

## **PRAISE FOR ELLEN FELD'S NEW BOOK ANNIE!**

"Feld's tale follows the adventures of a mistreated Morgan, Annie, who becomes separated from her registration papers. A gentle young teenage horse woman slowly retrains the mare, but Annie will soon be sold since she cannot be shown nor bred without her registration. The story shows strong examples of good horse care and kind handling as well as promoting the value of careful preparation to gain successful results. This wonderful book will have readers seeking all Ellen Feld's books if they haven't already read them."

—Caryn Sappelli, *The United States Pony Clubs, Inc.*

"The latest entry in Feld's Morgan Horse series will thoroughly please fans of the series as well as capture the hearts of newcomers. In addition to a wonderful story line, young readers will learn much about the basics of training, veterinary care of horses, and the consequences of lying. They will also be introduced to a bit of the lore surrounding Justin Morgan. This is a great book for horse lovers of any age."

— John Clark, *TCM Reviews*

"*Annie* is more than just a story about winning show competitions for horses. It's about how to bond with and treat horses, any animal for that matter, and how that brings out the best in all involved. Even if you've never ridden a horse, you'll wind up wanting to try after reading this sensitive and tender novel, and you will definitely be even more interested in finding out more about this particular breed of proud, talented Morgan Horses! Exquisite! Wonderful!"

—Viviane Crystal, *Crystal Reviews*

Ellen F. Feld, award-winning author, equine journalist and phenomenally passionate horse lover, once again reaches out to the hearts and dreams of the teenaged horse loving set with her anxiously awaited new book *Annie*. No doubt about it, I'm simply captivated by Ellen Feld's *Morgan Horse* series. I like the way Feld easily reintroduces characters from the earlier books, horses and people alike. This book can stand alone, but is even better if you're familiar with the others in the series. She really knows about horses and, without trying to be trite, is the horse whisperer of the teen horse set. Anyone who doesn't like horses will want to fall in love with them after reading any book by Ellen Feld, and *Annie* is no exception."

—Deb Fowler, *Roundtable Reviews*

"Ellen Feld has created another fabulous story that wraps lessons in friendship, integrity, and human nature, in the story of a young girl and a lost horse. Feld offers wonderful insight into the horse world, including some not-so-pretty sights, without being graphic or over-the-top. In fact, her writing has the opposite effect: you instantly become empathetic for the horses and the care-givers in their lives. In *Annie*, you feel as though you are part horse, part spectator. Feld gets you off to a fast start, then forces you to manage your pace. It's hard not to race ahead, but she is a master of her craft and will keep you reading and, when it's over, wanting more. *Annie* will tug on your heart from the opening pages and will give you a wonderful ride to the end."

—Terry Doherty, *The Reading Tub, Inc.*

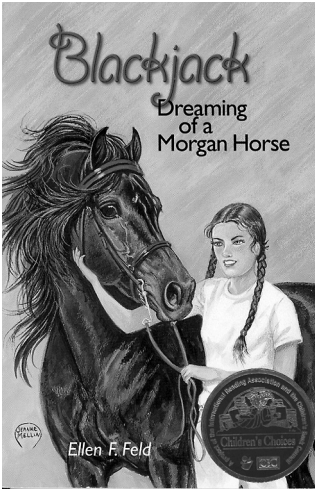
"*Annie* is an absolutely fabulous book! Ellen Feld has a thorough knowledge of horses and pleasure riding and I simply loved this book! I hope Feld writes many more books in this series. Although this book is written for young readers, I know it can be enjoyed by horse lovers of all ages. If you want to saddle up with a great book, you would definitely enjoy *Annie*"

—Brianna Plach, *Reader Views*

# ANNIE:

The Mysterious Morgan Horse

**ALSO BY ELLEN F. FELD**



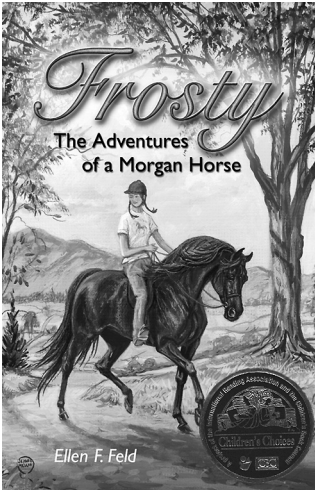
***Blackjack: Dreaming of a Morgan Horse***

ISBN 978-0-9709002-8-9

*An International Reading Association—Children's Book Council "Children's Choices" Selection*

"Mrs. Feld has a true gift in capturing the imagination and engaging the reader. It isn't always easy to find a book that will be read willingly by pre-teens! Kudos to Mrs. Feld on her delightful Morgan Horse Series."

