



PETS ARE NOT TRASH

Definition of “Pet”: Any domesticated or tamed animal that is **kept as a companion and cared for affectionately; a thing that is particularly cherished.**

Definition of “Trash”: **Anything worthless or useless.**

“Pet” and “Trash” – clearly by their definitions are so utterly diametrically opposed. Yet anyone who has visited an animal shelter knows firsthand the heartbreak you feel and experience when you see all of the unwanted animals (mutts and purebreds) that have been callously, carelessly, and mercilessly discarded.

Science demonstrate that dogs have the intellect and emotions equal to that of a 2-year old child. In turn, a 2-year old is *capable of complex thoughts and feelings.*

If you had a 2-year old child, would you drop him/her in a strange place, turn your back, and walk away without expecting that toddler (who had been a beloved member of your family, “cared for affectionately”, and “particularly cherished”) to feel deserted, sad, anxious, and/or nervous?

Pets in shelters (who have the same complex thoughts and feelings of a human 2-year old) have been cast aside by their owners like a piece of trash when the owners have become “tired of taking care of it”. The owner hasn’t giving any thought to how the animal feels or will react. Pets sense significant emotional pain when surrendered, and like any 2-year old youngster, they too are confused and frightened.

For those of us who have visited a shelter firsthand (and continue our journey to scout for Dalmatians in shelters), you see these feelings in the animals’ eyes; you feel it in the warmth and dryness of their noses; or even in the posture they exhibit as they cower or lay helplessly in the corner of a cold concrete cage. Some animals become so depressed and despondent that they give up, refusing to eat, attempting to starve themselves to death, because death would take away their pain.

As rescuers we’ve heard all the excuses as to why people don’t want their Dalmatian anymore: “**he/she barks**”; or “**he/she barks too much**”; “**he/she digs**”; “**he/she’s big and knocks the kids down**”; “**we don’t have time for him/her**”; and let’s not forget “**we’re moving**”.

As rescuers we wonder: “**Did you train him/her?**”; “**Do you exercise him/her?**”; “**Did you include him/her as part of the family?**”; “**When you move will you be leaving your child behind?**” **Your pet is what you make of him/her, and the amount of time you put into him/her.**

Lastly, we’ve also experienced what happens when the Dalmatians move into their senior years, when they might experience arthritic joints, incontinence, blindness, deafness, or a myriad of any other canine issues that arise as the dogs become “seniors”. Now the game has changed because our pets require more or specialized care and veterinary visits; additional patience; medicine; and the list goes on and on. But rather than fulfill that life-time commitment to our pet, or put that pet out of its pain by euthanasia surrounded by family (because the excuse we get is “euthanizing my pet costs too much”, the animal is discarded like trash at a shelter, thus allowing others to do the dirty work at no cost to the “dumper”.

Owning or adopting a pet means **you owe that pet a home for the rest of its life. If you cannot make that commitment, DON'T GET A PET.**

Your dog provides 100% unconditional love and they believe you are the center of their universe. It is our hope at Save the Dals that this information sheds some understanding on a pet owner's obligation. Please remember **Pets Are Not Trash.**

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