

Isabella-Juliette: My Life as a Carousel Horse

It is a cold Monday morning. I hear the grumble of an old engine. I see horses being loaded onto a truck. I smell a faint trail of popcorn. My name is Isabella-Juliette and I am a Carousel horse. This is my story.

June 5th, 1904

"Mama, look at her!" Those were the first words I heard when I was made. I was made out of quality Birch wood and lacquered with fine coatings. My maker was Claude DeLong, who was a master Swedish carver. He had been asked to make horses for a carousel in the Bronx. He lived in New York City with his wife Kathryn and children Edward, Maria, and Chloe. Chloe was the first one to admire me when her father finished. I met several other horses on my journey to the carousel, but my best pal was Elizabeth, a white stallion with brown dots. I would have to know what to do without her soon.

September 8th, 1904

I was installed into the Lincoln Carousel a few months after I was made. I was overjoyed to gallop and leap over and over again. I was placed next to a brown horse named Marigold. She was kind, but her attitude showed once in a while. My other companion, Patricia-Lane was arrogant and bossy. When she laughed at my hair and saddle during our rides, I would burst with anger, which made me want to gallop faster. At last I was calm when the carousel made a complete stop. Many silent years passed as I galloped away for little children.

July 28th, 1914

Suddenly, the silence was broken by the cry, "Extra, extra, read all about it, World War One has begun!" Almost immediately, children ceased to climb up on my saddle. Once in a while, the occasional child would come with his miserable mother whose husband had been wounded at war. Chloe came to visit me every month, but that was hardly ever. The operators of the carousel, Mr. and Mrs. Pierce, covered us up and left us for the war times. I fell into a deep sleep along with all my fellow horses.

October 21, 1920

The war was now over, and the Pierces took off our cover. A mass of excited children poured into the gates, as if they had not ever ridden us. But sadly, Elizabeth was injured amidst the craziness. Her left hoof fell off, which caused her to injure a young child two years of age. The Pierce Family sorrowfully gave Elizabeth away to the waste center. It was a devastating ending to my friend.

March 3rd, 1964

Many dull years had passed since Elizabeth had left. I was fifty years old. My paint had faded. One boy had written on me, "Franklin wuz here." You could see many other horses' lifeless faces as they circled around and around, over and over again. World War II had passed, and many families had moved south or west, out of the Bronx neighborhood. Chloe was now 60, a grandmother of 7. She brought them to me to show them how beautiful I was. Patricia-Lane was gone, and had been replaced by Melinda, a quiet horse who hardly spoke to me. Modern times were coming, and style was changing. People didn't wear stockings and petticoats anymore. They started to wear mini skirts and boots. I would never adjust to this style.

April 25th, 1988

The Pierces had been gone for a while. A new operator came to the carousel. His name was Glenn Woodson. He was a plump, rich man who longed to own millions of dollars. He hired workers that didn't focus on the horses. Many of them got all dirty and some had to be removed. The New York City government contacted Mr. Woodson and politely asked him to leave the carousel to them. Mr. Woodson agreed. The Lincoln Carousel was ours!

November 19th, 2000

After many good years with the government, all the horses were joyful and proud. We had traveled many miles together. Many kids, as they were now called, begged their parents if they could go for a ride. One of them in particular, was named Claire. Her mother's face looked familiar, but I did not know how. "Can I go on that one, Mom?" she asked. "Of course," she replied. It was just then that I realized that this was Chloe's great-granddaughter. I was so excited and surprised that I decided to do my best on this special ride.

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So now I am being loaded onto a Museum truck that will take me to a special carousel exhibit. I am excited to tell the world my unique story.