—*The Old Schoolhouse Magazine*



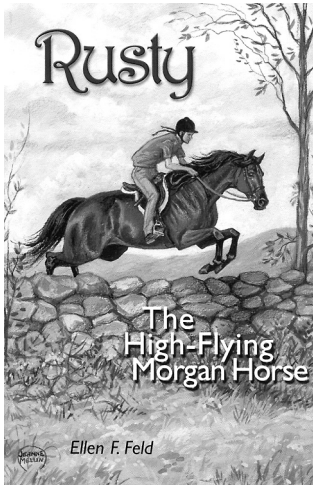
***Frosty: The Adventures of a Morgan Horse***

ISBN 978-0-9709002-7-2

*An International Reading Association—Children's Book Council "Children's Choices" Selection*

" . . . a thoroughly delightful novel for young readers about a girl and her relationship with powerful and noble animals . . . Frosty is a story to be cherished by horse lovers of all ages."

—*Midwest Book Review*



## ***Rusty: The High-Flying Morgan Horse***

ISBN 0-9709002-4-4

“ . . . a quick, entertaining read. Feld’s knowledge of the equine is apparent on each page; detailed descriptions of the movements and responses of the horses bring the reader right into the world of these splendid animals.”

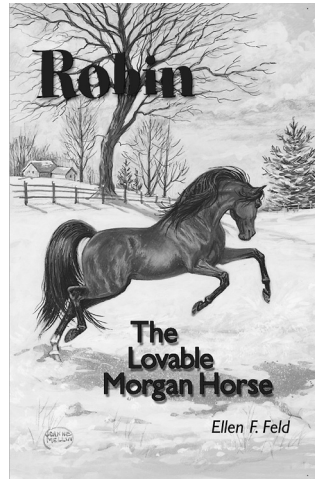
—*ForeWord Magazine*

## ***Robin: The Lovable Morgan Horse***

ISBN 0-9709002-5-2

“Feld uses plenty of conflict on many levels, a string of obstacles, and the characters’ solutions to craft a very interesting story with a quick pace. We rated this book five hearts.”

—Bob Spear, *Heartland Reviews*

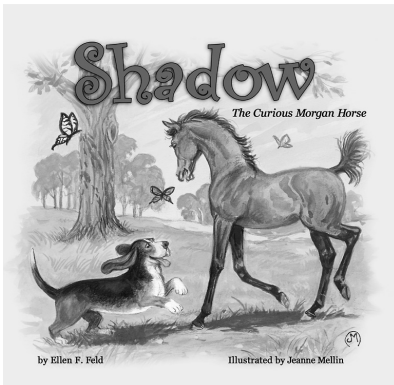


## ***Shadow: The Curious Morgan Horse***

ISBN 978-0-9709002-6-5

“You are guaranteed to delight in this story of a young, adventurous foal. Feld is a talented, creative, artistic writer who clearly loves her topic of horses. Absolutely delightful!”

