



BRAVE animal stories for Kids

50 TRUE TALES that
celebrate God's creation

Shirley Raye Redmond

author of *Courageous World Changers*

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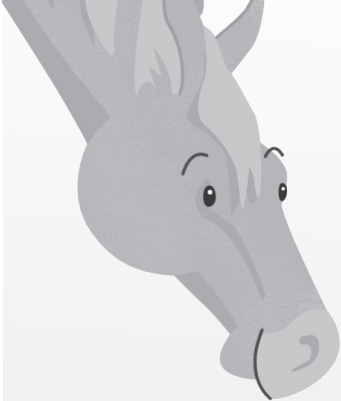
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Then God said, "Let the waters swarm with fish and other life. Let the skies be filled with birds of every kind.... Let the earth produce every sort of animal, each producing offspring of the same kind—livestock, small animals that scurry along the ground, and wild animals." And that is what happened. God made all sorts of wild animals, livestock, and small animals, each able to produce offspring of the same kind. And God saw that it was good.

GENESIS 1:20-25 NLT



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INTRODUCTION

Heroes give us hope. But not all heroes are human. Some have fur, paws, beaks, or hooves. In the Bible, the Lord used animals to serve His purpose, such as feeding Elijah with the help of ravens and exhorting wicked Balaam through his donkey. God's creatures have often shown remarkable courage and devotion in the face of danger. Animals have saved lives, prevented harm, and even predicted health-related incidents. When instinct tells them to flee, animal heroes have exhibited remarkable bravery in their efforts to save others.

Courageous cats, devoted dogs, plucky parrots, and dedicated dolphins—no creature is too small or too humble to be employed by God. Author Harriet Beecher Stowe once said, “We should remember in our dealings with animals that they are a sacred trust to us from our heavenly Father.” Recognizing that animals are capable of compassion and devoted service should inspire the same in us.



ROSELLE

Hero of 9/11

2001

For Michael Hingson and his guide dog, a yellow Labrador retriever named Roselle, September 11, 2001, began just like any other workday in New York City. As usual, Roselle had safely led Michael to his office in the World Trade Center. Because Michael had been blind from birth, he had never been able to admire the view of the city skyline from his window on the seventy-eighth floor in the North Tower. As he prepared for a business meeting, a hijacked jetliner crashed into the building. Following the loud boom, a violent tremor shook the office. The tower began to tilt and sway. Some people screamed and others cried. One of Michael's coworkers mentioned the smoke and fire outside the window and the millions of pieces of paper floating through the air.

Michael knew they had to get out of the damaged building. Roselle, who'd been snoozing under Michael's desk, didn't panic. She knew what to do. With Michael gripping her harness, she calmly led him down the emergency stairs. It was hot, and thick smoke and the nauseating smell of jet fuel made it hard to breathe. When frightened people tried to push past them, afraid the lights would go out in the stairwell, Michael urged them not to panic.

Roselle would lead the way. There were more than a thousand steps. Michael and Roselle descended one at a time.

When they reached the lobby, they hurried outside. Michael tried to call his wife to let her know he was okay. Just then Michael heard a deafening roar like a freight train coming toward him. A policeman shouted for everyone to run fast—one of the towers was collapsing. The air became filled with toxic dust and chunks of debris. Michael choked and gasped. He could hardly breathe. Roselle calmly led him through the rubble-filled streets to shelter down in the subway.

Thousands of people died that tragic day, including the brave firefighters who gave Roselle a friendly pat on the head as they passed her on the stairs going up to fight the flames. Michael credited his loyal companion with saving his life and the lives of others. For her heroic efforts, Roselle received the Award for Canine Excellence from the American Kennel Club in 2002.

SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT

How do you think it would feel to survive an incident like the one that occurred on 9/11? It's easy to become frightened or discouraged by such events. Just remember, God sees the big picture. He can turn tragedies into triumphs.

Dear heavenly Father, sometimes I worry about scary things happening in the world. Touch me with Your peace. Help me to realize that with You, I don't need to fear anything. In Jesus's name, amen.



SERGEANT RECKLESS

Korean Warhorse

1953

Reckless was a small Korean mare bred to be a racehorse. Instead, she became a Marine! A Korean stable boy, desperate for cash, offered to sell her for \$250. He wanted to purchase a prosthetic leg for his sister, who had been seriously injured when she stepped on a land mine. A US Marine commander in need of a pack horse willingly paid the price. The little mare was dubbed “Reckless” when she joined the 5th Marines Recoilless Rifle (“Reckless”) Platoon. She was trained to carry ammunition through waterlogged rice paddies and over mountainous terrain not suitable for motorized vehicles. The soldiers taught her to watch out for trip wires and to seek shelter when someone yelled “*Incoming!*”

Reckless loved to eat. The men laughed at the mare’s enormous appetite. She enjoyed pancakes, scrambled eggs, and Hershey bars. She ate bowls of shredded wheat and snatched peanut butter sandwiches whenever she had the chance. Once she even ate the lining out of a soldier’s combat helmet. She drank coffee but especially loved Coca-Cola. When the weather was cold outside, she’d invade the men’s tents to sleep alongside them.

Reckless won their respect, however, during the brutal battle

for Outpost Vegas in the Korean War. She made fifty-one trips up and down a steep hill hauling nine thousand pounds of ammunition to the front lines. At first, she was accompanied by one of the men. But as the battle raged and more Marines were killed, Reckless made the trek alone. The sight of the mare trudging up the rubble-strewn hill raised the morale of the hard-pressed Marines. She completed most of her trips without a soldier to guide her. Even after being wounded above one eye and in her left flank, brave Reckless pushed onward, remaining steadfast in her duties despite the carnage around her.

After the battle, she became Sergeant Reckless. For the rest of the war, soldiers placed their flak jackets over the beloved mare to prevent injury during bombardments, risking their own lives for her sake. Reckless wasn't a horse, they insisted—she was a fellow Marine! She inspired awe and respect from all who learned of her bravery.

After the war, the men insisted on taking her with them to Camp Pendleton in California. One shipping firm offered her free passage from Korea to San Francisco. She arrived in the United States in November 1954, just in time for the Marine Corps Birthday Ball, where she enjoyed eating cake and all the flower arrangements! When Reckless died in 1968, the grateful Marines buried her with full military honors.

SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT

Considered America's greatest warhorse, Reckless was recognized at a special ceremony on Capitol Hill in 2019. She was cited for her "absolute dependability."

Could someone describe you as dependable? A dependable person is someone you can count on no matter what. Are you that kind of person?

*Lord, show me how to be the sort of person other
people can trust. In Jesus's name, amen.*