



The Rainbow Bridge (Rescue Version) **(Author Unknown)**



Unlike most days at Rainbow Bridge, this day dawned cold and gray, damp as a swamp and 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 who had been waiting for their beloved people knew exactly what was going on and 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 and 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 and made healthy and 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 and 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 who 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 and saw a group of other animals like himself, also elderly and infirm. 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 and waiting.

One of the newest arrivals at The Bridge didn't understand what he had just witnessed and 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 and his eyes clouding. He never made it out of rescue and 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".

The first animal thought about this for a minute and then asked, "So what will happen now?" As he was about to receive his answer, the clouds suddenly parted and the gloom lifted. Approaching The Bridge could be seen a single person and among the older animals, a whole group was suddenly bathed in a golden light and they were all young and healthy again, just as they were in the prime of life.

"Watch, and see" said the second animal. A second group of animals from those waiting came to the pathway and bowed low as the person neared. At each bowed head, the person offered a pat on the head or a scratch behind the ears. The newly restored animals fell into line and followed him towards The Bridge. They all crossed The Bridge together.

"What happened?" "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, across The Rainbow Bridge".

"I think I like rescuers," said the first animal. "So does God," was the reply.