

終身刑に苦しむ「つながれた犬」

「真の自由とは、自らの鎖を解き放つだけでなく、他人の自由をも尊重し、高めようとする生き方にある。」

ネルソン・マンデラ



それは日常的な光景です——交通のはげしい路傍で汚れたプラスチックの小屋につながれ、排気ガスを吸い込んでいる犬、騒々しい道端で金属の箱に閉じ込められた犬、建設器材置き場の裏手で、動いている重機に押しつぶされまいとガレキの中にうずくまる犬、空き地や裕福な農家

の裏で、雨や雪にさらされ、灼熱の太陽を浴びるもの。塀ぎわの狭い通路につながれた犬が燃料タンクとか自転車、がらくた家具などにはさまれ、エアコン室外機の熱風にさらされていても、飼い主家族は室内で「涼しい顔」。こんな哀れな犬が日本中にあふれ、苦しみ、死んでいくのです——顧みられず、無視された「物体」として。

しかし、人々は、このような飼育法を残酷とは思わず、それどころか、正常とみなしています。犬を、自分たちと同じよう

に、極端な暑さ、寒さ、雨、のどの渇き、飢え、不快さを感じる生き物だとは考えていないのです。飼い始めた頃は、冒険好きで、人なつこく甘えたり、遊んでほしいとせがむワフワフした子犬が、成長に伴ない、たちまち、ストレス発散のために吠え続ける精神分裂症的な半野生

動物と化し、または、生気のない、抑うつ状態の「物体」となってしまいます。彼らの目をのぞき込み、その体軀を見てごらんない——正常なあるべき姿とはほど遠い「ぬけがら」のようで、すでに死んだも同然ではありませんか。



アークの犬をほしいと希望される方に当方が求める条件のひとつは、絶対に「つないで飼わない」ということ。犬を惨めな境遇から救出したとしても、その先に、鎖につながれる不幸な生活が待っているのであれば、私どもの努力は無駄になってしまうのです。その上、日本では、犬はリードをつけて散歩させるのが普通

Breaking down the Barriers

"For to be free is not merely to cast off one's chains, but to live in a way that respects and enhances the freedom of others."

Nelson Mandela



You see them everywhere; chained to dirty plastic kennels by the side of busy roads, breathing in petrol fumes; incarcerated in metal boxes along noisy streets; cowering amidst rubble at the back of construction yards, trying to avoid being crushed by heavy moving machinery; exposed to rain, snow and searing sun on waste bits of land or at the back of affluent farmhouses; chained in narrow passageways

alongside the house between gas tanks, bicycles and household junk with the air-conditioner pumping out hot air while the family sit inside enjoying a cool room. Throughout Japan these dogs exist, suffer and die, as neglected unloved objects.

Yet people do not regard this way of keeping dogs as cruel, quite the reverse, they regard it as normal. They do not see these dogs as living beings able to feel the extremes of heat, cold, wet, thirst, hunger, discomfort, as they might. What starts as a fluffy puppy, adventurous, friendly, eager to please, desperate for love and attention, soon becomes a schizophrenic semi-wild creature barking endlessly to relieve its stress or a lifeless depressed object. Look into their eyes, look at their body posture, they are mere shadows of what a normal dog should be. It's as if they have already died.

Here at ARK one of the conditions we make when people wish to adopt a dog, is that it should never be chained. What is the point of us rescuing a dog from a miserable situation and then to subject it to a future of misery on the end of a chain? Besides, since dogs are nearly always walked on leads in Japan and few are ever able to run free in parks, or in open spaces, it is important that they have the freedom to run around their own backyards or gardens.

Ideally a dog should be treated as a member of the family and kept inside but having access to the garden. If kept outside the dog should be free in a wide space surrounded by a fence strong and high enough with a roofed area above the kennel which should be warm and weather-proof. Consideration should be given to whether the dog has enough shade in summer and sunlight in winter and also that it