

Autumn & Tasha

Like many PMU cast-offs, Autumn and Tasha's story starts at a livestock auction where, like the other hundreds of foals, they nervously and quietly waited in their pen unaware that they were about to be bought by the largest kill buyer in Manitoba.

Unlike many of the other foals though, the colt (fawn-coloured) was very small. He had a severe case of diarrhea and seemed disoriented. The horse penned with him (a filly all of 3 months of age herself) was clearly working hard to protect him.

Also as routine practice for auctions, they lied to me about the time that the sickly foals were to go through the auction ring, and I was with a very ill dairy cow in the back stables when the colt and filly were auctioned and bought by Pat Houde. They were put into a pen full of foals of all shapes, sizes and varying levels of healthiness. I knew the small foal would not survive on the feedlot where little is provided for them, not even a roof over their heads although Manitoba winters can plummet to -50°C with windchill. I approached the kill buyer/feedlot operator and eventually he agreed to let me buy them.

After bringing the foals home I soon learned their health was worse than I thought. Both had a bad case of worms and had likely never been de-wormed. Both also had lice and wounds that took months to treat. The colt, who I named Autumn, was diagnosed as blind in one eye. The veterinarian discovered that his left eye socket had been hit with enough force to crush it, blinding him in that eye. Autumn soon developed strangles but thankfully after treatment, recovered well. It appears that Tasha was likely infected at the point of sale though, when a shot of penicillin (routine pre-auction practice in Manitoba) forced the virus to go systemic. Because of it, Tasha's rear fetlocks are swollen and her skin reacts strongly to insect bites.

Although they'd not known much kindness during their formative months, they've done incredibly well. Now 3 years of age Autumn and Tasha have turned into sweet, loving horses. Their farrier loves them and was especially shocked at how calm and content they were as foals saying he'd never worked on two horses in a row that didn't require a halter or lead.

Autumn and Tasha have found a wonderful home where they'll have other horses to play with and less mosquitos to cope with (particularly important for Tasha) but it's in Ontario and they're in Manitoba. Hauling costs are steep so we're putting a plea out to our membership to please consider even a small donation towards their transportation costs. These two have been through so much in their short lives, they deserve a second chance.

Thank you for considering our request!



Foals at auction



Rescued foals



Adult Tasha and Autumn in all their regalness