DOUBLE STEED

By

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Teen Horse Drama
Feature Film Script

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FADE IN:

EXT. WHITEPINES STABLES - DAY

On a bright summer afternoon, the grass blows gently against the white rail fence surrounding the horse paddocks.

A car drives down the gravel lane towards the big double doors of the stables.

A young girl, BETH GARNER excitedly exits the vehicle followed by an older couple, her grandparents.

INT. WHITEPINES STABLES - DAY

Beth runs through the modern stables to a stall and she jumps up onto the stall door with one arm and with the other arm holds up a carrot to a horse's open mouth.

INT. STABLES TACKROOM - DAY

As Beth enters the neat and organized tack room, a female stall person hands her a grooming carryall of brushes and a hoof pick.

Beth follows the stall person who carries the bridle and saddle.

INT. ARENA - DAY

The wood-sided arena is bright and airy with a few doors open spilling the sun on the raked sand footing.

Sitting up straight in the saddle, Beth beams as she enters the arena on her alert horse at a steady pace.

Her grandparents sit on the bleachers and watch the instructor, JEFF TANDY, check Beth's position on the horse and the equipment on the horse by running his hand over the bridle buckles, the stirrup leathers of the saddle and the fastening of the girth.
The instructor smiles at Beth and pats the horse's neck.

    JEFF
    OK, Beth. Let's begin your lesson and
    walk on, left reign.

Beth's horse walks forward.

FADE TO:

Beth and her horse stand in the centre of the arena.

The instructor approaches and pats the horse's neck and
looks at Beth.

    JEFF
    Well done, Beth.

Grinning, Beth walks her horse towards the stables.

The instructor approaches the grandparents and sits at the
edge of the bleachers.

    JEFF
    For someone so young, Beth shows
    remarkable regard for her horse.

EXT. OUTDOOR RIDING RING - EARLY EVENING

The white rail fences gleam in the early evening sun around
the outdoor riding ring.

Jeff Tandy leans against the fence near the mounting block.

The stable person leads the horse to a mounting block and
looks around.

The horse gets a bit antsy.

Jeff looks at his watch then towards the two-story
clapboard house.

The horse startles when the SLAM of a door resounds.
VERONICA SPEARS walks leisurely to the group.

JEFF
Veronica, you're late again.

The stable person gives Jeff a side-glance and shrug.

Veronica gives Jeff a haughty look.

As the stable person holds the horse, Veronica steps on the mounting block but Jeff stops her.

JEFF
Veronica, don't forget to check your saddle and bridle.

Veronica ignores him, mounts her horse, grabs the reins and kicks her pony forward without her feet in the stirrups.

The stable person reels back.

The startled pony instead of moving forward in a walk, lunges forward and Veronica falls off.

The pony runs forward.

Jeff and the stable person run toward Veronica.

SUPER: 6 YEARS LATER

INT. HIGH SCHOOL AUDITORIUM - DAY

Students pack the auditorium -- abnormally attentive and quiet.

A man and a woman both wearing aviator jumpsuits with the NASA logo stand on the stage each at a microphone.

Hands wave in the audience to be picked to ask a question.

The man points at a young teen who stands up.

TEEN BOY
When did you know you wanted to be an astronaut?
From the time my dad gave me my first telescope.

The woman points to a young girl teen who shouts out.

What if you really want to become something but everyone else tells you not to?

If you have a passion for something, follow your heart and you will find a way.

The principal stands up, claps and goes to the microphone.

Let's have a big round of applause for our special guest speakers today on career day. I'm sorry but they have to leave to go to the next school.

The students file out of the auditorium.

Walking down the crowded hallway, Beth Garner and Mary Anderson stop at their lockers and open them.

Horse pictures cover the inside of Beth's locker

What a great talk!

I know what your passion is.
BETH
Yes, but how can I get back to riding lessons? It's been six years since my grandparents died and my parents can't afford it.

MARY
Follow your heart and you will find a way.

The two girls close their lockers and shuffle along the hallway that is almost vacant.

They pass a job board.

Mary looks quickly at the notices and grabs Beth's arm.

MARY
Beth, here's a job ad looking for someone to help clean out horse stalls.

BETH
How's cleaning stalls going to fulfill my passion?

MARY
Silly, the money from cleaning the stalls can pay for the riding lessons.

BETH
That's the horse farm where I used to take my riding lessons.

Beth takes the ad off the job board, sticks it into her pocket, smiles and walks down the hall.

EXT. HORSE FARM AND HOUSE - LATE AFTERNOON

A hay truck slowly drives down the lane.

INT. HOUSE - LIVINGROOM - LATE AFTERNOON

VERONICA SPEARS and her friends AMY and KAITLAN walk into the family room.
Horse memorabilia clutter the family room walls.

The horse theme is on the couch fabric, pillows and throws.

Veronica grabs an apple off the fruit display on the coffee table and flops on the couch.

Amy and Kaitlan stop and inspect the family room.

VERONICA
Did you hear those astronauts?
Who wants to do all that work?

Amy goes over to the mantle and picks up a picture of a woman on a horse.

AMY
Veronica, who's this woman?

Kaitlan rushes over to Amy and looks at the pictures.

KAITLAN
Is she famous or something?
There are enough pictures of her here.

Veronica grabs a throw cushion off of the couch and covers her face.

VERONICA
Oh, that's my mother.

Amy goes over to a trophy on the mantelpiece picks it up and examines it.

AMY
Are these your mother's too?
She looks almost your age.

Veronica GROANS LOUDLY, takes the pillow off her face and turns her eyes to the ceiling.

Kaitlan fingers some ribbons displayed together on a wall.

KAITLAN
Which one of these is yours Veronica?
Veronica MOANS LOUDLY and throws the pillow on the floor then looks away from the girls.

VERONICA
None. I don't ride anymore.

Amy sits down beside Veronica.

AMY
Why not? You need this room to showcase your own ribbons and trophies.

Kaitlan plops into the comfy chair beside the couch and grabs a horse magazine off the coffee table and flips through it.

KAITLAN
Yeah. That can be your new goal.

Veronica's brows knit together. She looks pensive as she bites her fingernail.

EXT. STABLES - LATE AFTERNOON

A college-aged young woman walks her horse into the stables.

INT. STABLES - LATE AFTERNOON

The young woman opens the stall door and walks in her horse.

Jeff and Beth walk down the aisle of the stables.

JEFF
Thank you for applying for the stable help notice. What kind of experience do you have around horses?

BETH
Nothing recent but I took lessons here when I was ten.
JEFF
Yes, yes. I think I remember. You took lessons from me.

BETH
Yes, that's right. That seemed so long ago.

JEFF
You were doing so well. What happened?

BETH
My grandparents were paying for the lessons. When they passed away, my parents couldn't afford to pay.

Jeff and Beth stop at a stall with the nameplate 'BUDDY'.

The chestnut horse brings his head over the half door.

Beth strokes his nose.

JEFF
This is Buddy. If you got the job, he would be one of your main responsibilities.

BETH
Wow, you mean I'll be able to brush him?

JEFF
Yes, and tack him up and lead him out so Mrs. Spears can ride him.

BETH
Wow, wow.

Jeff leads Beth to a locked door that he opens and reveals a full tack room.

Beth enters, slowly looks around and touches a saddle.

JEFF
You'll be busy Beth. There are at least two other horses to take care of. That's a lot of tack to clean.
EXT. RANCH MAIL BOX - LATE AFTERNOON

MRS. SPEARS stops her vehicle, opens the mailbox, reaches in and pulls out a stack of letters and magazines that she places on the seat beside her.

She drives towards the house.

EXT. HOUSE - LATE AFTERNOON

Mrs. Spears slams the car door as she walks towards the back door and flips through the stack of mail.

INT. KITCHEN - LATE AFTERNOON

Mrs. Spears slams her keys down on the counter and throws the mail on the kitchen table.

Many envelopes are stamped with 'OVERDUE'.

Mrs. Spears walks over to the refrigerator and takes out a bottle of white wine and pours herself a big glass.

VERONICA
Can I have a glass?

WENDY
Oh. I didn't know anyone was here.

Veronica grabs a glass and pours.

WENDY
That's enough. You're too young.

Veronica flips through the mail and see the back of the magazine showing an upcoming competition.

VERONICA
I want my own ribbons on display. I want to take lessons again.

WENDY
Darling. That's great. Buddy needs the exercise.
Flipping through the magazine, Veronica stops and lays out the two-page advertisement.

VERONICA
Not Buddy. A new young European horse.

Dylan enters the kitchen and grabs an apple from a bowl on the table.

He leans over his sister's shoulder and looks at the horses in the ad.

DYLAN
Mom. If Veronica gets a new horse, I want a new guitar.

Mrs. Spears grabs the overdue letters and leaves the kitchen.

EXT. HOUSE - SUNSET

Veronica slams the kitchen door behind her as she stomps towards the stables.

INT. JEFF'S STABLE APARTMENT - NIGHT

Cozy and homey bachelor apartment.

Twangy western music RESOUNDS from a record player as Dylan STRUMS along on his guitar.

Jeff with his guitar demonstrates the chords.

Veronica bursts in the door and grabs Dylan off the worn couch.

VERONICA
Dylan, don't you know its bedtime?

JEFF
Veronica, we'll just finish this last song.
VERONICA
It's because of you, Dylan's in trouble.

DYLAN
Mr. Tandy's teaching me how to play the guitar.

VERONICA
Mom better not waste her money buying you a new guitar.

DYLAN
It's only fair if she gets you a new horse.

JEFF
A new horse? What about Buddy?

VERONICA
Not that old nag. I want my own new horse.

Veronica and Dylan leave Jeff's apartment.

Jeff goes to the window and watches the kids walk on the dark path and into the house.

He turns and takes his guitar off the couch, opens the closet door and puts the guitar inside.

Ribbons cover the inside of the closet door.

Jeff reaches inside the closet and takes a photo album from a top shelf.

He sits on the couch and slowly turns the pages.

INT. STABLES - DAY

Beth sweeps back and forth clearing the loose shavings and bits of hay in the corner aisle into an empty stall and leaves her broom.

Beth walks towards the large front doors to Buddy's stall.
As she opens his stall door, Buddy bends his head over and grabs one of the carrots out of her jeans' back pocket.

BETH
Buddy!

Buddy chews the carrot NOISELY.

He bobs his head up and down and shows his teeth in a big grin.

Beth LAUGHS.

BETH
Buddy, you're a funny guy!

She puts Buddy's halter on his head and leads him into the aisle and puts him in cross ties.

As Beth turns to go into his stall, Buddy grabs the other carrot out of her jeans' back pocket.

As Buddy chews the carrot, Beth cleans his stall.

BETH
Buddy, I only brought two carrots today. There's no more treats. Hold on a minute. I'm just tidying up your stall.

