



Sweet Barrymore, picked up lost and neglected as a stray, was rescued from a high kill shelter. His chances of adoption were slim to none – he had lots of lumps and bumps, he had horrible breath, his back end looked a little weak, and he was many years past the lovable puppy stage. Luckily our fantastic LR team saw past the imperfections and looked into his beautiful, soulful brown eyes and snatched him from that shelter on his last day when no one claimed him.

He immediately found his foster family on Feb. 25, 2012 and he went home with them. First came the luxurious bubble bath to wash away the tons of dirt and debris from his gorgeous golden coat. Then came a scrumptious evening meal, in the company of another super senior foster, then lots of hugs and loves before drifting off to sleep on a brand new, cushy dog bed just feet away from his new foster parents. It was love at first sight for everyone. Barrymore is one of those rare, special dogs that just melts your heart and is so eager to please and so grateful for the love and attention finally coming his way. He could have been a Goodwill Ambassador because he got along with everyone, dogs and humans alike. How could anyone resist such a lovable, cuddly guy like this?

After preliminary x-rays and blood work determined that he was healthy enough to handle anesthesia, he had a thorough dental cleaning and extraction of 4 rotten teeth (that gave his breath that rotten fish odor) his foster parents took Barrymore back home. Just like a little boy, Barrymore got to eat special, soft foods (and hidden antibiotics) for several days while his gums healed where the teeth had been extracted. It was obvious that Barrymore felt 1000% better and when he covered you with kisses you didn't have to turn away due to a foul odor! There was a spring in his step, even though he was 14 years old. Life was good again!



Barrymore basked in the attention and love from his foster parents as well as their 3 other foster dogs. But, unbeknown to any of us, Barrymore had contracted cancer and it was swiftly killing him from the inside. It was only two weeks from the onset of one vomited meal at first; but he was hungry and happy and perhaps this was just a fluke. Barrymore, and his foster buddies, were fed 3 times a day to prevent that "starving to stuffed" feeling which can be deadly with these deep-chested dogs if they come down with bloat and/or a twisted stomach that is extremely painful and often fatal. Then the vomiting episodes increased little by little. He looked so sad and seemed so embarrassed by throwing up on the carpets, on his dog bed, or outside (if he could make it that far). He had tons of sticky drool that started to choke his throat. His yummy, grain-free kibble of turkey and sweet potatoes was replaced with half a plain baked potato that hopefully he could keep down to give him nourishment. He was still drinking water and was super hungry. But he just couldn't keep anything in his stomach. After a very long, sleepless weekend Barrymore was taken to the vet to try and figure out what was happening. After discussion of his symptoms and an exam, Barrymore was sent home with anti-nausea tablets and a tentative diagnosis of food allergies so keep him on a bland diet of baked potato, white rice, and clear broth. Nothing helped. Barrymore was given Benadryl, an antihistamine, to reduce the flow of sticky saliva that was choking him. That helped the drool but the vomiting continued until his poor stomach was completely empty and producing only piles of sticky, foamy goo. Barrymore was back to the vet for an exam and the next step in evaluation, x-rays. It was at this point we found the two large masses: one right in the middle of his lungs, the other at the top of his stomach. The mass was preventing food from entering his stomach. So anything he ate had nowhere to go but back up. The dreaded diagnosis of probable lymphatic cancer was spoken and, with it, the horrible reality that there was nothing we could do for this fantastic dog! No surgery, no chemo, no radiation, no drugs. This type cancer is nasty and aggressive. And, for a dog of Barrymore's age (14+), the only decision was to humanely euthanize him to stop the torture to his poor, exhausted body. Barrymore crossed over Rainbow Bridge in his foster mom's arms on Thursday, April 26, 2012. Barrymore knew he was loved and he gave more love than we ever thought possible. It was only 2 months ago that Barrymore was on death row at a high-kill shelter. That love at first sight gave him 2 months more than he would have had if not for LR and our mission to help the older, medically-challenged dogs that have been taken to the shelters. Now Barrymore is running happily with all his other LR buddies, free of pain, and continuing on in our hearts forever. God speed, Barrymore. We will always love you. Please open your hearts and donate to LR so we can continue to rescue these fantastic dogs that add so much to our lives and ask for so little from us in return.

