

The expectant mare and foaling

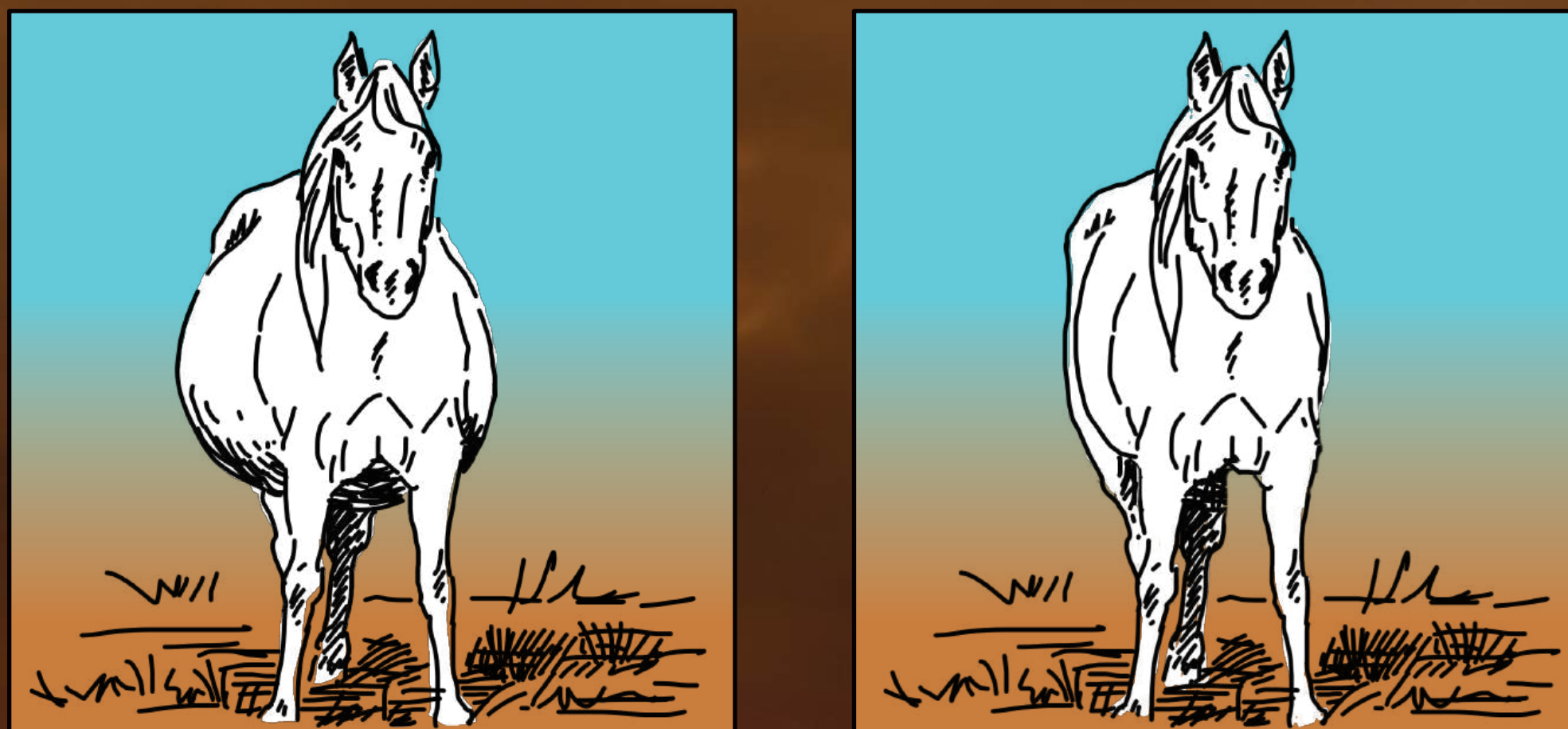
BEHAVIOUR

Shortly before foaling, the mare will appear restless, may paw the ground, hold her tail high, look repeatedly to either side of her flank (similar to colic symptoms) and sweat profusely, even if it's not warm...

Frequent small droppings or urination may also indicate impending birth.

BELLY

After about six months, the mare may start to be visibly pregnant. Mares that have foaled before may show an expanding belly sooner than a maiden mare. Over the remaining months, the mare's abdomen will continue to grow as the foal approaches the foaling, or due date. Her belly may appear to drop, as the foal positions for birth. Sometimes you can see or feel movements of the foal.



Pregnant and not pregnant.

PELVIC LIGAMENTS

The muscles around her tailhead will become more relaxed. A hollow develops on either side of the root of the tail as muscles of the hip and buttock area start to relax. This makes the tail appear a little higher than normal. It can happen 2-3 weeks before foaling, but this can also occur just before foaling or not...



