

My name was Chelsea, but now I am known by my family as Gracie

I am not sure what a fairy tale is, but I don't think my life has been one. My life took place within a 5-foot circle as I lived for 7 years on a chain, watching the world go by, alone, bored, frightened and often hungry. Each day I hoped for something better, but each day was the same. My family did not like me to be near them, they simply did not like me, no matter how I tried. The summers were so hot and my coat so thick and dark. The winters were cold, wet and frightening. I did not think I would make it through some nights. Sometimes I wished I wouldn't. The storms were very scary but no one cared. My people would throw some food on the ground and when it rained, I drank rain water out of a moldy old bucket. Then one day, a man came for me. I was put into a cage in a truck. I had never been for a ride in a truck before. It was scary but exciting at the same time. This was almost as scary as a storm. When the truck stopped, I was really scared and did not want to come out of the cage. The man used a rope on a pole to drag me out of the cage and into a loud scary building. It was full of other barking dogs. It was terrifying and I wished I were back on my chain. I sat cowering in the corner of my cage in this loud animal control place for 75 long days.

Then one day someone came and put me into a car again. Again, I was so so terrified that I couldn't even walk and I was so embarrassed when I pooped myself in fear. The lady was nice to me, but all I wanted to do was hide under the bed all day. Day by day, the quiet of this place made me feel less scared. The nice lady even let me sleep in the bed beside her! She fed me and took me for walks. Day by day, my fear was less. I learned about toys, about good food, clean water and about the gentle touch of the human hand. I did love that bed thing though! Was this what I have missed for my whole life?

The nice lady who showed me all of these wonderful things tells me she is my foster mom. She now tells me I am getting adopted and going all the way to Florida. What??? My foster mom says there is a nice lady in Florida who can't wait for me to arrive and will love me forever. She says there is another dog like me who needs a foster mom now so he can heal too. I'm not sure I know what all this means, but I am not afraid now. I have learned this thing called "trust"

and I have learned that there are people that are kind and gentle. After 7 years of suffering I get a 2nd chance and I am ready to begin my new life!

Paws-Ability made a t-shirt with a cartoon on it that would raise the money needed to get me to my forever family. The cartoon reversed the role of dog and his "man". The dog watched "man", chained outside no house, no food and no water. The dog wondered if this was cruel but decided he was just a "mangy old human". I did not think it was so funny but the money they raised selling this shirt helped me to get to my new family.

My life is different now but I will never forget the kind woman who took the time to teach me about love, kindness and the gentle things. She is called RESCUE.