

The Bridge

Unlike most days at Rainbow Bridge, this day dawned cold & gray, damp as a swamp & as dismal as could be imagined. All of the recent arrivals had no idea what to think, as they had never experienced a day like this before. But the animals that had been waiting for their beloved people knew exactly what was going on & started to gather at the pathway leading to The Bridge to watch.

It wasn't long before an elderly animal came into view head hung low & tail dragging. The other animals, the ones who had been there for a while, knew what his story was right away, for they had seen this happen far too often.

He approached slowly, obviously in great emotional pain, but with no sign of injury or illness. Unlike all of the other animals waiting at The Bridge, this animal had not been restored to youth & made healthy & vigorous again. As he walked toward The Bridge, he watched all of the other animals watching him. He knew he was out of place here & the sooner he could cross over, the happier he would be. But, alas, as he approached The Bridge, his way was barred by the appearance of an Angel who apologized, but told him that he would not be able to pass. Only those animals that were with their people could pass over Rainbow Bridge.

With no place else to turn to, the elderly animal turned towards the fields before the bridge & saw a group of other animals like himself, elderly & infirm, or young, having left life to soon, not from injury or illness, but from euthanasia. They weren't playing, but rather simply lying on the green grass, forlornly staring out at the pathway leading to The Bridge. And so, he took his place among them, watching the pathway & waiting.

One of the newest arrivals at The Bridge didn't understand what he had just witnessed & asked one of the animals that had been there for a while to explain it to him.

"You see, that poor animal was a rescue. He was turned in to rescue just as you see him now, an older animal with his fur graying & his eyes clouding. He never made it out of rescue & passed on with only the love of his rescuer to comfort him as he left his earthly existence.

Because he had no family to give his love to, he has no one to escort him across the Bridge.

Those others, not the ones who passed unloved in old age, they are ones who last days were spent in a shelter."

The first animal thought about this for a minute & then asked, "So what will happen now?" "Just wait, one day you will see what will happen to them."

One day approaching The Bridge could be seen a single person. This was not unusual, as all people who have loved and lost an animal come to The Bridge to find them. Only this time no animal was running to greet them. Suddenly among the old, and lost animals, a whole group was bathed in a golden light & they were all young & healthy again, just as they were in the prime of life. So too, were some of the young, healed of their emotional pain.

A number of the animals awaiting their people came to the pathway & bowed low as the person neared. At each bowed head, the person offered a pat on the head or a scratch behind the ears. After the person had greeted each bowing animal he turned to the newly restored animals. He opened his arms silently to them, and all fell into line & followed him towards The Bridge. They all crossed The Bridge together.

"What happened?" asked the new arrival, turning to one who had been there longer.

"That was a rescuer. The animals you saw bowing in respect were those who found new homes because of his work. They will cross when their new families arrive. Those you saw restored were those who never found homes.

When a rescuer arrives, they are allowed to perform one final act of rescue. They are allowed to escort those poor animals that they couldn't place on earth, but loved if only for a short time, across The Rainbow Bridge."