Beth throws with a pitchfork the soiled bedding into a wheelbarrow.

She retrieves a bale of compressed shavings and scatters them in Buddy's stall.

BETH
There. Your stall is now nice and clean. Now for you.

Beth unhooks him from the cross ties and leads him down the aisle.

Buddy's head nudges her.
INT. GROOMING STALL - DAY

Beth puts Buddy in cross ties.

Buddy moves his head to watch Beth.

As Beth bends over to get a brush out of the brush caddy, Buddy swishes his tail in her face.

Beth's eyes peer through his swishing tail.

BETH
Buddy, you did that on purpose.

Buddy bobs his head up and down in agreement.

With a brush in her hands, Beth goes to his left side and brushes from his neck down to his shoulders.

Buddy's neck and shoulder muscles ripple with the brushing.

Beth brushes his back and around his barrel to his belly.

When Beth brushes his belly, Buddy gets antsy and lifts his front feet up and down.

His ears go back and he lifts his head up.

BETH
OK, OK, I know it tickles. We'll be done soon.

Beth bends over and brushes his left front leg.

As she bends over, her top comes out of her jeans and reveals some bare back.

Buddy lowers his head and tickles her with his muzzle.

Beth LAUGHS.

BETH
Hey Buddy, you know how to tickle too.
INT. HOUSE LAUNDRY ROOM - EVENING

The dryer CHIMES its finished cycle.

Mrs. Spears opens the dryer door and pulls out a towel and folds it into a hamper on the floor.

Excitedly, Veronica enters with a horse magazine.

    VERONICA
    I found him, I found him.
    This is the horse I want.
    I just have to have him.

Veronica sticks the magazine page into her mother's face.

Mrs. Spears pulls back and turns to get another towel out of the dryer to fold.

    VERONICA
    You said I could have a new horse.
    It's time I won my own ribbons.

Mrs. Spears turns towards her while she hugs a towel.

    WENDY
    Veronica, we can't afford a new horse.
    You can ride my prizewinner Buddy.

Veronica stamps her foot.

    VERONICA
    Buddy is YOUR prizewinner, not mine.
    I want my own NEW horse.

Mrs. Spears put the towel on top of the full hamper and lifts it.

    VERONICA
    Mother, aren't you listening to me?

    WENDY
    Veronica, I do everything for you.

    VERONICA
    Mother, you don't do enough.
CRYING, Veronica runs out the laundry room.

Wendy Spears drops to the floor and hugs a towel to her chest.

EXT. HORSE FARM – EARLY MORNING

On a ridge, looking out onto the horse farm property, Wendy on her horse Buddy, stops and leans forward and hugs Buddy around his neck.

WENDY
Buddy, you really are my only buddy.

Buddy turns his head and touches her boot.

WENDY
OK, OK, I’ll get down for a while and we will walk.

Wendy dismounts and takes the reins over Buddy’s head and strokes his face.

Buddy lowers his head and closes his eyes.

Wendy scratches behind his ears and Buddy bobs his head up and down.

WENDY
Yes, I know it tickles.

Wendy SIGHS and looks into his eyes.

WENDY
I hope you will forgive me. I’m not spending as much time as I want to with you.

Buddy tosses his head up and STOMPS his foot.

Wendy takes the reins and walks along the ridge.

WENDY
Buddy, I don’t know what to do.

A bird flies overhead.
Wendy watches the bird’s flight.

WENDY
Oh, to have no money problems like a bird.

Buddy twitches his ears in her direction.

Wendy puts her hand on his ear and pulls it then runs her hand on Buddy’s neck.

Wendy stops, stands and looks at the property.

WENDY
If I would have paid as much attention to the farm’s finances as I did to you after Steven’s death, we now wouldn’t have our reins crossed.

Wendy mounts Buddy and turns him towards the barn.

WENDY
I don’t want Whitepine Stables to turn into a honky dude ranch with trail rides for city folks. But I don’t have a choice. I don’t know what else to do.

INT. INDOOR ARENA - DAY

Wendy walks into the indoor arena and leads Buddy.

She walks towards the door that leads to the stables.

Deep in thought, Wendy startles when she sees Jeff leading a young horse in the arena.

JEFF
Good morning, Wendy. I haven’t seen you out for a ride in a long time. Buddy must have enjoyed it.

Buddy shakes his head. Wendy strokes his neck.

WENDY
Oh Jeff, I didn’t know you’d be here.
Wendy wraps her arms around Buddy’s neck and buries her face in Buddy’s neck.

JEFF
Wendy, what’s the matter? Is it about Veronica’s new horse?

WENDY
Jeff, there isn’t going to be another horse. I can’t afford it.

Jeff’s young horse gets restless and moves around.

Jeff pays attention to the young horse.

JEFF
OK, Wendy. We now need to have a serious talk about lessons in this arena.

With a look of disapproval, Wendy takes Buddy’s reins and walks him towards the stables.

INT. STABLES, TACK ROOM - AFTERNOON

The tack room is neat with rows of saddles on saddle racks. Bridles hang on the wall next to the saddle. On the floor, a few wooden tack boxes sit against the walls. A blanket sits on top of one of the tack boxes. Beth stands in the room with a bucket of warm water at her feet. Beth wipes a saddle on a stand with a damp sponge. Jeff walks by the tack room and Beth CALLS to him.

BETH
Jeff, can I talk to you for a minute, please?
Jeff turns and comes into the tack room.

JEFF
Hi Beth. What’s up?

BETH
Nothing’s wrong Jeff. I love my work but...

JEFF
But what Beth? You’re doing a great job. We really like how you care for the horses.

BETH
I really like caring for the horses. But I want more. I miss my riding lessons.

JEFF
Well Beth, you’re in luck. We’ll be starting lessons in the next couple of weeks.

BETH
Wow. I heard something about that. But how can I afford them?

JEFF
Don’t worry, we’ll work something out.

EXT. RANCH - DAY

Veronica turns her sporty Jeep with the top down from the road into the ranch’s lane.

She brakes hard when she sees Dylan tacking a poster to a roadside fence post.

Veronica backs up her Jeep and drives along the shoulder of the road and stops where her brother is.

VERONICA
What are you doing brat?

Dylan doesn’t turn right away towards her.
VERONICA
Don’t ignore me. Does mom know you’re putting that up?

Veronica gets out of the jeep and grabs one of the posters out of his backpack on the ground.

Dylan turns and looks at Veronica as she reads the poster.

DYLAN
Isn’t it great? I’ll go and watch and pick up some tips for my flat work.

VERONICA
Jeff hasn’t taught dressage for years. Will anybody come for lessons?

DYLAN
With you getting a new horse, are you going to take dressage lessons and go into competitions like mom did?

VERONICA
Shut up Dylan. With my new horse, I’ll be better than mom.

Veronica turns and drives her Jeep back down the ranch lane.

EXT. TACK SHOP – DAY

Placing her bike against the sidewall of the building, Beth enters the tack shop.

INT. TACK SHOP – DAY

Beth walks into the front room of the saddles and bridles displays.

She walks up to a black dressage saddle with a deep seat and long side flaps and runs her hand down the seat and then the flap.

She turns over the price tag and grimaces.
She walks over to the wall display of hanging bridles.

She takes off the wall a black bridle with white noseband trim.

She turns over the price tag and grimaces.

Beth walks into the main room and nods to the sales lady.

BETH
Hello, this is my first time here.
Can you point me to where the riding breeches are?

The sales lady comes from behind the counter and takes Beth to a circular display.

Beth has two pairs of breeches on her arm. She feels one knee patch of fabric and the other breeches has soft suede.

BETH
This suede is so soft. Is it as durable as the fabric?

SALES LADY
Yes, that’s what other riders tell me. Its durability is why it’s more expensive. What colour are you looking for? You seem to be a small size.

BETH
I’m starting dressage lessons. What would you recommend?

SALES LADY
Most dressage riders choose gray or beige for their lessons and then buy white for the competition.

BETH
Oh I think it’s going to be a while before I think of competitions.
SALES LADY
Did you see the poster near the front
door? The local dressage group is
having a primary competition.

With her purchases in a bag, Beth walks to the front door
and looks at the competition poster.

INSERT: Competition poster

Veronica walks into the store, turns and sees Beth look at
the poster.

VERONICA
Oh that. My mother’s on the committee.

Veronica walks deeper into the store.

EXT. RANCH – DAY

The ranch double trailer turns from the road onto the lane
towards the barn.

At the barn door, Veronica jumps up and down and gives a
CLAP.

VERONICA
He’s here! He’s here! My new horse
is here.

Dylan comes from the barn and goes to Jeff’s door at the
trailer.

DYLAN
Jeff, what can I do to help?

Jeff climbs out of the vehicle.

JEFF
Dylan, can you check if his stall is
ready?

Dylan runs back into the barn.

Jeff goes to the front trailer door, opens it and looks in.
JEFF
We’re finally home fella.

Jeff goes to the back of the trailer and lets down the ramp.

He goes inside the trailer and unties the horse.

He hooks a lead line onto his halter.

Veronica comes to the back of the trailer and SQUEALS.

The horse shifts nervously.

JEFF
Calm down, Veronica. You are making him nervous.
Slowly unhook the back strap but be careful around his hind quarters.
Move to the side as I back him out.

Veronica unhooks the strap and then stands at the back wheels of the trailer.

Dylan and Beth stand beside Veronica.

Jeff holds the lead line as he walks forward in the trailer and the horse walks backwards.

JEFF
Come on fella. Easy does it.
Good boy.

Once outside the trailer, the horse looks around with a high head and attentive attitude.

Veronica stares with mouth open at the big, tall, massive horse.

BETH
Wow, he’s beautiful.

Wendy Spears walks up behind Veronica.

Jeff sees Wendy looking worried.
JEFF
Veronica, do you want to lead your new horse to his stall?

Veronica gives a pleased look at the horse, then turns and leaves.

VERONICA
No, I can’t. I have to be somewhere.

Jeff turns to the wide-eyed Beth.

JEFF
What about you Beth?

Beth takes his lead.

BETH
Yes, please.

Beth stands and lets the horse smell her first before she strokes his muzzle and then his neck.

She leads him into the barn.

At the cab door, Jeff closes it then turns to Wendy and hands her a large stuffed envelope.

JEFF
What do you think of Veronica’s new horse?

Wendy gives Jeff a look and turns to walk towards the house.

EXT. FARM ARENA – DAY

A young woman pulls up with her car and gets out dressed in riding gear.

Another young woman gets dropped off also dressed in riding gear.
INT. FARM ARENA - DAY

The two young women walk their horses around the arena.

Jeff Tandy stands in the middle of the arena and watches the two riders.

Beth enters the arena with Buddy and goes up to Jeff.

**BETH**

Thank you Jeff, for arranging with Mrs. Spears to let me take my lessons on Buddy.

