

Crazy Horse

**by
Gail Berry**

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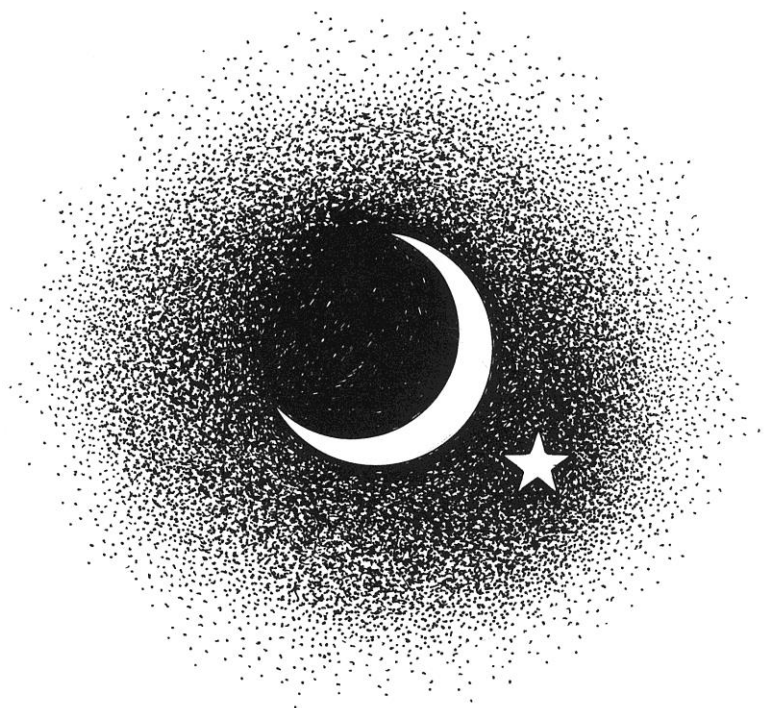
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The Crazy Horse



This story takes place in the small Texas town of McKinney, outside a service station.

"Hey Rob, that newspaper lady is here. Better get your rear outside. She is the one who came for the interview about Kevin Blair. Come on."

"Hey Gus, I'll be out in a few minutes. Gotta get Mr. Jones' carburetor fixed. He is coming at 2:30."

"Hey Rob, this lady is out there tapping her foot, and she's got some pink high heeled shoes on and they are so pointy, looks like nails. She is ready for the interview. Best get out here."

"Okay Gus, I'll finish this carburetor later."

"Well, nice to meet you ma'am. My name is Rob Terrell."

“It is nice to meet you, Mr. Terrell. My name is Nina, Nina Simpson. I’m here for the interview about Kevin Blair that I phoned you about.”

“Yes ma’am. Glad to talk about him. I don’t know, I don’t know much about him. You know we were in high school together, small high school.”

“Yes, yes, Mr. Terrell, could I call you Rob? The reason I came across your name is, you know Mr. Blair, he owns most of the oil stations around here.”

“Yes ma’am, I know that pretty well.



“He is quite rich, a millionaire in fact. He usually doesn’t give interviews. I had been reading up about him, and I noticed that in one of the interviews

he mentioned your name — which is very odd because he hardly ever talks about his background — and something about a black horse. I wonder if you could tell me about that.”



“Yes ma’am that’s probably the only thing I could tell you about Kevin Blair. You see, well I could tell you a few things first. Maybe you want to sit down here on this bench. I don’t believe that I can talk quite as fast as you New Yorkers can. It is pretty hot out today; would you like somethin’ cool to drink?”

“No thank you, Mr. Terrell. I wish we could just get on with the story, please. I have to catch a plane shortly. I have about an hour and a half here.”

“Yes ma’am, I’ll speed it up fast as I can.”



“Well I knew Kevin Blair in high school. He come from a different part of town than I did, I mean McKinney is a small town but you know there is a section where the rich people live and there is a section where the people that are poor live and there is a section where the people in between live sort of like that. There’s a little mixin’ but not much.