—Viviane Crystal,  
*Crystal Reviews*





# **ANNIE:**

The Mysterious Morgan Horse

**Ellen F. Feld**

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*To Nicholas*

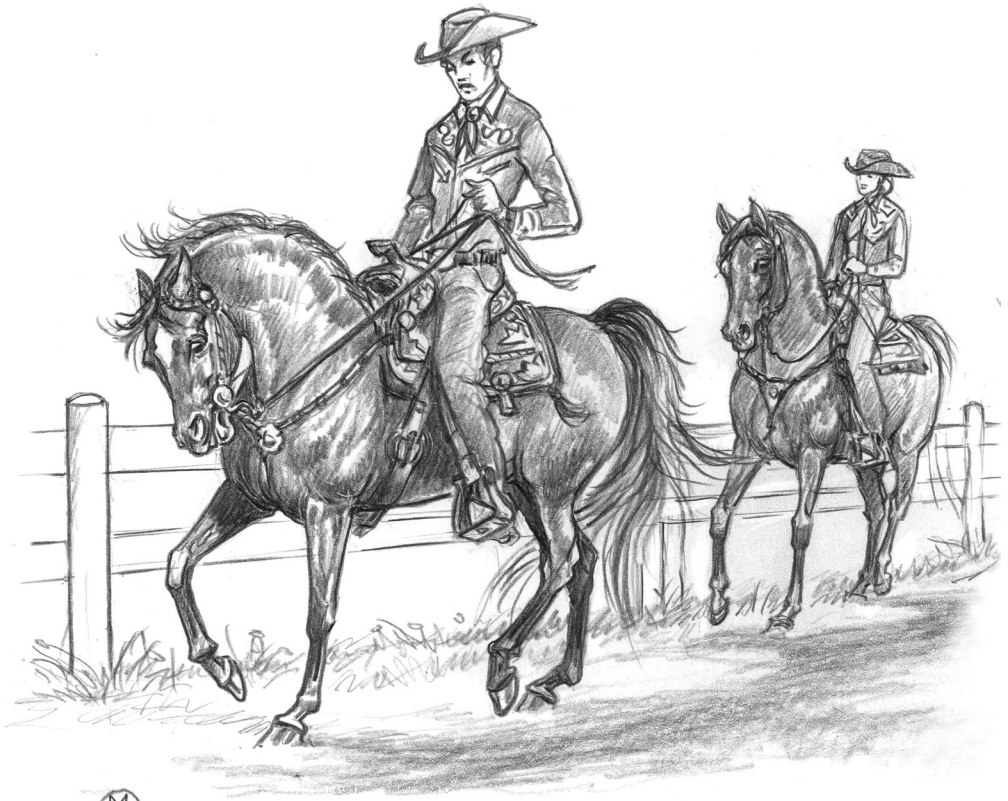
*It is so exciting to see you and Rimfire  
growing up together.  
Whether you decide to enter the show ring or  
simply enjoy trail rides with your new horse,  
I know you'll have a blast.*

*Love always, Mom*



## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

I would like to thank Jeanne Mellin for good-naturedly taking on yet another project and creating some amazing artwork for this book. Her beautiful pictures add so much to my story. Thanks to Grant D. Myhre B.S., D.V.M. for his thorough review of the medical portions of the text, and for the wonderful care he and his staff gave the real Rerun when she visited his clinic. Dr. Michelle G. Hutchinson of Wordhelper Editing Services has once again provided a careful review of the text and without her help I'd be lost. Anne Brown very willingly put up with countless phone calls to verify historical aspects of the story and has always been a great source of Morgan facts. Finally, thanks to Linda Mahoney for her wonderful layout talents and great patience with my many changes.



(M)

*The chestnut horse, upset and confused, continued to toss her head as she jiggled down the rail.*



## A VERY BAD HORSE SHOW

“Walk, Polly, walk,” snarled the rider in a whispered voice. He snapped the reins harshly several times in an effort to slow the pretty Morgan mare to a walk. But the chestnut horse, upset and confused, continued to toss her head as she jiggled down the rail. The bouncy movement, a mix of a walk and a trot, threw the rider around in the saddle. Polly’s ears were pinned back and she swished her tail constantly. It was not a pleasant sight.

The rider grew more and more annoyed at his horse. His body became tense as he once again pulled back on the reins. Polly was afraid. She could feel her rider’s anger and grew more anxious. The heavy-handed rider was hurting the frightened mare’s mouth. “I said walk!” he whispered to his horse in a spiteful voice. He didn’t want anybody to hear him, especially the judge.

While horse and rider fought, the judge, standing in center ring, carefully watched them. Noting the horse’s uneasiness, the judge wrote something on his notepad and then looked elsewhere.

“Lope, all lope,” came the order over the loudspeakers.

Fifteen Morgan Horses all decked out in fancy western show attire, with silver oozing from every part of their saddles and bridles, calmly broke into a relaxed, slow lope, the western version of a canter.

