

Horse Story

Jeannette and I used to enjoy riding horses occasionally. She and I would go for rides during the summers, but the latest one will probably be the last we will ever take.

We visited a small dude ranch nearby where the rancher kept a short string of horses for riders like us. His wrangler helped us pick out our horses for the day and get us mounted. Jeannette, as usual, picked a calm mare, but I wanted a horse with a little more spirit. The wrangler suggested Daisy for Jeannette, and Flash, a three-year old stallion for me. Perfect, I thought, not considering the connotations of the name.

The wrangler helped Jeannette on to her horse while I mounted Flash. He was a tall horse, so it was difficult getting my left leg into the stirrup and, even harder, to get my right leg over the saddle. I hadn't quite gotten my right foot over Flash when he shied away from me and started to prance. I had one hand on the reins and the other on the horn but was left hanging part way on and part way off, when he decided to head out across the pasture.

I reached forward and circled my arms around his neck as Flash began to accelerate. I bounced up and down, barely holding on, as he galloped faster and faster. Slowly, my right foot was jolted loose from the saddle and I began to slide lower and lower, so that I was eventually dangling beneath his neck. Then, I began losing my grip on his neck. When I could no longer hold on, I dropped to the ground at a full gallop. "Well, at least the suspense is over, " I thought, as I hit the ground!

But, no, my ride was not finished yet, it seemed. My left foot was still caught in the stirrup and Flash proceeded to drag me by one leg across the field! On and on, we sped, until my backside began to complain unbearably. I noticed we were approaching a canyon and feared what might still lie ahead.

I'm convinced that I would have been killed as he dragged me over the rocks and cactus if the manager hadn't come out of the store just at that moment and pulled the plug on Flash!