

HOSSBACK

by

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(Enter four men on hossback. They are:

SHERIFF, CURLY, JEB and ROSCOE.
The HOSSES are women (no “all-fours”
please). The HOSSES relate only oblique-
ly to the COWBOYS. The COWBOYS be-
lieve the HOSSES adore their riders.)

Whoa, Spot!
SHERIFF

Whoa, Blacky!
CURLY

Whoa, Red!
JEB

Whoa, Brownie!
ROSCOE

Brownie?
OTHERS

Brownie. That’s my hoss’s name.
ROSCOE

Your hoss ain’t brown. She’s white.
SHERIFF

Got a brown nose. Nope, that’s dirt.
CURLY

If’n your hoss ain’t brown, you ought not to call her Brownie.
SHERIFF
Curly, what do you call your hoss?

Sheriff, my hoss is black, so I calls her Blacky.
CURLY

That’s a good name. Jeb, what you call your hoss?
SHERIFF

She got red har, so ah calls her Red.
JEB

My hoss got freckles all over her body, so I calls her Spot.
SHERIFF

JEB & CURLY

She's got freckles, so he calls'er Spot!

SHERIFF

You can't call yer hoss Brownie if she ain't brown all over.

ROSCOE

I call her Brownie 'cause she got a pixyish quality about her.

SHERIFF

What in thunderation is that?

ROSCOE

She's dainty, lady-like. I had her fixed.

(Pause.)

SHERIFF

Let's take a breather here, 'fore we heads back to town. Rest these here hosses.

CURLY

Hosses is funny.

JEB

They is good ole boogers.

CURLY

We shoulda stuck around after we hung that hoss thief.

JEB

What fer? He were dead an' no mistake.

CURLY

Shore, after we shot him. But all kinds of interestin' things start to happen while he's still jiggin' around. I know some historical hangin' facts, namely scientific feenominees about what happens to a man when you hang'm.

JEB

What were some of the things that happen to a hangin' fella?

CURLY

Well, one of the firstest things that happens is

(CURLY whispers in JEB's ear.)

JEB

Do tell. Can you see it fer a fact?

CURLY

That's not all. One of the bestest things that happens is...

(CURLY whispers in JEB's ear
again.)

JEB

By jingo! It were a mistake to finish him off so soon!

SHERIFF

Historical hangin' facts ain't the only things we missed out on. We still don't know what his hoss's name was!

JEB & CURLY

Hey, that's right!

SHERIFF

He were just about to tell it when Roscoe here slapped the hoss out from under him an' set'm dancin' on the wind.

JEB & CURLY

Hey, that's right!

SHERIFF

Roscoe, why'd you let the dang hoss get away?

ROSCOE

Don't make no difference. Hoss were yellor. He probably called her Yeller.

SHERIFF

Yeller, orange, pink, blue, anything. Point is, we'll never know, thanks to you. That's what you're really up to, isn't it Roscoe? Callin' your hoss Brownie 'stead of Whitey 'cause she are stolen an' you don't want us to know her real name, so you make up that tall story 'bout some pixy dumb-ass quality just to get us cornfused?

ROSCOE

I always called her Brownie.

SHERIFF

How long've you had that hoss, Roscoe?

ROSCOE

Fifteen years.

SHERIFF

You been callin' a white hoss "Brownie" for fifteen years?

ROSCOE

Yessir.

SHERIFF

You're a plumb liar! You call a white hoss "Brownie" that's called "Whitey" by everybody else! That means you stole that hoss, Roscoe!

ROSCOE

Her name is Brownie!

OTHERS

Whitey!

ROSCOE

Brownie!

OTHERS

Whitey!

SHERIFF

Roscoe, I arrests you fer hoss-thievin'. String'm up, boys!

CURLY

Whoopee!