

The Boy and the Rescue Donkey



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On a bright Saturday morning, Sam skipped down the gravel path to the animal sanctuary. His yellow shirt glowed like a sunflower, and his blue overalls bounced with every step. His canvas satchel held three crunchy carrots. He had waited all week for this visit. Today, he hoped to make a new friend.



The sanctuary was a cozy place full of soft sounds. Goats bleated, chickens clucked, and a gentle breeze rustled the leaves. Sam's large brown eyes sparkled as he looked around. A volunteer smiled and said, "Welcome, Sam! We have many animals here, but one special donkey needs a quiet friend."



Sam followed the volunteer to a shady corner of the sanctuary. There stood an elderly donkey with a soft grey coat and a cream-colored muzzle. His long floppy ears twitched, and his dark eyes had pale lashes. A blue halter with a small brass bell hung around his neck. The donkey stood very still, looking tired and wise.



Sam walked slowly toward the donkey, remembering to be gentle. "Hello," he whispered. "My name is Sam. Would you like a carrot?" The donkey's ears perked up just a little. Sam held out a carrot, and the donkey took it softly with his lips. The brass bell jingled. Sam smiled his gap-toothed smile. A quiet friendship had begun.



The volunteer told Sam that the donkey was very old. His name was Dusty, and he moved slowly because his back was a little stiff. "He loves cool shade and easy paths," she said. "But the sanctuary doesn't have many nice places for him to rest." Sam's kind heart felt a tug. He wanted to help.



Sam sat beside Dusty on a soft patch of grass. He noticed the donkey's grey whiskers and the little age spots on his coat. "Don't worry, Dusty," Sam said. "I'll help you." Dusty nuzzled Sam's shoulder gently. The boy felt warm and happy. He decided to ask the sanctuary keeper if they could build a special garden.



The sanctuary keeper, a cheerful woman named Ms. Rosa, listened to Sam's idea. "A peaceful garden for older animals?" she said. "What a wonderful thought!" Sam told her about safe pathways and shaded resting places. Ms. Rosa nodded. "We have some space behind the barn. We can start tomorrow." Sam's eyes shone with excitement.



The next day, Sam arrived with a plan. He drew a map with wide, smooth paths that would be easy for Dusty's stiff legs. He marked shady spots under big trees where the donkey could rest. Ms. Rosa gave him a small shovel and some seeds. Dusty watched from his paddock, his floppy ears listening to every word.



Sam worked hard, digging and planting. He made a path of soft wood chips so Dusty's hooves wouldn't slip. He placed a bucket of cool water near a shady tree. "This will be your resting place," Sam told Dusty. The donkey walked over slowly and sniffed the fresh wood chips. His brass bell jingled softly, as if he were saying thank you.



Days passed, and the garden began to grow. Sam planted sweet grass and fragrant herbs along the path. He built a low wooden bench in the shade where he could sit with Dusty. The donkey loved to walk the easy path, stopping often to nibble the grass. Each time Sam came, Dusty's ears perked up with joy.



One afternoon, a group of children visited the sanctuary. They ran noisily toward the animals. Dusty's ears flattened, and he stepped back. Sam gently spoke to the children. "Please walk slowly and talk softly. Dusty is old, and he needs kindness and respect." The children listened. They quieted down and approached gently. Dusty relaxed.



The children helped Sam finish the garden. They spread soft hay in the shady spots and placed smooth stones along the path. Dusty walked beside them, his slow steps matching their careful pace. The garden became a favorite place for all the animals. Sam felt proud. He had created something peaceful and safe, just like he promised.



The sanctuary keeper was so pleased that she asked Sam to show the garden to other visitors. Sam stood proudly beside Dusty. "Older animals deserve comfort and love," he said. "And kindness makes every animal happy." Dusty nuzzled him, and the brass bell jingled. Everyone clapped, and Sam's gap-toothed smile stretched from ear to ear.



Now, every Saturday, Sam visits Dusty. They walk the easy paths together, and Dusty rests in the cool shade. Sam brings carrots and sometimes an apple. They sit quietly, watching the leaves flutter. Sam has learned that patience and gentle care make the best friendships. Dusty is his wise, old friend, and Sam is his kind boy.



Sam often tells other children about Dusty. "Move slowly and speak softly," he says. "Older animals need extra kindness." The children nod and smile. They, too, want to help. Dusty stands in the shade, his cream muzzle twitching happily. The garden is a peaceful place, full of respect and love. And it all started with a boy and a rescue donkey.



As the sun sets, Sam gives Dusty one last carrot. "Goodnight, friend," he whispers. Dusty's brass bell jingles softly. Sam walks home with a happy heart. He knows that kindness and respect make every animal happy, and that older friends are treasures. The peaceful garden will always be there, a symbol of their special friendship.