

Arabian Rebellion

By Cara Myers

Some call him Stallion of the Night. Others, the Horse Raider. His true name is Naj, a wild Arabian. His black coat melts away at night, making him invisible. Legend has it he is a magical beast unstoppable by humans. When darkness settles over the land and all becomes still, the "Horse Raider" truly comes alive. His powers were intended that he would one-day rebel against the people who capture wild Arabian mustangs of the land.

Naj's rebellion is coming soon. The people are worried. They know of the desert stallion powerful enough to break into stables, taking with him prized horses and leaving without a trace. Many horses have disappeared in the past from various tribes, and none have ever been recovered. These horses have been glimpsed with Naj and his herd, galloping amongst the sand dunes too fast to catch, disappearing from sight.

Today Naj prances along the lush valley. Standing among the grasses dotted with trickling springs are 30 some horses, all part of Naj's cavy. Proudly he surveys them. Many of the mares will soon foal, and in just weeks colts and fillies will be learning what it means to be in his tribe with the laws of the horse.

Evening turns to night, the full moon casting a soft pale light. Naj appears on a sand dune, alone and silent. A slight breeze picks up, lifting his ebony mane and tail and streaming them out behind him. The sand swirls below his feet. Suddenly Naj is charging, racing over the dunes as though his hindquarters were afire. Only he knows why this moment is chosen to let loose his powers and make the most pronounced rebellion in the age of the horse. The Arabian mustangs were the first horses to roam this earth, and now the captive Arabians will soon taste the wild freedom of their ancestors, led by the greatest Horse Lord of all time.

The tribal towns surrounding this famous and highly regarded race-track and show arenas lay still. Confident of their security, the sheiks stabled nearly 1000 of the most powerful, beautiful, and swift Arabians in all of Saudi Arabia here. The walls are lined with ribbons, trophies, and titles earned by these hard working animals that serve their masters. But soon this all will change!

As the wind blows over the sandy hills, a sudden gust storms up bringing with it Naj, who has traveled over 50 miles. He appears to be flying with the wind, as if it takes no effort to run as fast as he. Abruptly, the wind stops as Naj comes to a sudden halt, sinking his hindquarters into a sliding stop and spewing sand all about him. He studies the stables where the champion horses are resting with his dark intelligent eyes. Cautious to avoid the night guards patrolling the grounds, he is soon slipping among the aisles unlatching the stalls without a sound. Suddenly, the stables erupt with the crash of stall doors and the yells of the helpless stable boys trying to hold back the tidal wave of horses answering to Naj's trumpeting call. One of the men, a practiced cowboy, lassos one of the escaping horses, ties it and saddles it. Needing no encouragement, the captured horse races off trying to rejoin his friends.

After reaching the summit of the first hill, Naj circles the escaped herd, then glances back down toward the stables. His black liquid eyes fill with fear for the first time this night, for a horse and rider are almost upon them. He screams a warning to the band of horses, and the mass take off in a dead run. Naj knows the rider is after him, for without their leader, the herd will not go far. Yet he knows he can not desert these newcomers, for inexperienced at surviving on their own, they will surely be recaptured.

Reaching a sudden decision, Naj disappears, causing the rider to halt his mount and search for the now invisible leader. His distressed horse, nearly beside himself with panic, wants desperately to rejoin the herd. But then Naj's rumbling voice soothes him as he hears, "Against your will, you must take your rider away from us and lead him astray. I promise I will come back for you, and you will return with honor to the herd, for you will have already served us." The colt's eyes register on the thought, then he breaks away. Bucking and spinning, he races off away from Naj and his confused band of horses.

Naj gallops back to the group, leading them toward his hidden haven. Tension is in the air between the newcomers and the older experienced band. A young filly steps from behind her mother towards one of the large stallions, which has so recently arrived. The stallion reaches down and nuzzles the little filly affectionately with his soft brown whiskers, breaking the tension between the groups.

Relieved, Naj trots away from his followers and paces the surrounding territory until he comes to a high cliff. Looking east toward the dawning sun, he catches sight of the disobedient colt with its bemused rider. He starts to move on, glancing back at the path he will once again take, but this time for a single horse. For now he has a promise to fulfill, and a trusting colt to reclaim.

The End