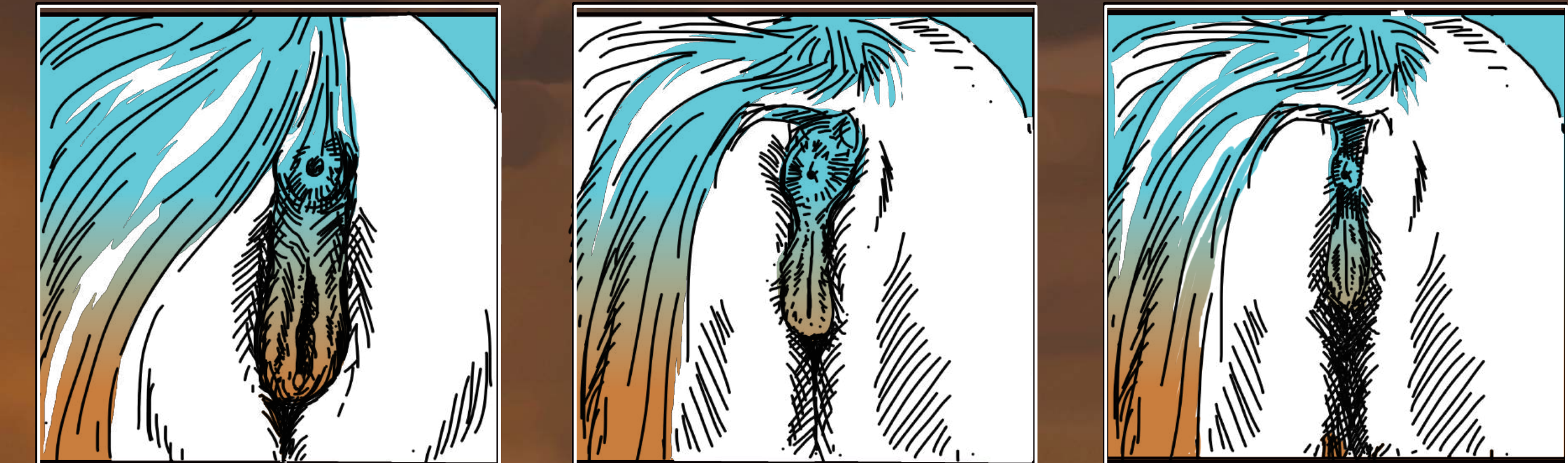
Pregnant and not pregnant.

INTRODUCTION

Mares that are 90% or more of the way through their expected gestation are not considered fit for transport. There is a wide variation in the final gestation period of a horse: the average is 335 days, varying between 320 and 360 days. If the time of insemination is known, the expected time of farrowing can be calculated. If the time of insemination is not known, certain signs can be used to determine that the mare is in late pregnancy and the foal will be born soon.

VULVA

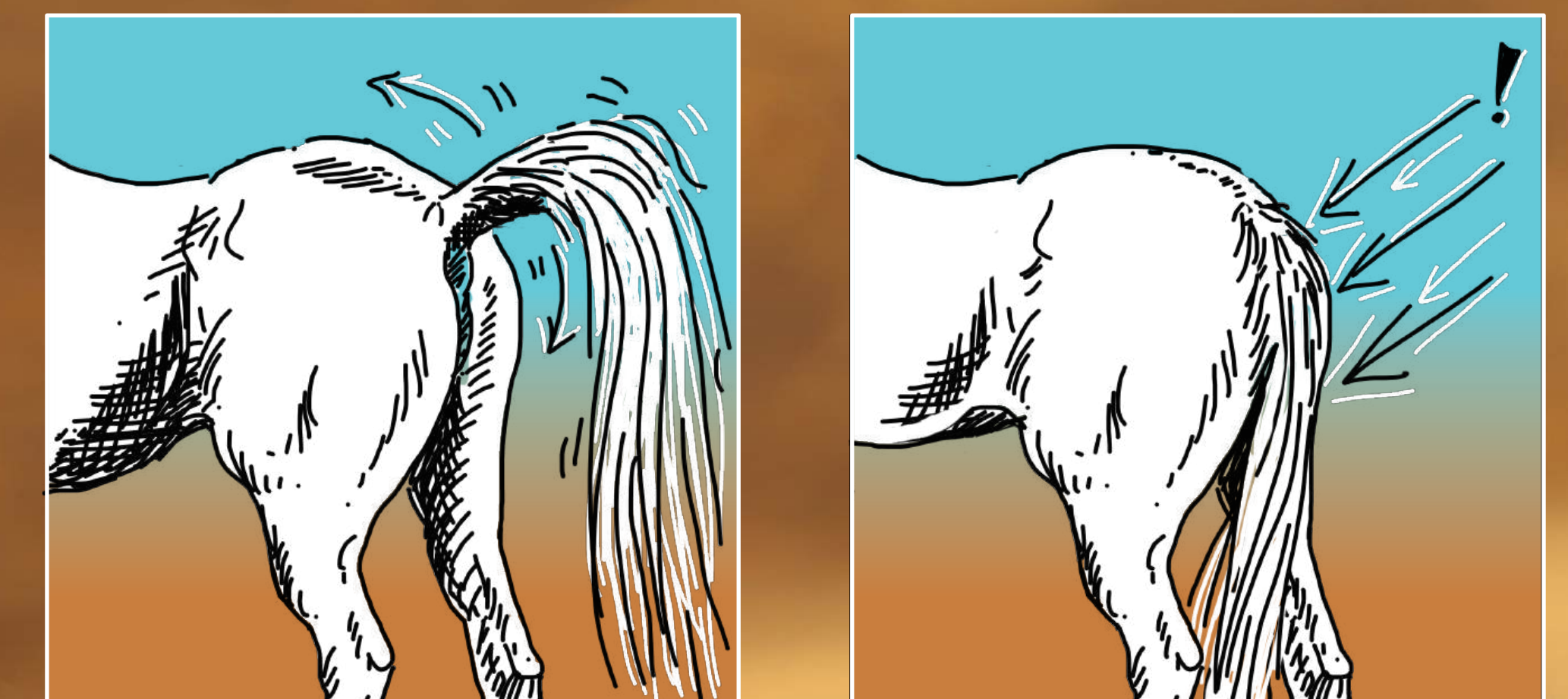
Right before foaling everything on her hind end relaxes, including her vulva. It will appear longer and won't have as many wrinkles on its side.