The sixteenth horse, Polly, jumped up with her front end and landed hard as she stumbled into a lope. Her head flew high into the air, mouth gaping open as her rider jerked hard on the bit. He had tightened the reins so much that the poor mare was forced to open her mouth to try and get away from the pain. She swung her tail violently as she cantered sideways down the rail. The judge, who had been watching a lovely bay mare in front of Polly, now focused his attention on the chestnut mare.

Polly was a very pretty horse with a long, flowing mane and tail, both colored light brown with streaks of red. Her body was a little darker, which made her left hind sock, shaped like a small triangle, and white hoof stand out. She had a big, bold star on her forehead and a little white snip of hair and pink skin between her nostrils. Her fancy western saddle had silver on every flat surface, while the bridle reins were wrapped in the shiny metal. The headstall, the portion of the bridle that ran along the side of Polly’s head, had so much silver on it that it was hard to see any leather under-

neath. The bit, too, was incredibly ornate, with a fancy floral design. Unfortunately, the part of the bit that ran through Polly's mouth, the section nobody could see, was an extremely severe device. With a little pressure on the reins, it could cause a lot of pain. Polly knew this all too well as she tossed her head, desperately trying to get away from the discomfort. The judge watched Polly struggle with her rider, but he only needed a moment to determine the mare wouldn't place in his ring. He quickly turned to watch another horse.

The horses loped twice around the ring while the judge carefully observed them. Then, satisfied that he had seen enough, he called for a walk. Polly once again refused to walk, instead prancing down the rail. "Kevin! Make her walk!" commanded a middle-aged man standing on the outside of the ring.

"I'm trying, Jim!" snapped the rider in reply. "She won't listen to me."

"Line up in center ring," ordered a voice over the loudspeakers. Kevin, Polly's rider, had thought the command would never come. He hated riding the unruly mare and was glad the class was over.

Polly jiggled into the middle of the ring and came to a stop between two other mares. The other horses calmly waited as the judge slowly made his way down the line. Polly, however, refused to stand still. She pawed at the ground, swished her tail,

and then moved her hind end from side to side. Kevin yanked the reins, trying to get the horse to stop moving. Instead, the upset Morgan backed up several steps. In response, Kevin kicked his horse hard with the heels of his western boots.

Polly gasped as her rider's heels dug deeply into her sides. She leapt into the air and landed several feet ahead of where she had stood. The two riders on either side of Kevin gave him a nasty look. Their horses were getting upset by Polly's bad behavior. Kevin ignored them as he again pulled back tightly on the reins. This time, Polly turned her rump to the left and bumped into the horse next to her. That horse pinned her ears at Polly but continued to stand still. It was at that moment that the judge passed Polly.

Kevin, seeing the official, grew even angrier at his horse, and as soon as the judge moved away, he kicked Polly again. Polly had no where to go but up. She threw her front legs into the air as her head went back, nose flying outward. Jumping forward, she landed hard and then trotted several steps. Thinking quickly, Kevin guided Polly to the far end of the ring, around the horses and back into place. As he asked his horse to stop, the order came to retire. All the riders knew this meant the judge had turned in his scorecard and the class was over. Now they were to ride to the far end of the ring and patiently wait to hear the placings for the class.

Kevin followed the crowd but again, his horse refused to quietly wait. He was forced to walk his horse nonstop in a small, tight circle. Looking up, he saw his boss, Jim Spencer, standing by the rail. The man didn't look happy. Kevin knew as soon as the class was over, Mr. Spencer was going to yell at him for the bad ride. Taking his aggravation out on Polly, Kevin pulled hard on the reins as he kicked his horse. "I said walk!" he growled.

"We have the winners for class 52, Western Pleasure Mare and Gelding," boomed the speakers. "In first place is number 359, Grand Creek Pioneer, owned and ridden by John Keesher."

Kevin watched as the winner jogged slowly into center ring to receive his blue ribbon. Polly, still tossing her head, was forced to walk in tight little circles as the rest of the ribbons were handed out. Then, once the eighth place winner was announced, Kevin turned his horse toward the gate and exited the ring. Guiding the horse about twenty feet from the ring, he stopped and waited for Mr. Spencer. Polly finally stood still.

