



HOSSBACK

BY JAMES CAMPBELL

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James B. Campbell

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HOSSBACK

a play by

James Bentley Campbell

(Enter four men on HOSSBACK: SHERIFF, CURLY, JEB and ROSCOE. The HOSSES are women. No “all fours” please.)

SHERIFF

Whoa, Spot!

CURLY

Whoa, Blacky!

JEB

Whoa, Red!

ROSCOE

Whoa, Brownie!

OTHERS

Brownie?

ROSCOE

Brownie. That's my hoss's name.

SHERIFF

Your hoss ain't brown, she's white.

CURLY

Got a brown nose. Nope, that's dirt.

SHERIFF

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

CURLY

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

SHERIFF

That's a good name. Jeb, what do you call your hoss?

JEB

She got red har, so ah calls her Red.

SHERIFF

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

JEB & CURLY

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

SHERIFF

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

ROSCOE

I call her Brownie 'cause she's 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.

JEB

Hosses is funny. They is good ole boogers.

CURLY

We should've stuck around after we hung that hoss thief.

JEB

What fer? He were dead an' no mistake.

CURLY

Interestin' things happen while he's still jiggin' around. 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, the firstest thing that happens is ...(*CURLY whispers in JEB's ear.*)

JEB

Do tell. Can you see it fer a fact?

CURLY

That's not all. The bestest thing that happens is...(*CURLY whispers again.*)

JEB

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

SHERIFF

Scientifical feenominees! 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 that 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!

SHERIFF

That willow tree over yonder looks 'bout right. Here's my rope (SHERIFF *throws them a rope*. JEB & CURLY *exit with* ROSCOE.)

ROSCOE (*Off.*)

But my hoss is Brownie!

JEB (*Off.*)

Har, har! Whitey!

CURLY (*Off.*)

Hold'm, Jeb. I'll throw the rope over...thar she be!

ROSCOE (*Off.*)

BROWNEEEE!