

# The Trespassing Crew



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# *The Trespassing Crew*



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## Chapter 1

They saw their first cold dark morning together. They rubbed up against each other as they tried to extend their legs. They both noticed a gigantic something sitting next to them. It started licking them and they weren't sure if they liked that. It was cold enough out not to want to be wet in addition. He tried to push himself up on his hind legs to avoid the furious tongue. His legs were shaky and he fell back down on the ground remaining at the tongue's mercy. She tried the same thing with as much success.

"Stay still a minute," said the big tongue licking thing.

"Stop licking me. I'm cold," said the little boy. "Who are you to get so familiar with me?"

"I'm your mother and I can do anything I want. Of course I'll only do things that are for your own good."

"Mother," he thought. "I don't know what that means." He figured he'd find that out some other time. Now, it was more important to escape that tongue. He tried to get up on his legs again, but they seemed too weak to support his minimal weight. When she saw him do it, she tried her legs, with similar results.

"You are brother and sister," the big thing said.

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She said, "Are those our names?"

"No. It just means you two are relatives. I'm a relative too."

Neither of the two shaky-legged ones knew what that meant, either.

The little girl thought of a million questions to ask, but decided to hold them for later.

The little boy was a bit bolder or more vocal and asked, "Then what are our names?"

Tongue Licker realized her answer would be viewed as evasive, but in the long run it would avoid confusion, saying; "You don't have names yet. I could give you names, but they might be changed. Our human protectors will be here soon and they will do that."

The sun started to rise over the mountains on a sub-freezing, November fifteenth morning. The wind was mercifully calm.

Joe and Mary Robie finished their quick breakfast and exited the farmhouse back door. The middle-aged, long married couple were about to begin their daily routine, when they saw the movement under the apple tree.

Joe excitedly said; "Look what happened, Mary. Annabelle must have just had her babies."

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Mary quickened her step and replied; "Let's see."

Joe and Mary raced over to all the activity. They saw Annabelle lying on the cold ground and the two little ones, now shakily standing.

"How beautiful," exclaimed Mary.

"Maybe we'll see their first steps. You check Annabelle and I'll take a look at the little ones."

Mary got on her knees and put her hands on the new mother and told Joe; "She looks fine to me." She softly rubbed Annabelle's neck and mane, smiled into her alert eyes and cheerfully said; "What a good girl."

"The babies are fine, too. It's a little boy and a little girl. What should we name them?" Joe petted them softly, careful not to disturb their precarious balances.

"Well, let me think. .... They must have been born right under this apple tree. So let's call her Apple. You name him."

"How about Pablo?"

"Sounds good to me."

Of course Apple and Pablo had no idea what they were saying. It sounded like a muted series of drumbeats and a constant swoosh to them. The gentle, dry hands were considered an improvement over the wet tongue, but they kept that to themselves. Annabelle understood enough of human speech to tell

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them, "Your names have been given. You are Apple and you are Pablo. That was quick."

They liked their names better than brother and sister. They smiled at each other and felt that their legs were getting a little steadier. "What's your name?"

"Mom. That's what children call their mother."

Pablo tried to walk closer to Mary. His legs started shaking and he fell back down. Apple stayed still, not wanting the same thing to happen to her.

Joe said, "Pablo is a curious boy. He's a good looking horse, too, with those white diamond markings on his little brown head and body."

"Apple is the beautiful one. She's all black, I think, except for the white markings on her hooves, like boots."

Joe moved over to the fallen Pablo and put his right hand on his belly and rubbed it.

"Hey, don't start licking me," cried out Pablo. Joe just heard, "Whinny."

Joe said; "Easy, I won't hurt you little boy. I'm a friend."

Mary chastised Joe, saying; "You're ignoring Apple." Mary walked over to her, petted her head, looked and spoke in her direction, though the words were half directed to her husband; "Look at this proper little girl. She's not the least bit

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reckless. And look at those beautiful eyes," as she held her under the chin. "You're my girl."

Pablo: "What are they saying, Mom?"

Annabelle: "They're saying that they like you two a lot. They speak a strange language. You'll pick up parts of it as time goes by."

Apple: "Can they understand us?"

Mom: "Not at all."

Apple: "Then how do we tell them that we like them, too?"

Annabelle: "You have to show them. You'll learn how."

Pablo: "When?"

Annabelle showed the slightest hint of exasperation: "I don't know. It depends on how smart you are."

Pablo and Apple got quiet. They realized it would take some time to understand what was going on. But, for the moment, they were happy as well as curious.