Kevin was not looking forward to what his boss was going to say. Within moments, Mr. Spencer came storming over to them. He was a grumpy looking man in his mid-forties, with brown hair that had started to turn gray around the edges. He was wearing a long-sleeve white cotton shirt, jeans, and work boots. There was a crop sticking out of his back pocket, which had been used many times

on Polly. Seeing him and his whip frightened the mare who knew too well what Mr. Spencer was capable of doing. "I told you to walk in that ring," shouted Mr. Spencer.

"I tried, Jim, but she wouldn't listen to me," replied Kevin, trying to defend himself. Kevin Jones was a handsome young man in his early twenties. He had grown up in a city but had never enjoyed living in a place surrounded by buildings and pavement. When he graduated from high school, Kevin had decided that he wanted to live in the country and needed to find a job. After spending several months searching for the right position, with no horse experience at all, he started working as a groom for Mr. Spencer. He loved living in the country but really didn't like working with horses. But with no other education, he felt he had few choices, so he decided to make his living with the often annoying animals. Now, five years later, he was Mr. Spencer's assistant trainer.

"This mare isn't going to make a fool of me," announced Mr. Spencer. "Take her out in the back field where nobody can see you, and ride her hard. Then I want you to ride her hard again tomorrow. Really hard, Kevin. I want her lathered up with sweat. That way, by Friday, for her championship class, she'll be better. Mrs. Clayburg will be here for that class."

"Mrs. Clayburg?" asked a worried Kevin. He knew the woman owned the chestnut mare along

with four other horses under Mr. Spencer's care. It was very important that they impress her.

"Yes," replied Mr. Spencer, "and you know how essential it is that this horse does well on Friday."

"Of course," agreed the young rider. "Don't worry, Jim, I'll get her going."

"Good. You've got two days to get her to behave. How are you going to make her walk?"

"I'll work her in the field," said Kevin, "running her until she's too tired to keep going. After a good, long run Polly will want to walk."

"That sounds perfect. Now go work her hard. I don't want this mare thinking she can get away with her obnoxious behavior."

Kevin clucked and at the same time dug his heels into Polly's side. The mare immediately responded by breaking into a nervous trot. They moved past the warm up arena, the food vendors, and beyond the trucks and horse trailers to a grassy field that was separated from the nearby highway by a six-foot tall chain-link fence. Kevin was relieved to find the area vacant. He didn't want to share the space, nor did he want his actions viewed by nosey onlookers. He suspected the workout wouldn't be viewed favorably by others; he knew Polly would finish the training period breathing heavily and sweating profusely.

"Trot, mare, trot," Kevin ordered as the Morgan continued to prance. When showing in a western

class, a rider is only allowed to use one hand on the reins. The other hand must never be used to guide the horse. But now that they were out of the show ring, Kevin could use both hands, so he took full advantage of the power of his arms to slow the horse. "Not so fast," he snarled. But Polly knew her rider was angry and tense and it caused the frightened mare to go even faster. "Fine," growled Kevin. "You want to go fast, huh? I'll give you fast," and he kicked Polly hard. "Lope, you stubborn mare."

Polly jumped into a lope and continued to increase her speed. She tried to free herself from the pain of the bit by tossing her head forward, but the tight reins prevented any head movement. Unable to extend her head, she instead bounced her body up and down. It was the only thing she could do. Kevin, in response, flopped all over the place. He was thrown forward and back, and every time he fell backwards, he landed hard on Polly's back. "Don't stop, you stupid horse," ordered Kevin when he felt Polly beginning to slow down. "You'll be begging to go slow by the time I finish with you," he laughed.

Several minutes went by and still the pair was flying around the field. Polly had broken into a sweat, and there was a white, foamy lather between her back legs. She was tired and wanted to stop but her rider wouldn't let her. Every time she started to slow down, she received a hard kick on

her sides. Soon her neck was soaked with sweat and there too, lather was beginning to accumulate.

Kevin continued to jab the reins hard until a trickle of blood started flowing from one side of Polly's mouth. "Had enough?" he asked the horse. Polly was too tired to fight now and instead, stumbled and almost fell. Falling forward, the rider grabbed the mare's mane with both hands to keep himself in the saddle. Regaining his balance, he immediately stuck his heels into Polly's side again. "That'll teach you," he scolded.

