

LETTER TO THE IRRESPONSIBLE DOG OWNER

Today I had to euthanize a dog (YOUR DOG, YOUR FAMILY PET)*.

It does not matter where he came from, who bred him or how he came into the world -- because that had nothing to do with how he ended up -- so please read and understand -- its time we come down HARD on irresponsible dog ownership:

Dear Irresponsible Owners:

Today, I held your male dog (muzzled & sedated) in my arms while my wonderful caring vet Dr. Larry helped me let this poor confused boy go "over the Rainbow Bridge" as we say. I had to do it -- he had already hurt several people, he attempted to hurt several more -- but YOU, his irresponsible owners, refused to do right by him so instead, you left it to me to do right by him.

When you got this dog as a puppy, he was silly, sweet and outgoing. He loved your female dog in residence and from all appearances, he was going to have a great home. Little did anyone know the truth then -- that he was going to be relegated to the back yard, have little to no contact with any other humans than the male owner and he would grow up fearful of people including those others in his own household.

Why is that? you may ask -- well its because NO ONE but the male owner even wanted him -- the wife sure didn't, the kids sure didn't but they lied and pretended they did so "Dad" would be happy & get what he wanted. So off to the solitude of the back yard he went as a little puppy when Mom was sick of him peeing on the carpet his first few days there -- once there, to stay there, to grow more and more fearful of the noises & other things in life he experienced that he didn't understand: neighbors screaming at him to stop barking/whining that he couldn't see from behind his fence; kids that walked by throwing stones at him for fun; thunder, lightening, wind that scared him since he had no shelter outside.

There he stayed sad and alone, as the family had dinner every nite 15 feet away in the kitchen, watched tv in the family room 30 feet away every evening and weekends, celebrated birthdays & holidays while he sat alone outside wondering what he did wrong. Every nite was the same ritual: coming in only to be shoved down the basement stairs to a dark cellar while the resident family dog got to stay upstairs with the family and go to sleep by their beds at nite. Alone, afraid, fearful and sad -- that is all this puppy knew now in life.

As he grew, his wariness grew also until he was not even able to control himself around those he did not know -- by the time he was a year old, he could tolerate no one but his male owner without reacting in fearful aggression. His first bite happened to a family member who was acting aggressive to him to "teach him a lesson" -- the second bite 4 months later to a visitor that entered the yard despite being told not to. There were other attempts to bite, as he would lunge at any stranger that even looked in his direction by the time he became an adult.

By the time we were contacted, it was too late for him. We gave him time in rescue with us hoping for a turn around - - but he could not let go of his fear. He was now an adult male, dangerous because he trusted NO ONE and unadoptable because even a simple vet visit would put humans at risk even if we could get him to trust one owner again. Experts were called, behaviorists discussed all this with us -- and rationally we knew he had to go over the Bridge.

So today -- after sedating him, crating him and driving him to my vet's office all the while shedding tears for him -- I cradled his sedated body while he left this earth -- because over the Rainbow Bridge is where I knew he would finally find peace and happiness. I have no doubt he will be waiting for ME over that Bridge when my time comes, not those that ruined him. Little comfort to me today...

So irresponsible owners -- how long until you run out and buy a new puppy to ruin or race to the local SPCA to adopt again? Why did you ignore the ton of information on how to properly raise a puppy you can find on line? Why did you not reach out to DOG people for help and guidance before you let him get this bad? Why didn't he get taken to training classes, why wasn't he allowed in the house, why was he so ignored?

I know why -- because you are irresponsible, selfish humans and now you want to blame all this on "his breeder" and "his genetics" -- which isn't fair, because WHEN YOU GOT HIM HE WAS PERFECT!! Every time you were asked about him, you said he was doing GREAT!!! Every time you talked about him, you never once mentioned you had these issues with him. By the time you reached out for help, it was just easier to dump him and never look back.

So high-five to you, irresponsible owners!! This is on you -- and I for one, will never forgive you for what you did to him. I am a huge believer in "what goes around, comes around" -- and one day, when the "comes around" part comes knocking on your door, I hope it chooses for its lesson to give you, for one brief moment that will last a lifetime, an image that sears into your mind of me crying as I held your muzzled, sedated beautiful dog in my arms so I could do the kindest thing I could for him. I hope that the image never leaves your mind because I know it won't leave mine.... I stopped his fear, his loneliness and his desolation - I did more for him in his last hour on earth than you did for him in his 3 yrs of life.

Sincerely,

Kathy in Rescue
5/11/13

* Kathy is a vital member in a purebred rescue community, and she wrote this referring to a dog of the breed she gives her heart & soul too. With permission, I have made her letter available with the understanding that THIS letter applies to every breed of dog, purebred or "designer dog" or mutt. She understands that I made the minor changes to remove the specific breed to the word "dog" (once emphasized as DOG) & I added the words (YOUR DOG, YOUR FAMILY PET).

These are her words, heart wrenching & true. The experience she dealt with on May 11, 2013 with just one dog; this dog; this happens EVERY DAY all over America (heck, all over the world).