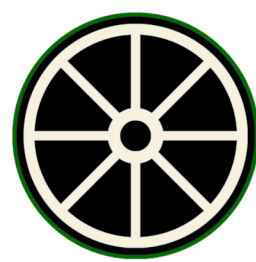
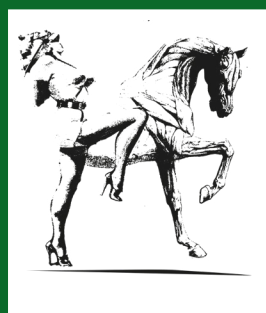


Tall Tails Gazette



Saturday August 21 2021 | No. 8

A Tricky Insights Special by Tricky Trouble.



Special Report Part Five: The Old Pony.



Rebels Secret safe cracked by Ponifia Member!



The infamous safe in the Rebels Lair. [Photo: Camilla]

Rebels not-so secret lair was revealed in Issue 6 of the gazette where it was reported that a "...treasure trove of riches lie within... baskets of the finest apples and bottle upon bottle of the finest apple cider are all stashed there". Various puzzles have to be solved to break into the lair, try to win a bottle of the cider and to evade the various traps. But standing quietly and proudly in the corner of the room lies an unassuming locked safe.

An unidentified member of Ponifia has solved the puzzles and cracked the safe secret code. It is understood that something was found inside. The person who broke in, details of what the note said and how they solved the puzzles are all still shrouded in secrecy. Upon reading the note and absorbing the information like a wet sponge, the safe cracker promptly closed and locked the door again.

What was found inside the safe? Does it contain the infamous Rebel pin?

Citizens of Tall tails... it can be done! Venture forth yourself and see if you too can learn the secrets of the Rebels lair!

-Devi

OMG its Fleur!

It seems that with Axelle away on holidays, the infamous Fleur has picked this moment to return to Tall Tails!

Rumour has it that Axelles yacht is not longer in the harbour so one can assume she is off sailing the seas for a well earned break.

-Devi



Fleur returns! [Photo: Fleur]

Part 5 - The Old Pony

The old pony is the complete opposite of the newbie pony. Inexperienced trainers, may sometimes be a bit intimidated by the old ponies because they have an aura of experience even if they do not say anything specifically to the trainer.

There is nothing wrong about learning from a pony, but you have to be careful that the pony is not topping you. Of course the method to prevent this depends on the type of pony you are dealing with. The important note for the trainer is that this "aura of experience" must be somehow ignored for couple of reasons. First of all, this issue may not even be in the pony's mind and they are just looking forward to a fun training session with you.

So avoid being too nervous to grab an experienced pony - you could both be missing out on a fun session. The advice for the experienced pony is to be patient and respectful. Not all trainers are super confident and dominant - but they have formally qualified to the rank and deserve respect. Second of all, the pony may have their own well established vision of ponyplay and you need to separate fact from opinion. The facts are to learn, opinions are personal interpretation.

If the experienced pony can't be polite and respectful to the trainer then this will not be an enjoyable session for either. The trainer would be unlikely to relax into the session and innovate to create a fresh and fun training experience. This will be a loss for the both the trainer and the experienced pony.

-Tricky

Tessa & Aida grab Bronze!



Our Tessa on the podium. [Photo: Devi]

Congratulations to Pony Tessa and Trainer Aida who grabbed third place at the flower competition held at sNr stables on 31st July.

Jolie and Amber also did us proud grabbing forth place! Our very own green monster, Axelle, represented TT at the event as a wonder judge!

Well done to everyone!

-Devi



Berry with her wonderful Chicken Cart. [Photo: Devi]

Don't Unmare Mares

It is not appropriate to engage in long meaningful conversations with Mares. You can talk to them but you won't get a better answer or even understanding than you would from your dog.

However, sometimes a trainer needs to have a mare understand the human words such as for a training session. The worst thing that can be done to achieve that is to unmare the mare and then to forget to mare her again.

Well first of all, don't forget that a mare can understand all emotes and a large number of pre-set words. So it's possible to conduct a whole training session without turning off their mare hearing, assuming they have already been trained in the given discipline.