**JEFF**

Mrs. Spears is pleased as well since she’s too busy to work Buddy.

Buddy nudges Beth.

She strokes his neck.

Beth goes to a mounting block and mounts Buddy then starts her walk around the arena.

**JEFF**

OK ladies. Please pick up a rising trot.

Jeff watches them go around the arena.

Veronica enters the arena with Shadow.

**VERONICA**

I’m late because there was nobody to saddle Shadow. I had to do it myself.

**JEFF**

Veronica, that’s part of being a horse owner. Anyways, we’ve just started.

Shadow has his head up and looks alert around the arena.

Veronica takes Shadow over to the mounting block but he won’t stand still for her to mount.
Jeff goes over and stands in front of Shadow and strokes his neck and holds his reins.

JEFF
It’s OK boy. Stand still. Take it easy.

Veronica mounts Shadow and moves the horse forward.

INSERT: Horses and riders.

The four girls dismount in the area and Jeff walks towards the group.

VERONICA
These lessons are for my new horse, Shadow. I’ve already entered him in the upcoming competition.

The other three girls are silent and look at each other.

JEFF
Veronica, with Shadow just getting here, that’s going to be a daily regime, not just once a week.

Veronica walks her horse over to Beth and hands her the reins then walks away.

VERONICA
Beth, it’s your job to put him away.

Jeff looks at Veronica disapprovingly and Beth looks at the two horses.

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

In the dark, Beth walks to the back door and opens it and enters.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Beth takes off her light jacket and hangs it on a peg on the wall.
Beth sees her place setting on the table.

She sees the dirty dishes in the sink.

She goes over to the stove with her plate and takes from the pots.

A voice CALLS from the other room.

MRS. GARNER (VO)
Beth, is that you?

BETH
Yes, mother. Sorry I’m late.

A typical housewife, MRS. GARNER walks into the kitchen.

She goes over to the counter to fill up her teacup from the teapot.

Beth sits down to eat her supper.

MRS. GARNER
What happened that you’re late?
It was your turn to make supper.

Mrs. Garner puts milk from the fridge into her mug then sits at the table with Beth.

BETH
I’m so sorry. I forgot it was my turn.
I should have called.
I didn’t realize I had to untack and put away Veronica Spears’ new horse, Shadow, after our riding lesson.

Mrs. Garner puts sugar into her tea mug and stirs.

MRS. GARNER
Beth, they seem to be giving you more work every day. Are you sure that you can handle it? That it won’t interfere with your school studies and your chores at home?

Beth takes her plate to the sink.
She fills the sink with hot sudsy water and washes the dishes.

BETH
Oh, mom. Don’t worry. I love this work. Everything is under control. I’ll remember to call next time.

Mrs. Garner takes a tea towel and wipes the dishes from the drying rack.

MRS. GARNER
Your grandparents would be so pleased to know you are back at your riding lessons.

INT. STABLES - NIGHT
Dylan opens the stable door and shuffles in.
He walks down the aisle and kicks at the cobblestone floor.
A horse leans over the door with his mouth full of hay chewing.
Dylan stops and rubs the horse’s nose.
Jeff comes down the stairs from his apartment and sees Dylan.

JEFF
Hi Dylan, I thought I heard I a noise down here. What are you doing here so late at night?

Dylan pauses and gives a big SIGH.

DYLAN
I couldn’t talk to mum. She’s too busy with her paperwork. I didn’t know what else to do.

Jeff puts his arm around Dylan.
JEFF
I can make us some cocoa upstairs and you can tell me if you like.

INT. JEFF’S APARTMENT – NIGHT

Dylan sits and pushes a pencil around at the little table.

Jeff hands Dylan a cup and puts his cup down on the table then sits down.

Jeff stirs his cocoa as he looks at Dylan.

JEFF
Sorry, Dylan. There’s no marshmallows for the cocoa.

DYLAN
I don’t want marshmallows; I want a new guitar.

Jeff stands up and gets his old guitar and sits back down to STRUM it.

JEFF
Dylan, you have a guitar. Did you tell your mother you wanted a new one?

DYLAN
Well, Veronica got a new horse. Why can’t I get a new guitar?

JEFF
What kind of new guitar?

Dylan smiles as he pulls out the folded piece of paper and hands it to Jeff.

DYLAN
Take a look at this.

Jeff gives a LOW WHISTLE as he unfolds the paper and smoothes it out on the table.

JEFF
Wow, that looks expensive.
DYLAN
Yeah, but it must be a lot less expensive than a new horse.

JEFF
If you really want this, you just have to find the right time to talk to your mom.

Jeff picks up his guitar and STRUMS.

JEFF
I have a new song to teach you.

Dylan pulls his chair closer to Jeff.

EXT. OUTSIDE ARENA - DAY

In the outside arena, Jeff has Shadow on a longe line but also with a saddle and bridle.

Jeff stands in the centre of the arena and guides Shadow in a trot around him.

With his back turned, Jeff doesn’t see Wendy with a file in her hand approach the arena.

Jeff flicks the longe whip at the ground.

JEFF
Come on Shadow; a little more forward.

As he turns with Shadow in the arena, he sees Wendy who sits on the fence.

Jeff drops the longe whip and pulls the longe line taunt.

JEFF
Walk, Shadow. Walk.

Shadow comes to a walk. Jeff tugs at the longe line.

JEFF
Whoa, Shadow.
Shadow halts while Jeff picks up the longe whip and longe line as he approaches Shadow.

He leads Shadow over to Wendy.

After she lays her folder on the ground, Wendy strokes Shadow’s forehead and nose.

WENDY
Shadow, you are such a lovely boy. Jeff, what do you think?

Jeff stokes Shadow’s neck.

JEFF
Yes, he is lovely, well-mannered and easy to work with.

WENDY
Oh, talking about work, we need to talk about our mounting expenses.

JEFF
Wendy, if expenses are getting out of hand, why did you buy Shadow?

WENDY
You know I can’t deny Veronica anything. I was her age when I went into competition. I wanted to start her off right.

JEFF
What’s wrong with Buddy? He would have been a better choice.

WENDY
You know Veronica. She won’t accept any hand-me-downs. What do you mean Buddy would have been a better choice?

JEFF
Shadow is young and excitable and needs more time and work than what Veronica is willing to give.
WENDY
I want Veronica to concentrate on her riding. Get Beth to look after Shadow’s stable needs and get him ready for Veronica to ride.

JEFF
Now don’t ignore Dylan’s needs. Dylan just wants his fair share too – a guitar – a lot less expensive than a European horse.

WENDY
He hasn’t said anything to me. How do you know that?

JEFF
Dylan comes and talks to me when you are too busy with paperwork.

WENDY
And talking about paperwork...

INT. GIRLS’ WASHROOM – DAY
Veronica and her two friends walk in and go to the counter with the mirror above.

All three girls fix their hair and makeup.

VERONICA
Both of you have to come over tonight and see my new horse, Shadow.

AMY
What a great idea! I can bring my new music CD.

KAITLAN
I have my new shoes on today. I don’t have to go into the stall with the horse, do I?
VERONICA
Oh, don’t worry. We have a girl to
do all the cleanup work.

A couple of girls come in to use the cubicles.

AMY
Isn’t that a guy’s job?

VERONICA
I would think so. But some girls are so
horse crazy that they will shovel their…

Veronica stops speaking as Beth comes out of the cubicle
and washes her hands at the sink.

As Beth leaves, she turns to Veronica.

BETH
Hi, Veronica. Yes, Shadow is a
beautiful horse.

As the washroom door closes, Veronica bursts out LAUGHING.

VERONICA
That’s the girl and she loves the dirty
work.

All three girls exit the washroom and LAUGH.

EXT. HORSE FARM LANE – DAY

A pickup truck turns off the main road onto a farm lane.
The post and rail fence has a sign advertising the local
dressage show.

INSERT: POSTER OF LOCAL DRESSAGE SHOW.

EXT. HORSE FARM – DAY

The pickup truck pulls into a crowded grassy field
temporarily used as a parking lot for trucks and horse
trailers.
Jeff gets out of the driver’s side while Dylan and Beth from the passenger side.

They walk over to the Show Secretary’s table and pick up a competitors’ list.

SHOW SECRETARY
Hello, Jeff. Are you judging or coaching today?

JEFF
Neither today. But is there someplace to put my flyers on my dressage lessons at the Whitepines Stables?

SHOW SECRETARY
There’s a table for flyers and business cards near the food area. Don’t forget our lunch barbeque today with coffee and soft drinks.

DYLAN
Come on, Beth. I’ll buy you a drink.

As Dylan and Beth run over to the food area, Jeff wanders to the literature table, puts down his flyers and picks up a brochure to look at.

Someone taps Jeff on the shoulder.

Jeff turns and sees a woman competitor.

WOMAN COMPETITOR
Hi Jeff, remember me? I took lessons from you when you were coaching for dressage competitions. Is that a flyer for intermediate or advanced lessons?

She picks up the flyer and looks at it.

WOMAN COMPETITOR
Oh, this is only for the novice.
JEFF
If you know three other interested riders, I can put together intermediate level lessons.

At the food counter, Dylan hands the woman some money and he and Beth walk away with cans of soda.

DYLAN
Beth, are you going to bring Buddy to a dressage competition?

BETH
Hey, I’ve just started lessons. I’m only borrowing Buddy, he’s not my horse.

DYLAN
Mom would let you.

BETH
What about entrance fees? The proper show clothes? Let alone, how do I get Buddy here?

Dylan and Beth go up to Jeff who looks at the score sheets pinned to the barn wall.

Jeff points at the various notations.

JEFF
I’ve taught that horse and rider in clinics. It’s nice to see them doing well.

Jeff looks at the program.

JEFF
Let’s hurry to the competition ring. They are due to ride next.

The three hurry over to the fence and stand quietly.

One judge sits at a table at the far narrow end of the ring with a scribe in a shelter.
In a shelter, a second judge sits along one of the sides in a shelter with a scribe.

On the opposite side of the ring, the caller stands.

DYLАН
Jeff, why did they choose those letters?

JEFF
Dylan, I’ve never found anyone that could answer that question.
Shh. You have to be quiet now.

The first scribe RINGS a bell on the table.

The competitor enters the competition area and trots her horse around the outside of the ring.

When she passes the first judge, the horse trots.

They continue to trot the long side of the ring and they pass the caller.

CALLER
A enter at working trot. X halt, salute.

The rider enters the ring at A.

CALLER
Proceed at working trot. C track right.

The rider halts at X and salutes the judge with her right hand, moves straight from her side and points to the ground and nods her head.

The rider proceeds at working trot to C and turns right.

CALLER
E track right. B track left.
Proceed to A.

The three lean forward on the fence intensely.

JEFF
Beth, did you notice the horse’s bend as he turned toward us?
It was very even and correct.
CALLER
'A' halt. Immobility 5 seconds. Proceed at ordinary walk.

