

Backyard Horse Tales 2

“Frosty and the Nightstalker

Excerpt from Chapter 2

The child was just six that spring, and he still believed in all the legends and ghost stories told by the people. That night was another dark one, making me hard to see, and my eyes caught the firelight. All that Little Wolf Saw were two glowing orbs moving toward him in the darkness, and he let out a howl that would have put a full-grown wolf to shame. He sure scared the poop out of me! I'd had more than enough of that game for the night.

Songbird must have squealed on her little brother. The next day, all the other children were teasing him relentlessly. Standing Bear took matters into his own hands and brought his little brother to see me in the daylight. Like I said before, I'm not spectacular by the light of day, nor at all frightening. I was just another young colt with a dark coat, a small star, a sock right ankle, snowflakes on my rump, and black spots there barely visible on my dark coat. In the winter I was almost black and my dark spots were invisible.

Standing Bear inched his sibling closer, and Little Wolf reached out his small hand. I lowered my head to get a better look at this small human. My first whiff of him told me he was the howler from a few nights ago. He petted my nose, with his small pudgy hand, then declared, “Mine!”

He came to see me every day, after that. An older family member accompanied Little Wolf on most of his visits, but sometimes he'd steal away and visit me by himself.

Several days of heavy rain kept him confined. The rain was not very cold, but it melted much of the snow that was still high in the mountains. Melting snow increased the current of the river until it overflowed the banks. Mares wisely moved their foals farther from the rising water.

On the first sunny day, Little Wolf had escaped the watchful eyes of his mother and grandmother to come for an overdue visit. I heard cries of panic from the village, and turned to investigate the ruckus. The two women suddenly noticed that their charge was on the run toward the river. On most visits he came along a path that ran parallel to the river, but on that day the path was under water.

I watched the human drama as his mother ran to save her child from certain doom. The rascal took one look at his mother chasing after him, giggled, and picked up speed. I heard his mother let out a terrified screech when her son slipped and fell into the raging water. At that point, I galloped as fast as I could to intercept the rambunctious little boy. He was able to grab hold of a partially submerged tree limb. His presence of mind allowed me the time I required. I plunged into the icy river and battled the current to reach him. I was becoming winded and my heart was pounding against my ribs as I swam upstream.

“Almost there, just a few more feet,” I told myself as my strength threatened to fail me. I was so close. Then the child lost his grip! He began tumbling in the water and was headed in my direction. His little hand found purchase in my mane when he collided with me. The little imp scrambled onto my back and held to my mane for dear life.

