Love Does Not Require Possession

The decision to let Gabe go, and the difference between keeping what we love and choosing what we believe will help love continue.

The starting point

Love does not have to be met with possession. Caring deeply for someone or something does not automatically mean that keeping them close is the choice that best serves their happiness.

This starting point comes from a difficult personal decision about Gabe. I loved him, valued our memories, and understood what he meant to my family. But I also had to investigate whether keeping him was truly the best choice for him, or whether I was holding on because of what keeping him meant to me.

What I had to decide

I spent weeks considering the decision. I thought about Gabe, Rachel, Lamia, the memories we shared, my responsibility for his care, and the possibility of Gabe bringing happiness to a little boy. I did not make the choice because Gabe had stopped mattering. I made it because he mattered.

The question became: **Am I keeping Gabe because that is best for him, or because I do not want to experience letting him go?**

I came to believe that letting Gabe go could give him a happy life and allow the love and happiness he brought into mine to reach another child. That possibility mattered more to me than my personal satisfaction in keeping him.

Responsibility and sacrifice

As the person responsible for Gabe, I believed it was my responsibility to make the difficult choice rather than leave Rachel and Lamia to carry the same weeks of uncertainty I had experienced. My intention was to spare them that burden, not to say their feelings did not matter. They remain entitled to their feelings and choices, even when those differ from mine.

I understood that they might not see the decision as I did. I was willing to carry that misunderstanding because I believed I was choosing a better possibility for Gabe and for someone beyond our household.

What the decision taught me

I learned something about the difference between love, happiness, and possession. My attachment to Gabe was real. So was the pain of letting him go. But love could also mean accepting that his happiness might continue somewhere else, with someone else.

I can regret how painful a choice was without regretting the choice itself. I would make that decision again under the circumstances as I understood them, not because it was easy, but because I believed the happiness it could create was worth my sacrifice.

> **"I was not trying to possess Gabe for happiness. I was trying to let his happiness become happiness for someone else."**

The larger investigation

This experience offers a starting point for asking how love can create value beyond the person who feels it. Can letting go be an expression of love? How do we distinguish another being's well-being from our own attachment? How can a painful decision create an opportunity for happiness to be passed forward?

The claim is not that every act of letting go is loving, or that good intentions guarantee good outcomes. It is that **love and possession are not the same thing**, and understanding that difference can change the choices we make.

Starting-point principle

Love can value another's happiness above personal possession. When we understand that distinction, we can choose to pass love forward rather than hold on to its source only for ourselves.

Status: Personal account and philosophical starting point. Preserves the reasoning and values behind the decision; it is not a claim that every participant interpreted the decision the same way, or a final scientific conclusion.