

Do You Treasure Animals?

Even before I was born, my dog, Bell, has been a part of my family. I grew up with her and we have lots of fun memories together. She's the playful type. She likes to chew on slippers, balls, socks, anything really. One day while she was playing, she swallowed my favorite socks! She started choking and I panicked! Luckily, with my mother's help, she was able to cough up the socks. I was very relieved, but I never wore those socks again.

I'm an animal lover. I often watch TV shows and read books about them. One of the books I read was about a dog who was mistreated by its owner. He was unbathed and he was malnourished to the point that you could see his bones. I felt so bad for him. Reading his story brought tears to my eyes. I didn't want to and couldn't ever imagine Bell being treated this way. To me, Bell is a precious family member. By the end of the story, luckily, the dog was saved by a neighbor, a young girl. The dog was cared for and loved by the girl. She gave him baths, took him on walks, and played with him all the time.

Unfortunately, unlike the dog in this story, not all mistreated dogs and other animals will be able to have this sort of happy ending. There will be no savior for them. No help will be coming.

Some abused animals are auspicious enough to be brought to animal shelters. However, just because an animal is brought to a center, does not mean that it will be saved. For example, last year, 1306 dogs were brought to the animal center in Konan, Kumagaya. Out of those 1306 dogs, 613 were able to go back to their original homes and 294 were adopted. 280 were euthanized and the remainder died in the shelter. How do these numbers make you feel?

I've seen TV shows in which dogs are terrified of people. Because they were abused in the past, if a human even starts to approach them, they cower in fear.

Of course, dogs are not the only animals who may face mistreatment by an undeserving owner. A while back, I visited a cat café for the first time. The cats there were so cute and I had a great time. When I got home, I decided to do some research on cat cafes. It turns out that some of the cats in cat cafes actually come from animal shelters. The cats at the café were friendly and didn't mind interacting with people, so I was surprised to discover this. At the Konan animal center, last year, 1054 cats were taken in. Only nine of them were able to find a new home, while 864 of them were put down. That means that over eighty percent of the cats brought in had to be euthanized. As shown by these numbers, cats struggle to be adopted by pet owners and places like cat cafes.

No one deserves to be mistreated. Not humans, not animals. I fear the day my Bell will pass. I know it's inevitable. Until that day, I'll treasure her with all my heart.

To all the pet owners listening, I hope you'll do the same. I know that raising a pet isn't always easy, but please cherish and love them until the end. To those who don't own a pet, if you are thinking of raising one, please consider the responsibility that comes with it.

Animals can't speak to us with words, but they can show us their emotions in their everyday behavior. I want everyone to think about what and how they feel. Do you treasure animals? I hope I gave you an opportunity today to think about that.

Thank you for listening