

Are we not horses?

"Come on Kid, hurry up, it's just about to strike!" The two horses ran across the plains towards the massive black clouds in the horizon. They had to get there fast if they should catch a lightning. "Take it easy Small, I'm a little rusty." Kids connections were squeaking and he was in serious need of an oil shift, but he was an old one and the people didn't take as much care of the old. Small on the other hand, still had some parts of her that was shining with almost no rust. It was even still possible to mirror yourself in her optic spheres. Kid could stare into those spheres all day. "We can't take it easy, dear" snorted Small with heavy breath. She wasn't used to run this fast. "If we don't catch one they'll send you to... you know." "I know. I'll pull myself together, don't worry". Kid tried to hide how nervous he was, but didn't do very well. He could see other horses were heading for the clouds too, and unfortunately they were much faster than them, all being newborn. Young inexperienced males all hoping to catch their first lightning, and some ambitious females trying to prove that they weren't less capable than the men. Small were just like that when he first met her, a completely new bred at that time. He could remember how all the males had been running after her, and even more how she had rejected them one after another. She said she didn't need anyone.

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That she could take of herself and that turned out to be truer than even she would have imagined.

The two horses went in to the stables, beaten and scarred, but with a smile on their faces. They had managed to steal a lightning right under the nose of a trendy youngster, which was caught up in some of the clouds slipstream. "You know, I'm gonna go turn these charges in, you can just go relax, old boy" said Small quite exhausted from the hunt. She wouldn't be able to carry Kid like that forever, and Kid knew that too. "*ALL CHARGES IS TO BE DELIEVERED TO THE CHARGE STATIONS,*" buzzed a microphone, and Small together with a dozen other horses began marching towards the gates to the stations. "Wait Small" shouted Kid after her. "I love you dear!" Small turned her head and answered: "I know, old boy". Her optic drive gave a little blink before she continued into the stations. The gates closed behind her, and they less successful horses could do whatever they saw fit. Many of the youngsters preferred to go to the inner stables to shine themselves up, especially today, because of the big harvest prom the same night. Kid and they other old models who were already in steady relationships loved to watch all the young running around trying to find partners, placing themselves in all kind of awkward situations. Kid praised the lord that he didn't have to participate. He had already found his partner.

Kid were walking back towards the recharging quarters to meet up with Small, when he noticed something different. The forbidden door was open. There were all kinds of stories of what should be behind that door, ranging from giant monsters to the owner of the microphone voice. Nobody knew whom the voice was, only that they should do what it said. It also seemed to change every once in a while. Kid were puzzled. Why were the door open all of sudden? Should he look in? He really shouldn't, Small was waiting for him and they're a reason that it was called "the forbidden room". But on the other hand it would be a great story to tell and what harm could a little peek hurt? "A old horse can have his last adventure, right?" whispered he to himself before he went slowly through the door. He wandered through what seemed like endless dark corridors that seemingly led nowhere until he saw a bright light at the end. Excited to see what the great mystery could be, he mustered some strength and ran towards the piercing light. When his optic drive finally grew accustomed to the light he found himself standing in a great green field with some sort of fence in the middle. Curious to see what this fence might hold he went over to see and saw something he had never seen before. Inside the fencing stood a weird creature. It had four legs and was covered in some fuzzy brown stuff he had never seen. It was strangely familiar though it almost

looked like him. In fact it looked completely like him, just without plating. Kid was completely dazzled by the appearance of this strange being, and it seemed that the creature was just as confused as him, but before he could talk to it, some creatures that were even stranger interrupted him.

These ones had only two legs and were very pale with only the fuzzy stuff on their heads and they seemed to be heading towards the fencing. One of them was carrying a robe of some kind and Kid could hear them talk about "Fetching that stupid horse". Had they seen him and now they were out to get him, were they the monsters behind the door? Kid closed his optic drives waiting for whatever fate these creatures had prepared for him, but strangely nothing happened. He waited a few more seconds before opening one of his drives and to his surprise; the beings were inside the fencing getting the brown creature. Kid didn't understand, he was the horse not that thing? "Hey, I'm the one you're looking for," snorted he loudly, immediately regretting it when he saw the expression one of the beings got when it spotted him. "Oh shit George one of the fakes got out!" shouted the taller of the two beings. It also had some of the fuzzy stuff around its chin. "They're not fakes, they are valuable machines, they are just shaped like horses for convenience" answered the shorter one very calmly. Kid didn't know why, but he was the one that invoked the most fear in him. "But you're right, you should go catch it, it needs to go to the junkyard now." The tall one began walking towards very slowly, but Kid didn't give him a chance to get close, he was already running down the corridors again. While he ran he didn't hear the shouts of the two men, they only thing that ran through his head were the same word. "Fake".

"Where have you've been, I was worried sick about you, y'know". Kid had crashed into the recharging quarters, making quite a fuss, falling over his own legs. "I've..." He had troubled finding the right words to describe what he had seen. "I've seen a horse". Small looked at him with a puzzled look before letting out a tiny laugh. "And so what? They are all around you if you haven't noticed, dear." "No, I mean a real horse". He sent her the most serious look he had ever given her. "What do you mean?" Small asked confused and slightly worried. Had her partner gone mad? "I mean..." Kid wasn't sure what he meant. "I'm not sure what I mean. The beings said that we were just fakes, not real horses." "Of course we're real horses, don't be silly. Look dear, you seem tired..." "I saw a real horse, goddammit!" shouted Kid ignoring the weird looks the other steel horses send him. "We're just machines they said, like this recharger or that lamb! You have to believe me!" He gave Small a begging look, but before she could say anything, the microphone interrupted them. "ATTENTION HORSES. WE'RE COMING IN TO RETRIEVE HORSE "KID". DON'T WORRY IT'S JUST A ROUTINE." "Wait, no!" screamed Kid as mechanic arms grabbed him, pulling him towards the junkyard gate, while the other horses stood back in awe and fear. "Kid!" shouted Small, but was quickly muted by some of the other horses. Kid continued screaming: "They know I know the truth! Were just fakes, machines I tell you!" He could finish before the great gates shut close behind him. "Are we not horses?" whispered Small.

The junkyard was the place was all steel horses were sent to if they were deemed unfit or unable to work. This were the place were you had your last moments before you're battery ran short. Kid now lay there too; too weak to stand up and walk, and he really couldn't see a point in it either. Every moment felt like an eternity in this ghastly place. "If I could wish one thing, it would be to see her again." "You can, dear," said a voice weakly above him. The horse collapsed down beside him and turned her head to his side. "Small, what are you doing here?" asked he confused. "I couldn't leave you, could I? I believe you, why else would they take you away." "I was kind of heading here." "Oh yeah? Didn't I still catch enough lightning for us both?" "All right you're good, I get it." They both tried to laugh, but hey didn't have the energy or the mood for it. "Of course the voice didn't like that I believed you, so they threw me here too." said Small and look up into the sky. "I can't believe we're just machines" whispered Kid with shaky voice. "Don't say that dear." "But it's true. We're just feeless machines, fakes..." "All right look, can you remember why I picked you for the prom? Because you didn't care about who I was or how popular I was. Where's that man, the one that didn't care who he or others was? So what if we're not horses, we've still got each other right? We've still got a lot to be glad for." Kid looked into her optic drive, her beautiful, beautiful drives and said: "You're right, we've still got a lot to be glad f..." The light in the two horses went out and the junkyard once again went silent.