So what can be done (in order of preference) to address this:

1. Use ** surrounding. Mares can understand everything that is inside the stars. e.g. *Please turn off your AO*
2. Go to "shortcuts" and choose "training" or other pre-set like "lesson" - this way you don't change a present and the restrictions will be reapplied later. (The pre-set function is currently only available to trainers and not grooms, but this is going to be discussed).
3. Go to "hearing" or "RLV" and lift the restrictions you need to be lifted.

Now obviously for a workshop or seminar it is better to use option 2 or 3 so they can fully participate.

Remember, even if you want to be 'kind' to a mare, they are mared for a reason. They feel safe and more comfortable without their senses. Be gentle to them and maintain their restrictions - they are there for a good reason.

- Tricky

A Tricky Insights Special: How to Win Friends and Influence Trainers

In this extended article, Tricky explains some interesting and thought-provoking insights into human and group behaviour that impact the way we are seen and treated by others.

Have you ever asked yourself a question, why some people are so popular from their first day at a new sim while some don't feel part of a community even after weeks of trying? Especially when everyone starts on the same blank page and are equally cute. What causes staff to orbit around some ponies and avoid others?

TL;DR . Its comes down to just two simple things. Try to understand the trainers and cut them some slack.

We can choose to read this advice and see if it works for us, or pick the easy way out which is to blame ourselves or others. Just remember, before things get better, sometimes they have to get worse.

This advice is not necessarily going to provide much comfort - it is honest and brutal – but aims to give us some practical advice we can use, but this may shake some worlds a little.

Some of these points may seem to be irrelevant but at the end of day, every seemingly small thing contributes towards an overall impression of us, seen through others eyes.

You may have noticed that some people are like suns, and others orbit around them. If they are missing, everything collapses. But remember: those that orbit may create their own orbits too. Are you one that only orbits? If the answer is yes, it might be why you feel alone. If we want to have others orbit around us then we need to be magnetic, not pushy. Unfortunately, one must give more than they get.

- Stand up!

A trainer's mentality and experience tell them that a pony sitting is a pony afk or busy. If willing and available, don't sit, even if in your stall, on a roof or in a bar with people around you. If we sit, we rule ourselves out with our body language.

- Don't wait for a trainer to arrive before you stand up

The most active trainers cam the ponies before they approach a stable to see who needs handling. If we are sitting we will most likely be ignored.

- Curtsy

Just because we are standing doesn't mean we are not afk. A curtsy to staff shows we are available, responsive and its respectful. Some may even wait for your curtsy for confirmation we are available. If we don't, they may just leave us without a word.

- Don't give up too soon

Very often I was planning to do something with



a pony that approached me, but I was finishing a conversation or something else I was doing but in the meantime the pony left.

- Be reactive

If a trainer says something or does something, react. It may be just a whinny, anything. It's like saying "mhm" during a monolog. Participate in active listening - show we are engaged.

- Be cooperative

Perhaps we are waiting for a trainer to grab us and when a trainer comes and takes us, they also take the five other ponies around us. Remember, its not just us keen and excited to be grabbed by a trainer.

Remember, the trainer has decided to dedicate some of their time to work - to entertain and stimulate stable ponies. If we show gratitude and patience, we are more likely to have a good session with this trainer in future, perhaps 1:1.

A 1:1 session provides an opportunity for a focused chat. If we show disappointment or snap, the trainer will probably try and avoid us next time and that opprtunity is lost.

- Don't run around

Well, we can. But mind that if we run around in the trainers' proximity we look like we are frustrated and trying to steal attention. It doesn't matter if it's not our intention, that's what it looks like. The result will be that the trainers will try to avoid us.

- Don't heel uninvited

This looks like a pony trying to force a trainer to handle them, while the trainer may just be passing through.

- Your stall is your sweet home

Most ponies don't enjoy being stalled and their first goal once logged in is usually to be unleashed and let out the stall. That's a mistake. Patience is your friend here.

It depends on the sim, but if you are in an active stable, then those waiting in the stall will get preferential treatment. If trainers see a roaming pony they may assume she doesn't need anything. If they see a stalled pony, they are more likely to approach it. Funny fact here, sometimes the mares

have it easier because in the trainers mind, a stalled mare needs be handled. Unless you are in a sim where the ponies are stalled forever and that's all.

- Have things available

It's simple, if I can't grab you, I won't. This is particularly the case with guest ponies that are stored by their owners. This kind of pony is the most ignored. The best way to fix it is to persuade your owner to become active within the community.

