

## Jasper's journey from 26<sup>th</sup> Feb to 22<sup>th</sup> May

Poleaxed by Jasper's passing, it has taken us time to grieve, regroup and go about breaking this news to colleagues and friends, later than we would have liked.

Jasper's illness occurred over 3 intense months. The word most frequently used to describe this period was "rollercoaster". He remained philosophical and calm throughout (mostly), but never lost hope that bold yet prudently administered treatment would buy him enough time to focus on a few cherished projects. Perhaps enough for one more trip to visit his dear friends in Italy and in the UK, and particularly to see his beloved son Adrian. He dreamt of convivial meals celebrating life with friends and family, and woke happy thinking of this.

He was realistic and courageous, but also optimistic. This inspired those who were going through it with him to approach the situation in the same spirit. Meanwhile he endured periods of investigation, treatment and recuperation in 3 hospitals, a rehabilitation centre and, somewhere in the middle of those episodes, a few precious weeks at home getting on with life.

Perhaps we should have anticipated how quickly the end would be upon us, yet it was a shock, even to the professionals caring for him. Preceding events were a blur. We tried to construct a timeline, for ourselves, for him, and for anyone who wished to know how this played out. Here's how it went:

- February 26, 2026** Jasper and Rosie were on the way to a routine check-up when he had a mild seizure. The taxi driver took them to the nearest ER, at Lenox Hill Hospital. He was admitted first to the ICU, then to Neurology for assessment.
- 1<sup>st</sup> weeks of March** A scan revealed a mass in his brain in an operable position, which was successfully removed. It was found to be an aggressive lymphoma, but the surgeon and oncologists believed this could be treated. Options were considered and a plan put in place.
- Progress became complicated by swallowing issues and risk of aspiration that could lead to pneumonia. It was a couple of weeks before the risk resolved enough for Jasper to move on to rehabilitation and treatment.
- March 20, 2026** Jasper transferred to Mary Manning Walsh Healthcare and Rehabilitation Centre, where Rosie had once spent time recovering after a period of illness. There were adventures getting him food he liked and would eat; rehab went very well. He worked hard, and gradually began to recover some of the strength that being bedbound in hospital had undermined. Towards the end of his stay at MMW he began taking Ibrutinib to target the lymphoma. And 3 weeks later ...
- April 10, 2026** JASPER CAME HOME! to celebrations, family and shared good food. His appetite was fully restored. Home-based physiotherapy, which included a stroll in Riverside Park, continued to boost his mobility, even allowing for outings to the doctor (where we learned that his PET results were good), his favourite diner, errands and shopping - even an Indian meal.
- April 27, 2026 and following** Symptoms that had been minor became more pronounced. Jasper experienced another seizure and was taken to Mount Sinai Morningside.
- Scans showed a new mass forming in the same site, and concerning heart issues.

- May 6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup>** In consultation with Jasper and his family, the oncology team decided to try a course of radiotherapy. He was moved to Mount Sinai West for this, but treatment was once again delayed by aspiration and pneumonia risks.
- May 15, 2026 and following** The first radiation session was successful. He slept a lot afterwards, which is not unusual. There were signs that it had been effective.
- Once again he found food deemed safe to eat unpalatable. This, along with more immobilisation in hospital, contributed to greater frailty and lost ground. However, when he wasn't sleeping, he continued to enjoy smoothies brought by grandson Orion and engaging with loved ones who visited in person and remotely.
- He longed for home.
- May 19<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup>** On both these nights, Jasper had good dreams (hallucinations?) that he had spent the evening happily at home with Rosie. He looked forward to a football game in the company of grandson Max, with whom we hoped to watch simultaneous transmissions of the Champions League final.
- May 21, 2026** Jasper was groggy yet engaged and coherent, with family around and in touch by phone.
- May 22, 2026** Around 8 a.m. on Friday morning, he began to struggle with breathing. This had not been anticipated; staff realised the end was close and called Rosie, who alerted Yolande. Both made their way to the hospital as quickly as possible.
- Yolande arrived moments after Jasper had passed. I was in London; she set up a facetime call to enable me to see him at peace and say goodbye. Rosie and Orion arrived soon after, and sat with him.
- Mount Sinai has since recorded his cause of death as acute hypoxic respiratory failure related to aortic stenosis that had worsened over the previous 2 weeks, exacerbated by heart failure and complicated by lymphoma.
- When Jasper finished rehab and came home, what we took to be hints of a possible normal life that would last months (at least), instead turned out to be a brief interlude in which to enjoy his home, spend time with loved ones and contemplate other good times with friends and family he had not seen since his illness. We are grateful for this.
- Throughout those 3 months, Jasper assured us he felt neither pain nor fear. Although he hoped treatment would enable him to savour life a bit longer, he said he was satisfied with his span and proud to be the second longest-lived member of his family, outlasted only by Granny Rubin. His loss is bittersweet: we miss him terribly, yet are so happy to have been part of his journey.