

## Jan Salter

Artist, Animal Lover,  
and Member of Kathmandu's Community



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**J**an Salter has lived the kind of exciting and diverse life that most people can only dream of. As a child, she wanted to become an artist, but her father thought she wouldn't earn enough money and said she should become a hairdresser instead. As a result, Jan spent much of her life making money by cutting hair. This gave her a great opportunity to spend years traveling around the world, finding employment in different countries as a hairdresser, and having unforgettable adventures.

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Jan Salter has been an animal lover through her entire life. When she came to Kathmandu, she saw many dogs in awful conditions - many covered with mange, starting, or abused by people. The city government poisoned around 10,000 dogs every year to try to reduce the street dog population. This method made the dogs suffer for hours before death and, because the remaining dogs continued to breed, it was ineffective. Although Jan was shocked and deeply disturbed by the dogs' misery, she didn't know how she could help.

Years later, Jan visited an animal welfare organization in Jaipur, India called Help in Suffering, which is humanely reducing the city's street dog population through Animal Birth Control: catching dogs, sterilizing them so they can't have puppies, and then returning them to their neighborhoods. Jan realized the same method can work in Kathmandu. She asked foundations for support, but none offered the money needed to build a dog shelter and treatment facility. Many people would have given up at that point. Jan knew there was only one way to make her idea a reality - she was so devoted to the dogs of Nepal that she decided to use her own savings to start the project. Ms. Salter registered the Kathmandu Animal Treatment Centre as a non-profit, charitable organization in 2003. She formed a board of directors and hired staff, and the KAT Center began to rescue and treat animals in 2004.

The KAT Centre faced many challenges in the early years. There was little money available, and although the government of Nepal promised not to poison dogs where KAT works, in Kathmandu Valley, it was completely barren. However, Jan and KAT built and



excellent animal treatment facility and planted trees and grass on the land. KAT's Animal Birth Control Program began to sterilize dogs throughout Kathmandu and vaccinate them for rabies. The Rescue & Treatment program provides life-saving medical care to street dogs who are injured or sick, and the public Education program teaches adults and children to avoid rabies and treat animals with compassion.

As Jan and the KAT Centre built a reputation for improving the street dog community in Kathmandu, more people, foundations, and local companies began to contribute to the organization. A local restaurant, Fire and Ice, donates their leftover food for the dogs. Volunteers also play an important role- Nepalis and foreigners volunteer at KAT for hours, days, or weeks, grooming the dogs, helping in the office, putting up posters around the city and much more. While some animal shelters almost feel like jails for animals, volunteers have said coming to KAT is like "walking into sunshine."

Besides treating dogs directly, the KAT Centre has changed how people think about stray dogs. In the areas where KAT works, more people feel and play with dogs than in the past, and there are fewer cases of animal abuse. The city government receives far fewer complaints about street dogs, and KAT gets many more calls from people asking them to rescue dogs in need.

The KAT Centre has only been able to treat dogs in the city of Kathmandu, within the Ring Road. With more donations, Jan and KAT will be able to accomplish the goals of expanding Animal Birth Control throughout the Kathmandu Valley, eliminating rabies in the Valley, and creating a healthy, stable dog population.

Now 75 years old, Ms. Salter has lived in Kathmandu for more than 30 years and doesn't have any plans to move away. She values living in Nepal because she feels she can truly make a difference

here. In her original home in England, she thinks she would be just another person living an ordinary life. Although Jan has family in England who she visits every year, she also has close ties in Nepal, including children she sponsors and many good friends. And of course, she is deeply dedicated to the KAT Centre.

Throughout her life, Jan Salter has been a world traveler, a renowned artist, and now a leader of an animal welfare organization. Through her art, she has contributed to the world's understanding of Nepal's diverse

ethnic groups. As the founder of an animal charity, she has improved the lives of thousands of dogs and will help tens of thousands more in the future. Beyond the help for dogs, the KAT Centre is transforming the city of Kathmandu by teaching people to live happily with their street dog community. Jan hopes to spend less time overseeing the KAT Centre so she can return to her painting, which is like a form of meditation for her. Or maybe her life will take in a completely new unexpected direction! \*\*

## सोचेजस्तो रैनछ विदेशमा पढ्नलाई



अविशोक राजत



अशेष राणा

विभिन्न अमेरिका लगायत युरोपियन देशहरूमा उच्च शिक्षा हासिल गर्ने लक्ष्य बोकेर अधिकांश विद्यार्थीहरू दश जोड दुई पास गरेपछि त्यतातिर लम्कने आशामा रहेका हुन्छन् । अभिभावकको चाहना पनि त्यही नै हुन्छ । विडम्बना के छ भने यहाँका अभिभावकहरूले आफ्ना छोराछोरीलाई विदेशमा पढ्न पठाउने चाहना त राख्छन् तर समग्र नेपालीको आर्थिक स्थितिलाई नियाल्ने हो भने यहाँ नेपालीले आफ्ना छोराछोरीलाई आफ्नो भएभरको घरखेत गरेर भए पनि जेनतेन कलेज भर्ना गर्ने र बढीमा ६ महिनासम्मको ट्युसन फिमात्र तिर्न सक्छन् । काम गर्दै पढ्न पनि त्यति सजिलो छैन, भनेको समयमा काम पाउनु पनि मुस्किल छ, काम पाइहाल्यो भने पनि कलेजले बाहिर गएर काम गर्ने अनुमति नै दिँदैन । नेपाली विद्यार्थीलाई अन्य देशको विद्यार्थीको तुलनामा हेयभावले हेर्ने प्रचलन त छँदैछ । कामको सिलसिला मिलिहाल्यो भने पनि काम गर्ने ठाउँ र कलेजको अनुकूलता नमिल्न सक्छ ।

उनीहरू त्यहाँबाट राम्रो पढाई गरेर स्वदेश फर्किँएर गौरवका साथ आफ्नो प्रमाणपत्र देखाएर राम्रो नाम र दाम कमाउने चाहना हुन्छ । तर कमै मात्रले त्यो सपना पूरा गर्ने अवसर प्राप्त गरेका हुन्छन् । अधिकांश विद्यार्थीहरूको सपना सपनामै सीमित रहन्छ । उनीहरू कि त बाध्य भई आफ्नो पढाई छोडी अन्यत्र काम गर्नतिर लाग्छन् कि नेपाल नै फर्कन विवश हुन्छन् ।

यदि नेपालमा पनि अन्तर्राष्ट्रिय स्तरको पढाई भइदिएको भए यसरी नेपाली युवा विदेशिनु पर्ने थिएन, बाहिर जाने पैसा पनि जोगिने थियो ।