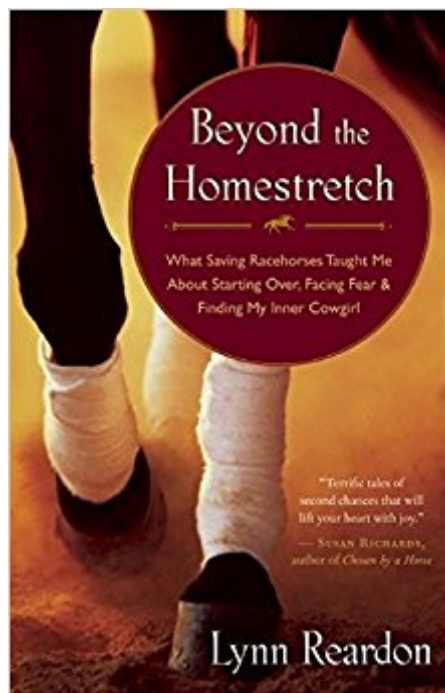




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Beyond The Homestretch: What Saving Racehorses Taught Me About Starting Over, Facing Fear, And Finding My Inner Cowgirl



Synopsis

After learning to ride horses as an adult, Lynn Reardon quit her office job in Washington DC and moved to rural Texas to open the racehorse adoption ranch LOPE (LoneStar Outreach to Place Ex-Racers). Since then, LOPE has helped transition more than 750 thoroughbreds into new homes. In this riveting account, Reardon encounters dozens of unruly racehorses, all with special needs, unusual histories, and distinct personalities. She takes readers for a thrilling ride through the horse-racing world filled with offbeat horse people, colorful Texas culture clashes, veterinary melodramas, and surprising life lessons. Reardon may have saved these horses' lives, but they saved hers as well.

Book Information

Paperback: 304 pages

Publisher: New World Library; 1 Reprint edition (February 15, 2011)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1577319567

ISBN-13: 978-1577319566

Product Dimensions: 5.6 x 0.7 x 8.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 12 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars 73 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #341,853 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #73 in Books > Sports & Outdoors > Individual Sports > Horses > Racing #107 in Books > Science & Math > Biological Sciences > Animals > Horses #297 in Books > Crafts, Hobbies & Home > Pets & Animal Care > Essays

Customer Reviews

“Terrific tales of second chances that will lift your heart with joy.”—Susan Richards, author of *Chosen by a Horse*; “This is a book for anyone who truly wants to change their life and live their dream.”—Leslie Guttman, author of *Equine ER*; “In Lynn Reardon’s world, the horses have as much personality as the people, and most all of them are real characters....Lynn’s gift is making the day-to-day chores and the simplest interactions poignant, meaningful, and insightful.”—Linda Kohanov, author of *The Tao of Equus*; “Lynn Reardon shares a personal journey to which many horse lovers secretly aspire: leaving the safety of the office cubicle and embarking upon a career working with horses.”—Rick Lamb, host of *The Horse Show*; “Every now and again” all

too rarely – a book crosses my desk that is a must-read. Beyond the Homestretch is one of them. – Marc Bekoff, author of The Emotional Lives of Animals; A wonderful, wonderful journey that inspires us all to live our lives with purpose, on purpose. – Joe Camp, author of The Soul of a Horse

Lynn Reardon is the founder and executive director of LoneStar Outreach to Place Ex-Racers (LOPE Texas), a nonprofit racehorse placement agency near Austin, Texas. Prior to founding LOPE, Lynn worked in nonprofit finance and administrative management in the Washington DC area for too many years. Lynn lives on the LOPE ranch with her husband, Sophie the dog, multiple cats, and a herd of ex-racehorses up for adoption. Lynn has adopted three LOPE horses of her own: Tulsa Mambo, Sally, and Lightening Ball. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