The rider proceeds towards A, and halts but the hind legs are not square.

JEFF
Ooh, that’s not a good halt. See Beth, he is not standing square on all four legs because the halt didn’t come through from behind.

DYLAN
Oh look at him toss his head.

CALLER
H, X, F, free walk on long rein.
F will be collected walk; C will be canter right rein.

Rider proceeds with test.

CALLER
E, circle right 20 metres.
Proceed to A. K, F, lengthen stride.

JEFF
Not a bad attempt at a lengthen stride.

CALLER
F, working canter. C, working trot.
D, X, K, lengthen stride.
K, A, working trot. A canter left lead.
E circle 20 metres. Proceed to F.
F, K, lengthen stride.
K, A, working trot. A turn down center line. X halt salute.

As the rider comes to 'X', the horse halts at 'X'.

The rider puts both reins in her left hand, and drops her right arm towards the ground and nods her thank you to the judge.

The judge stands and nods to the rider.
As the judge sits down again, the rider gives her horse a free rein and exits the ring at ‘A’.

The rider gives the horse a pat on the neck.

As the three walk away from the fence, Jeff turns to Beth.

JEFF
Beth, you can do that.

BETH
Oh, Jeff, do you really think so? I’d love to. How long does it take to learn to do all that?

JEFF
Well Beth, riders spend their entire lives perfecting their riding. But preparing for competition is straightforward and you would have the advantage of being able to ride a trained and experienced horse in Buddy.

DYLAN
I’m hungry. Let’s eat.

Finishing their meals, Jeff sees the rider at the scoreboard.

JEFF
I’m going to talk to the rider. Why don’t you two take your drinks and I’ll meet you at the warm-up ring?

INT. WARM-UP RING - DAY

Dylan and Beth walk through the open sliding doors to a roped off area where other spectators stand.

BETH
Wow, Dylan look at all these horses. It really would be nice to be able to ride like this.
DYLAN
I don’t think any of them look as good as Shadow.

Jeff enters and stands beside the kids.

In the warm-up ring, a few horses trot, a couple canter.

A couple of riders on the edge mount their horses.

JEFF
We’ve been here long enough. We need to get back to the farm.

As the three exit the warm-up ring, Beth turns and longingly looks at the riders and horse before hurrying to catch up with Jeff and Dylan.

INT. TRUCK – DAY

As Jeff drives the truck on a concession road, the three sit in the truck and talk.

DYLAN
Well, Jeff. Dressage is OK, I guess but I would love to see jumping. I think that is way more exciting.

JEFF
Dylan, it may look that way for jumping but jumper riders need to do dressage between the fences.

DYLAN
They do?

BETH
I thought the dressage competition was exciting. I love to see the horses and riders working together. I can imagine Mrs. Spears and Buddy as a team. Jeff, do you think Buddy and and I could work like that?
JEFF
Beth, I’ve seen how you relate to Buddy as you work around the stables. You two seem to have a good rapport. I’m sure it wouldn’t take any time at all.

DYLAN
Beth, does that mean you are serious to compete with Buddy?

The truck approaches their farm laneway.

JEFF
Beth, if you are serious, I am willing to train you. We spent longer than I thought at the show so now we better hurry with our chores.

EXT. FARM - DAY

The truck stops at the barn and Dylan and Beth jump out and run to the barn.

INT. STABLE - DAY

On a saddle rack sits Buddy’s saddle with the bridle and reins on a hook on the wall.

Beth brushes Buddy’s neck.

BETH
You really like that don’t you Buddy?

Dressed in her formal riding clothes, Veronica enters Buddy’s stall.

VERONICA
Shouldn’t you be doing that to my horse, Shadow, and getting him ready for my lesson?

Jeff walks by and overhears.
JEFF
That’s your job, Veronica. You’re the one riding him.

VERONICA
I may be the rider but I don’t need to do the dirty work.

JEFF
The daily brushings and tacking up helps build a relationship with your horse.

VERONICA
I’ll build my relationship with Shadow by riding him. The hired help can do the rest. I’ll be back for Shadow in time for my lesson.

As Veronica stomps out of the stall, Jeff turns to Beth.

JEFF
Since you need to tack up Shadow as well as Buddy, I’ll delay the start of the lesson until you get there. Extra warm-up won’t hurt the riders.

INT. ARENA – DAY

In the centre of the arena, Jeff stands and observes the three riders warm up the horses on a walk with a long rein.

The horses’ necks extend long and relaxed.

JEFF
Keep your horses moving forward. Just because we are warming up for our lesson doesn’t mean you can just plod along.

Beth leads Buddy into the arena to the mounting block and mounts Buddy.
JEFF
We’ll give you a few moments to warm Buddy up, Beth.

With his long walk strides, Shadow passes Buddy and Veronica turns to Beth.

VERONICA
Of course the hired help would be the one to hold us up.

The other two riders look at each other with raised eyebrows.

JEFF
Veronica, in a lesson, your horse needs your full attention.

Now ladies establish contact with your horses and move forward into a rising trot.

Veronica tightens the reins making Shadow toss his head and move forward with his nose in the air.

JEFF
Veronica, Shadow resists contact because you were too abrupt in picking up the reins. Relax your body and give him a bit more rein to help him relax and move forward.

Beth and Buddy move forward and look relaxed.

JEFF
Looking good, Beth. Ladies, you need to think about your position in the saddle. Heels down, legs long, sit up straight. With practice that will soon become automatic.
INT. ACCOUNTANT’S OFFICE – DAY

Many accounting diplomas and certificates line the office walls.

Wendy sits straight, stiff and tight-lipped.

The accountant shifts through papers on his desk.

WENDY
How bad is it?

ACCOUNTANT
I have been sending you quarterly reports. Have you not read them? Your investment interest does not cover your present expenses. With recent expensive asset purchases like that fancy European horse, you are depleting the principal at an alarming rate.

WENDY
What do I need to do?

ACCOUNTANT
Well for starters, I would suggest that you meet with your banker to review and reassign your investments.

Wendy sits quietly in the chair with her hands pressed and head down.

She looks up at the accountant.

WENDY
Thank you for seeing me. And thank you for your support since my husband’s death.

Wendy stands up and the accountant stands and they shake hands.

As she turns to go out the door, the accountant shakes his head.
INT. FAMILY ROOM – EARLY EVENING

In the family room next to the kitchen, Amy sits in a chair, Kaitlan lies on a rug, and Veronica lies on the couch.

All three girls look at different horse magazines and flip pages.

**AMY**
Veronica, look at the sparkles on this bridle. Boy, that would look great on Shadow. Everyone would look at it.

**KAITLAN**
Look what I found. Look at the colour of this saddle pad. It would be really hip on Shadow. And there are even leg wraps that match.

**VERONICA**
I want this outfit with the jeweled front and back and the tasseled cuffs. On this page is the earrings and necklace to match.

The two girls rush to look at the pages.

Wendy stands at the door and listens to the girls.

**AMY**
Oh, yes. You need to get that in blue to complement your hair.

**KAITLAN**
No, you and Shadow would be a knockout in pink.

**VERONICA**
No, wearing the white outfit, everyone would look at me.

Wendy walks into the room.

**WENDY**
Hi girls. Hi Veronica.
AMY
Hi Mrs. Spears. We better go
home now. See you Veronica.

KAITLAN
Goodbye Mrs. Spears. See you
tomorrow at school, Veronica.

The two girls stand and look at Veronica glued to the
magazines, shrug at Mrs. Spears and leave.

WENDY
Veronica, you could at least have seen
your friends to the door.
You can forget about buying anything
from those magazines. Competition has
a specific dress code.

VERONICA
Who says I want them for competition?

WENDY
I thought you wanted Shadow to go
into competition?

VERONICA
Well, yeah. I can wear the bling
in the arena before and after the
competition.

WENDY
No, we can’t afford that excess.

VERONICA
How can you call it excess when I’m the
new star and represent our farm?

WENDY
Veronica, you don’t seem to realize that
to become the farm’s next dressage star,
you need total dedication and bonding
with Shadow to win competitions.
You don’t even go to see Shadow, let
alone ride him regularly.
You can’t be a dressage star by yourself.
You need to be a team with your horse.
VERONICA
Yes, maybe that was the case in the old days but I’ve got a well-trained horse.

WENDY
Yes, Shadow is a well-trained horse in basic dressage but dressage has many levels and you must bond with your horse and train every day.

Veronica gets off the couch and brings the magazine to her mother and points to an outfit.

VERONICA
Well can I at least have this outfit?

WENDY
Honey, I told you. We can’t afford it.

Veronica throws down the magazine on the coffee table and stomps out of the room.

Wendy plops down on the couch and covers her face.

INT. STABLES – DAY

In Buddy’s stall, Beth hands Buddy a piece of apple and he greedily grabs it.

After chewing it, he sticks his nose to the side of Beth’s jeans to grab a carrot sticking out of her pocket.

Beth LAUGHS and hugs his neck.

BETH
Oh, Buddy. Don’t you ever get enough?

Beth pulls a carrot from another pocket and gives it to him.

As he eats the carrot, she runs her fingers through his mane, along his shoulder and down his front leg.

Close by, the stable door BANGS.
Buddy swings his head down and knocks Beth onto the straw.

BETH
Buddy, that wasn’t nice.
But it wasn’t nice of someone to
slam the stable door too.

Veronica appears at Buddy’s stall door.

VERONICA
Beth, what are you doing on the
floor? Thank goodness that you
keep a clean stall.
Are you alright?

Veronica comes into the stall, extends her hand and helps
Beth up.

Beth rises and dusts herself off.

BETH
I’m fine. Thanks.
I was just about to go to Shadow’s
stall. I can clean the stall while
you brush him.

Veronica barricades Buddy’s stall door with her arm.

VERONICA
You’re so good with the horses, Beth.
I’ll pay you to brush Shadow and
ride him once a week.

BETH
I would like that but I better make
sure it is OK with Jeff.

VERONICA
Jeff is the hired help. I’ll deal
with that.

Veronica turns and leaves.

Beth turns and strokes Buddy’s head.
INT. JEFF’S APARTMENT – NIGHT

Dylan dashes up the stairs into Jeff’s apartment with his new guitar in a case.

All excited, Dylan opens up his guitar case to show Jeff.

Dylan
I got it; I got it.

Jeff takes the guitar and sits in the chair.

Jeff
I’ll tune it for you, Dylan.

Dylan sits in the chair beside Jeff.

Dylan
It’s great. But I wish mom would have have bought me the one I REALLY wanted.

Jeff
Well your mother has a lot of expense running the farm

Dylan
Yeah, but that didn’t stop mom from buying a really expensive European horse for Veronica.

Jeff hands back the guitar to Dylan and gets his hanging guitar off the wall.

Jeff and Dylan STRUM their guitars.