- Don't dive too deep in the beginning

The thought of being a full-time mare with all the restrictions is exciting but if you can barely communicate, you won't make any friends and friends are crucial as a mare because you are completely dependant on others. Don't expect that people will just come to work with a pony they don't know even if you are a full stable member. Take it easy at first, and use your time to get to properly know at least one or more people. Remember that the early days are the most exciting. You have found a fun community and you had a great time for a week. But this might not the right time to take a full leap into ponyplay. Make a more informed and considered decision when you are truly committed and ready.

- Leave if you don't like it

It doesn't make sense to stay in the community just because you have nowhere else to go. It makes sense only if you like the community and want to contribute to help build and enhance it further. We can enhance the community in many different ways, not just with building and scripting. We should work to our strengths. Otherwise, we will be annoyed and annoying.

- Helping out

Nothing works better. If people see somebody helping, being involved and active it is natural to be drawn towards that person (unless the person doesn't meet some personal preferences). A switch that grooms and takes care of ponies is more likely to be grabbed when they themselves are a pony. Most the staff at TT are switches. Members don't just look to see if they can have fun with us as a pony, but also as a groom. One of the biggest concerns of the active trainers is that if they switch to pony... a stable won't have any trainers anymore, only ponies.

Advertisement



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- Suggest, not criticise

Especially in our first days, try to avoid a situation where we tell others what they should do as they will probably look at each other wondering who we are. Saying: "Oh I find this place awesome" before we suggest changes, works wonders. After all, we all want good. Nobody wants bad.

- Be like a game

If we are ugly, people don't like to look at us and SL is very visual thing, so we need to look good one way or another. However, looking good is not enough. We are like a picture. People like it but then they get used to it after some time. A picture is not interactive. If we look good, we might be nice to look at but not necessarily fun to play with. If we want people to play with us, we must be like a game - interactive, with a storyline, good graphics and playable.

- Find a playmate

Waiting in a stall is far better if we are waiting for a particular person. If we wait for just anyone, its most likely we will end up frustrated, unless you don't mind the long wait. Even in a stable when basically people play in a group it's common that people have their own circles of friendship. It's not a stable issue, just like in real life some people will like us, some less so.

- Don't try to target everyone

Not everyone shares our kinks, not everyone necessarily likes our personality. Not because of us but because of their own preferences. If someone likes silence then they won't like noisy people. If someone likes stimulation then they won't like quiet and passive people. Some may not like us because of their own preferences. It's proven that people who express specific preferences will find a smaller group that accepts them. On the other hand, if we are vague about our preferences, then we will find a wider group, but we will not be special in that group. So to stand out, we need to be specific about our preferences and accept that the group of people that accept us will shrink.

I can be mouthy, cruel, mean and sometimes even rude and treat animals like dirt. I probably repel at least half of the ponies in SL with my style! But also, those that share my specific kinks adore me more. So, accept that not everyone will love you and it really isn't personal, its just the way of the world.

- Mind what the trainers are doing

It's a sin of many ponies and usually ends in frustration. If we see a trainer is busy, we can approach of course, but shouldn't expect to be handled right away. If the trainers are in the middle of conversation or they are doing something with another pony one to one, don't expect them to immediately drop that to play with us.

- Mind where the trainers are

This is especially important to trainers that have their homes on a sim. All trainers have their safe, quiet spots. Sometimes they change clothes or browse marketplace or deal with something in IMs or they are simply afk. If they are in a such spot, don't approach them with the IM's or go to them unless you are sure you know what you are doing.

- Mind that trainers may be tired

Indeed and they still log into SL. They still, like us, want to be around people but they might not want to be pulled into work. We can approach them but lower our expectations. Most likely being taken on a leash is the most we can expect.

- Mind that trainers may have their own issues

This is something that almost no pony takes into account. Ponies are very often those that are allowed to have issues and should be comforted and trainers are those that should comfort. Very often it could be the other way around. Maybe we could try to comfort them?

- Lower your expectations

Very lame advice, I know. However, note the previous points. Remember, the trainers are same people like you. They may feel alone or be sad or angry. They may be working on something and have their mind elsewhere. They have SL and RL issues. They have own kinks after all that may not be being fulfilled. Maybe they are currently struggling with something. Just be cool, patient and understanding.

- Be supportive

I can't count how many times I stopped midway travelling between my house and a stable and thought: "No I have no energy for this today". Then I logged off.

