

Jasper and Marlow, England



I scheduled this pet sit and then started planning the rest of my trip that included five more countries and a Mediterranean cruise to Greece. In all, I was overseas for 70 days.

I got to London four days early to do some sightseeing and stayed in a hostel near Wimbledon. I used the Tube (subway) and trains to get around. I visited the Tower Bridge, the London Eye (Ferris wheel), took a Thames river cruise, went to The Medieval Banquet and to a dog expo at ExCel London convention center.



The
London
Eye
10/2018



PIC•COLLAGE



Tower
Bridge
views and
glass floor
in walkway
10/2018



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Jasper and his cat Purrdy were very sweet critters living in Marlow, a small town on the River Thames an hour west of London. Their parents, David and Claire, were very welcoming and David picked me up from the Marlow train station. Their home was right on the main street just west of downtown and close to everything. I walked to the market, restaurants, post office and thrift shops.



That evening, I went with them to walk Jasper to a nearby park. We walked down Portlands Alley, across one street and into large Higginson Park. They took him off leash going down the alley and then said, "Jasper, wait!" before the street. They put him back on the leash and we crossed into the park. He came back off leash and chased tennis balls and walked loose in a loop through the park. Going home they did the same thing again.

The next morning when they were going out to their car to load up for the drive to the airport, I took Jasper for his morning walk. They were certain he would be fine and I could take him off leash in the park. We said goodbye as they were getting into the car and Jasper and I disappeared down the alley. I kept him on the leash to the field in the park and then took him off. I launched one tennis ball and he ran after it and abruptly ran right past me and started for home.

I started yelling, "Jasper, wait!" over and over while running after him. My iPhone fell out of my jacket pocket as I ran and I asked a woman going the other way to please grab it as I continued after Jasper yelling, "JASPER! WAIT!" over and over again. I could see cars going both ways on the two-lane street and as he disappeared around a stone wall, I just knew I was about to hear screeching brakes.

I went around the wall and there he was: standing on the sidewalk just short of the street. I got the leash back on and turned around to the woman coming with my phone. I was out of breath and about to have a heart attack! I told the lady what had happened, although I think she figured it out.

I called David and Claire awhile later while they were waiting for their flight. Their hypothesis was that Jasper thought they were still in the parking lot and he was going home to them. Their said once he realized they were not there, he would be alright off leash. Well, let me say, he stayed on leash for a couple days until we had developed more of a bond. Even then, toward the end of my stay, he was running for the ball and running a little farther past me each time. The last couple days he stayed on the leash.

