

From HELL to HEAVEN

2006-03-21



Have you ever been forced to eat cigarettes because they just think it's funny?
Have you ever been forced to burn under the stifling sun continuously for twelve hours, with no shelter, never having the luxury of voluntarily tanning for a little while instead?

Have you ever been brought to the brink of death by the freezing cold, with nothing resembling even a cardboard box to cover and warm your ailing body, let alone a blanket?

Have you ever eaten, defecated, slept and rested, confined to one minuscule place for four full years?
Have you ever been left with no other choice?

Have you ever been beaten so harshly and incessantly, with no fair chance to at least attempt to defend yourself?

Has anyone ever used your home as a waste bin, discarding their trash over your head, making the humiliation and pain of such a life even more unbearable?

Have you ever been constantly exposed to bullies twice your size, treated like a slave in an absurd little circus, where everyone can freely kick you around and use you as a cathartic outlet for all their personal inadequacies, insecurities and complexes?

If you think that Lola, a four-year old female baboon, had the choice to avoid any of the aforementioned unspeakable conditions of life, you're deeply mistaken.

If you think that she hadn't wished more than anything in the world to escape from the cruelty she lived in, wrong you are once again.

She had tried hard to break out of her enslavement and run away leaving her horrible living conditions behind. No matter where, she just wanted out from the most distressing and pitilessly painful location. Her efforts always came to nothing. Lola was imprisoned, and no escape was ever possible. She had been a prisoner in the same tiniest, dirtiest cell for as long as she could remember.

Lack of physical and mental stimulation was clear on her, and her resignation to her situation was obvious. She would ceaselessly spin around in one spot in her rusty metal cage. She could not stand up; she could not even stretch her body out. She could not be able to eat fruits or any other foods a healthy baboon would normally eat, and instead of apples and bananas, she was forced to eat cigarette tips! She was evidently frazzled and starting to give up on life.

While assisting an international investigation into the smuggling of chimpanzees in Lebanon, one of BETA's rescuers and co-founders spotted Lola in one of the most ghastly, appalling and abusive pet shops ever, in one of Lebanon's shadiest areas. It was a matter of minutes: after few phone calls, the

BETA team decided to work hard and work miracles if they have to in order to remove Lola from her misery and give her a much better life: the bare minimum of what she deserves!

With the help of some brave local people (details must remain undisclosed) BETA was able to get a hold of Lola. It is not hard to imagine the disastrous alternative: a child buying her as a pet, or worse yet, being doomed to staying in her cage forever...

All the sudden attention, affection, and care washing over her were just too much to bear. This unexpected tremendous shift from cruelty and abuse to love and care had been a distant dream to her. She could not fully comprehend this new development - her hopes of ever being treated in such a way had been all but dead! She did not really care about food; it was affection and tenderness she craved!

Lola stayed with BETA for only 10 days! Why not any longer? Where is she now?

BETA was not alone in providing Lola with the relief and beautiful life she was longing for. The Cefn-yr-Erw Primate Sanctuary in South Wales (<http://www.cefn-yr-erw.co.uk>) and the World Society for the protection of Animals (WSPA) (<http://www.wspa.org.uk>) were the main contributors to Lola's rescue which would have amounted to nothing without their essential support.

Graham and Jan Garen, owners of the Cefn-yr-Erw Primate Sanctuary, did not hesitate for one second in welcoming Lola into their sanctuary. What's more, Graham was the one who proposed to take her in, before we even ever asked, and demanded that she be immediately removed from her confinement and sent to Wales. Graham and Jan, inspiringly devoted persons, who dedicate so much of their own life to animals and their welfare will now provide Lola with the delightful treatment she ought to have but could not even conceive of ever having. Graham has also helped out with most of the necessary legal documents for Lola to get out of Lebanon and into the United Kingdom. Thank you so much Graham! Lola and the entire BETA team are immeasurably grateful to you! Lola got to the U.K. on March 22, 2006 and joined Tom, a baboon previously rescued by BETA, and featured at <http://beta.beirut.com/viewNew.php?ID=192>, where you can see him in his new home!

This would have also been much harder, if not impossible, without the financial support of WSPA. All of the airline companies approached by BETA and Graham Garen had agreed to fly Lola on a commercial basis only, which would have made it incredibly complicated for her to leave. WSPA courageously stepped up and granted BETA the sum of UK£ 1,600 to fly Lola's crate from London to Beirut, and back to London with Lola in it.

BETA, a WSPA Member Society, thanks Trevor Wheeler, WSPA Middle East Projects Director, for his prompt and invaluable assistance.

While BETA and Graham were desperately searching for the means to fund Lola's flight, Trevor Wheeler instantly solved the dilemma!

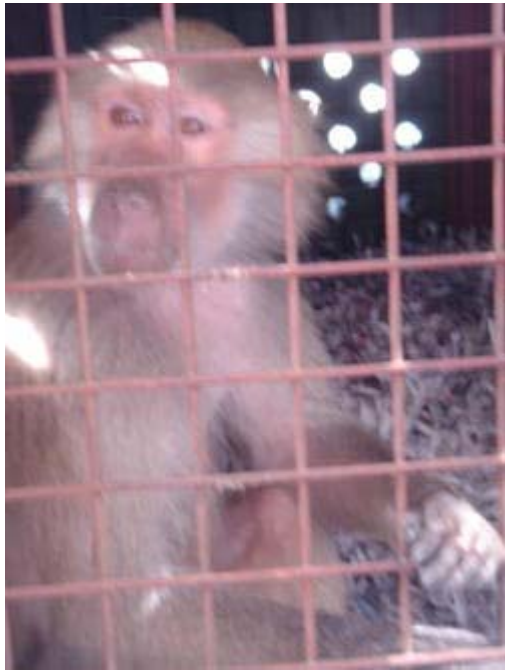
Thank you Trevor! Thank you WSPA for all the wonderful and indispensable work you do for the animals worldwide!

Not to forget the IPPL who also granted funds to help cover some of Lola's quarantine expenses. Thank you IPPL!

Each and every member of BETA and all the persons who got to know Lola and enjoy the pleasure of her sweet company wish her a marvelous life with Tom!







<http://animals.beirut.com/viewNew.php?ID=202>