

My Best Teacher, Khrumpet

By Karen Scholl

If we are lucky, a very special horse can come into our life that opens up a whole new world. That horse for me was Khrumpet, a son and perfect image of the magnificent Khemosabi.

Before Khrumpet, my experience was with Quarter Horses types, and I had heard all the negative comments about those “crazy” Arabians. But when I saw this elegant Arabian come into the sale ring at a Quarter Horse auction, my heart jumped a beat! His big, dark eyes seemed to take in everything all at once, and he impressed me as being very wise and thoughtful with terrific conformation, great legs and feet.

Something took over and I found myself the excited new owner of an Arabian horse, something that I had not even considered until I saw Khrumpet—it was love at first sight! At that time I had been studying the Parelli Natural Horsemanship program for about a year. My other horses had responded quite well, but when I used the techniques on this little Arab, well, I felt like I was driving a Ferrari for the first time!

Because this approach was different than what Khrumpet had known in past training, you could actually watch his expressions change as he very quickly processed the new information. I discovered an even deeper meaning to the term, “set it up and wait” as Khrumpet needed only a suggestion from me and he would try his heart out to respond correctly. If he gave the wrong answer, I would simply maintain the same amount of pressure until he found the correct answer then release.

Very quickly he understood and enjoyed the “game”—to search for the release the moment something begins to change. Khrumpet’s responses taught me an extreme new level of lightness and improved the timing of my release immensely. When my timing was off, I knew it right away and learned to adjust my approach to become even more effective with this very sensitive horse.

Once I reached his mind and heart, we developed a very special relationship, and felt like I could go anywhere and do anything with Khrumpet as my willing partner. I experienced moments of a feeling that is described as “true unity,” where his feet felt like my feet. It’s an incredible experience, one that is very addicting once you feel it!

Khrumpet became the type of horse that would go as fast as you want or as slow as you want. He would stop on a dime without touching the reins and follow me everywhere around the ranch without a halter. We played with cattle, jumping, reining maneuvers, dressage and rode hundreds of miles in the high mountain wilderness of southern Colorado.

Riding without a bridle became common as Khrumpet learned to respond when I used only my seat and legs. There was a time when it would have been difficult to believe that an Arabian would even be capable of this, but here we were!

Progressing into Level 3 with Khrumpet in Parelli’s program and becoming a Parelli Instructor in 1995, Khrumpet became a wonderful teaching partner for me at workshops and clinics. Now in his 20s, Khrumpet is semi-retired and lives with his best friends Dajen and Lady Zip with a wonderful family who is learning natural horsemanship. Khrumpet absolutely adores young Alana and follows her everywhere around the paddock. I am thrilled to think of the skills he will teach Alana and all the horses she will help in her lifetime because of this special and generous teacher, Khrumpet.

Considering all I would have missed out on had I not looked beyond my limited view of horse types, I am truly thankful and humbled for having such a special horse in my life, one that I used to think I was training, when in fact he was the one training me!