“Anyway Kevin Blair came from the rich part of town and in school I always remember him, he was a good lookin’ boy, black hair, dark eyes, all the girls thought he was great, you know, and he played on the football team, the basketball team and all that. I never played sports much, I was in good shape, but I

never did play much sports and anyway, he was like a straight A student but you know the thing I always noticed about Kevin Blair was that he hardly ever smiled. You know I thought he would have lots to be happy about since he was like president of the class, I mean everythin', he had everythin', but he hardly ever smiled. Except for once in a while he would smile at somebody and you know it looked like that smile was pasted on, you know, I mean not like one of those real smiles, somebody just pretendin' like they was smilin' but they weren't really.

"Well anyway that's about all I know about him because we came from real different parts of town and he hung around with different people, well I guess he didn't even hung, I mean, hang around with that many people, excuse my grammar I do the best I can, anyway you will be writin' up the story, you won't be usin' my words much anyhow, right?"

"Yes, Mr. Terrell, and tell me about the black horse, please."

"Oh yes, I forget, you're in a hurry. Yes we're getting' to that part. Well, the black horse, the black horse, yeah I remember the black horse.



“Well, how it was is some people farm around here, and outside the southwest part of town there is a man, last name’s Brown we always just called him Farmer Brown, I don’t know why, but he was a little piggy sort of man, round and bald head these little, you almost would think they were pink eyes but nobody has pink eyes so they must have been some color but all bloodshot or somethin’ and he weren’t just fat I mean he was heavy, but man he was

strong, he was solid and he was short, and he liked showin' off. And one day he told the neighbors that he was goin' up north, can't remember if it was Tennessee or Kentucky, somewhere up north. He was goin' there, was goin' to a big horse auction and he was goin' to buy himself a ther-o-bred and bring it back here. Well he went up to the auction all right and he bought himself a ther-o-bred and brought it back here – that was the big black horse. And he fixed one day to invite all the neighbors over – 'come on over I want you to see my horse.'

"He was goin' to ride this horse around, just parade it in front of us cause this made him a big man. He invited people from all over town, anybody he knows 'Come on over. I'm goin' to show you my new thoroughbred.' So there were some people there – not a whole lot because, well, Farmer Brown, he didn't have so many friends. He weren't what you call a friendly man. Anyway there were a few of us there. I was there. I was curious.

"He brings out this saddle, real fancy western saddle, and bridle. He starts goin' over towards this horse.



“Well the horse, don’t know if he don’t like Farmer Brown or he don’t like the saddle, but he starts backin’ up and his little tiny pointy ears go down, the lips rolled back and you could see those big white teeth, and the fur or the hair on his haunches, on his shoulders, it starts standin’ up. He didn’t growl, but if a horse could growl you would have heard a growl comin’ out of that horse, and Farmer Brown kept walkin’ toward that horse and that horse stopped, stared at Farmer Brown. Farmer Brown took one more step forward and that horse was high up in the air. On his hind legs pawin’ the air and startin’ to come down on Farmer Brown. Well, Farmer Brown he backed off fast and then the horse was after Farmer Brown and there was that horse chasin’ Farmer Brown around the field. Farmer Brown was tryin’ to

protect that new saddle. And after a while he just dropped it and ran for his life.



“Well you can bet that after that episode Farmer Brown didn’t say no more ‘bout the crazy horse to nobody – that’s what we came to call him – that weren’t his name but after that day everybody called him The Crazy Horse cause that horse wouldn’t let nobody get near him.

“Farmer Brown even hired a trainer, a gentler. They said he was real good with horses, real good, from out east to come and train this horse. Well that horse wouldn’t let nobody near him.

“I use to go out after school I remember, and I would watch him runnin’ the field and you know Mrs. Pearl Carter, that was my high school English teacher,

she would drop her teeth today if she heard me use this word, but if there was a word for that crazy horse it was magnificent. If God had of been a horse he would have looked like that crazy horse runnin' thru that field with that black mane flyin'. I never seen anything so beautiful and so free. Took to goin' there after school just to watch him. Sometimes I would take an apple and I would lay it on the fence there. He'd watch me. I'd back away some and then he would come up and take the apple, and after a while, it took a while, but after a while though, he would come up and take it, with me standin' there.



