

My Horse is Pink

By Gwen Sibley

My horse is pink and blue, its mane is bright yellow and its tail a lime green. His glassy black eyes reflect the flashing iridescent lights above as I take hold of the reins and hoist myself onto his waiting saddle. I am instantly aware of how far off the ground I am and the phrase “don't get up on your high horse” comes to mind. Feeling a little insecure I look down for the stirrups and push my feet into their comforting clasp. There, that feels much better. The little blonde girl on the steed next to me gives me a big smile and suddenly I feel the first stirrings of movement below me, along with the first tinklings of music above me.

A sudden lurch reminds me to grab for the gleaming brass pole in front of me and I'm off!

My fellow travelers on this Montmartre carousel at the bottom of the steps to the Sacre Coeur are a blur of colors with a variety of riding styles. The blonde girl next to me is waving at her family with one hand while clinging to the brass pole with the other. The boy next to her, riding a gold and purple stallion with flaring nostrils, has both of his arms stretched over his head as if he were trying to hug the sky. A teenage boy and girl are leaning across their horses to try to catch a kiss as the girl's horse rises up while the boy's horse is plunging down.

I look up and the dizzying view is a stunning panorama of blue sky, pink clouds, white doves and ivory cherubs holding onto curtains of lace. My horse gathers speed as we begin our spin around the 18th century Venetian carousel and I hold on for dear life. That's an apt description as I have been holding on for dear life ever since divorce shattered my smooth predictable life's journey five years ago.

Yet, as the ride continues, I am beginning to meld into the horse's rhythm as he gallops along to the tempo of the music. It becomes almost zen-like as I am carried around and around on this magical merry go round ride. It occurs to me that perhaps I don't have to hold on so tightly – that I can get into the flow more easily if I can just let go a little. So I slowly release one hand from the pole and amazingly I am still feeling secure and safe. I look for my friend in the crowd. I catch her eye as I whirl by and shout, “Look at me – I'm flying!”