## Chapter 2

The neighbors started coming out for their morning walks, most with leashed dogs, obediently at their sides. They all stopped to say hello and to look at the two new lives. They unanimously commented on Pablo and Apple's good looks.

Later in the morning the two babies got steadier on their legs and started to explore their new surroundings. They saw that they were in a field of about two acres, bordered on three sides by eight foot adobe walls and on the road side by another eight-foot fence, made of posts and wire. There were a few apple trees, well-spaced-out. There were a number of old outbuildings, with a generally brown color, made of wood probably 20 years ago. They would soon see that they'd be spending a lot of time there and meeting some interesting characters. The first of them was to be Charlie, the chicken. He was technically a rooster, but Charlie always considered himself a chicken, as he would not fight with anyone.

Charlie came up behind them and startled, Pablo and Apple, almost backed into him.

Charlie: with raised voice, "Hey, careful."

Apple: "I'm very sorry, you startled me."

Pablo: "I'm sorry, too. I might have seen you coming if you were bigger. How come you're so small?"

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Charlie: "I don't know. How come you're so big and clumsy on top of that?"

Apple: "Gee, I never thought about it that way. I don't know why I'm so big. I thought Pablo and I were small, because Mom is much bigger. As to clumsy, maybe it's because we haven't been on our legs very long yet, but I'm just guessing."

Charlie: "Please be careful. You could kill me if you accidentally kick me."

Pablo: "I'll be very careful, but try not to sneak up on us."

Charlie: "I know the safest thing. How about, if I hopped up on your back? This way I can be away from your legs." With that Charlie half jumped and half flew onto Apple's back.

Apple was somewhat startled. Charlie stepped on Apple's long white mane, causing her some discomfort. She shook her head and said; "Watch it."

Charlie stepped back and said; "So sorry."

Since Charlie didn't weigh much, Apple kept her balance, laughed and said; "That feels funny, with you walking around up there, but I like it."

Charlie: "Take me for a ride. I like the view from up here."

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Apple walked as best she could through an open area leading to the wire fence. Pablo followed and they told each other their names.

Charlie excitedly said; "Stop, stop."

Apple incredulously said; "Why?"

Charlie: "You can't go through that fence."

Apple: "I wasn't planning on it. But, now that you mention it, why not?"

Charlie: "First of all, you can't go through it. You'll just get all tangled up. And secondly, you don't want to go out there. People get all weird when an animal gets on their property and worse, cars sometimes drive very fast down this road and if you meet one of those it could be the end for all of us."

Pablo: "I understand. But what exactly do you mean "animal"?"

Charlie: "That's pretty much what everything not human is called. Well, there are also things called insects, fish and plants. But, we've all got one thing in common. We have to make sure we stay out of the human's way and try not to annoy them too much."

Pablo and Apple really didn't understand what Charlie was saying, but got the general idea. Joe, Mary and the morning callers seemed nice enough. Weren't they human? They thought

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it best to learn some things for themselves, but were already smart enough not to say so.

Next they met Gunther and Hilda, two four year old mostly black pygmy goats. They did have a few white markings.

With an accent different than they had yet heard Gunther greeted them with a direct; "New around here, huh?"

Pablo: "Very new. We haven't even been to the other side of the farm yet."

Hilda, sounding similar to Gunther said; "Yavol!! C'mon, follow us; we're taking our morning walk."

Pablo and Apple, with Charlie still on her back, followed the two. Gunther and Hilda led them through the largest outbuilding, as this was the quickest way to the other side. The goats walked fast with their strange hopping sort of gait, but Pablo and Apple caught short glimpses of others around. Most were just rousing to greet the new day. The five travelers were soon next to an eight foot wall, with stucco over the adobe, the same color as the house, a light brown.

Apple: "Already."

Gunther: "Yeah, this is the end."

Pablo: "That's kind of quick. What's on the other side?"

Hilda: "I really don't know. I hear cars there pretty regularly. Sometimes I hear human voices."

Apple: "Are we not allowed on the other side?"

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Hilda: "No, we're not. It's mostly private property. Besides, you don't want to get hit by a car."

Apple: "I keep hearing about private property. It must be a big deal. Tell me, if a rider taller than Charlie rode me, couldn't he see over the top."

Gunther: "Sure, you can look all you want. Trespassing is another matter."

Charlie: "Are you making fun of me already, I know I'm just a little chicken."

Apple: "I wasn't making fun. I was just being curious, you know. Some animals are bigger than chickens, like Gunther and Hilda."

Gunther: "But, I can't hop up on you."

Apple: "I can lie on the ground and you can get on my back. Then, I'll stand up."