INT. STABLES – NIGHT

In the stable aisle, Beth stands beside a wheel barrel filled with a bale of hay.

She splits the flakes of hay with her gloved hands; she tosses several flakes of hay into a horse’s stall.

Dylan walks down the stairs from Jeff’s apartment carrying his guitar case and down the stable aisle towards Beth.
DYLAN
Hi Beth.

BETH
Hi Dylan. I heard you playing upstairs. You sounded great!

DYLAN
Oh yeah! Look at my new guitar. And Jeff taught me a new song. Boy, is he a good player.

Dylan takes his guitar out of the case while Beth gets him a mounting block to sit on.

Dylan plays his guitar as Beth continues her chores.

From the bottom of the apartment stairs, Jeff watches and listens to the two but doesn’t say anything.

INT. WENDY’S OFFICE - DAY

In her home office at the back of the house, Wendy intensely types at her computer.

Papers and files litter the desk.

A KNOCK at the side door to the desk startles Wendy who turns and sees Jeff coming through the door.

WENDY
Hello Jeff. I’m rather busy doing some important paperwork. Will this take long?

Jeff goes to sit on a chair beside the desk and picks up on the seat a file folder marked ‘UNPAID BILLS’ and the bills spill on the floor.

As he and Wendy pick them up, he looks at a few and notices the overdue dates.

JEFF
Wendy, why aren’t these bills paid yet? We can’t get bad credit from our barn suppliers.
WENDY
Jeff, don’t worry. They will be paid by the end of the week. What do you want to discuss with me?

JEFF
I found out about a competition coming up at a farm close by and it would be good exposure for both Veronica and Shadow.

WENDY
That sounds like a great idea. Have you mentioned it to Veronica?

JEFF
No, not yet. I need to chat with her about riding Shadow more than just at her weekly lessons.

WENDY
How are her lessons coming along?

JEFF
There are some challenges. Truthfully, Shadow needs more schooling than Veronica is willing to give him. I’ll start riding him between lessons in the hope of encouraging her.

WENDY
At the moment, Veronica needs to pay attention to her schoolwork but once school is out for the summer, she should have more time to spend with Shadow. I think your suggestion to ride Shadow more would be a good idea.

JEFF
You know Wendy, Beth has been riding Buddy in lessons and has expressed interest in riding in competitions. What about allowing her to ride Buddy more frequently, then I can work with both horses?
WENDY
Buddy would love the attention and exercise and as you are there to supervise, that would be alright with me.

Jeff stands up and hands Wendy the file of unpaid bills.

JEFF
I’ll let you get back to your paperwork.

Wendy nods and goes back to her computer as Jeff exits through the door.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL CAFETERIA – DAY
Busy lunchtime cafeteria.
Beth and her friend eat their lunch at a cafeteria table.
Veronica and her two friends approach the two girls.

VERONICA
Hi girls, we’re off to support our team in the big game this afternoon. Beth, this give you extra time to exercise Shadow.

Veronica turns back to her friends

VERONICA
Come on, we need to get a good seat in the stands but I have to check my hair first.

Beth’s friend turns to her.

MARY
What was that all about?

BETH
Veronica pays me to ride her new horse Shadow. Anyways, I need the money to enter an upcoming competition with my borrowed horse Buddy.
MARY
You are getting horse crazy. I never see you anymore. I was hoping we could go to the game together.

BETH
I’m sorry but between the chores at the farm and home and schoolwork, I don’t have any spare time.

Beth’s friend gives Beth a pensive look, stands up, takes her dishes on the tray and walks away.

Beth looks down at her lunch and pushes it away.

EXT. HOUSE – NIGHT

Beth bicycles up the path to her house.

Her mother sits in a porch swing and stands up as Beth hurries to the back door and approaches the porch.

MRS. GARNER
Beth, I’m here on the porch. Where were you? I was worried. Why are you so late?

Beth goes up to the porch with her bike and looks up at her mother.

BETH
Sorry, mum. I had so much work to do at the farm that the time ran away from me. And I got to ride a new horse today, Shadow. He’s a new horse that has come from Europe.

MRS. GARNER
That’s all well and good but you are ignoring your chores at home. It seems to me that they expect you to do more and more at the farm. I don’t want you to be taken advantage of.
BETH
But mum. I am getting paid for my work at the farm. The money goes towards my riding.

MRS. GARNER
Is there an adult that supervises your riding?

BETH
Yes, the farm has an award winning trainer who supervises everything I do.

MRS. GARNER
Was he there while you were riding that new horse?

BETH
Yes, mum. This was lesson night and Shadow’s owner couldn’t show up.

MRS. GARNER
Beth, I wish you had told me. I had to do some of your chores. And now your dinner is cold. Beth, you are 16 years old. You need to be more responsible. You know how to use a telephone. Why didn’t you call me? I’m not about to take on your chores so you have more time to play.

BETH
I’m sorry mum. I have extra work with two horses and I couldn’t work fast enough. Mum, this isn’t play for me. I really enjoy working with horses and I want to make a career out of it.

MRS. GARNER
Beth, that’s no excuse for ignoring your chores at home. Hurry up and warm up your supper.

Beth walks her bike around the house.
INT. BETH’S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Beth lies stretched out on the bed on her stomach.

She flips through a horse magazine.

She pauses and looks at a picture in the magazine.

She looks up at a picture of her grandparents on her dresser.

FLASHBACK:

EXT. HORSE FARM - DAY

Beth at 10 years old sits beaming on a pony.

Standing beside her, her grandparents look at her lovingly.

BACK TO PRESENT:

Beth gives a big SIGH.

She leaves the magazine on her bed as she rolls onto her back.

She looks at the various horse paraphernalia in her room: horse posters on her walls, a few horse books on her dresser, a horse afghan on her bed, small horse figurines on shelving units on the wall, a horse throw pillow, a horsy calendar, horse stuffed animals, an old wooden rocking horse, a plastic farm set, horse magazines in a rack, etc.

Beth gets up from the bed and goes to her dresser.

She picks up the picture of her grandparents and looks at it.

EXT. OUTSIDE RIDING RING - DAY

Side by side, Beth walks Buddy and Jeff walks Shadow on a loose rein along the perimeter fence.
The two students exit the ring with their horses.

BETH
Shadow is really a wonderful horse, isn’t he. I hope someday I can ride him as well as you.

JEFF
Well Beth, you have a great teacher in Buddy and the two of you get along so well. It’s as if you were made for each other.

BETH
Buddy is lovely to ride. He has smooth gaits and so well trained.

JEFF
Wendy deserves all the credit. She and Buddy have a special bond. My contribution was overseeing their training.

BETH
But I also enjoyed riding Shadow the other day. He is a completely different type of horse to ride, isn’t he?

JEFF
Describe how you found him to be different?

Beth rides in silence for a few strides.

BETH
Well first of all, I found that I needed to be very clear when I cued him to trot or canter. And he didn’t always pay attention to me the way Buddy does.

JEFF
That’s because he’s young yet. He’ll get better with more frequent riding and consistent training.
Both Beth and Jeff stop the horses at the gate and dismount.

They run the stirrups to the top of the harness.

They take the reins over the horses’ heads and hold the reins in their hands as they walk them towards the barn.

Beth reaches up and pats Buddy’s neck.

Buddy turns and nuzzles Beth.

All four disappear into the barn.

INT. LAWYER’S RECEPTION AREA – DAY

In a couture business suit, Wendy walks into the high-end lawyer’s reception area and goes up to the expansive desk.

    WENDY
    Hello, I’m Mrs. Spears. I have an appointment with Mr. Donnally.

The receptionist doesn’t look up.

    RECEPTIONIST
    Thank you, Mrs. Spears. Mr. Donnally will be with you in a moment.

Wendy sits upright in a padded upholstered chair.

She takes one magazines and flips through it quickly.

She puts that one down and takes another and flips through that one quickly and puts it down.

She folds her hands in her lap and looks around.

She stands up and looks at a painting on the wall.

She sits down and picks up a newspaper.

A man from the offices enters the reception area and takes a client to his office.

The receptionist looks at Wendy.
RECEPTIONIST
Mrs. Spears, may I get you a coffee?

WENDY
Will Mr. Donnally be long?

RECEPTIONIST
I will check with his secretary.

The receptionist calls.

Wendy leans forward in anticipation.

RECEPTIONIST
He shouldn’t be much longer, Mrs. Spears.

Wendy leans back and clutches her purse.

An older man walks into the reception area, goes to Wendy and shakes her hand.

MR. DONNALLY
Mrs. Spears, sorry to keep you waiting. Please follow me.

He turns and heads down the hall and Wendy follows.

INT. LAWYER’S OFFICE – DAY

Leather bound-books line two walls of the dark-wood office.

Wendy sits down and looks at her hands.

MR. DONNALLY
Mrs. Spears, you have some questions on your daughter Veronica’s trust fund?

WENDY
Yes, I bought Veronica a new European horse. I would like to inquire if his costs can be reimbursed from the trust fund.
MR. DONNALLY
That fund was set up in Veronica’s name only by your deceased husband. She can access part of it at 18 for her education and the rest at 21. Those are an iron-clad direction.

WENDY
Mr. Donnally, I took the funds for her horse from my business account. It was a larger expense than I expected. And now money is quite tight. Are you sure there is nothing you can do?

MR. DONNALLY
Mrs. Spears, once Veronica reaches 18, she could reimburse you if she is going into competition as you had. Until then our hands are tied.

WENDY
Mr. Donnally, I really need the money now.

MR. DONNALLY
Mrs. Spears, I suggest you speak to your banker.

INT. STABLE – DAY
In the stable aisle, Buddy stands quiet in crossties.

On Buddy’s right side facing his neck, Beth stands and combs his mane.

BETH
Oh, Buddy. You are so patient and quiet.

Beth’s hand runs from the base to the tip of his ear. Buddy inclines his head towards her.

Beth GIGGLES.

BETH
You’re such a glutton for attention.
Beth combs Buddy’s mane and takes out tangles and knots.

Dylan walks in, carries his guitar case, grabs a stool and pulls it near Beth.

**DYLAN**

Hi, Beth. I saw you working in the barn. I thought I’d practice my guitar and give you some background music.

**BETH**

Hi, Dylan. I don’t mind. Do you mind Buddy?

Buddy stretches his neck towards Dylan’s guitar case and wiggles his lips.

**DYLAN**

Hey, Buddy! That’s not food. That’s my guitar case.

Dylan picks up his guitar from the case and seats himself on the stool and STRUMS.

Beth returns to the tangle on Buddy’s mane.

**INT. VERONICA’S BEDROOM – DAY**

Movie posters wallpaper the walls, an open closet door bursts with clothes, shoes pile on the floor, a vanity piled with makeup.

The three girls sprawl on the bed and flip through magazines.

