

# I'm Shy Boy

**Here's  
My  
Story**

*Interpreted by*

**Monty  
Roberts**





# *I'm Shy Boy*

Here's *My* Story

*Interpreted by*

Monty Roberts

*Illustrations by*

Sisko Tahon-Raulo

*and*

Philippa Raulo

## **Also by Monty Roberts**

---

*The Man Who Listens to Horses*  
*Shy Boy: The Horse That Came in from the Wild*  
*Horse Sense for People*  
*From My Hands to Yours*  
*The Horses in My Life*  
*Ask Monty*

Copyright © 2009, 2010 by Monty and Pat Roberts, Inc.  
All rights reserved  
Printed in China

### Photo Credits

Back cover: Diane Benson

Front flap: Maya Horsey

Back flap: Laura Davis

Page 10: Laura Davis

Page 11: Heather Roberts

Page 143: Christopher Dydyk

Book design and production: Studio E Books, Santa Barbara

Published by Monty and Pat Roberts, Inc.

Post Office Box 1700

Solvang, CA 93464

[www.montyroberts.com](http://www.montyroberts.com)

ISBN 978-1-929256-61-7



— Chapter Two —

## The Dangers for a Mustang Growing Up

ONE DAY, AS WE WERE WANDERING down a hill toward a water hole for an afternoon drink, I had just ducked my head to take a shortcut under a large red rock when I heard a loud, drawn-out “growwwwl.” Before I had a chance to react, a tan-colored blur leaped past me and disappeared around the rocky outcrop. My head shot up and hit hard against the side of the rock; I squealed in fear and pain and dizzily stumbled out from under the ledge to bolt in blind panic down the hill. The tan blur reappeared off to my left. I veered right and ran as fast as my legs would carry me, but felt pain on my left shoulder and then a



*This is me in my frightening encounter with a mountain lion.*

sharp slashing down my side. I kicked hard with my left hind leg, striking something with a thud. Panicked, I continued running.

My mother, tasting the water before the rest of the herd drank, turned in alarm and called to me as I dashed down the hill and landed in a heap at the bottom. Shaking my head, I unfolded my trembling legs and went straight to her udder for a drink, as she sniffed me all over, licking the bloodied scrape on my side. For the rest of the day I stayed very close to her, and from then on I was cautious of anything approaching me except for my family members. I came to learn that the tan blur was a mountain lion that had sharp teeth and strong, piercing claws. The tough lesson made me appreciate the power of my hind legs.

The waterholes dried up as the weather grew hotter. We would often go without drinking for two or three days, but all the while my mother

would be working hard at finding water for us. During the hot days we would seek shade, but it never seemed to help all that much. We would look for deep cuts in the earth, which would provide shade both from the earthen walls and scrub trees growing from the sides. My mother knew that these were dangerous places as it was difficult to see if predators were coming. She would always assign a guard horse that had to stand above us in an open area so that she could see all around and give warning if a predator was coming near.

As the evening sun cooled, we would resume our search for water. My mother knew how to seek out the low-lying areas where underground water might be close to the earth's surface. When we arrived at one of these spots, she would walk to the center and scrape the ground with her front feet. If she continued for more than a minute or so, other mares



*To mustangs water is precious, and when we found some we enjoyed it.*



*I had been bitten by a rattlesnake.*



appeared above my right knee, and after about a week or so it broke open and drained. My leg was useless for almost three weeks, and I had to travel on the three remaining ones. I went through long periods of time where everything around me seemed cloudy and distorted, and I couldn't think straight. I could have died like my sister. Fortunately, grass and water were plentiful on the high meadow, and I didn't have to travel very far. I guess it was between twenty and twenty-five days before I could use my right leg very well. This was a serious lesson; I learned to always observe the area around me very closely. Perhaps if I had been more careful, I might have seen the snake before he buzzed and then struck.

During my recovery time all the other colts left me, and I was alone. I was extremely vulnerable to attack; wolves, mountain lions and bears kill many unwell and weak mustangs. I was careful to skirt the edges of



*My leg was useless for almost three weeks, and I had to travel on the remaining three.*

since I left the herd, and night had fallen. Fog soon curled in from the ocean and the landscape became blurred and indistinct, with the mist deadening the sound of my hooves. At times I could not see the man or his horse, but with my keen sense of hearing and smell I knew they continued to travel with me, stopping as I rested and nibbled at grass.

I hoped that the misty fog that had moved in around us had also hidden me from their view, and so I doubled back in my tracks, hoping to lose them. However, the other horse could still smell and hear me and followed wherever I went. Strangely enough, despite my fear of men, this man and his horse became comfort to me during the night. A horse's greatest fear is isolation, because without the herd we are vulnerable to all types of predators, with only our speed and senses to protect us.

Attempting to hide from this man and his horse simply didn't work, and the pair was coming closer and closer to me. I could hear his voice singing these words:



*I was trying to hide in the fog.*

## Hey, Little Shy Boy

Hey, little Shy Boy, where are you going?

Stop trying to hide from me.

I'll be here come morning, when there's light for me to see.

Hey, little Shy Boy, don't be afraid,

I'm not going to hurt you, that's a promise made.

Fifty years back, and to your kin,

My word was, it'll be better than it's been.

I told them I'd leave the world a better place

For both you horses and the human race.

Hey, little Shy Boy, settle down.

Eat, drink, stop running around.

You think I might hurt you, but that can't be,

Because of the promise I've made, don't you see?

No pain to horses, now that's my goal,

It's my life's work, I'll take this role.

Shy Boy, Shy Boy, don't be so shy,

I know we'll be friends in the by and by.

