

A LETTER FROM YOUR NEW DOG

I am so happy that we have decided to adopt each other. My life before rescue was full of uncertainty. In rescue, I have been learning that people can be gentle and kind leaders. I really need guidance. If you won't be the leader, I will take over, but I'll do a terrible job. I need to learn that you will protect me, feed me, exercise me and teach me the rules of our home.

For the first TWO WEEKS, I will be excited and a bit overwhelmed. You may want to take me to meet all of your friends, show me where you work, take me shopping for clothes, collars, dog beds, treats and anything else my heart desires but PLEASE DON'T. It's an awful lot for me to process all at once.

What I really need is to get to know my new home and family. And please, somebody show me who is in charge!! Lead me gently but don't pick me up and carry me if I freeze and stop moving. Luring me with treats is never a wrong strategy. Where is the bathroom? The corner of this thing that you sit on? The carpet behind your chair? I need my family to show me this stuff or I'll just have to guess. Don't be mad at me if I guess wrong. My old bathroom was in the back yard but I'm too far away from it now. Show me where to go and praise me when I use it.

Food! I love food. I probably didn't get enough for a while. So, do I get regular meals from you or should I just take the stuff that is up on the counter? Or on your plate? Do we share that stuff? I would like it if I could have breakfast and dinner in my kennel. Just a quiet meal where I don't have to worry about anyone taking it from me.

I have a bit of extra energy because I'm a little nervous and uncertain. At my foster's, I ran and played in the back yard, slept in a kennel and chewed on bones and toys. But I'm not sure what I should chew on in my new home. That thing you point at the TV kind of looks like a chew toy. If you don't show me what I can chew, I'll give that a try. Or your shoes because they smell like you and I long for your touch and approval. Maybe this is the next best thing. I'll feel a whole lot better if we can play in the back yard or go for a walk.

At my foster home, I probably had a small group of dog friends to play with. You might think a dog park is a great idea right now. Let's wait a few weeks. I need to know that you will guide and protect me if anything goes wrong. Some dogs at the park are jerks. Maybe I'm a jerk sometimes too but my dog friends understood that

I was just too rough, not trying to fight. Stranger dogs might not be so understanding.

If I have a new dog brother and sister, I sure would like it if I could wait a little while to meet them. If I could sleep in a kennel all by myself and take a few naps in it while my brother or sister is spending time with you, that would give me a chance to get used to the new smells and sounds in our home. I'd love to meet the new dog while I'm in the kennel. If you give both of us treats during this meeting, I'll learn that good things happen when that dog is around. Later, we could take a walk around the block, each of us being led by an adult. This would be a time when we focus on walking and listening to you. I'll know the other dog is there and I will feel safer with your leadership because YOU are preventing an unfriendly meeting. When our walk is over, maybe we can smell each other.

My kennel will be an important place for me. It would be nice if I could eat there so I know that nobody is going to mess with my food. It will be important for me, especially at first that I have a place to chill out and mull over all the new changes. When I first came to Rescue, I had the chance to just relax before I had to meet any new dogs or spend a ton of time with a new person. Because of this, my interactions with the new people and dogs were positive.

Changes are exciting and exhausting. Please protect me from overload. I have looked all over for you. I want to be everything you deserve. If you can help introduce me slowly to my new life, over a couple of weeks, it would help me tremendously. If you want to learn more ways to help, an internet search of the two-week shutdown will give you a lot to chew on.

Thank You,



Your New Dog

(as translated by Shannon Tarr at Emotional Rescue

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