

EVERY DOG HAS ITS DAY – BUT THINGS DON'T ALWAYS GO TO PLAN!

When driving down the dirt road to our farm the other day, a Kangaroo hopped across the road in front of us nearly smashing into our Subaru.

Kangaroos are a hazard when driving, especially at night. “City” people do not understand the problems they cause when in great numbers... in great numbers they are.

For some reason my mind was taken back to an event I had with a Kangaroo, a dog and myself.

At the time I owned this beautiful German Shepherd dog, called Defa – D for dog. She was without doubt the best dog I ever owned [Apologies to all other dogs I've owned]. She was loyal, gentle, faithful, loving, well behaved, intelligent, protective and great fun.

She loved playing games. I played this game of a modified “hide and seek”. I would hide an object and she would have to find it. No matter where I hid the object, she always found it. I could pick up a stone... throw it in the creek and she would find it. I had to stop this, as getting water in a dog's ears is not the best.

Defa loved water, she could swim well and was super confident in the water. Another game we played was rescue. Pretend you were drowning, and she would swim out and bring you back onto land.

As said, she was super smart and seemed to evaluate most circumstances before acting. She wasn't scared of things but knew the dangers associated with a bull or a hurt mad cow. She also seemed to know the dangers a big buck [male] kangaroo could bring to an encounter.

When chasing Kangaroos, she kept at safe distances, making sure she never actually caught it. She was satisfied just to see it off into the bush. Defa loved the chase but was never interested in a catch.

One day all this changed. We were out going around the cattle and we came across a mob of kangaroos. Defa took off after them, they bounded away with some going in one direction and others going in another.

One old buck hopped away by himself... Defa decided she would chase this old fellow. He was huge and she made sure she stayed well back, allowing him to hop away. If she got too close, he would turn around and offer a challenge. She knew she was outgunned so refused the challenge.

I watched all this from a distance. I was on top of a hill and had a good view of what was taking place. The old kangaroo was tiring and headed off to a dam, to cool off and rest.

It was here that events took a sudden and dramatic change. Defa decided this was her chance, her “every dog has its day” moment. No longer would she allow the kangaroo to call the shots this was her chance to give him what for.

You see Defa was super confident in and around water. She just knew she could have the upper hand in this situation. At last she had a kangaroo right where she wanted him. She had never been in this situation before, she had never experienced tacking a kangaroo in a dam before... but she just knew she could handle the situation.

Looking on from a distance I had a completely different feeling... I had seen a dog and a kangaroo do combat in such a situation... not good for the dog.

I was too far away to call her off... I just had to watch.

The kangaroo was standing in the middle of the dam. The water was up to his chest and he just stood there watching Defa arrived at the edge. She jumped straight in and swam towards him ready to do combat... this was her chance to put the record straight once and for all... dog one... kangaroo none.

As she swam towards him, he never moved just waited his fate. Yeah right. Defra got within a few inches from him, when the kangaroo suddenly grabbed her and pushed her under the water. My heart sank, I had seen all this before. Kangaroos are very adapting at drowning dogs in these circumstances, they just hold them under until they drown... simple.

I was watching my favorite dog and great friend be drowned before my eyes and I could not help her, I was just too far away. I was yelling at the top of my voice but all to no avail, nothing changed... it was a very hard few minutes that seemed like hours.

Everything was still, no more ripples in the water, just Mr. Kangaroo standing there. The moment was sickening... I felt shocking, not sure how to explain it. Even in that short time, probably no more than a minute, I felt tears running down my face.

I wasn't angry at the kangaroo I was angry and frustrated that Defa had let her over confidence rule her normal calculated decision making. I know I am talking about a dog here, but she was special... in my tormented mind, she should have known better.

Then suddenly, movement in the water, Defa came to the surface meters from the kangaroo and swam to the edge of the dam. She climbed out, looked back at the kangaroo in what appeared to be in bewilderment.

She ran around the dam barking and growling until I got there, but she never looked like going back into the water.

How she escaped I don't know, I suspect her stone diving exercises helped her. She may have swum down to the bottom of the dam and escaped that way. Most dogs in that situation want to try and struggle to the top, making it very easy for the kangaroo to hold onto them and drown them.

I was just glad to see Defa shaken, but not drowned.

We left the kangaroo and headed home... she looked totally embarrassed, I was just happy she was alive.

I didn't berate her, I gave her a pat and a cuddle... she had learned a valuable lesson that day.

Took her awhile to take up kangaroo chasing again, but she never ever challenged one again, on land or in water... she stayed her distance.

WHAT PROVERB DOES THIS STORY REMIND YOU OF?