

Dear Mary,
just a brief and sorrowful note to tell you that my Allegra died last Friday. The vet had found a large mass (probably malignant) near her kidney but before he could operate she quietly stopped breathing. I didn't really know until then what anguish and grief really were. For two days I was bereft and then I suddenly became numb. I knew I could not endure the silent empty apartment and somehow found the will and sense to go to the nearest pet shop and get a kitten - Mimi - 8 weeks old. She gives me a reason to go home at night and some comfort - it will take time to assimilate this bitter loss.

A further shock this morning, the obituary of Jim McDonald (enclosed). I had to keep it a strict secret but I learned 2 months ago that he had attempted suicide and had become blind from a gunshot wound - apparently because of desperation about his failing marriage. I could not believe at first that a blind man could have got hold of another gun - gone to the desert - written a note - and gone through with the suicide he had attempted only months earlier.

But after speaking to my friend in
Washington — who knew McDonald
very closely for years (I had only a
flight acquaintance with him) —
I had to accept that somehow he had
managed to overcome every barrier
to ending his life. It is really
tragic, for he was courageous and
determined, as few of the Establishment
Scientists ever are, and was
not intimidated by the inorthodoxy
of his own findings. I doubt that
"Ufology" will have so effective
and forceful a spokesman again.

I wish I had some good news to
balance the bad, but I have none.
My sense of despondency will lessen
with time, no doubt, but for now I am
just desolated and sad.
I hope you are well and that Arde continues
his recovery.

As always,

Sylvia