Finally, as Polly's nostrils flared, trying to get enough air into her lungs, she was asked to stop. Coming to a quick halt was the worst thing a horse should do after such a strenuous workout. The horse needed to be brought slowly down, first by trotting, then by walking. But Kevin either didn't care or didn't know.

Polly stood perfectly still, head hanging down, steam flowing up from her neck into the afternoon air. Her sides heaved in and out so much that Kevin could easily feel the motion. The blanket underneath the bulky western saddle was drenched with sweat. The young trainer had a look of pleasant satisfaction on his face. He had taught the annoying horse a lesson.

After several minutes, a young woman led a yearling colt into the field. She smiled at Kevin but quickly turned away when she got a closer look at

the exhausted horse. Leading the colt to a far corner, she snapped a lunge line onto the youngster's halter, let out about fifteen feet of the rope, and asked the horse to trot around her. The bay colt had a gleeful, playful look to him; he was happy to be out of his stall and had a lot of pent-up energy he needed to release. Letting out a loud squeal, he kicked up his heels and bolted into a flurry of motion. The sound startled Polly who glanced over at the baby but then she turned away. She was too tired to care.

Kevin decided the lesson was over. Kicking Polly, he turned the horse toward the barn. With her head dragging low, Polly slowly made her way to the stabling area. Kevin slid off the mare and handed the reins to Kelly, one of two grooms who worked for Mr. Spencer. "Cool her off," he commanded, without ever looking at Polly or Kelly.

Kelly, a slender twenty-year-old woman with blond hair and dirty clothes, obediently took the reins from Kevin and led Polly to a grooming stall. The instant Kelly removed Polly's saddle and blanket, a mountain of steam rolled off the mare's back. The blanket was soaked with sweat and would need a good cleaning before it could be used in the show ring again. Kelly had seen so many horses drenched in sweat, heads hanging low, and breathing heavily, return from workouts with Kevin or Mr. Spencer, that she actually thought it was the way all trainers worked their horses. The young

groom next replaced the fancy show bridle with an old blue nylon halter. As the halter was slid onto the mare, the weary horse tried to rub her head on Kelly's arm. Polly received a quick slap for her actions. "Cut that out," warned the groom. Then Kelly began the long job of cooling off the horse.

Twenty minutes later Kelly was still walking Polly. The warm summer temperature made it difficult for the mare's body to expel the extra heat. Still, her breathing had returned to normal and the horse was starting to feel better. "You still walking that horse?" came a voice from behind Kelly.

"Yeah," she replied, recognizing the voice of Mr. Spencer. "She's real hot."

"Well, put her away. Domino's class is this afternoon and you've got to start getting him ready."

"Domino?" asked the groom.

"Yes, you heard me. Domino," snapped Mr. Spencer.

Kelly knew that Domino, a dark bay Morgan stallion, was Mr. Spencer's top show horse. Like Polly, he belonged to Mrs. Clayburg, but unlike the mare, Domino frequently won top honors at the shows he attended. He was a fancy, high-stepping park horse who also refused to walk. But since he was shown in park classes, where few horses performed a flat-footed walk and instead moved in a slow, animated trot when asked to walk, Domino's poor behavior was often misinter-

preted. The handsome stallion, once a bold, happy show horse, had changed when he was placed in the care of Mr. Spencer. Now he too, feared the abusive trainer.

Knowing that Mr. Spencer would yell at her if she didn't respond immediately, Kelly acted quickly. She knew the mare needed more care before being put away, but the groom didn't want to get fired. She obediently put Polly back in her stall and turned her attention to Domino.



The day of Polly's championship class finally arrived. The day before, Kevin had worked the mare incredibly hard. He had taken her back to the open field near the highway in the morning and had run the mare until she could hardly breathe. Head dragging, the horse finally walked without jiggling. Believing it was the only way to get the mare to go properly, Kevin took Polly back to the field the morning of her class. Again, he worked her until she was drenched in sweat and having trouble breathing. But by the time Mrs. Clayburg arrived, the mare had been completely cooled off. The wealthy owner would never know what her horse was going through.

Polly was standing outside her stall, secured with cross ties that ran between her stall and an

outside pole. Two other horses stood in similar fashion further down the barn aisle. "Has Domino gone yet?" asked the plump, gray-haired woman as she walked past Polly, completely ignoring the mare.

