

Man's Best Friend – Richard Archer

It seems like it was only yesterday
that I crawled towards the soft glow of your fire pit,
tail still, nose following a tantalising scent
as hunger pangs overcame my instinctive caution.
I had my furtive eyes on a discarded bone,
when you slowly walked out of your cave towards me
a hand cautiously held out in front of you.
As my trusting eyes met yours
and my rough tongue rasped your fingers
you softly smiled then
quickly slipped a rough chord around my neck
and jerked me to your heel.
Then you taught me with fist and stick to obey you
hard lessons but I learned quickly.
You trained me to hunt to feed you
yet I only got your scraps to eat,
you trained me to be your sentinel as you sleep
me shivering, you warm by the fire.
And in spite of the bruises, cuts and scars
I loved you and I still do,
even as you drowned my unwanted offspring,
crudely docked my ears and tail,
forced me into bloody fights against my kin,
I still loved you.
And I will never judge you,
I will never leave your side.
I will always be
man's best friend.