

Ontario Coalition Against BSL

True story about Marley...

This is my foster dog Marley. He's cute as hell. His cuteness has been both his curse and his blessing in life. Marley bites. Bad. Marley was a cute puppy. He was treated like a stuffed toy by a young child who wasn't supervised with him. When Marley got big enough he started to defend himself from this unintended abuse the only way a dog knows how. With his teeth.

At ten months old Marley was surrendered, covered in mats because the family who bought him didn't understand the needs of a hypoallergenic dog. By this time the damage was done. Imagine not washing your hair for months the whole time someone was dragging you around like you were a teddy bear.

So what do you do with a dog that's snappy and won't let you get close to it? You lock it in a cage. You let your frustrations get to you and you shove him into the cage because he's biting you while your trying to get him in there. So now he obviously has issues with the cage.

Marley was sent to a training facility that deals with aggressive dogs. I have worked with some very aggressive dogs. Marley is not an aggressive dog. Marley has no trust in people because all they have ever done is wrong him. Marley is terrified to be touched the wrong way because all his life he has been shown that touch only leads to pain and hurt.

They said he had no respect and that he was unfixable and unadoptable. When I first heard his story I laughed, I thought he was a poodle with an attitude. Now that I have known him a while I know better. I can see the pain and the suffering this dog has been through. The animals don't have a voice but if you know what your looking at they will tell you their story. Marley now has a voice, mine, and I am telling his story.

Marley is going to be with me quite a while so he can learn to trust people again, working at his own pace towards his recovery. Marley is well trained. He can sit, stay, come, lay down, roll over, Fetch (exceptionally good at Fetch), and high five. He is house trained. He follows the rules of the house. He walks well on a leash. Marley does not need training. Marley needs to recover.

I'm writing this with Marley at my feet. A dog that was a gift to a small child. A dog that was supposed to be therapeutic. A dog that was made into a monster. So this holiday season please remember; a dog is NOT a gift. A dog is NOT the responsibility of children. A dog (any dog) is NOT to be left unattended with children. A puppy/new dog is NOT a therapy dog. A therapy dog is a therapy dog. It takes years of expensive training to turn a dog into a therapy dog. You don't buy them from some donkey selling designer puppies out of their backyard. A dog is NOT an impulse. If you want a non shedding dog be prepared to take care of that hair. If you want a German Shepard be prepared for all the training required. If you want a Dalmatian be prepared to deal with a stubborn pain in the ass.

At the beginning of this I said his cuteness was his curse and blessing in life.

The curse is obvious after reading this.

The blessing? **If Marley looked like a Pit bull he would have been put down a long time ago.**

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