



## **The birth of the seahorse**

Many fabulous stories have been written. Some are so ancient that time has stored them in people's memories like a pile of old papers.

But among all that paper, there is one ancient legend that we should always remember. A legend that tells of how thousands and thousands of years ago, in an unknown place on earth, a fabulous, supernatural event occurred: the birth of the seahorse.

Don't ask me where it happened because little is known about it. I can only tell you that it was a country full of craggy mountains. But we don't know if the climate was hot or cold, if the land was green or parched, or what kind of trees grew there.

But it doesn't matter, girls and boys, the fact is that two magnificent wild horses ran freely through the hills and valleys.

They were two majestic purebreds. Nimble and fast as the wind, with strong, muscular legs and long, thick tails that were never still.

The two horses spent all day trotting and prancing about, as they raced each other and ran from one place to the next.

But one day, they heard the hair-raising growls of a pack of wild beasts. Their fine sense of hearing never misled them. And as it turned out, the terrifying growls came from a pack of hounds running towards them at full speed.

The two horses realized immediately that the dogs wanted to eat them alive. They froze in fear and were so bewildered they didn't know which way to run. And not until they saw the first dog closing in on them did they break into a run and took off in any direction.

One, two, three... My goodness! They were being chased by a whole pack of mad dogs that were growling and baring their teeth.

Totally confused, the horses took the worst possible road: the one that led to the top of the cliffs.

They soon realized that the path led to the sea - they were trapped with nowhere to go!

They ran and ran. They ran so fast that they reached the cliff in no time. They either had to stop short or they wouldn't have enough time and they'd run right over the precipice.

They had to make a choice-they could either let themselves be devoured alive or they could jump over the edge. So the horses decided to jump.

Neither of the two stopped running or looked back. Neither of them hesitated an instant... they knew they were better off jumping. At least by jumping they had a slim chance of survival

The option was to be devoured by the mad pack of hounds.

How valiant those horses were! Both of them ran as fast as they could and took a flying leap as they neighed for what might be the last time.

The horses flew for a long time. When they started falling, their tails and legs stretched out for balance and to try and soften the blow.

But even so, when they hit the water the impact was so brutal that the horses were dazed and started sinking to the bottom of the sea.

Then suddenly, something wonderful happened. As the horses started passing into the next world, as they were about to drown to death, a magical transformation started to occur. Suddenly, they were able to breathe underwater. Their back legs joined together and turned into a tail covered with scales while their front legs became smaller and smaller and turned into fins.

The fish that were swimming by were amazed when they saw the two magnificent purebreds transform into seahorses.

The legend ends by explaining that the dogs went hungry because they didn't have the courage to jump into the bottom of the sea.

*Script: J.M. Hernández Ripoll*

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