“And then one day I put out my hand. I was so excited he sniffed it and it seemed like it was okay for

me to touch him and so I stroked his mane and his neck. I still remember it was soft like satin; he even seemed to like it and so then when I would go everyday I would bring an apple or carrot and he would let me feed it to him and I would just hold it on my hand there. He would let me stroke his neck and then one day I thought well maybe it would be okay if I walked into the field. He was at the far end of the field and he hadn't seen me yet. Usually he saw me comin' and he would run over to greet me. And he didn't see me that day, so I thought maybe it would be okay if I walked in the field to see him, and I got about half way across and his ears picked up and he saw me and at first I thought he was goin' to run after me the way he run after Farmer Brown, and then it was like he recognized me and it was okay.



“He walked up to me and I fed him the apple and I stroked his neck and I even leaned a little bit on his back. It didn’t seem to scare him none. And then after that if he didn’t come to the fence it seemed it was okay I would find him in the field. Then one day, one day I got the idea in my head I thought that maybe, maybe he would let me sit on his back and it must have been okay cause I crawled right up there and he let me sit on his back and then he started to walk around the field real easy like.



“You know I’d never been on a horse before. It seemed like that big black crazy horse, it seemed like he knew so he was handlin’ me real gently. So I just set up there a few minutes. I didn’t want to, you know how they say, overdue your welcome or

somethin', anyway I didn't want that, so I slid off and thanked him and went home.

"The next day then he let me git up on top of him agin and this time he walked faster. I was a little scared at first but it seemed okay; you know, I felt like he was watching out for me or somethin'. So we walked around the field and the next day I wasn't sure if I wanted to ride or not and wasn't sure if he wanted me to ride and so it just continued like that. And then after a while, one day we didn't do no trottin'. You know I never knew any of these fancy words at the time trottin', canterin', or gallopin', but I went to the library a couple of days after this one thing happened and looked them all up so now I know it was canterin' we did one day. We had been walkin' for a while and then that one day I got up on his back and we walked for a little bit and then he started to do this thing I know is called a canter now, he was rockin' back and forth real gentle but we were movin' sort of fast and, wow, it was really fun, really fun and then the next day I went back and we did the canter again and then after a while it's like I was getting' the hang of the thing and I felt real safe on

top of him. It was almost like I could tell what he was goin' to do next, and then one day we galloped and then after a while we would run there was nothin' ever like it, I never felt nothin', nothin' like that. I mean I weren't holdin' no bridle I was just holdin' onto his mane.



"I was never scared and I felt, I mean I've driven fast cars, I've been on motorcycles, there ain't no thrill, ain't no thrill like I felt ridin' on the back of that crazy horse. The wind whistlin' thru my hair and

thru his mane and my hands gripped in that black mane and I never even fell off that horse I mean it was like one time I almost slipped, almost slipped — I know, I know you want me to get back to Kevin Blair.

“Sorry, yeah, right. Anyway, one day I almost slipped and it was almost like he felt it and we slowed down, anyway that was the crazy horse.



“After a while I noticed that Kevin Blair came out to that field practically everyday. I don’t know how long he had been comin’ before I noticed him, but I noticed him one day and he was standin’ by a big old, don’t know if it was an oak or a hickory or what it was, some big old tree next to the fence, he

was standin' there watchin' and that first day I saw him I didn't say anythin' to him. I just got off the horse when it was time to go and walked on by. Didn't have to pass him or nothin' and the other days I noticed that he would stay there after I was gone and he would watch the horse, just watch the horse. He never said nothin' to me and I never said nothin' to him, I mean you know I didn't know him and he didn't know me so that's the way it went. That was a good time ridin' that crazy horse.



“Well, I'd heard stories that Farmer Brown wanted to get rid of the horse, wanted to take him up to that auction and wanted to sell him to some other sucker (that's what he said) but ev'rytime that Farmer

Brown tried to get next to that horse, that horse, that crazy horse would lower those pointy little ears and you would see his teeth and if Farmer Brown came up on him, that horse, that crazy horse never hesitated he would chase that man out of the field. Well Farmer Brown got tired of feelin' like a fool, I guess, so one day he was out in the field and had one of those big shotguns. I guess he had been talkin' about what he was goin' to do to that horse so there were a couple of people followin' him, one was a friend of his and I think there were a couple of field hands that worked for him, and then I was there standin' by the fence — I had just fed the crazy horse an apple. Kevin Blair was there leanin' up against the tree, and here comes ole' Farmer Brown totin' that shotgun over his shoulder sayin' how he was goin' to shoot the crazy horse and send him up to the factory for dog meat. He was laughin' with his friend. I wasn't laughin'. Anyway Farmer Brown came into that field, he said to that crazy horse — either you are goin' to be saddled or I'm shootin' you.

