

# Sadie's story



Sadie was abandoned in an empty apartment in Cartierville, a neighbourhood in Montreal, in April, 2004. On May 8, along with her mate and two other girls, she was turned over to a shelter. The volunteer shelter staff were not equipped to recognize and treat their malnutrition. Sadie was so thin and desperate for human attention that she often squeezed out of her cage to seek it – they thought the cage was too big for her. The four rats, three misidentified as males, languished for a week before someone familiar with rodents took them in. They were lucky.

Sadie's last days at home were filled with baby food, quiet comfort, and medication to help her breathe. She rewarded her caregiver with kisses and bruxes (a rat's version of purring). At 143 grams, she weighed 80% of her minimum and 65% of her ideal weight. Despite her love of life, her physical state was too weak and her lungs were too filled with fluid for her to heal. She was gently, and all too soon, put to sleep under anaesthetic. She is dearly missed by her mate.



Unfortunately, on moving day, many pets are abandoned like unwanted furniture. The shelters cannot take the deluge, and care is in short supply. If you cannot or will not take your pet with you to your new home, it is your responsibility to find them one. **Place ads, talk to people, and above all, give it time.** If you want a pet, or can foster one from time to time, look for ads and call your local shelter. Read up on their care. Be prepared. A pet is a friend well worth keeping.

**Your pets need a home, too. Don't abandon them when you leave yours.**