**AMY**

Veronica, look at this haircut. You would look great with short hair.

**VERONICA**

All the boys like long hair.

**KAITLAN**

You gotta get this jewellery. These earrings are so sweet.
Amy leans over and looks at Kaitlan’s magazine.

AMY
Veronica, can you wear those earrings in the show ring? Boy, they would attract attention.

KAITLAN
Veronica, have you decided yet where to put your trophy shelf?

VERONICA
I haven’t decided if the trophy case should go in the front hall or the stable.

AMY
The front hall would be cool. All your visitors would see it.

KAITLAN
But if you put it in the stables, all the students would be jealous.

Veronica leans back on the pillows on her bed and smiles.

EXT. HORSE TRAILER DEPOT - DAY

A pickup truck backs up to a tagalong double horse trailer in a parking lot of horse trailers.

Jeff and Beth get out of the pickup.

Jeff walks around the horse trailer and examines it.

JEFF TANDY
Let’s go to the office and see what damage there is.

As Jeff and Beth walk by other horse trailers, Beth stops at a large shiny aluminum gooseneck horse trailer.
BETH
Oh, Jeff. Isn’t this a gorgeous trailer. The horses would have more room to be comfortable in a trailer like this.

JEFF
We had a trailer like this one where I used to work. Yes, you are right. The horses do ride more comfortably.

INT. HORSE TRAILER OFFICE – DAY

Jeff and Beth step up to the counter.

JEFF
Hello, I’m Jeff Tandy from Whitepines Stables. We are here to pick up our horse trailer that was in for servicing.

A man comes up to the computer monitor at the counter and types.

MAN
I’m glad you’re here, Mr. Tandy. We’ve done the service you requested on the trailer but there’s more work to be done to ensure that it is safe for the road and the horses.

JEFF
I was afraid of that. What kind of extra work are we talking about?

MAN
Let’s go out to your trailer and I’ll show you.

As the three start to walk out the door, Beth notices a bulletin board.

She goes up to it and flips through the used trailer ads.
INT. WENDY’S HOME OFFICE – DAY

A female in business dress, CAROLINE CARTER sits at a chair beside Wendy’s desk and works on a laptop.

Wendy enters her office with a tray of teacups, a teapot, cream, sugar, spoons and napkins and places the tray in the middle of the desk.

Wendy’s papers and files are in piles on both sides of her desk.

As she stands, Wendy pours the two cups of tea.

    WENDY
    It is lovely to see you, Caroline.
    I was surprised to get your call.
    What brings you here today?
    Would you like cream and sugar in your tea?

    CAROLINE
    Thank you. I drink it clear.

Wendy hands her a cup then sits in her chair behind the desk.

Caroline takes a sip of her tea then turns her laptop towards Wendy.

    CAROLINE
    In light of this economic downturn, I thought it wise to sit down with you and review your investment portfolio and make sure we are well positioned for the coming economic recovery.

Wendy sits quiet and stirs in her sugar and cream.

    WENDY
    I see.

Caroline types on her laptop which brings up a new screen.
WENDY
Caroline, how much of my portfolio is liquid?

CAROLINE
Just a minute, I’ll double check but your investments are all in long-time funds and there are severe fines and penalties for withdrawing or cashing out early.

WENDY
What is long-term? Would any funds be available soon?

Caroline types on her laptop then turns her screen in Wendy’s direction.

CAROLINE
Sorry, nothing before two years.

WENDY
Would any of the investments set aside for Veronica and Dylan be available?

Caroline types on her laptop.

CAROLINE
You can’t touch those, Wendy. What’s going on here?

WENDY
Well as you said, in this economic downturn, expenses are up and income is down and I need to find sources of cash to pay the monthly bills.

CAROLINE
At this point, you would lose too much if you cashed out any funds. I would recommend that you talk to your banker to get a second mortgage to tide you over.

Caroline turns her laptop and points to the screen.
Wendy leans forward with a concerned look.

**EXT. OUTSIDE RING - DAY**

Mounted on Shadow, Beth’s face shows great concentration as they trot along one side of the ring.

Shadow’s demeanor shows attention: his ears prick towards Beth, his head is steady, his shoulder muscles are soft, his movements are fluid, and his tail is held relaxed to his body.

He moves forward smoothly.

At the end of the ring, Beth sits up a bit straighter and her hands become still.

Shadow responds by slowing to a walk.

Beth loosens her reins and leans forward to pat Shadow’s neck.

BETH
Oh, what a good boy you are Shadow.

Shadow nods his head and stretches his neck forward.

Beth LAUGHS.

BETH
You think a lot of yourself, don’t you? I think you have every right to. You are wonderful.

Beth walks Shadow around the ring and leans forward and runs her fingers along his neck along the crest of his mane from his withers to his ears and back down again.

They walk to the gate and stop.

Beth dismounts and takes the reins over Shadow’s head and slides the stirrups up to the seat of the saddle.

Jeff comes out of the barn to the ring.
JEFF
Beth, I watched the end of your ride.
You get along well with Shadow.

Beth strokes Shadow’s neck as he stands quiet.

BETH
I really enjoy riding him.
Veronica is lucky to have a horse like him.

JEFF
Yes, Shadow has the ability and potential to be a champion. He just needs a rider that brings that out.

Jeff strokes Shadow’s muzzle.

JEFF
You did a good job, Beth.

Beth walks Shadow towards the barn.

EXT. PADDOCK – DAY

Beth leads the unbridled Shadow into the outdoor paddock and closes the gate.

Beth turns and sits on the picnic table near the paddock and watches Shadow roll on the ground.

Dylan walks up to the picnic table and sits beside Beth.

DYLAN
Shadow looks like he is having fun.

BETH
Yeah, right after I brushed him.

Beth LAUGHS and turns to Dylan.

BETH
You’re right. He looks like he is having fun.

Dylan pushes Beth in the shoulder.
DYLAN
It’s good to have fun and you’re a lot more fun than my sister. I can’t goof around with her.

Beth gives Dylan a little push back.

BETH
Is this what you mean by goofing around? I don’t have any brothers and sisters to goof around with.

DYLAN
What is it like to be an only child? You sure wouldn’t have to share.

BETH
There’s that. But I don’t have anyone my age to talk to.

DYLAN
But all girls talk about is their clothes and their hair.

BETH
For me, I’d rather talk about horses any day.

DYLAN
Horses? I’ll talk about music and my guitar any time.

BETH GARNER
No wonder you are always with your guitar.

Beth gets off the picnic table and looks at her watch.

BETH GARNER
It’s getting late. I better get back to my chores.

Dylan gets off the picnic table and they both walk back to the barn.
INT. WENDY’S OFFICE – NIGHT

In her office at her desk, Wendy puts down the phone.

Jeff TAPS at the door and walks in.

Wendy lifts papers off a chair near her desk and Jeff sits down.

WENDY
Good evening, Jeff. What brings you here this night?

Jeff pulls out a paper out of his shirt pocket and unfolds it and lays it on the desk in front of Wendy.

JEFF
I saw your office light on so brought over the estimate for the repair to the trailer.

Jeff pushes the paper closer to her.

Without giving it a glance, Wendy picks up the paper and puts it on another pile.

In a glare, Jeff watches Wendy move the paper.

JEFF
Wendy, you have to look at this. The trailer must be repaired for the safety of the horses and to meet the towing vehicle standards. You can’t risk Shadow and Buddy to use the trailer as it is.

WENDY
I don’t want to look at it. I can’t face it right now.

Jeff looks at her with concern.

JEFF
Wendy, is everything alright? Have you been paying the bills?

Wendy looks at Jeff.
WENDY
The bills are being dealt with.

Wendy turns back to her paperwork.

JEFF
If you ever need help Wendy, I am here to help.

Wendy shuffles her papers in silence.

Jeff looks at Wendy’s back and stands up, and leaves.

INT. BANK ACCOUNT MANAGER’S OFFICE—DAY

Wendy with hands clenched leans forward in her seat toward the clean-cut professional young man.

WENDY
I’ve been a client of the bank for a long time. Why can’t my overdraft be increased at this time? It’s not as though I am asking for a lot.

The young man looks at her with impatience.

ACCOUNT MANAGER
Mrs. Spears. You haven’t increased your assets and income to justify your increase in your overdraft. There is the matter of a number of NSF cheques.

WENDY
Of course, that’s why I need the overdraft.

The young man closes the file on his desk.

ACCOUNT MANAGER
If your farm income isn’t increasing, then it’s time to consider selling some of your assets.
WENDY
But my assets are the farm and the horses.

ACCOUNT MANAGER
Maybe you need to sell some of your horses.

WENDY
I couldn’t. It’s the horses that bring in the income.

ACCOUNT MANAGER
Then you have to drastically reduce your expenses.

WENDY
This isn’t helpful. Maybe I need to move my business to another bank.

The young man stands up.

ACCOUNT MANAGER
In that case Mrs. Spears, I recommend you clean up your credit record. I’ll see you out.

WENDY
Don’t bother.

Wendy leaves the office and slams the door.

INT. STABLES – DAY

Buddy stands in the stable’s aisle with his saddle on. At his head, Wendy does final adjustments to his bridle. She pats his neck. The reins of the bridle are over her forearm, turns and leads him out the stable door.
EXT. STABLES - DAY

Wendy leads Buddy up to the mounting block where it is on his left side.

She puts the reins over his head.

She steps up onto the mounting block with the reins in her hand.

She checks that the girth on his saddle is snug.

She pulls down the stirrup and mounts Buddy.

She turns and walks to an open field.

They follow a fence line into a wooded area.

They stop and Buddy eats some leaves on the trees.

As Buddy stretches his neck down to eat the grass on the ground.

Wendy leans forward to pat his neck and rub her hand along his neck.

Wendy gives out a big SIGH.

WENDY

It’s so hard Buddy. I wish you could tell me what to do.
Remember when we used to not have a care in the world. It was so great then. (SIGH)
I guess I have no choice ... but it was good, wasn’t it, Buddy?

Wendy gathers up his reins and turns towards the stables.

INT. STABLES - DAY

Buddy stands in cross ties in the middle of the aisle.

A man, DR. OSGOODE, puts one of Buddy’s legs back down on the ground.
Wendy stands in front of Buddy and watches.

Dr. Osgoode stands up and pats Buddy on the neck.

    DR. OSGOODE
    You have a fine and healthy horse here, Mrs. Spears. He seems in great shape and checks out sound. I’ll give you the results of his x-rays as soon as I have them. Goodbye and good luck.

The two shakes hands.

    WENDY
    Thank you, Dr. Osgoode.

As he turns to leave, Jeff comes into the stables.

    JEFF
    Hi, Dr. Osgoode. Is everything OK?

    DR. OSGOODE
    Oh yes. I was just doing a vet check on Buddy.

In confusion, Jeff looks at Buddy, Wendy and Dr. Osgoode.