Gunther: "I weigh more than you do now. When you get bigger it's possible, but it would be hard for me to keep my balance."

Apple: "Well, you're welcome to try when I'm big enough. But, won't you get bigger, too?"

Gunther laughed and said; "If I grow any more now it'll be in my stomach only. I can get big and fat, if I wanted. But, I'm considered full sized now."

Pablo: "When did you stop growing?"

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Gunther: "When I was about two years old. I'm four, now. It should be about the same for you."

They all turned their heads toward the barn, where they heard many strange noises.

Charlie: "Feeding time. Take me back there."

They all turned and walked as quickly as possible to the barn, where they saw Joe and Mary dropping bales of hay in various places. Mary was also throwing corn on the wooden barn floor for Charlene the chicken, Charlie's wife. Joe put some kind of slop into metal dishes and Dominick and Vanessa, put their faces in them quickly. Dominick was a light brown pug and Vanessa was a striking Dalmatian, with brilliant white fur, interspersed with jet black spots.

Charlie jumped off Apple's back and quickly scurried on foot toward the corn, exclaiming; "Charlene, leave some for me."

Charlene wouldn't stop eating, so didn't reply. Charlie started eating furiously. Everybody forgot about Pablo and Apple.

Annabelle was standing tall, fully displaying her tan body and called out to her babies; "Get over here and try some of this hay."

Pablo and Apple walked over, as quickly as their new legs allowed and gave it a shot, copying what their mother was doing.

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Apple put her snout in the yellow-brown meal, made a grimacing face, recoiled, looked up at her mother and questioningly said; "I don't like this."

Annabelle momentarily giggled, shook her medium length black mane, then got serious and said; "It's good for you. It's a bit of an acquired taste."

Apple tried again and while she was not eager, she shortly felt no compulsion to recoil.

Pablo dived in face first, worked at the hunger quenching conglomeration of fuzzy nourishment and exclaimed; "I think it's great." He kept eating and got a second thought, saying; "I do wish it was a bit less dry."

Annabelle replied; "Just keep at it."

Pablo had thus far always obeyed his Mom and this proved to be evidence of having a good reason to continue to do so."

Everyone ate until all the food was gone. When finished, Pablo and Apple started looking around and they saw Efscot and Zelda, two horses the approximate size of their Mom, Annabelle. They were actually a bit taller and longer than Annabelle, but appeared the same to the new untrained eyes. They were thin and somewhat dignified. Zelda was a mixture of cream and light gray with a long black mane, while Efscot appeared more subtle, completely dark gray with a short white mane. However, they

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were inside stalls and weren't coming out because the doors were closed and dead bolted.

Apple: "Can't they come out here?"

Annabelle: "Not right now. In fact, not most of the time. .... Sometimes they do."

Pablo: "Well, their doors are closed. They couldn't come out if they wanted to."

Annabelle: "I can't quite explain it. Most of the time the doors are shut, but sometimes they are open. Joe and Mary do it whenever they feel like it. I think Efscot and Zelda are a little different from us. They are owned by humans, other than Joe and Mary. The owners come over and take a ride on them sometimes. They just reside here."

Apple: "Owned?"

Annabelle; "Yes, owned."

Pablo: "That doesn't sound right."

Annabelle: "You're a bit too young to understand. Excepting a few, animals, just like houses and cars, are owned by humans. Some, like Joe and Mary, are very good to us and things work out. Some are out and out cruel to animals and then things don't work out. Some are somewhere in-between like the owners of Efscot and Zelda."

Apple: "We just reside here, too, right?"



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Annabelle: "I told you that I really can't explain it. One thing that seems certain to me is that their owners don't want them mingling with us too much."

Pablo: "Why?"

Annabelle brayed in frustration and loudly said; "You guys are driving me crazy. You two were just born today. Don't expect to learn everything so quickly. I really don't know the answer. Maybe you two will figure it out some day."

Pablo and Apple were finished eating and they instinctively walked over to a trough of water and started drinking. They then walked over to the closed stalls.

Pablo: "Hi. I'm Pablo and this is my sister, Apple."

Efscot: "I'm Efscot and this is my wife, Zelda. You're probably wondering why we're in here and you're out there."

Apple: "Most certainly."

Zelda: "Humans are very weird. The people who own Efscot and me want it this way. They're supposedly sheltering us from the riff raff."

Pablo: "What's riff raff?"

Efscot: "Let me interject. I have a better way with words than Zelda."

Zelda: "You learned plenty from me."

Efscot: "Nonetheless, I am going to try not to confuse the babies. When Zelda said "riff raff" she really didn't mean

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