Pregnant, pregnant and not pregnant.

TAIL TONE

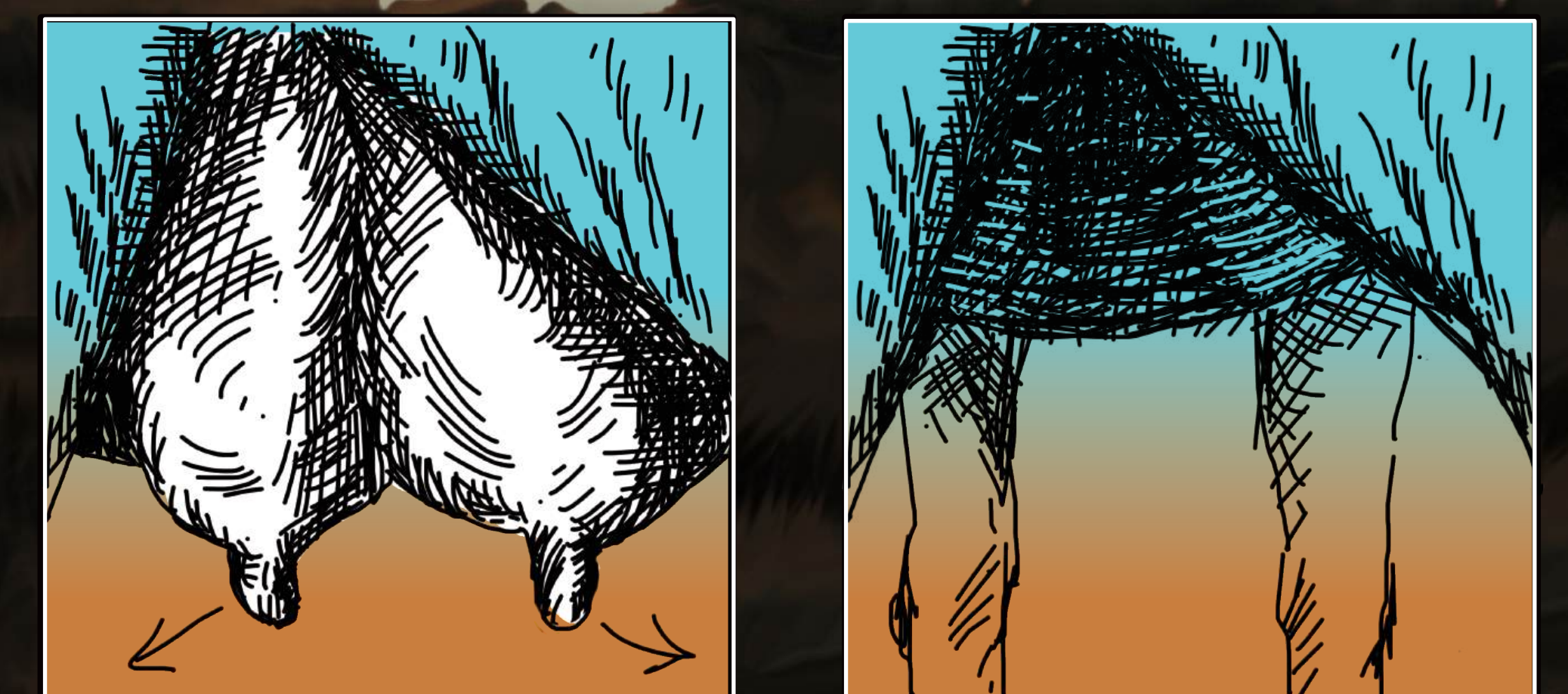
The closer the mare is to foaling, the less to no resistance you will feel when lifting her tail.



Pregnant and not pregnant.

UDDER

When the mare is due to foal, her udder will become engorged and very tight. About three to six weeks before the due date, the mare's udder will start to expand. A few days before foaling wax-like beads or droplets of milk on the tips of the teats can be seen. This is called 'waxing up' and is a sign that the mare is very close to foaling. Unfortunately, this is not a fool proof indicator as some mares do not wax up at all. Mares often drip milk or sometimes even lose a constant stream from their udder just before birth.



Pregnant and not pregnant.