

Eileen Bona
53044 RR #213
Ardrossan, Alberta
T8G 2C4
780-809-1047 ext 2
Eileen@dreamcatcherassociation.com



Tick Tock

Waiting, tick tock, for the day they would be free. A life of working, toiling, raising children, then their children's children, saving for their futures and the day they could bask in the rays of liberty. What would they do with all that time? He hadn't considered that yet but he knew it would be good. O Yeah!

Six months to go. He was getting ready, after thirty years of wholehearted dedication to the financial industry. He was afraid. He wondered what it would be like to get out of bed that morning and not have to dawn the crispy-clean suit and mirror-like shoes. He imagined lying in bed long after the alarm would have gone off, smiling, elbows jutting out from arms cradling his head. No more work. Aaaahhhh. Forever. Wow, that sounded permanent. His heart skipped a beat.

She has been a part-time admin assistant for more than twenty years. She spent the majority of her early adult years providing a loving home for their four sons and her doting husband. They will retire on the same day. Togetherness is what their whole life has been about. He is the only man she has ever loved and she has loved him from the day she was born, long before she ever met him. He is all she ever wanted and she would crawl over needles to be with him.

"Ollie, I've been thinking. With retirement on the doorstep, I want to try something I never did before. I want to have a hobby, something I can do when we're all done with this foolish work thing." She chuckles as she says the last words, giddy with exhilaration of the coming changes. She is not afraid, she is ecstatic and planning and ready. She has been waiting for this moment from the day he started that job. "I looked into horse-back riding and I am going to start taking lessons on the weekends." She spat it out, just like that and from the look on his face, it landed square in his eye. He wouldn't have been any more surprised if she had announced finding a tail growing out of her backside. "You're going to do what?" he finally managed. The words were disjointed and uneven. Did he hear what he thought he heard? She was going horse-back riding? Well, that was absurd! She'd never ridden a horse in her life, although she did talk about them from time to time, professing a passion for the handsome beasts.

She knew he would react like this and she sat back, pleased with herself for rattling him. Ollie was far too serious and every now and then she reveled in her ability to keep him on his toes. "Yes, you heard me right, I am taking horse-back riding lessons. I am going to learn to jump over those things, like on television." The world's longest silence yawned through time and was suddenly slammed shut by his high-pitched fits of laughter. Tears rolled down his cheeks as he gasped for air like a blowfish on an arid beach. She waited with arms crossed on her chest, searing cavernous holes through the middle of his forehead. She didn't anticipate that he would belly laugh at her. Still sucking for air and wiping his tears, he said: "Okay dear, whatever you wish." Whatever you wish! Humph! "I wasn't asking your permission, I was telling you your future." Ruffled and tangled, she stormed to the sitting room. He smiled a toothy smile, shaking his head affectionately. He loved that crazy lady. "Horse-back riding" he thought. Then he burst into laughter again as he envisioned the look on her face as she jumped over "those things" for the first time. "I have to see this" he giggled. "This is going to be good."

Ignoring the ludicrous cackling that echoed through the halls of their twenty-year-old-loving home, she picked up the phone and made her first appointment. She always did what she said and she would show him. He didn't give her the chance to tell him what she had thought of for him to do so now he would just have to wait and see. If he thought her plan was gut-busting funny he was going to think his plan was the comedy show. She dialed the phone meticulously, a satiated grin stamped on her face from the memory of his amusement. She was planning the ride of their lives.

"Hello?" she said tentatively into the receiver, now she was starting to feel nervous. "Is this the place that gives English riding lessons?" "Yes it is" said a far-away voice from the other end. "And is it true that you know of an acreage for sale where I can keep a horse?" She swallowed in the middle of the last word and completely missed the 's.' "Excuse me?" came the reply. She laughed as she corrected herself and her whole body tensed as she awaited the response. "As a matter of fact, I do" said the stranger. She smiled as she planned a date to go and see it as she thought "you just wait till that belly-laughing, guffawing husband finds out about this!"