

Introducing Prince:

This is the story of our newest rescue. He has been with us since the end of January but there were so many moving parts to his story, we just didn't know how they would land. As fate would have it, he is still with us and now has become part of our family and we'd like to start sharing his story as it is pretty incredible. Here is Part One of his story...

On Jan 30, 2020 our co-founder and Director, Sue Balla, received a phone call from an out of state person that was desperately looking for a rescue in our area to

save the life of a horse who was scheduled to be euthanized in an hour. The caller was from out of state and wanted the horse who was in the Rockton, IL area, but couldn't get to him for a couple of weeks. They told us he was a big 10 year old Andalusian cross stallion that had just recently been gelded. He was scheduled to be euthanized because he had attacked his new owner and was deemed dangerous. We were told that he was owned by the Amish, gelded, and left in a stall for 30 days without cleaning the stall area (which is the worst thing to do as you want the horse in a clean environment and out moving as much as possible to help heal). This horse was then taken to an auction and purchased by a woman who sold him to his new owner all within two days.

The new owner took him to her boarding barn in Rockton, IL and started working with him the very next day. As his she was holding him in the ring, her mother was rubbing him all over to "desensitize" him and he snapped attacking the owner's mom by biting her in the shoulder, which knocked her to the ground, then he tripped over her while trying to flee. He was deemed dangerous and was scheduled to be euthanized. It sounded to everyone that he just hadn't had a chance to settle- it was all too much too soon- as he was taken from one strange situation to the next and retaliated like a stallion might do. Casey's really wasn't in the position to take in another rescue due to funding, but this was a short term situation and Sue had worked at a Trakehner breeding farm and has experience with working with and riding stallions, so we agreed to go get him.

The next day, we drove the hour and a half to Rockton to pick him up. While there, they showed us the video of him attacking the woman and they were very honest about everything. We loaded him up, and fortunately, he trailered like a champ. This poor guy, however, did not know how to back out of the trailer so we had to move the divider and let him turn around in the trailer. (It wasn't pretty but we got him out!) Once out, we noticed that not only did he walk into the barn one unsteady step at a time appearing as if he was drunk, he was also uncertain of how to even walk down the aisle. We put him in his new temporary oversized stall with two windows. It was clear he was so insecure about everything and was on stimulation overload. We gave him his space and let him settle in with a clean stall, fresh hay, his automatic waterer (that he quickly figured out how to use), and lots of natural light. Sue called his new owners-to-be and said he had landed safely with us. They asked how big he was and Sue said not big – he was maybe 15.2 hands and she could tell by the silence on the other end of the line that they were expecting much bigger.



Prince first day in his new stall at Casey's



Prince looking into Rio's stall.

Since he was just recently gelded, Sue put him in the stall next to her big boy Rio who gets along with everyone. Later that day when we brought all the horses in from pasture, Rio and the new guy met through the stall bars and it was perfect! No ear pinning, no squealing, no drama whatsoever - thank goodness! Later in the day, Sue was standing outside his stall with the stall door open about two feet and the stall guard up, telling him he was safe here at Casey's and no one was ever going to hurt him. He was looking at her very pleasantly and then with ZERO warning (no ear pinning, no posturing – nothing), he lunged at her and bit her in the chest and knocking her over backwards! It was a full on attack without any warning. Thankfully, she had three layers of clothes on and he did not break skin but there was a throbbing red knot the size of an egg on her chest by the time she stood up and composed herself. Not wanting the situation to end like this, Sue then went into the stall and stayed by the door with a lunge

whip as a "defensive tool" and when he made a move at her again, she swung the whip towards him and he made the decision to back off. She had to end his attack with her respectfully having the last word as she knew by experience he would continue his aggression as a first resort whenever he felt threatened. It was then she realized that he was never, ever treated with any respect or kindness in his stall and in his mind her standing in the doorway became a threat to him. She came out of the stall and let him decompress from what had happened. This was so horrifically sad to us that he thinks he has to act this way to defend himself from humans.

Later that evening, Sue called his future owners and let them know what had happened. She told them she did not blame the horse as we believe he was aggressive due to terrible human treatment over the past ten years. They then started talking about how he wasn't as big as they were told and they really couldn't use him for what they wanted. Sue could sense it coming – they were going to abandon this horse with us here at Casey's. So here we were not in a position to permanently take in another horse and now as fate would have it, he just may be with us for the long haul. We were not going to give up on him though, we had to help him. And now we had to figure out how to take care of a horse that no one could go near. Stay tuned for Part Two of his story...