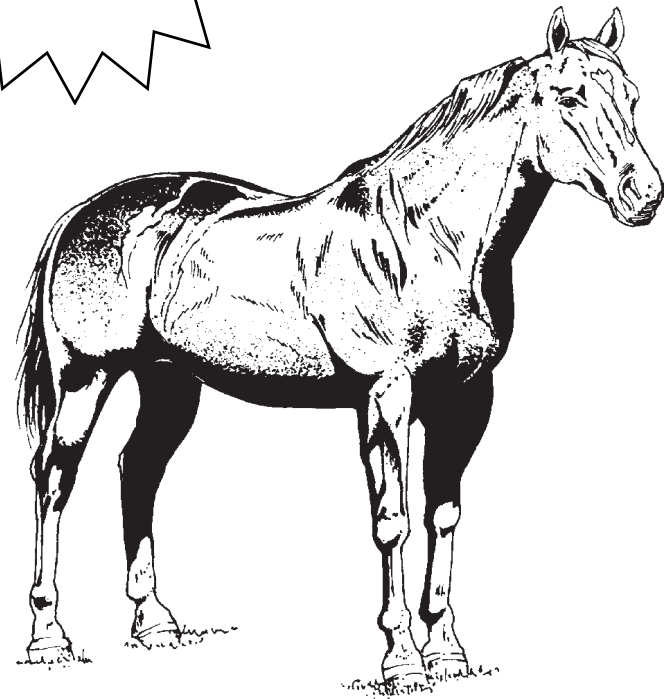


Black Beauty

by
Anna Sewell

Young
Readers'
Edition



This book was illustrated by and belongs to:

Foaled--to give birth to a horse
irritable constitution--the behavior of an animal or person that makes them grumpy
gag-bit--a metal brace that fits in the mouth of a horse which holds the reins
impervious voice--a voice that is loud and clear and cannot be stopped
Turret--a metal device that holds the rein on the horse's neck
Hock--the lower back side of a horse's leg
Obliged--required to do something
Constrained--bound up and unable to move or do something
Froth--foam coming out of the mouth

Chapter 6

Crimean War--a war between Britain and Russia in the 1850s
Regiment--a large body of soldiers
iron palisades--metal fence
carter—The man who operates the cart

Chapter 8

Speculation--to guess about something
Pounds--money used in England
Sovereigns--money used in England at that time, they were worth more than pounds
Fetlocks-- a projection bearing a tuft of hair on the back of the leg above the hoof of a horse or similar animal
Blemished--scarred or marked skin
low Park chair—a small horse carriage

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CHAPTER V

A Not So Happy New Life At Earlshall

The next morning after breakfast, Joe put Merrylegs into the mistress' low chaise to take him to the vicarage. He came first and said goodbye to us, and Merrylegs neighed to us from the yard. Then John put the saddle on Ginger and the leading rein on me, and rode us across the country to Earlshall Park, where the Earl of Weymouth lived. There was a very fine house and a great deal of stabling. We went into the yard through a stone gateway and John asked for Mr. York. It was some time before he came. He was a fine-looking, middle-aged man, and his voice said at once that he expected to be obeyed. He was very friendly and polite to John, and after giving us a slight look, he called a groom to take us to our boxes, and invited John to take some refreshment.

We were taken to a light, airy stable, and placed in boxes adjoining each other, where we were rubbed down and fed. In about half an hour John and York, who was to be our new coachman, came in to see us.

"Now, Manly," he said, after carefully looking at us both, "I can see no fault in these horses. We all know that horses have their peculiarities as well as men, and that sometimes they need different treatment. I should like to know if there is anything particular in either of these that you would like to mention."

"Well," said John, "I don't believe there is a better pair of horses in the country, and right grieved I am to

part with them, but they are not alike. The black one has the most perfect temper I ever knew. I suppose he has never known a hard word or blow since he was foaled and all his pleasure seems to be to do what you wish. The chestnut, I fancy, must have had bad treatment, we heard as much from the dealer. She came to us snappish and suspicious, but when she found what sort of place ours was, she got better tempered. For three years I have never seen the smallest sign of temper, and if she is well treated there is not a better, more willing animal than she is. But she has naturally a more irritable constitution than the black horse.

Flies tease her more, anything wrong in her harness frets her more and if she were ill-used or unfairly treated she would not be easy to handle.

"Of course," said York, "I quite understand. You know it is not easy in stables like these to have all the grooms just what they should be. I do my best, and there I must leave it. I'll remember what you have said about the mare." They were going out of the stable, when John stopped, and said, "I had better mention that we have never used the check-rein with either of them. The black horse never had one on, and the dealer said it was the gag-bit that spoiled the other's temper."

"Well," said York, "if they come here, they must wear the check-rein. I prefer a loose rein myself, and his lordship is always very reasonable about horses, but my lady—that's another thing. She will have style, and if her carriage horses are not reined up tight she wouldn't look at them. I always stand out against the gag-bit, and shall do so, but it must be tight up when my lady rides!"

“I am sorry for it,” said John “but I must go now, or I shall lose the train.”

He came around to each of us to pat and speak to us for the last time, his voice sounded very sad. I held my face close to him that was all I could do to say goodbye, and then he was gone, and I have never seen him since.

The next day, our new master, the Earl, came to look at us. He seemed pleased with our appearance. “I have great confidence in these horses,” he said, “from the character my friend Gordon has given me of them. Of course they are not a match in color, but my idea is that they will do very well for the carriage while we are in the country. Before we go to London I must try to match Baron. The black horse, I believe, is perfect for riding.”

York then told him what John had said about us. “Well,” said he, “you must keep an eye to the mare, and put the check-rein easy, I dare say they will do very well with a little humoring at first. I’ll mention it to your lady.”

In the afternoon we were harnessed and put in the carriage and led around to the front of the house. It was all very grand, and three times as large as the old house at Birtwick, but not half so pleasant, if a horse may have an opinion. Two footmen were standing ready, dressed in scarlet breeches and white stockings. Presently we heard the rustling sound of silk as my lady came down the flight of stone steps. She stepped down to look at us. She was a tall, proud-looking woman, and did not seem pleased about something, but she said nothing, and got into the carriage. This was the first time wearing a check-rein, and I must say, though it certainly was a nuisance