

Calf Rescued by the Compassion of Strangers by Laura Simpson

Recently, photographer Sam Beam and his buddy Josh Brinkin were out four wheeling and testing an iPhone helmet cam mount in a remote area outside of Albuquerque, New Mexico when they spotted some ravens and vultures near a known watering hole. They rode in for a closer look and were jolted by the sight of a bull calf, barely alive, still next to the body of a cow assumed to be his mother. She had been deceased for days and he had evidently been left to wither in the ultimate act of cruelty. But it appears the universe had other plans for this little one, big plans...

"This little guy had his mouth, eyes and ears shut from struggling for days, but those birds never touched him," Sam said.

After pulling the calf from the mud, the two men knew they had to act quickly.

"He still had a little kick in him, but it didn't last before he got cold," Sam continued. "We made the call to return to the truck where there would be cell service. We were maybe 20 miles from any real road, so Josh put him up on the quad and away we went."

He Needed to Get Warm, And Fast!

When they reached the truck, it was clear that the calf was going into shock.

"By the time we made it to the truck, he was shaking uncomfortably and having difficulty breathing," Sam said. "We gave him some water and he did drink it before losing consciousness. I built him a little fire and we took turns warming our coats over it and wrapping him with them. After a half hour, I do believe he came to liking this."

It wasn't long before animal control arrived on the scene and the calf was brought straight to a local veterinarian where he spent a few days in recovery. Sam was delighted to touch base with the veterinary office on day three and learn that the calf was eating well and on the road to perfect health. Watch the incredible rescue video, and then read on to learn how this calf's rescue set off a major law enforcement initiative aimed at stopping animal cruelty.

His Rescue Would Spur a Major Anti-Cruelty Initiative

Just look at Ferdinand now, grazing on the ranch he now calls home.

□It wasn't long before the calf's rescue would take on a much greater significance as he became the inspiration behind the creation of the Pro-active Enforcement Team (P.E.T) aimed at stopping animal cruelty and prosecuting offenders. The team is a joint effort between Animal Care Services and the Bernalillo County Sheriff's Office in New Mexico. And the calf, now named Ferdinand, is the official mascot for PET.

□Ferdinand lives with Becky Koster, a retired Bernalillo County sheriff's deputy and former investigator for the Bernalillo County District Attorney's Office. She is now a school resource officer and took the calf home in December to live on the 65 acre ranch south of Albuquerque where she shares with her partner Robbin Burge, an Albuquerque police detective.

□“Ferdinand is such a sweet animal, very special, and not just because I was a part of his rescue,” Sam said. “I have seen this animal make actual change in a few different peoples lives. He does remember both Josh and I quite well. He greets us much like a dog would on our visits. He's such a treasure.”

□Ferdinand's rescue exemplifies the potential within each of us to save lives. If you've intervened to help an animal in crisis, we want to hear about it. Several days a week, the heroic stories of everyday heroes are featured right here on Care2.com, the home of some 20 million members. Please share your story on The Great Animal Rescue Chase website, and it just might appear here to inspire and educate our massive audience of animal advocates.