



This is in honor of our Christmas Angel of 2017 - Ben. Sadly he became our Angel in December of last year just before his birthday. Ben was adopted out 7-8 years ago to a gentle senior citizen. Something evidently happened to her because three years ago he was found roaming and in terrible condition. I suspect his owner passed away and family members dumped him. That is how so many animals come into rescue groups. Thank God he was microchipped and I was called. He was found in Polk County and taken to their kill shelter - a horrible place - where he lived for two weeks until they had the sense to track him down via microchip!!

I was called, told he was UNADOPTABLE because he needed a dental so I drove 3 hours one way to retrieve him. When he was led from prison on a leash, he proceeded the attendant, looked neither right nor left, heading straight for the door. He wasn't about to let them kill him.

I watched in amazement remembering that little type from years earlier. Tears welled in my eyes and as he approached the door I picked him up and hugged him. It was heartbreaking as he was matted with feces and urine having never received a bath, never given pain meds for his infected teeth.

I didn't say a word to the staffer just marched out the door with that darling little man in my arms. We got to the car and I placed him on the passenger side but....oh no, Mr. Ben wasn't about to sit alone. He jumped in my lap as we took off to freedom. But even that didn't satisfy him. I tried driving with two hands but he wouldn't allow it. He stood up and pulled my left arm down to comfort him while I steered with my right. I tried again - no way - he needed that human touch. He got it - my left hand - all the way 3 hours north.

Back home he was bathed, dried, then immediately ran around the house like a little energetic youngster. After placing a bio and cute photos on our website off he went to receive superior care at my daughter's vet hospital - FloridaWild. His teeth were extracted, he was put on antibiotics and he began to bloom. Arrogant and bossy, he took over the house and my big dogs.

Within a week I had one call on him from Mary - a very determined nurturing former nurse in Sarasota. She wanted Ben - sight unseen - and with his health issues as well. That didn't bother her. She sent in her application, was approved with resounding success.

Ben and I drove midway to Tampa to meet Mary in a shopping center parking lot. I cried as I carried Ben toward her. Placing him on the ground, leash in hand, he pranced straight toward Mary and never looked back. Instinctively he knew he was heading home - again - his trust impressive.

Mary gave him several amazing and healthy years after frequent visits - back to FloridaWild and then to her vet. It was Mary who discovered after astute observation that his constant attempt to scratch his back and cry was a build up of dead skin cells. The nurse in her saved Ben months of agonizing agitation.

Ben even received the high honor of being one of the poster kids for the Sarasota Humane Society - a little pup who was going to be killed in Polk County because he was unadoptable! As the years passed I was fortunate to visit Ben and his mom on several occasions and always it was as if Ben displayed a huge grin on his face when I saw him. And always when I left it was with tears in my eyes - tears of joy. Ben was the center of the universe for generous loving Mary.