

Rescued collie's new lease of life

Report by **BECCA GLIDDON**

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A DOG who is both terrified of humans but craves the love of an owner is on the lookout for a new home after being fostered in Exmouth.

Three-year-old collie Reason was rescued from appalling conditions from a farm in Wales at the end of last year by the charity Many Tears Animal Rescue (MTAR).

She is currently being fostered by Juniper Connal at her home in Littleham Road, but the dog is desperate to find a forever owner who can restore her trust in humans and give her the love she sorely deserves.

Juniper, 35, said: "By adopting Reason, you are not going to change the world, but it's going to change the world for Reason.

"She's really affectionate and has a real cheeky fun side to her. She just doesn't believe she deserves love.

"When she doesn't realise she's being watched you see her reliving her puppyhood, but when there are people around she doesn't believe she deserves to exist.

"Over time she will get to believe she does deserve to exist."

Tri-coloured Reason has been given a second chance at life thanks to the dedication of Many Tears Animal Rescue, which refused to ignore complaints that a dog-breeding farmer had shut and chained puppies in dark sheds, without bedding, expecting them to lie on concrete amid their own urine and faeces.

After battling the pups' owner to part with the dogs, and with no help from the authorities, MTAR co-founder Sylvia VanAtta finally came away with nine pups – returning to the farm twice more to rescue the remaining animals, including Reason.

The whole rescue took a year. You can see a video of Reason and her pups' rescue at: www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=KOT07KmtxrQ

In her blog, Sylvia remembers the awfulness of discovering the conditions the farmer had inflicted on Reason, her pups, and the other dogs.

She said: "I found dogs shut in crates, chained in buildings, in dark sheds, with tiny pups, a mess and totally unacceptable. I came away with nine but asked for all.

"The dear little cross collie with nine-day-old pups that were in a stone building where the pups lay on the cobbled floor had to be left.

"He told me they did not need heat or bedding as they were cross breeds. He told me he would be selling the pups to pet shops. I was literally sick with sadness."



▲ Juniper Connal with her foster dogs Reason (left) and Tiny Tim (right). Picture by Alex Walton. Ref exe 4594-08-13AW.

Sylvia was finally able to free all the dogs after the farm owner intervened, finding the animals' living conditions "totally unacceptable" and telling the tenant farmer to hand the pups and their mother, Reason, over to the charity.

Sylvia told how the dogs had "blinked in the light and covered in their own mess" when they were freed from their prisons.

"They were kept in the dark,

chained, little or no bedding, urine and faeces sticking to them," she said.

"Nothing had changed – the roped-together crates making kennels were still there.

"The owner of the property and his son had pulled the prisons out from the dark so a little light got in.

"No bedding, filth, dog mess and empty water bowls were all that was visible."

Foster carer Juniper said the ideal home for Reason would be one where there was another dog, so that Reason could learn by example. It would also be best if there were no young children.

● To adopt Reason, or to read Sylvia's full blog of the rescue, visit: www.manytearsrescue.org/display_mtar_dog.php?id=5679.

Sylvia's blog of the rescue is at www.manytearsrescue.org/sylviasblog.php

See Reason's first taste of freedom at: www.youtube.com/watch?v=BTQ0LyjMdYE&feature=player_embedded