no connection, but sometimes I convince myself that I somehow knew when I was losing Milo and the others.

Each of the ferrets I lost touched my life and my heart, but the part that hurts the most is losing my Milo. His luck had just run out. I think that Milo was pure love. That's all he ever felt for the world, and that's all he experienced. I know that Milo came into my life for a reason. He gave me the love and adoration for ferrets I have today and showed me unconditional love. I also think Milo left for a reason. That maybe if he survived more lives would have been lost.

I still see Milo and the others who passed in my surviving ferrets. I see them every time I walk into their room. I see Milo just as he was that last day I spent with him. I see him happy, healthy and whole.

I hope Milo's story and the stories of the others who lost their lives sheds light on the seriousness of heatstroke. Please always be prepared.

For Milo, my sweet boy, I'm so sorry I wasn't there. I love you.

For Mina, my precious deaf girl, your spunk and vivacious nature had such an impact on everyone. Thank you so much for teaching me patience, for teaching me to listen and for teaching me to communicate. I was most surprised that you were lost because you had so much love for life. I see you sleeping in the tunnels above the cage and prancing around like the princess you were. You pushed everyone and crossed every boundary, always wanting more and never tiring. Even though you were always so busy running the show, you would still talk to me. I'm so happy that after the time we spent together, you finally made me understand how to communicate with you. My sweet little fighter, I'm so sorry. I miss you and love you.

For Pongo, my big albino boy, I remember you as my big teddy bear. Finding you when you had nothing and seeing how



happy you were when you got anything at all. I hope you know that, regardless of how annoying it was at the time, I miss you biting the girls' ears every night. You would play with anything that moved, and that made you an amazing gift that fell into my life. You brought the family together and did it by having fun. Seeing you happy after seeing you sad was a gift. I'm sorry. I love you.

For Snookie, I am so sorry sweet girl. You are my sweet loner. You trusted people so easily and my best memories of you are ones with you on my shoulder, watching me do whatever I needed to do. The dogs miss you sweet girl. They want you back to chase them. You deserved to live the end of your life, and I'm sorry. I love you.

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