



Book Review

Going Home, Finding Peace When Pets Die John Katz

I read just about every book I find on the topic of dealing with the loss of a beloved pet and every once in a while I find one that I am really excited about – this is one of them. *Going Home* is a fast and pleasant read; a real soul cleansing for the animal lover. Grab a box of Kleenex and enjoy!

I want to highlight three things from *Going Home* that I believe make this book stand out. The first is the early pages of the book where Mr. Katz puts our relationships with our pets (and grief over them) into perspective. He breaks down why our relationships with our companion animals can be so powerful and therefore carry such intense grief when we lose them. He puts these relationships in the context of a challenging world around us.

Second, Mr. Katz not only shares his own experiences with loss and lessons learned living on a farm but also draws on traditions and writings of great thinkers of the past. He reflects on Plato, Aquinas and Arendt and weaves a narrative of responsible ethics towards animals that guides us towards a healthy ethos and a natural and healing grief.

Finally, Mr. Katz writes in plain truth about the feelings of doubt and guilt that come with having to make end of life decisions for our pets. Of all the books I have read on pet loss, particularly on euthanizing a pet, this was the most articulate and helpful. Katz speaks to how thoughtful reflection on the relationships with and the responsibility we have to our pets can lead us to trust this relationship bond when we are forced to make tough choices and be the advocate that our pet needs us to be.

This is a particularly helpful book for anyone who has had to euthanize a pet due to extreme behavior problems. Mr. Katz shares his own powerful story of guilt, grief and loss over his dog Orson.