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### I Love You, Owen

I had the pleasure of spending time with Sasha a few days ago and we were reminiscing on how wonderful Owen is and all the happiness and love he brought into our lives. Sasha asked me to list all the reasons why I love Owen and to be honest, there are truly countless reasons. Sasha recalled that all I kept saying to Owen in the hospital was "I love you, I love you, I love you". So, here are just a few reasons why I love Owen.

- 1) I love Owen because of all the people in the world, he chose me.
- 2) I love Owen for always defending what he believes in. When I first met him not only did I instantly admire his striking eyes or brilliant smile but, he was the only one who defended me when Roger relentlessly made fun of me for being a vegetarian.
- 3) I love Owen for his patience. Over the past months he and I enjoyed listening to Harry Potter, as it's his favorite series and I had never even read a single Harry Potter book. Not only would I rewind the audio book a million times, I would sometimes even wake him up to ask questions. He always patiently answered every question and was never frustrated and ended every response with a smile.
- 4) I love Owen for our morning routine. Each day I would make us a Stacia smoothie which was the first of two breakfasts for Owen. He would then "yay or nay" my outfit for the day and I would always take his advice. Every time I left the apartment he would tell me to "take no guff".
- 5) I love Owen for his endless appreciation. I was by his side every night and even on the very difficult nights where all I could do is rub his head to ease his headache, he always made me know how much he appreciated me being there. His main priority was to make sure that those around him were taken care of.
- 6) I love Owen for his inclusivity. He loved my family and friends because I do and welcomed them into his life without judgment.
- 7) I love Owen for his way with words. I particularly loved the slew of nicknames he gave me. For example; snuggle buggle, snuggle buggle under the ruggle, snugglety buggelty, staybalicious, staybcakes, veggie dumpling, and my person favorites, snowbirds and snowbird cookie dough bird.

- 8) I love Owen because he gave me the best year of my life. Apart from his diagnosis I have never been happier. He was always my biggest cheerleader. He encouraged, loved and supported all my crazy ideas wholeheartedly and truly made me feel like I could accomplish anything.
- 9) Most importantly, I love Owen because he left me the gift of you. It's a true testament to his character to have cultivated such a loving community. I am so glad that he gave me the gift of Ed, Laurel and Leda who will always be my family.

I love you, Owen and will miss you terribly everyday.