Jeff and Dr. Osgoode shake hands and Dr. Osgoode leaves.

Jeff walks over to Wendy.

    JEFF
    Wendy, what was that all about?

Wendy undoes the crossties off of Buddy.

    WENDY
    I HAVE TO cut expenses on the farm and I have decided to sell Buddy.

Beth enters the stables and runs up to Buddy.

    BETH
    Oh, no. Not Buddy. He’s my favourite.
WENDY
Sorry, Beth. He needs to be sold by September. Here, you can put him away.

Wendy walks out of the stables and Jeff follows her.

Beth takes Buddy into his stall and puts her arms around his neck, buries her face into his mane as the tears roll down and she SOBS.

EXT. FARM - DAY

Wendy hurries along the path towards her office and Jeff follows.

JEFF
Wendy, Wendy.

Wendy doesn’t stop so Jeff leaps forward, grabs her by the arm and turns her around to face him.

Wendy turns around upset.

JEFF
Wendy, what’s going on here?

WENDY
Can’t you see? I’m trying to cut expenses.

JEFF
But selling Buddy? You have had him for so long. Things can’t be that bad.

WENDY
Yes they are. I paid for Shadow out of the farm’s expenses. I can’t access any other funds. I don’t see where I have any other choice.

Jeff crosses his arms across his chest and looks astonished.

JEFF
Wendy, how could you jeopardize the farm like that?
Wendy storms into her office and slams the door.

EXT. OUTDOOR RING - DAY

Jeff on Shadow and Beth on Buddy walk around the perimeter of the ring with the horses on a loose rein.

Apprehensive, Beth glances at Jeff a number of times.

Jeff turns and sees the concern on her face.

Jeff urges Shadow to catch up to Buddy.

JEFF
Is something bothering you, Beth?

Beth leans over and strokes Buddy’s neck then turns and looks at Jeff.

BETH
I can’t believe that Mrs. Spears wants to sell Buddy.

JEFF
Farm operations sometimes means making tough decisions.

Beth reaches out and strokes Buddy’s neck.

BETH
Jeff, you know I like Buddy and we ride well. How much would a horse like Buddy cost?

JEFF
Beth, horses with Buddy’s training and competition experience, would command a hefty fee.

Beth gives a nervous LAUGH.

BETH
More than I would make this summer cleaning out stalls?
JEFF
I’m afraid so.

Beth rides quiet and pensive as they ride to the ring exit.

INT. FEED STORE – DAY

Through the window of the feed store, a couple of men haul bags of feed into the back of Jeff’s truck.

At the counter, Jeff pulls out his wallet and gives cash for the invoice.

Beth walks over to the notice board and looks at the ads.

She grabs one printed flyer and runs up to Jeff as he turns to the door.

JEFF
Beth, what have you got there? You look awfully excited.

BETH
Jeff, this may be what I have been looking for.

INT. TRUCK – DAY

Both seated in the truck, Jeff takes the flyer from Beth and looks at it.

JEFF
Well Beth, you’re setting your sights high. Why do you want to go into this show?

BETH
Jeff, don’t you see? If I could win this competition, I could put the money towards buying Buddy. Can you help me?

Jeff turns on the truck and drives down the road.
JEFF
Beth, I’m always ready to help. But do you realize how hard you’ll need to work to get ready for this competition?

BETH
I’m finished school next week. Jeff, I’ll do whatever it takes.

INT. STABLES - DAY

Jeff tacks up the competition flyer on a notice board as Beth watches.

Jeff turns to Beth.

JEFF
Beth, let’s see if any of the other riders are interested in the competition and we can put together an intensive training schedule.

BETH
That’s fair. But what can I do in the meantime? I want to get started now.

Veronica walks in the door and notices the colourful poster.

JEFF
OK Beth. Let’s get started in today’s riding lesson.

VERONICA
What are you going to be doing differently in the lesson today?

Beth points to the poster.

BETH
I want to start training for this competition.

Veronica takes a closer look at the poster.
Beth is taken aback and looks at Jeff who looks noncommittal.

VERONICA
That looks like a good chance for me to show off Shadow. I want ride in it too.

JEFF
Well, ladies. I suggest you get your horses ready and prepare yourselves for some hard work.

Veronica looks at her watch and turns to Beth.

VERONICA
Beth, there’s enough time for you to get Shadow ready. I’ll go tell my Mom the good news.

Veronica turns and leaves.

Beth is wide-mouthed in shock.

Jeff watches Veronica walk away.

INT. FAMILY ROOM – DAY

Veronica runs into the family room, stops abruptly as she sees her mother who vacuums the rug.

VERONICA
Mom, what are you doing? Didn’t the cleaning lady show up today?

Wendy stops the vacuum.

WENDY
Veronica, you and I are now the cleaning staff. We have to cut back on expenses.

VERONICA
Yah, right. Guess what Mom? There’s a big competition coming up in the fall and I’m going to ride it.
WENDY
Veronica, that’s wonderful. I’d love to see you train more with Shadow this summer. Is that the annual fall benefit competition? That’s the one that started Buddy and I on our successful career.

Veronica shrugs and plops into a chair.

VERONICA
I don’t know. You’ll have to talk to Jeff. He posted the flyer in the barn. We’ll have to go shopping for new riding clothes. I want some bling and a new top hat.

WENDY
Whoa, young lady. We have some time yet. Let’s see how your training with Shadow progresses.

Veronica bounds out of the chair.

VERONICA
For heavens sake. What’s the holdup? I told you I was going in the competition.

Veronica gives her mother a look, runs out of the room and slams the door.

Wendy slumps into a chair and puts her hands to her face.

EXT. FARM – DAY

Outside the stables, Beth rakes strands of hay off the driveway.

Dylan saunters up to her with his guitar over his shoulder.

DYLAN
Hey, Beth. Let me know when you will take a break and I’ll play the latest song that Jeff taught me.

Beth stops and leans on her rake.
BETH
Hi Dylan. If it only takes a couple of minutes, I’ll stand here and listen. Sorry, I have too many extra chores today to take a break. I need to get home by dinnertime and do those chores.

DYLAN
That’s good school’s ending. You won’t have to worry about school work anymore.

BETH
Yes, but my free time will be taken up by training for the fall competition.

DYLAN
Veronica’s been talking non-stop to her friends about an upcoming competition. Would that be the same one?

BETH
Yes, I think it is. I’m glad Veronica will spend more time with Shadow.

DYLAN
As long as she can pay more attention to Shadow than her school books. But she certainly is excited about it!

Beth gives a secret smile to herself, goes back to her raking as Dylan strums his guitar.

EXT. SCHOOL PICNIC TABLE – DAY

Students mill around outside the high school cafeteria.

On a picnic table, Veronica sits on the top level while her friends sit on the benches.

Veronica flips to a page in a magazine and shows it to the two girls.
VERONICA
Remember this dressage jacket we saw in this magazine? Now I have the perfect event to wear it at. My mother and I will order at the tack shop.

AMY
What event is that Veronica?

KAITLAN
Can we go watch you?

VERONICA
It’s a dressage competition in the fall. You will definitely be there to cheer me on.

Veronica flips through the magazine.

VERONICA
What pair of breeches will go good with this jacket?

A student approaches the girls at the picnic table.

STUDENT
Excuse me, Veronica. Your name was just announced over the loud speaker. You are wanted in the office.

Veronica looks at the student with impatience.

VERONICA
Oh for heavens sake. What do they want? Girls, take the magazine and see if you can find me a suitable pair of breeches. And a top hat too.

She flounces off to the school.

INT. SCHOOL OFFICE – DAY

At the front counter, Veronica DRUMS her nails.
The Principal, MR. NARDINI, pokes his head out of his office.

MR. NARDINI
Hello Veronica. Please step into my office.

INT. PRINCIPAL’S OFFICE - DAY

He escorts her into the office and sits down. He opens up a file.

MR. NARDINI
Please sit down. You won’t be surprised with what I have to tell you. You can either repeat your year or attend summer school to bring up your marks. The choice is yours.

Veronica opens her mouth and pales.

EXT. OUTDOOR RING - DAY

The riders walk the horses around the ring. Then they begin to dismount.

JEFF
Ladies, after you put away your horses, make sure you see the bulletin board for the details on the barn show that Whitepines Stables will hold. I would like you all to enter. This is a good opportunity to get show experience.

Beth is the first to lead Buddy into the barn. With excitement, the other two girl riders CHATTER as they follow her.

Veronica is slow to dismount. Jeff walks over to her. He strokes Shadow’s nose.
JEFF
You seem to be distracted today, Veronica. You know if you are going
to do well in this show, you’ll need
to focus on your horse and your riding.

VERONICA
Everyone has their off days.

INT. BARN - DAY

Veronica comes into the barn with Shadow up to Buddy in his stall.

In the aisle, Beth puts away Buddy’s brushes.

VERONICA
Now that school’s over and you will be spending more time at the barn,
you will be able to work more with Shadow. I expect him ready to win our barn show.

Veronica hands Beth Shadow’s reins and walks away.

Beth puts her arms around Shadow’s neck and pats him.

BETH
You deserve better. Don’t you boy?

INT. SPEARS’S KITCHEN - DAY

In her riding clothes, Veronica enters the spacious kitchen.

Her mother stands at the kitchen island chopping various vegetables for a salad.

WENDY
Hi Veronica. How was your riding lesson?
VERONICA
It was OK. Jeff’s giving us extra tips for the upcoming show.

WENDY
Oh honey, I’m so proud you’ll be spending more time with Shadow now that’s school’s finished. And you’ll have more time to train for our show. I remember my first show and how hard I worked towards it. Oh Veronica, can you stir the tomato sauce on the stove?

Veronica turns her back to her mother as she stirs the pot.

WENDY
Veronica, you’re awfully quiet. Is anything wrong?

VERONICA
Those stupid teachers. They’re making me go to summer school.

WENDY
Oh, Veronica.

VERONICA
And you’ll have to drive me back and forth to school since there isn’t any bus service.

Veronica stops stirring and storms out of the room.

Wendy stops her cutting.

WENDY
Veronica wait!

Wendy goes over to the sink and looks out the window.

INT. BARN ARENA – NIGHT

On their own, Beth trots Buddy on a 20-metre circle.
Buddy moves in a steady and smooth rhythm.

Beth has a focused look on her face.

She does a rising trot in rhythm to buddy’s steps.

Jeff stands at the arena door still and quiet.

When Beth gets Buddy to the far side of the 20-metre circle, she positions herself in the saddle and Buddy slows to a walk.

Beth leans forward and pats Buddy on the neck.

Jeff walks toward the two.

JEFF
That looks quite nice Beth. What are you doing riding at this time of night?

Beth looks up and Buddy walks towards Jeff.

BETH
Oh Jeff, I finished all my chores. Before I went home, I thought I’d spend some time with Buddy and get in some practice.

