"Please Look After This Bear" A Heartwarming Christmas Rescue Gives Margaretta the Gift of Freedom

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Messages to share kindness and goodwill are prominent as the world gears up for the festive season. One extraordinary tale of hope shines brighter than ever. Meet Margaretta (Retta), an ex-circus bear who spent years confined in a tiny cage, serving as a sad spectacle for visitors at a resort in Armenia. But this Christmas, as Aladdin Pantos grant wishes across the UK, we are pleased to share that Retta's wish has also been granted. Retta's life has been transformed. Thanks to an extraordinary rescue mission by International Animal Rescue (IAR) and its Armenian partners FPWC (Foundation for the Preservation of Wildlife and Cultural Assets), Retta now roams freely for the first time in her life, a living testament to the power of compassion and the spirit of giving.

Retta's heartbreaking journey began in captivity, where she suffered for many years of neglect and isolation. Her cage, no larger than a concrete closet, became her entire world; with no opportunity to explore, play, or feel the earth's warmth beneath her paws, Retta's life was a shadow of what it should have been.

This changed when Animal Rescue and Conservation charity International Animal Rescue (IAR) and FPWC launched a daring rescue to free Retta from her cage and transport her to safety. Working tirelessly with local authorities and the police; the team navigated logistical challenges and harsh conditions to ensure Retta could begin a new chapter of life.

Now, Retta resides in the quarantine quarters of International Animal Rescue and FPWC's bear sanctuary, where she can finally live as nature intended. Once her period in quarantine ends, after Christmas, she will be able to step onto soil for the first time, sniff the crisp air, and enjoy the winter sunlight, a life she never knew existed.

International Animal Rescue's President, Alan Knight OBE, reflects on the mission: *"Rescuing Retta was a monumental effort, but seeing her rediscover her instincts and joy will be worth every second. Her resilience inspires us to keep fighting for animals like her, who desperately need a second chance at a life worth living."*

The timing of Retta's rescue couldn't be more poignant. As the world celebrates the release of Paddington in Peru, Retta's story echoes the famous bear's plea: "Please look after this bear." This holiday season, Retta reminds us that acts of kindness, big or small, can create miracles.

International Animal Rescue invites you to read more inspiring stories or support our bears at www.internationalanimalrescue.org.

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