“I don't know if the horse understood or not but he sure weren't goin' to be saddled. In fact,

Farmer Brown, he never even brought that saddle out and he started to lower the gun. Kevin Blair, he ran out from by that tree and he ran, he ran up to Farmer Brown and tried to pull the gun away from him.

Farmer Brown, though, I told you he was strong, he looked like a fat little man, but he was strong, he just knocked Kevin, Kevin weren't no baby either, just knocked Kevin over about three feet away and pulled up that shotgun.



"Crazy Horse, oh I remember too, Kevin was runnin'; then Kevin ran up to the Crazy Horse wavin' his arms yellin', "run horse, run, run," like he was tryin' to scare the horse away, anythin' he could do to make him go away from Farmer Brown, but that

Crazy Horse he just stood there lookin' at Farmer Brown. His ears weren't laid back or nothin'. Just stood his ground, and you know I don't know what happened to me but all of a sudden I was, I remember, I was standin in back of Farmer Brown and I knew I wanted to stop him from what he was goin' to do but I didn't know what to do and all of a sudden it was like I was frozen I couldn't move a muscle, I couldn't move anything and then I was lookin' down the barrel of that gun I remember I was standin' behind Farmer Brown so I don't know how this happened but I was lookin' at Farmer Brown then, not the back of him but lookin' into those beady little tiny eyes and lookin' down the barrel of that gun and then I heard a huge noise and somethin' hit my chest and it hurt, hurt bad, and then I was back behind, standin' behind Farmer Brown and I looked down, I looked down at the ground and then I looked for the crazy horse and then I looked down agin and the crazy horse, he was layin' on the ground with this big hole in his chest and the blood was runnin' out and Kevin Blair was down there holdin' the horse's head and just rockin' back and forth sobbin', just

sobbin', just sobbin' and cryin' out "no," and sobbin' and Farmer Brown he just slung that shotgun over his shoulder and just walked away.

"I didn't do nothin', I just watched Kevin for a little bit and then I walked home. I went out to the field the next day and I looked around, I don't know if I expected to see that big black crazy horse or what. Kevin was standin' next to the old tree starin' out at the field. He never even saw me and the look on his face, if there were a person who could have willed that horse back to life, it was Kevin Blair.



"I went out to the field a few more times but after a while I just stopped. Stopped goin' and I saw

Kevin at school a few times and once or twice you know he actually gave me a real smile. Funny, isn't it. Then I heard he went off to college and somethin'; you know I heard through the years he made all that money and such, you know, so I wish him well.

"Is there anything else I can tell you, Miss Reporter? Was the story short enough for you?"

"Thank you, Mr. Terrell, it was, really, it was an interesting story. I thank you very much."

"Do you have any questions or anything? I s'pose that's what I'm suppose to say to you next, though I probably don't have any answers for you. I think I told you everything I know."

"No, Mr. Terrell, I think I have a good story here."

"Yeah, well, well, I hope so miss, I hope so."

And then Rob just, just looked on the ground and noticed those pointy pink shoes she had on seems like he couldn't look up.

"Thank you, Mr. Terrell, I'll be going now."

And he really didn't even say goodbye to her; he just watched those pink shoes walk away and heard that little click, click, click on the pavement.



“Hey Rob, you goin’ to come in here and finish up Mr. Jones’ carburetor, or are you goin’ to just stand out there all day lookin’ at the cement? I mean the lady left five minutes ago. What are you doin’ out there?”

“Well, Gus, I was just, I was just, just rememberin’ a little bit. Just rememberin’ that, that big black crazy horse.”

“Yeah, well that’s not going to get Mr. Jones’ carburetor fixed.”

“Yeah, I guess you’re right, I guess you’re right. I’ll be in directly.”

