

Oh, Myth...

by Mary Alston Capps

Philip Ahearn woke up in an empty field. Last night had been one hell of a party - he *almost* hooked up with Rosamund - and, at the time, it seemed wiser to crash outside than to drive and really crash. But he wasn't a kid anymore and sleeping on the hard ground, exposed to the elements made him feel like he weighed a thousand pounds when he tried to get up. He dragged himself up on his hands and knees and, although the ground seemed about the right distance away, was a little surprised that he could rise no further.

Then he noticed his hooves.

He immediately felt overwhelmed by vertigo. I must still be drunk, he thought, so he lay back down and closed his eyes. He fell back asleep —the nice way of saying he passed out — and when he woke up, he still felt the inordinate heaviness of his body. But again, he tried to stand up and again, he was relegated to his hands and knees. Wait, make that hands and feet. And he saw hooves again.

Whoa.

Not sure what else to do, Phil decided to head home. He trotted past the copse of trees to the street and saw his car. He went over and nudged the door handle with his muzzle. Well, that was stupid, he said aloud. The sound of own his voice startled him — it sounded similar but throatier. Well, at least he could still talk, even if his classic 1965 Mustang was all but worthless to him now. He wanted to make a joke about horsepower, but his sense of humor was a little frazzled at the moment. And, although he seemed to be handling the whole “I've turned into a horse” thing fairly well, he was not quite prepared for what his reflection in the car window showed him. He looked like a horse, alright — but a horse with a bit of a goatee (which he'd sported for a couple of years — although it never looked like Colonel Sanders' before) and a singular horn spiraling out of his horse's forehead. So he wasn't a horse after all.

He was a unicorn.

And, with that, he decided to head home and further ponder his dilemma.

Of course, he couldn't get into his house and he couldn't call a locksmith — who likely wouldn't open the door to someone's house to a unicorn anyway — so he took a running gallop and leapt over the chainlink fence into the backyard. He was surprised as how easily he cleared it. He was equally surprised at how simple it was, with a horn and a good set of hooves, to break through his dining room window and climb into his house.

But there were one or six other things that weren't quite so easy. Such as convincing his bank that he was, indeed, Philip Ahearn. Or persuading his boss that he actually could still be a damned good reference librarian. She watched him like a hawk for the first couple of weeks, not because she was worried about his work, but because she was certain he was going to crap on the floor. He didn't want to tell her that she should be more worried about his pissing on the floor, because he got far less warning about that than about shitting. But, much to his (and her) surprise, he fell back into his normal work routine pretty quickly. They did get him a touchscreen and a heavy-duty keyboard, upon which he became pretty adept with his horn.

But he noticed his temper was much shorter than it used to be — and it was pretty short before. He worked in a public library, so there were all kinds of customers. No one, not even the regulars, seemed to realize he was the same guy who worked there before. Some were singularly terrified of him and would wait for help until another librarian was free. Some thought it was really cool that there was a unicorn librarian at their library and would wait specifically for him. Some were punkass kids who would wait for him to ask him stupid questions.

“So are you a virgin?”

“It's not unicorns who are virgins, it's the people who hang out with unicorns who are virgins. So here you are hanging out with me — does that make you a virgin, ya little douche?”

His boss glared at him. She'd been doing that a lot lately. He'd be more concerned, but he had a lot more discretionary income these days. He'd sold his house and his precious Mustang, bought a small cabin near the river a few miles out, and had an automatic delivery of oats, hay, and apples set up. Eventually he quit his job and spent all his time roaming his property. The few friends he had stopped coming around. The novelty of having a unicorn for a friend had obviously worn thin — as thin as his temper had gotten, which probably didn't help either.

He wandered out by the river, grazing aimlessly, when he heard splashing in the water. He couldn't see clearly, but his nostrils flared with the scent of a human female. He stood stock still and watched her emerge on the other side of the river. He inhaled deeply and might have actually smiled. Oh yes, definitely a female.

* * *

He was startled awake by a loud thunderclap and cold, cold rain. He was naked, face down in a growing rain puddle. He felt horrible and didn't dare open his eyes, but he knew something had changed. He peered through swollen eyelids and saw his hands. Hands.

Jesus Fucking Christ! It was a dream???

He rolled over, muttering to himself like an old man, and saw her standing about ten feet away. Rosamund. Then he heard her voice, in a reverent whisper:

“Damn, Phil, you are hung like a horse!”