I got this book with a little enthusiasm, reading the preview on I was interested in Lynn's writing style and sense of humor. When I got it and realized the first recommendation was by the author of "Chosen by a Horse", another good book, but didn't fit my tastes, I was hesitant. I started reading it and never stopped reading until the end. The stories are fantastic, each going into the horses personalities and journeys from the racetrack to a good home. It also goes in depth about the authors own journey of learning and facing her own fears but it doesn't impose either on you to the point where you are waiting for the next story. The style is fantastic, with sad stories mixed in with off-beat to off the wall humor and characters. I grew up in the Northeast and only went to California a few times for a "West" experience. The way she describes the people she meets is fantastic, even a chance encounter with someone really jumps out on the page and in a few paragraphs can describe someone from her own experiences. I would recommend this to any horse lover, and any animal lover. This changed my view on a lot of racehorses off the track. I knew that some could be mellow off the track, but never the way she describes them and their new careers. I always thought of them as "hot" and hard to handle, with a few exceptions. This book really changed my view and now I'm thinking if I ever adopt a horse, it would be a horse off the track from a rescue.

You might think this is about the horrors of saving unwanted horses, but it isn't. It is about a journey from Lynn doing a "career job" to doing a much more trying job that is her heart's passion. The characters are funny and quirky and that includes the horses. If you love horses, you will truly enjoy the indepth character analysis that each of the horses in the book get during Lynn's fostering. Its a

good inside look at the trials of keeping up a horse ranch and a variety of horse sports such as racing, polo, etc. As Lynn tries to find the right life's work and adopter for each of her horses, she learns about the wide world of horses from show jumpers to tough cowboys and shares it all. You will learn a lot right along with her and enjoy the journey almost as much as she seems to without having to actually schlep through muddy pastures and perform emergency vet procedures as she did. It is funny and uplifting and I was sorry when I came to the end.

I want to thank Lynn Reardon for being a voice for Off the Track Thoroughbreds - and letting people know that racers can be companions, competitors, best friends and teachers for us. I can safely say one of my OTTBs rescued me as well after my Eventing champion (also a TB) passed away suddenly. This book explores the personalities (all different, of course) of the ex racers that make their way on to Lynn's ranch. In doing so, we not only discover things about their past, but what they'd be best suited for in their next career - eventer, trail horse, etc etc. Time and time again, OTTBs prove their athleticism, grace and loyalty, and yet they still have a questionable reputation. Lynn's book brings to light the fact that these horses are very different, and suitable to someone who connects with them. I'm a trainer at a large Thoroughbred rescue in NY, and have purchased more than one copy of this book to loan out to clients and riding students. It gives them an idea of what these horses have experienced thus far in their lives, and that there is a "lid for every pot." If you are interested in adopting an OTTB, there are many reputable organizations, much like Lynn's that can steer you towards the horse of your dreams. Read this book!

As an avid equestrian, this has become one of my favorite books of all times. Lynn Reardon is a wonderful storyteller who puts things simply and tenderly. By the time you reach the end, you feel as though you know all of the horses and people she talks about personally. Her detailed experiences are informative, often humorous, and on occasion a bit sad, but such is the life of the head of an equine rescue. Even if you aren't a horse person, there are lessons to be learned from this book on compassion, patience, trust and kindness- things all of us could brush up on.

I heard of this book through a popular blog online and ordered it the same day. It's beautiful and vividly written in language that anybody, regardless of their experience with horse terminology, can understand. Rather than tell a straight beginning-to-end tale of her Thoroughbred rescue from start to present, she tells the story one horse at a time, weaving anecdotes of previous lessons and people she's met along the way. This is occasionally frustrating, as she'll mention some term such

as "flossing the couch" or "the stuff" and then not explain what this means until several pages or chapters later. At times I was distracted enough to find myself wanting to skim ahead and get a definition rather than focus on the story being told. This aside, I quite liked the way the main story unfolded, bit by bit, horse by horse, as each new rescue teaches Lynn something new. The stories are beautiful, and I found myself wanting to know more about these horses. To my delight, the book's official website includes photographs of many of the horses featured. This book has so much information in it, and so many tales of triumph, you can't help but feel for Lynn as she deals with screaming stallions, equine tracheotomies, floods, souped-up racehorses, and more. Rather than devour the book all at once, I've forced myself to read a bit at a time before bed. It's been a great end to my days.

As I am myself in the midst of retraining a thoroughbred fresh off the track, this book had a large educational value to me despite being written as a story. It was a great book and I loved every word of it!

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