

STORIES FROM THE FARM DOWNUNDER!

YOUNGSTERS CAN BE TROUBLE.



I was sound asleep when I was awoken by this insistent bellowing from a cow. Even though it was moonlight [cows often bellow in a full moon] it was a different sound... almost like an alarm bell.

I was as warm as toast in bed, and there was a heavy frost on the ground... not keen to leap out of bed at 2-00am, but I knew I should... something was wrong.

Debra was awake and asked, could I hear the cow? Reluctantly I said yes, knowing she would insist I get up and check the situation.

So, with much [not] enthusiasm I got up, dressed in warm clothes... freezing outside... found the torch and went out to get the Motor Bike to survey the situation.

As I was getting myself and the bike organised, I was listening for the cow. It sounded a long way away and not in one spot... she was moving. That was one positive... what could be wrong? They had all calved, so it wasn't a calving problem.

Jumping on the bike I headed off into the night searching for the cow. Even though it was moonlight and a frost on the ground, the fog had come down, making for unsafe conditions. I couldn't see more than a few feet in front of me.

Fortunately, I knew the lay of the land well, allowing me to negotiate the journey without mishap. Anyone who didn't know the farm would have meet with grief... logs, holes, stumps and trees lay in wait to trip up the unsuspecting.

Having ridden over to where the cattle were camping, I could make out a few dark shapes... I knew these cattle well, so I began to check who was here and who was missing. I couldn't see Gorgeous, one of our favourite cows, perhaps it was she who was bellowing in the distance... turning off the bike, I listened to hear where Gorgeous was. Sounded like she was down near the neighbour's property.

If so, I had a good idea what the problem was... her calf was probably in the neighbours and couldn't get back to mum. Better go and make sure if this was the case... sure

enough Gorgeous was walking up and down the fence line, with her calf on the other side.

The cheeky calf didn't look to worried... but mum was very agitated... she knew her calf could be in danger from wild dogs. The calf was in a big paddock, all by itself, wandering around without a worry in the world. It was "full of itself" confident it had all under control. Mum knew different.

I got off the bike walked up to mum and gave her a re-assuring pat and said what are we going to do now. She looked at me as if she knew what I was saying and let out a long bellow.

I had to make a decision, would I try and get the calf back now in such difficult conditions or wait until morning. I couldn't see where this troublesome calf had got through the fence, there was no gate between us and the neighbour [not ideal], and the fence was electric as well.

I decided to try and get the calf back, I felt sorry for Gorgeous, knowing she wouldn't rest and may damage herself trying to get to her calf. I phoned Debra and told her what had happened and what I intended.

It may sound strange, but these cattle trusted us... we spent many hours around them, building a relationship with them. This helped enormously in such a situation... it meant the calf didn't race off into the night never to be seen again. It meant Gorgeous didn't become scared or present any danger... she just wanted her calf back and wanted me to help.

The first thing I did was PRAY... then short the electric fence out... with difficulty I made a hole under the fence, big enough for the calf to go through. By this time the calf was becoming a little agitated and started to run up and down the fence... not a good situation as he was running away from mum and the hole in the fence. Gorgeous started to run along the fence with him, both disappearing into the fog.

The one good thing was the calf now wanted the comfort of mum... things had changed, no longer over confident, he badly wanted his mum. He was starting to bellow as well.

I jumped back on the bike and quickly rode around the front of Gorgeous, so I could turn her back towards the hole in the fence. I suddenly remembered I had some pellets [food] in my coat pocket... Gorgeous loved her food.

I got off the bike again went up to Gorgeous [having stopped her running] and let her smell my coat pocket... she instantly became interested. I began walking back along the fence, talking to her and rattling the pellets in my pocket.

She began walking with me, bellowing to her calf as we walked. The calf now wanting mum, began to walk with us on the other side of the fence. We slowly walked back to the hole in the fence... challenge - would the calf see the hole... would he walk through it?

Having come to the spot, I put some pellets on the ground right next to the hole...
Gorgeous began to eat them, calf could see mum eating, calf came through the fence
and went straight for a feed of milk off mum.

Mission accomplished... Gorgeous, calf, Philip and Debra happy. All ended well at 3-
30am.

Baruch HaShem.

WHAT LESSONS OR ENCOURAGEMENTS DO YOU SEE IN THIS ACCOUNT... LET
US KNOW... SHARE YOUR THOUGHTS.