Note that some trainers may try very hard to give all the ponies what they want, then they burn out and then they can't do it anymore.

Instead of just relying on their supposed 'infinite energy' we can help try to recharge them. Learn what they like, be fun and give them a reason to invest time in us.

This is probably the most important advice I can give. The trainers are here to have fun. If they get work instead all the time they will just fade away and sooner or later leave completely. We don't want that, right? Instead, we would like a trainer to come to us, even look for us when they log in. This is the strength of giving trainers pleasure. Trainers that think we have expectations of them will avoid us. Trainers that know that they will be excited with us, will look for us. Let the trainers know, that everything is ok, they are cool, we are fine and if needed we can take care of ourself or even help them. Such subs are blessing.



Choo takes in the View [Photo: Choo]

- Change perspective

Be a groom or trainer. Get this experience. Try to be the trainer we expect others to be. You think it's hard because it's not for you? No, no, no. It's hard because it's hard. Very often we say that the best trainers are those with pony experience, because they know how the pony feels. Too rarely we say that the best ponies are those with groom/trainer experience, because they are more understanding.

- Being shy is not a problem

It's the most common excuse. Being shy is even given as reason that the others should try more, i.e. "I am shy, so it's your job to get to me." However, I know many shy and introverted people that are surrounded by the others and loved by the

community. This leads to a simple conclusion, being shy is not a problem. What's more, we can forge it into a weapon. Why? Some trainers love the shy ponies. They seem to be more authentic in their reactions and giving them hard time is more amusing. Assuming that you like having a hard time of course...

- Speak well of the trainers

Note that people like those that like them and don't like those that don't like them. Never assume that our criticism that we shared with someone else will never come to the ears of the criticised trainer. If we spread rumours and bad words around people, don't be surprised when they start to avoid us. On the other hand, if we speak well of others, our kind words start to spread and if a trainer learns we like them, they are more likely to approach us.

- Be friendly and thankful

It's simple thing and I did not realise its power, but when I finish a training some ponies thank me in IM's. Part of me thinks: "yeah, whatever", another part: "shush, I don't talk with ponies", but a part of me really likes to hear this and I start to like the pony a little bit more. Guess which pony I will be keen to approach in future. Being thankful shows that we respect the time that trainer gave to us. Being friendly makes them more likely to orbit more around us.

- Give our idols some space

They are usually amazing people, otherwise they would not be the idols. Others orbit around them and love them, and it's not surprising we would like our idols to notice us. Very often ponies say they are alone, not because nobody plays with them but because their idols don't give them enough attention.

The secret about idols is: very often they are more alone than you. Being an idol means that nobody cares what you need, but everybody wants something from you. Love stories involving idols often ends with someone killing the idol because the idol ignored them once, then they spent a couple of years with a master plan how to hurt the idol. Note, your idol may have many people willing to hurt them and it may be you as well. You must accept that you can't be the best friend of someone in the first week you met them. Your idol already has friends. If you really want to be their friend, you must be patient. You must accept that the idols give themselves to the others and they probably will never give themselves fully to you. In the beginning they may not even know your name.

- Ignore those negative thoughts

Imagine you are standing in your stall and others are having fun around you. Noone even noticed you... They must hate you, or at least they don't care about you. Well, the real reason is usually that you were simply overlooked and it's a simple accident.

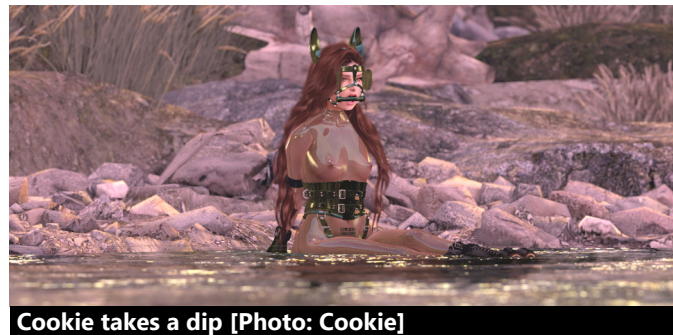
If we listen to these thoughts we will fall into a classic trap. We start to look for the proof these words are true. Guess what. Our brains are brilliant. We will find the proof. We will create our own world where we are the victim. We start to orbit around the other victims and instead of having fun, we might start to comfort each other and start rumours against the "bad world and lazy trainers". Together we will find more proof, we will convince each other that what we think is true. Look... we could just say: "Hey, I am here, can I join?" at the very beginning to avoid all of it.

