



The Rabbit

By reading this story, you have probably already concluded that I have a love of the natural world. It should be of no surprise that I took notice to the young rabbit hanging out in my front yard one early spring no to long ago.

Now a rabbit may be a common thing for some of us, but it had been quit some time since the last time I had seen anything more than a bird or a rat in my yard. I imagine with the recent development (urban sprawl) in this old neighborhood that there is too much 'man' activity for most wildlife. The rabbit was a welcome sight!

Admiring the little fellow as I did, I thought I would be sure to let him know that he was in no threat in my yard so I told him just that. This was the beginning of a new found friendship.

Over the course of the seasons, I was visited daily and I continued to my chats! "Hello Hazel!" (That was the name I chose for him. One must read Watership Down by Richard Adams to truly understand this) I would always say as I tried to get a step closer to him.

So spring rolled into late summer and late summer became early fall. By now I was able to get within inches before my furry friend would run off. I thought surely before the first frost, Hazel and I would be shaking hands. Fate had other plans.

As the leaves began to brown and fall, I came home to find Hazel in a desperate situation: He had lingered to long in the road and had his hind legs and pelvis run over by a car. Had it only been his legs, I would have done everything in my power to bring my dear friend back to health, but his situation was dire!

On my approach, he gazed at me as if to say "the man I have been waiting for!" Many times I have been told that one should not approach a wild animal especial while injured, however; without a sign of fear from him, I reached down and picked him up from the road and it was as if I had done so a million times.

After assessing the situation and realizing the severity, there was nothing I could do to help aside from ending his suffering. After consoling this long awaited friend and asking his forgiveness, a single .22 caliber round ended his pain.

Tears in my eyes, I buried him close to home! This dear friendship will not be forgotten!

"My heart has joined the Thousand, for my friend stopped running today."