"No, ma'am," respectfully replied Kevin as he led the handsome stallion out of the grooming stall. "His class is in about 15 minutes."

"Good," said Mrs. Clayburg as she ran her hand through her short hair. "Mr. Spencer told me over the phone that the horse won a second. He expects Domino to win the championship today and I want to see it." She wore a brightly colored dress and a long pearl necklace that hung limply down towards her fat belly. With high-heeled shoes, nylons, and a lacy shawl hanging loosely around her shoulders, Mrs. Clayburg was not dressed for the dusty environment of a horse show. "Do I have any other horses going today? I thought you said one of my mares was showing."

"Yes, that's correct, Mrs. Clayburg. Polly is going shortly after Domino," answered Kevin.

"Where is she?"

"She's right behind you, ma'am. You walked past her when you arrived."

"Oh," said Mrs. Clayburg, as she turned and looked at Polly. "I didn't recognize her; she looks so lovely," she said as she gave the mare a gentle pat. "Has she shown yet this week?"

Before Kevin could answer, Mr. Spencer walked up from behind him and answered Mrs. Clayburg. "The mare went in her qualifying class and had a real good go," he said, his lie obvious to Kevin and the two grooms who were working nearby.

"So what ribbon did she get?"

"The judge was blind," said Mr. Spencer, adding to his lie. "He's only judged a few shows and obviously has no idea how to pin a class. I can't believe some of the placings—"

"What color?" interrupted Mrs. Clayburg.

"She didn't pin," admitted Mr. Spencer. "She should have placed in the top three, but she didn't. But don't worry; the mare should do well today. Now, I've got to get ready to show Domino. Why don't you head up to the ring, find your box seat, and enjoy the show?"

"Yes, I think that's a good idea. I'll see you after my horses' classes," said Mrs. Clayburg as she turned and walked away.

With only three horses showing in the park saddle championship, Domino was guaranteed a top ribbon. His two competitors were the same horses he had shown against earlier in the week, and the class turned out to be a repeat of their earlier meeting. Another bay stallion, the winner of the previous class, had a fabulous headset, high-stepping action, and perfect manners. Domino, although his action was equal to the winner's,

threw his head around, flattened his ears, and fought with his rider, Mr. Spencer. But the final horse refused to pick up the canter, so the judge was forced to place him third. Because it was the championship, Domino's second place ribbon made him the reserve champion in the park saddle division.

Mrs. Clayburg didn't know what her horse had done wrong. She simply thought her stallion was the prettiest horse in the ring, and therefore, he should have won. When she met Mr. Spencer at the barn after the class, she repeated her thoughts to him. "You're absolutely right," agreed Mr. Spencer. "Domino was definitely the best horse in that class. But like I told you before, the judge at this show doesn't know what he's doing. He's blind. I know a lot of people saw that class, and they know Domino should have won too."

Feeling better now that she thought Domino's second place ribbon was the judge's fault, Mrs. Clayburg headed back to her box seat to watch Polly's class. Ten minutes later, Polly slowly jogged into the ring along with ten other horses. After the exhausting workout of the morning, the mare was too tired to fight Kevin. Her head hung low, too low for a Morgan western pleasure horse. When the walk was called, the horse obediently slowed to a walk. Her lope was rough, but the fight was gone. This time, when the judge watched Polly, there was no jiggling down the rail. But the judge could

see that the mare had no spark, no pleasure at being shown, no eagerness to display her talents. That was not the look he wanted in his winner.

When the class was pinned, Polly trotted out of the ring with a brown ribbon, eighth place. She was the lowest placing horse to get a ribbon. Two horses, each with major blunders, did not receive a ribbon. Mr. Spencer was furious. In his eyes, the mare had performed well. He did not understand the finer points of judging and why a horse who managed to behave would still place so low. He stormed over to the gate where Kevin and Polly were waiting. "That crappy judge," steamed Mr. Spencer. "He wouldn't know a good horse if it ran him over!"

Kevin, too, was upset. He took it out on Polly by yanking on the reins. In response, the Morgan threw her head up in the air, mouth gaping open. Kevin then kicked the mare and headed back to the barn with Mr. Spencer walking beside them. As they traveled, they tried to come up with an excuse for Mrs. Clayburg. They needed to explain why her horse had pinned so low.