

Soul Sisters...

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Radical Faith and Effortless Grace*

Soul Sisters...

Just the word horse can take me from the depth of human despair and self-imposed misery to the height of passion in a syllable. It is every single nuance of these magical creatures that has held me captive since early childhood. Their movement inspires music in my heart

in those sacred spaces where pure peace and true harmony reside. The musk of the barn, mud on my boots and the sweet smell of freshly bailed hay is pure salvation in those moments when my life had become a precarious balance of pure hilarity or insanity, often one in spite of the other. In the barn it is neither laugh nor cry but often times both and occasionally, at the same time. In me, horses evoke every single human emotion, some more often and intense than others – like fear for example, and through fear I would find pure joy and the path to oneness that can be found in true partnership with another soul. This soul sister on my journey showed up in a four legged body of chestnut, which, with just the right amount of sun light, radiates gold.

I had one thing of “value” left from my days at the Ranch. For some reason, perhaps as a token of all the miles I had meditated behind the wheel, I had kept my virtually new riding lawnmower. One day I got this little intuition that maybe I could trade my riding mower for another horse. It was time. I needed something that was just mine. The Universe will always answer when you set out a clear intention, always. Just as I made my intentions clear, my Dixie showed up, and she showed up in an internet ad saying “Looking to trade quarter horse mare for a riding lawnmower.” Oddly enough, she turned out to be located just a short walk through a Christmas tree farm from where I had decided I wanted to board my horse.

When I first met Dixie, it was a comedy of errors. The young couple that had her for sale were literally on the last day of tenancy in their property and that evening Dixie was scheduled to be moved to their new property a long distance away. Earlier in that day I had taken the drive out to the barn that I was hoping would be a good match for me, hoping the couple would call me so I could see the horse I was interested in from the ad. I didn't receive the phone call until I was long back home. On a whim I decided to turn around and go back. When I

first saw my horse she was galloping frantically around a smaller pasture area. She was hard to catch and not cooperative. When the husband saddled her up and climbed on, she crow hopped down the driveway.

That should have been enough. I do not like difficult horses. Standing in my own truth I must admit I am probably afraid of horses. I am afraid of being out of control and being thrown. I would never knowingly climb on a horse that I knew for a fact had a history of crow hopping with its owner. I saw this happen with my own eyes. Why I said, "Ok, I'll take her," is to this day a complete mystery. She scared me to death.

We traded straight across, my lawnmower for Dixie and the deal was done. Now it was time for me to figure out what I was going to do with her. For some reason, I started slow. I took a lot of time just hanging out with her, nothing to do, nowhere to go. In honest reflection it's likely that I was simply stuck in fear. We spent the first several days together with me just trying to catch her in the enormous pasture where she lived. I would get frustrated and angry, chase her around, run her off and then just stop and walk away. I could almost hear her faint giggles as I stomped out of the pasture vowing to sell her the next day.

Bursting at the seams with frustration and self-doubt I would stand at the gate just watching her. Even for her aloofness, she would stand close enough, almost within reach of my arm with just her hind towards me. Then she would amble off, stopping to pull at a random clump of grass scattered haphazardly around the pasture. Swinging her whole body to face me, she would stare at me with deep soulful eyes that seemed to whisper, "That which is important enough, takes whatever time it takes. Slow down." And she would quietly disappear into the herd of pasture mates that stood waiting for her off in the distance.

I hated being in the beginner's mind. That place of

utter confounding confusion. As an adult and I guess at the time as a “human” vs. “beast of burden” I thought I was just supposed to know what to do with her. I’d had horses at my Ranch, all of whom depended on me and seemed to love me in their own ways. I didn’t have to take care of Dixie, at least not in the everyday way I had to do at the Ranch. It was up to me to suck it up and figure it out walking through the fires of fear every step of the way.

Dixie is an old soul. You can see the depths of eternity in her huge brown eyes. If you listen close enough, she has a story to tell – about humanity, about relationships—about family. She speaks of learning to trust, of taking time and of being truly present and committed to the process, not the outcome.

We finally crossed the threshold of my own fear as I grabbed slivers of courage enough to climb on her back. She didn’t make it easy on me either. She demanded my focus and concentration. She demanded respect and her own dignity. She drew her boundaries and challenged me to draw mine. It took enormous commitment from me to keep fighting through my own fears: the fears of failure, inadequacy, of being in the beginner’s mind and trying to pretend as an adult that I knew so much more than I did. I’ve always been able to fake my way through anything, but I could not fake my relationship with Dixie. She would not allow it. It was as if she beckoned to my soul to dig in, dig deep and face myself. This was and continues to be huge challenge for me. There were days when I just had enough and thought I’d made the wrong choice in trading for her but the voice of Radical Faith inside me said, “Stay true. Commit.”

Dixie has never so much as offered to do anything, in any way that would ever hurt me. She has never even thought about crow hopping, or biting or kicking me. Little by little, we both faced our own wariness of the other. I have no idea of Dixie’s past. I know she has trust issues, just like I do. I know that it took a lot of time, and a lot

of consistency (in addition to a whole lot of mistakes) to gain her trust. I know to the depths of my soul she would never, ever hurt me in any way, something I had never known with any other being in my entire life. It was the start of trust, the start of trusting myself to do the right things, be present and be honest and be good enough – just exactly as I am.

Little by little we built a relationship. I had to give, she had to give. I'd draw a boundary and she'd step a little closer. She'd draw a boundary and I'd back a little bit away. I had no idea Dixie was teaching me the dance of intimacy, the dance of relationship. My relationship with Dixie is honestly the first relationship I've ever had where I've been asked to be completely who and what I am. I could bring no false pretenses, bring no lies. I could only bring myself. With Dixie, the Wicked Ego Witch was quiet. Perhaps she's just as fascinated with this incredible creature as I am.

Dixie opened the door to what is possible in Heart Space. I was ready again. I stated my intention loudly and clearly to the Universe. I was ready for "My One." And the Universe answered. It always does.

The King of Broken Hearts....

Anamchara and I continued conversations by phone and they remained connected, passionate and full of hope and promise. We started delicately navigating our way through our relationship stories of the past. He would talk in a voice so deep and so full of regret for the women who had come before me. He talked about failed promises, of poor relationship choices and of the relationship that was supposed to have lasted forever. When the Anamchara loves he would tell me, he loves forever. It might be a long, hard road to get there, but once he did, the mark on his soul would remain forever. That was pretty heady stuff for a girl desperately seeking the one