

## I Dream – AnnaBelle’s Story

*Sometimes, I still dream. My dreams still scare me, but now I know that is all it is, a dream. I know I am safe now and will always be safe. But still, I dream.*

My name is Annabelle. I am a 13 year old Leopard Appaloosa mare. For many years I was a brood Mare. Since I was able, I had several beautiful foals. But, I did not ever get to keep my little ones for to long. You see, the man that owned me took my babies from me soon after I had them. They would scream and cry when he took them. I would try everything to help them but this man would yell at me and push me back, hit me and lock me in my stall. I would rear up and buck and kick to try and see what he was doing with my little one. I did not understand. He did not understand. My baby was to young to leave me. I would cry for days wondering what happened to my baby. I became very mean. I was so scared and very sad. I didn't trust anyone. I really never understood why he was mean to me. All I know is I was very unhappy while I was with him.

I became very mad at him each time he came in to my stall, so mad I wanted to hurt him. Each time he bred me I was very sad because I knew after my baby was born he would take my baby away from me. It hurt so bad when he did this I thought I would never recover. I remember the last baby I had. I keep that little one close to my heart and deep in my memory. One night, my little one and I were all alone resting. Our Owner came into our stall, he said nothing to us. He never really talked to us very much, he just yelled. This time he put a strange thing in my mouth. I did not know what it was. I knew it hurt and it was tight. Then he put something on my back. It scared me. I did not know what he was doing. He pulled me out of my stall. I did not want to go and leave my baby.

I pulled back to try and get away from him. I did not want to leave my little one. My baby was crying for me. What was he doing? Where was I going? Who was going to stay with my baby? I became very frightened. I tried again and again to pull away from him. He got very angry at me and he started hitting me in my face with his fist. Oh, it hurt so bad. I did not care how bad it hurt though, all I cared about is my baby. I could hear by baby yelling for me. I could not bear it. I got very angry. I had to stay with my baby. I tried again and finally broke away from him and ran back to my little one.

I turned to look to see where my Owner was and I felt something hit me in my head. It was terrible. What was this man doing? What did I do wrong? All I wanted to do is be with my baby. He hit me over and over. I was thinking oh God please don't let him hurt my baby. I thought what can I do to make him stop. Finally he stopped hitting me. He was yelling very loud. I took my baby and we went in the corner of our stall. I thought it was over.

He was coming back toward me. He grabbed me and pulled me out of our stall. Again, he hit me. He pushed my baby back and slammed the stall door. He started to get on my back. What was he doing? I had never been rode before. I did not like it. I bucked and reared. He fell off. He grabbed me again. This time he had something in his hand. It was a board. He hit me over and over in the head and in the face. The pain was unbearable. I could not see. He hit me in my eye and it was bleeding. This went on for what seemed like forever. Then he stopped.

I ran to my stall to see if my baby was okay. My little one was in the corner hiding. I told my baby Mommy was okay, are you okay? I was dizzy. My head hurt so bad, and I couldn't see out of my eye. I stood quietly guarding my baby. Please, don't come back. For days after that my Owner would try and ride me again and again. I could not bear the pain in my head and my eye. I would rear and buck and he would hit me with a whip. I did not think this pain would ever end. He beat me before he got on me and when he would fall off he would beat me again. Then one day as he came into our stall I thought he was going to try and ride me again but instead he pushed me back and put a rope on my little ones neck. Oh please, take me I will let you ride me. Don't hurt my baby. As our stall door slammed shut I knew what was happening. Another sweet baby of mine was gone, forever.

I am not with that man anymore. I live at a place they call a horse rescue. But, I still have this dream and the others here say they dream to. But we know now it is just a dream. When we wake up now we see our new Owner's walking toward us. They smile at us and hug us each morning and tell us how happy they are to have us here. We are all rescues here and we all have a past but more important now we have a future because we are at Hooves & Paws Rescue of the Heartland.