



Waffle

Loyal, Steady, Father of Many

After that chat with Chicken, I wandered back to the herd thinking about life.

I spent my early years with Chicken. Our owner neglected us, left us alone in a tiny stall in her backyard, often without food or water. She didn't even clean our stall most of the time. It was awful. I depended on Chicken to keep my spirits up. Whenever I would feel down, he would offer an encouraging word. He was like an older brother.

Then Momma Karen found us and there was lots of commotion. It was scary. I fought hard to keep from being put in the trailer because I was afraid we were going to be split up, taken somewhere shoddier, or even worse – one of those evil places the Giants sometimes neigh about on quiet afternoons.

I still shudder at the thought.

I did everything I could to keep Momma Karen and Mr. David from getting me onto that trailer, and I almost succeeded. But they kept trying - for hours, Mr. David finally picked me up and carried me right into that trailer; and, Momma Karen jumped on and gave me a hug and a kiss.

I stood there in the trailer next to Chicken as we left and hoped that we were going somewhere nice, and I wasn't disappointed.

The Sanctuary is awesome. We have plenty of food. There is a huge pasture to play in and lots of other animals roaming about.

Momma Karen and Mr. Brooks are here. We often get to see Mr. David and Mom Lou too, and all the people who visit. They are all so nice and give us lots of hugs and treats.

Mom Lou even took a selfie of us smiling into the camera one day we were having fun. Momma Karen told me that she posted it on our web site – a device where people can post pictures of themselves for others to see.

But the best part of being here at the Sanctuary is that Chicken is the Mayor of this herd. There never was an election, or nobody ever appointed him. He just declared one day he was the Mayor and started acting accordingly. I haven't had the heart to tell him he's not really the Mayor, nor do the other animals. We just let him pretend to be in charge.

Oh, he's a pretty good leader. He has some great ideas and seems to have everyone's best interest at heart. But sometimes it goes to his head.

He greets all guests at the Sanctuary by running up to them and braying really loud. This serves several purposes. It tells Momma Karen and the others that somebody is here. This small donkey putting up such a ruckus puts people at ease – most stand there and laugh at him. And it gives Chicken a chance to fulfill his duties as Mayor of this community.

He also sneaks up behind the ranch at 6:30 every morning and makes an awful ruckus. This, too, serves a purpose, as it ensures that everyone is wide awake and we get our morning treats.

He even welcomes all new rescues at the Sanctuary, making sure they know the rules, that even though we are all different, we accept our differences, live here in peace, and support Momma Karen in her efforts to heal everyone.

And yes, he makes sure every new rescue knows that he is the mayor.

I let him carry on with the charade, as do the others; but, it gets annoying after a while.

Oh, we're still close, but it's not like it was. I have been able to develop relationships with the other rescues, good, positive ones, and I no longer feel like I am living in his shadow.

This is all good. I am more of my own donkey now. I have a lovely wife, Honey, and have sired several donkeys. Many of the other animals here at the Sanctuary also consider me their dad.

I don't know where this is going to take me, but I am looking forward to the journey.

Respectfully yours,

Waffle

Waffle is proof loyalty builds family, and family builds a forever home.