

A Pet Story by Shanti Urreta,

How many of you had a pet when you were young? I'm going to tell you a story about a little girl named Sara who had a pet named Rosie. And as all little girls, Sara loved her pet. When she got out of school she would run home as fast as she could, put a leash on Rosie and parade her up and down, and up and down the streets. Then she would invite her friends over and they would dress Rosie up in doll clothes and sit her down and have a tea party. Rosie was very smart and she loved the attention she got from the little girls. Rosie was truly loved.

One day Sara found out that Rosie was pregnant and she was so excited to have more babies to love and care for. Two neighbourhood boys also found out that Rosie was pregnant and they decided to steal Rosie and make some money by selling her babies. So they put her in a cage in their basement. No longer did Rosie go for walks, no more tea parties, and no little girls to dote after her. Day after day Sara would fall to her knees and pray that one day she would have her beloved pet back, but it was to no avail.

The money making business was going really well for the boys and they decided to keep her and all the females pregnant. The basement turned into a roomful of caged animals.

About a year later, Sara was walking pass this house and she heard a lot of noise coming from the back, so she walked quietly to the back of the house, bent down and looked through the basement window. What she saw stunned her. In this room were animals packed tightly in cages wall to wall. Now, I really need you to see what Sara saw, really put this picture in your head. In each and every cage are animals, crying, screaming, and some too sick to move. They lay there in piles of faeces and urine. Do you see it? Do you really see it? And as she scans the room she notices the two boys coming in the side door wearing masks. As they walk past some animals on the floor, they kick them as though they are garbage. The boys go to some cages and grab some babies from their mothers without a care in the world, as the cries and screams of the mothers and babies echo in Sara's ears.

And as she takes a deep breath, she notices the sickly stench coming from the closed window of urine and faeces, of death and of dying. Then more to her horror she sees a pile of dead and dying animals heaped up on the side of room - bloody, wounded, and infected. Some of the animals were still barely alive as they rocked their heads in their last attempt at life. Did you see it?

How many of you are thinking that Rosie is a dog? Well, Rosie was a pig. And for billions of animals some call food – this was not some made up story. This is reality. Billions of food animals are confined, never to see the light of day, abused psychologically and physically. We eat some animals, yet others we call pets. Rosie was both.