



## The First Time I Jumped from a Canter

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I was at summer camp on a hot summer day, and two other girls and I were in a lesson. I was riding my favorite horse, Casey, a paint Quarter Horse mare. It was just a simple lesson, and I had no idea that I would be jumping. I was just trotting and didn't expect the lesson to get any more interesting than it was. Then I saw the teacher setting up the jump while I was trotting, and I kept Casey trotting at a cool pace even as I passed it. Then the teacher slowed us to a walk and called the rest of the girls and me into the center of the ring. She explained to us that we would pick up a trot and go around the jump, and then go to the canter and jump it.

The other girls went before me. I had rarely ever seen anyone jump before, and it looked like a lot of fun. I was getting very excited to try it, and I could feel that Casey was too, considering that she was having a hard time just standing still in the center, and I had to keep a tight grip on the reins to keep her standing. Then it was our turn. It seemed as though Casey knew exactly what she was supposed to do, and she picked up a trot without even having to ask. Her trot was faster than usual and I could tell that she was getting electrified to jump. We trotted past the jump once, then she picked up a canter. The rhythm of her canter was smooth, and when we came around to the jump she got a sudden burst of energy. Her muscles tensed and then her feet lifted off the ground. Even though it only lasted for a second, it seemed like time had stopped. It felt like Casey was suspended by trapeze ropes in the air. It felt great to be in the air on the back of my favorite horse for those few precious moments. When Casey's feet finally touched the ground it still didn't feel like it was over. I tried trotting her, but she wanted to try again, and so did I. But I had to stop jumping for the day. So I slowed Casey to a trot and eventually a walk. When we returned to the middle, I gave her a big pat. Casey snorted with glee, as if she was happy that she cleared the jump. It was definitely one of my best horse experiences yet.