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Dog's life no more

By: Karin Eloff | Friday 03 June 2011 08:54



If **Maximus** the German shepherd cross could talk he'd probably tell a story of horrific cruelty – but also one about guardian angels who came to his rescue.

Thanks to those angels Maximus recently got a new snout after losing his in a violent way – and he also has the chance of a new life.

The stray made news recently when he had unique reconstructive surgery at the University of Pretoria's faculty of veterinary science at Onderstepoort.

It's thought his nose and part of his upper jaw might have been caught in a trap or hacked off with a weapon like a panga.

He and another stray were spotted sheltering under a truck in Pretoria by farmworker **Werner Appel** (38) who began feeding them and slowly gaining their trust.

Eventually he coaxed them onto his bakkie and took them to Wet Nose, an animal rescue organisation.

Debbie sought advice from various vets, among them **Dr Gerhard Steenkamp** who, with the help of a team at Onderstepoort, decided to give Maximus a second chance.

They created a titanium bridge over the missing part of the snout and stretched existing skin and tissue to cover it and prevent the airways to his nose from growing closed. They could do nothing

about his missing teeth but he'd seemed to have learnt to eat without them.

After the successful four-hour operation Dr Steenkamp said, "He's a wonderful dog and deserves wonderful owners."

Maximus, a very lucky dog, was taken back to Wet Nose – and his friend **Titus** – to await adoption.

See the 9 June 2011 issue of YOU for more on this story and an infographic showing the operation in detail. Learn how you can donate to a fund that assists animals such as Maximus. [CLICK HERE to follow us on Twitter.](#)

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