

A Dog's Plea

*Treat me kindly, my beloved friend, for no heart in all the world
is more grateful for kindness than this loving heart of mine.*

*Do not break my spirit with a stick, for though I would lick your hand
between each blow, your patience and understanding will more quickly
teach me what you would have me learn.*

*Speak to me often, for your voice is the world's sweetest music, as you must
know by the fierce wagging of my tail when your footsteps fall on my ear.*

*Please keep me inside when the weather is bitter and wet,
as I am a domestic animal, no longer accustomed to the stormy elements.
I ask no greater glory than the privilege of sitting at your feet by the hearth.*

*Keep my pan filled with fresh water as I cannot tell you of my thirst.
Feed me clean food that I may stay well, to romp and play
and do your bidding, to walk by your side and stand
ready, willing, and able to protect you
with my life should your life be in danger.*

*And, my friend, when I am very old or I no longer enjoy
good health, hearing, and sight,
do not make heroic efforts to keep me going.
I am no longer having fun.*

*Please see that my trusting life is taken gently.
I shall leave this earth
knowing with the last breath I draw
that my fate was always best and safest
in your loving hands.*

Beth Norman Harris

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