

Dog Gone Justice

By Cindy Hale

March 19, 2009

With Wally still nursing his sore foot, I'm having to beg, borrow and nearly steal other horses to ride. Yesterday I saddled up Topper, my sister's flashy Thoroughbred, and headed down the trail. It's sort of comical to see the big red horse in western tack. By the time I place the saddle pad, the Navajo blanket and my reining saddle on his back, he stands about 17-hands tall. But he is quite handsome, I must say, even if he does look like Secretariat masquerading as a cowpony.

We went be-bopping down the trail as only a skinny woman on a robust Thoroughbred under western tack can do. Fortunately I didn't pass any of the area's local cowboys, because I'm sure they would've done a double-take.

As I loped up and around a hill, past a row of upscale homes, a large black dog came bounding toward us. The hair was standing up on his back and his teeth were bared. He barked at Topper and me and made aggressive moves. Topper reacted like any horse: he dashed away from the black dog, which sent both of us dancing into the street. I glanced down at the asphalt and realized, "Wow. That's a long way down!"

Just as I was contemplating how to wrangle ourselves away from the grouchy dog and still stay upright on the asphalt, a yellow Labrador across the street began barking at the commotion. It turned out that Dog vs. Dog was more appealing to the black monster than Dog vs. Horse. So he left. But that altercation made me understand what a real threat loose dogs can be on the horse trails.

That very day, when I opened my email, I discovered my father had sent me a short article out of our local newspaper. Apparently a woman in a nearby town was riding her horse on the trail. A loose pitbull (never a good thing to encounter) attacked her horse. The poor horse went into self-defense mode and in the process unseated its rider and then, in a last effort to get away from the pitbull, leaped into the street. An approaching SUV hit the horse.

Don't worry. Neither the horse nor the rider were badly injured, other than a few scrapes and bruises.

But when the SUV hit the horse, it tossed the horse... onto the pit bull, crushing the dog.

Now, we all know I'm a dog lover. And personally, I don't have anything against pit bulls, in general. My good friend, Debbie, has always had several pit bulls and they're lovely dogs. But regardless of the breed, any type of dog that aggressively engages warfare against a horse is asking for trouble. This time, "trouble" came in the form of an SUV. And a flying horse.

I see that as a form of divine justice.

Now, if people would just make sure that their dogs-- of any breed and every temperament-- were kept enclosed and not allowed to wander along the horse trails, the world would be a much safer place for everyone.

Want to share your thoughts? Just click on "comments" below!

<< Previous Entry

Back to Life With Horses.