

a pied wagtail  
dedicated to Kath, who took her own life

I'll never forget you...

your love of nature,  
walking your wee dogs very early  
captured in daily photos

encouraging me on WhatsApp  
to get up and get out of bed  
to harness the highs and the lows

your sense of humour  
intent on trimming my bush  
I'm so glad I finally let you

I now look every day, after my walk,  
at my newly shaped front bush,  
and see the heart, your heart, your handiwork  
with the little stones & succulents  
peeking out beneath, to ground me.

your humour on my birthday  
a photo with a template for my bush  
I'm unsure whether to describe it  
as a bell or a knob  
but I told you where to stick it...  
and it wasn't on my door!

you were an amazing gardener  
thanks for the calming camomile plant  
to rub between my fingers  
and smell the peace  
it's been funny to see friends  
squeezing your label and saying  
"It says *squeeze me*, but nothing's happening, it's so frustrating!"

you were always improving, changing, adapting  
you've challenged me to love and accept myself

and that sometimes the drugs do work  
but they definitely don't, if you won't take them!

as you worked on my bush  
you saw the robin as your mum  
and I saw the robin as my son

we both had losses  
but sometimes the grief  
and the pain from our childhood  
are too much to bear  
because we care too much

Jo Beth Gray