- Sometimes it's too late

If we are too deep in our world where all trainers ignore us and we are feeling the victim, it may be too late to do anything to help. We already believe too much in our own misery and probably annoyed everyone around us making the misery real. Still, there is a way out, but it may seem a bit radical. Take a break. Leave SL for a month or two. Change sim. Change avatar. Sometimes you must abandon part of yourself to be healthy again.

- Sometimes nothing can be done

Hopefully its not relevant in your case but sadly some people may need real help in RL. We can't find it here in SL because people in SL are not here to help us, or even if they want to help us, they are not specialists and may make things worse, or even if they are specialists in RL, certainly they don't have enough knowledge to help us in SL. If they claim they have, it's even one more reason to avoid them. We don't have enough research about SL or any virtual reality to be the experts here. So, leave SL and find help in RL, don't look for it here. SL can't be this kind of escape from reality.



Cookie takes a dip [Photo: Cookie]

I don't want to finish with a pessimistic conclusion. I don't want you to think that you need RL help if you struggle to fit in. However, it was important to raise this. It's important because a happy life may depend on it. As you managed to get this far with my article I want to reward you with some detail about me.

All that I said, I said not only from my observations but also from experience. I am very needy person, and it's often a good quality of a trainer, but unfortunately I am needy as a pony too. So, I can say: "been there, done that". I was at the point I needed to abandon my account to find a balance and believe me I understand – don't think you are alone. Maybe you just are, maybe you just sit in your room complaining that nobody comes in because nobody knows you are there. I was the one with plenty of expectations thinking that I give so much and get nothing back. I am now one of those that makes my own orbits. Things change when you stop waiting for someone to care about you but you start to care about the others. I can only say, I wish you that. And if you do that, you will find your way with many lonely ponies with many expectations of what you will do with them.

What will you tell them?

-Tricky

[Thank you to Cookie and Shoo for their lovely pictures I used to add colour to this article].



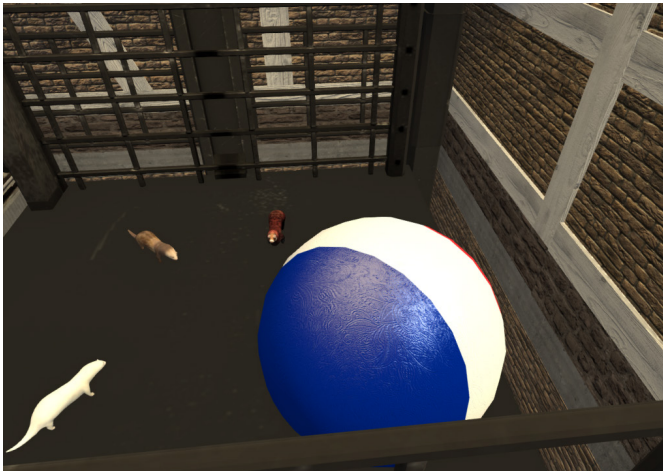
The Stoats having a Ball... by Shard.



1. Late at night, down in the quiet darkness of the tunnels beneath Tall Tails, the resident mouser makes an unusual discovery and is soon joined by the other resident furry denizens of the Meadows as they puzzle over this mysterious ball...



2. Joined by yet more friends, the Stoats determine that this is a Pepsi-ball!



3. Determined to free the Pepsi-ball the Stoats work together to get it up topside and push it along through the stables...



4. The Pepsi-ball journey continues its journey nudged along by the determined Stoats....



5. The Stoats have seen the ponies playing with these balls in the field so decide to try the fun for themselves. Not knowing any of the rules doesn't dissuade the Stoats who are determined to use the Pepsi-ball for their new sportsball game: Stoatball!



6. Stoat lore tells of other creatures that lurk deep in the shadowy woods of the Meadow, only to be scoffed at as rumors by ponykind! But here one of the legendary creatures has come to join the Stoats at their new game!



7. The Pespi-ball is heavy and so the Stoats decide to partake of another post-sportsball ritual like the pony-humans do...



8. ...Drinking!



9. Frosty beverages are enjoyed by all!



10. Maybe a bit too much... those Stoat Stouts pack a wallop!