JEFF
I can see that your practice is paying off. You are sitting much straighter in the saddle but remember the need to keep your shoulders relaxed. As an experienced horse, Buddy will react to any tension in your body.

Jeff stands next to them and pats Buddy’s nose.

EXT. GARNER’S SIDE GARDEN – DAY

Beth’s mother weeds the garden as Beth approaches.

BETH
Hi mom. Your garden looks nice. It’s getting late. Do you want me to start dinner?
Mrs. Garner stands up and pulls off her garden gloves.

MRS. GARNER
The garden is looking nice, isn’t it?
I’m finished for today. Let’s sit and talk for a minute.

They walk over and sit down on the steps.

MRS. GARNER
Now that school’s almost over, what are your plans for the summer, Beth?

BETH
Now that’s school’s finished, I can work at the farm more and save my money for the upcoming dressage competitions with Buddy. He’s a really good horse, mum.

MRS. GARNER
Well Beth, if that is what you really want. But please be careful. Your father and I are concerned about you working with such large animals.

BETH
Oh, mum. I’m always careful.

MRS. GARNER
Come inside and help me start dinner.

Beth and her mother enter the house.

EXT. OUTSIDE RING – DAY

Wendy stands against the ring fence and watches Jeff on Buddy.

A videographer with his camera on a tripod positions himself against the fence.

Jeff canters Buddy.
VIDEOGRAPHER
Bring him past me one more time and we will be done.

Beth rides up on her bicycle to the ring.

BETH
Hi Mrs. Spears. What’s going on here?

WENDY
Hi Beth. We are taking a video of Buddy. Nowadays people want to see a horse in action before they come down to look at him to buy.

Beth looks distressed at Jeff with Buddy.

Wendy goes up to the videographer as he packs up.

VIDEOGRAPHER
Mrs. Spears, I got some great footage of your horse. It should spark a lot of interest.

Jeff dismounts and leads Buddy to the gate.

Beth takes Buddy’s reins and walks him to the barn.

She leans her head against his neck and the tears stream down.

EXT. OUTSIDE RING - DAY

Shadow is tied to the outside ring by his lead.

With one hand, Beth separates his mane and with the other hand combs his mane in one-inch sections.

Her hand movements are slow and deliberate as she talks to Shadow.
BETH
I can tell you like this, Shadow. You are such a good boy.

Shadow stands quietly.

BETH
Veronica is missing out by not brushing you. You enjoy it so much.

Dylan startles Shadow by his abrupt appearance beside Beth.

DYLAN
Hi Beth.

Beth jumps and whirls around towards Dylan.

BETH
Oh, Dylan. You startled us. Where did you come from?

DYLAN
I just came from a guitar lesson with Jeff and I thought I would play you our new song.

Without waiting for a reply, Dylan sits on the mounting block and begins to PLAY a rapid, upbeat tune.

Beth goes back to her combing Shadow but has difficulty since Shadow won’t stand still.

BETH
Dylan, I don’t think Shadow likes that song. Can you play something more quiet and calming?

Dylan stops PLAYING the ruckus sound, pauses for a couple of seconds, then PLAYS a few soothing chords.

Shadow stands quiet and turns his attention to Dylan.

Beth smiles at Dylan and resumes her combing.

Dylan smiles back and watches Beth.
EXT. HORSE FARM – DAY

An expensive new vehicle drives down the long lane from the road to the barn.

As Beth leads Shadow, Jeff exit the barn.

They all turn and watch the car approaching.

Beth and Shadow enter the outside ring.

Jeff waits as the car pulls up beside the barn.

Jeff goes up to the car and opens the door.

A middle-aged woman in riding clothes gets out of the car.

JEFF
Good morning, Mrs. Munroe. I see my directions to our farm were OK.

MRS. MUNROE
Yes, Mr. Tandy. Sorry, I’m in a bit of a hurry. Can we get on to see this horse?

She turns and looks at Beth riding Shadow with a secret smile.

INT. STABLES – DAY

Jeff and Mrs. Munroe walk up the aisle to see Buddy in crossties.

Mrs. Munroe’s smile drops in disappointment, as she looks at Buddy.

She turns around to look at the other empty stalls.

Jeff’s back is turned as he approaches Buddy.

He turns to face Mrs. Munroe as he pats Buddy’s neck.
JEFF
Mrs. Munroe, this is Buddy.

Mrs. Monroe purses her lips.

MRS. MUNROE
Oh, he looked taller in the video.

She puts her hand on his nose, then touches his face, neck and leans over as she runs her hand down his foreleg.

She straightens and runs her hand down his back.

She comes back to his head and looks at Jeff.

MRS. MUNROE
Can we go out and look at that black that is being ridden outside?

JEFF
Sorry, but Shadow isn’t for sale.

MRS. MUNROE
That’s too bad.
Thank you, Mr. Tandy.

Jeff watches her exit the barn.

He turns and gives Buddy a pat on the neck.

EXT. OUTSIDE FRONT OF BARN – DAY

Beth and Dylan approach a picnic table near the front doors of the barn.

They each take a side of the picnic table and move it towards a tree.

BETH
I’m so excited about the competition tomorrow.
DYLAN
Do you know how much work this is going to be today? I won’t have any time to practice my guitar.

BETH
Don’t complain.

Dylan stumbles and drops his end of the picnic table.

DYLAN
OUCH!

Beth hurries to Dylan who lies on the ground holding his leg.

BETH
What’s wrong?

DYLAN
My ankle.

BETH
I’ll go get Jeff.

Beth runs down the lane towards the road where Jeff pounds a stake with a sign showing directions to the competition.

EXT. HOSPITAL - DAY

Exterior of local small city hospital.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Dylan sits up on a hospital bed with one ankle bandaged. Wendy and Veronica rush into the room.

Wendy wraps her arms around Dylan.

DYLAN
Mom, I’m alright. You don’t have to do that.
VERONICA
How clumsy can you get. Is it broken or what?

WENDY
Veronica, show some compassion.

Jeff enters the room.

JEFF
Not broken. Just a bad sprain.

Dylan turns to Wendy.

DYLAN
Mom, when we came to the hospital, a nurse asked Jeff if he was my guardian or parent. Jeff said he was my father.

Wendy looks at Veronica, then Jeff, and then Dylan.

WENDY
Yes, Dylan. Jeff is your father.

Veronica’s mouth drops and she takes a big breathe.

She turns to her mother.

VERONICA
Mom, how could you?

In tears, Veronica runs out of the room.

EXT. HORSE FARM - DAY

At the road entrance to the horse farm, cars and trucks some that pull horse trailers exit.

EXT. BARN - DAY

On the side of the barn, a group of girls in riding outfits stand in front of the scoreboard but we don’t see the list of competitors and scores.
Smaller groups of girls stand and SQUEAL and LAUGH and show each other their ribbons.

INT. BARN ARENA - DAY

Veronica and her two friends walk past the arena entrance where a teen girl stands with her horse surrounded by a crowd.

VERONICA
She shouldn’t have won. She doesn’t even train here.

Amy holds up a ribbon.

AMY
But Veronica, you won second place.

KAITLAN
Veronica, this is your first competition. Second is great.

VERONICA
It’s not fair. Shadow is the better horse. He did come from Europe.

The three girls pass Beth brushing Buddy in the stall.

A third place ribbon hangs on his stall door.

Veronica grabs her ribbon from Amy and holds it up.

VERONICA
I knew I would beat the stable help.

INT. CAR - DAY

Wendy drives the car on rural roads.

Veronica sits as close to the passenger door as possible with her arms crossed and looks out the window in silence.

Wendy glances at her daughter.
WENDY
I thought Shadow did well yesterday.
The two of you looked good together.

Veronica does not speak and still looks out the window.

WENDY
Jeff says with a bit more practice
with Shadow, you have a good chance
of winning the big benefit show in
the fall.

Veronica unfolds her arms and turns to her mother.

Wendy turns and smiles at her daughter.

Wendy slows the car in front of the school and stops.

Veronica opens the car door and turns to her mother.

VERONICA
You disgust me.
Dylan isn’t even my brother, just a
stupid half-brother.
What are your friends going to think
once they find out?
Let alone, what about me?

Veronica SLAMS the car door and runs into the school.

INT. STABLES – DAY

Shadow stands in the aisle in crossties.

A saddle lies on a saddle rack up against the wall of the
stall.

An open grooming kit lies beside the saddle rack.

Beth picks up his left front leg.

Shadow tosses his head.

BETH
It’s all right guy. I’m just
cleaning your foot.
With a hoof pick in her hand, she cleans the dirt from his left front hoof.

She runs her hand along his body until she gets to his left back leg which she picks up.

Shadow tenses his hind quarters.

    BETH
    Relax fellow.

Beth cleans his left back hoof.

After she puts his foot down, she gives his hind quarter a gentle pat.

    BETH
    Good boy.

She turns and walks to his head.

Jeff walks towards them in the aisle.

    JEFF
    Beth, you had a good ride today.
    You and Shadow get along well.
    You seem to have a calming influence on him.

Beth rubs Shadow’s nose.

    BETH
    He’s a nice horse.
    Too bad Veronica doesn’t care.

Jeff gives Shadow a pat and walks away down the aisle.

INT. WENDY’S OFFICE – DAY

Wendy sits in her office and types at her computer.

Papers, files, and unopened mail clutter her desk.

Dylan hobbles in with a cane with letters in his other hand.
He sits down on a chair near the desk.

DYLAN
Hi Mom. What’s up?
I brought the mail.

Wendy turns and looks at Dylan and smiles.

WENDY
Thanks dear.

Dylan holds up one envelope with ‘URGENT’ printed on the front.

DYLAN
This one looks important.

WENDY
Oh, it’s from the bank. They always think they are important.

She taps on her desk.

WENDY
You can set them here. How’s your ankle today?

DYLAN
It’s OK. But it’s still hard to get up to dad’s apartment for my guitar lesson.

Wendy looks at Dylan.

WENDY
Oh.

She shuffles her papers around.

WENDY
I need to get back to my paperwork. So why don’t you go and practice your guitar so you can serenade me after supper tonight.

Dylan hobbles out of the office.
Wendy opens the bank’s envelope.
The bank’s letter screams ‘FINAL NOTICE’.

EXT. FARMYARD – DAY
Beth rakes the stones off the lawn back onto the driveway.
Dylan limps from the house towards Beth.

   DYLAN
Hi Beth. Are you hungry?
We just finished supper.
If you’re staying late, I can fix
you something from the kitchen.

Beth looks up at the sky.

   BETH
Supper? It can’t be that late yet.

   DYLAN
You’re fooled by the summer sun.
It’s a lot later than you think.

Beth checks her watch.

   BETH
I didn’t realize. I better get on
home. I’ll finish this tomorrow.
Bye Dylan.

Beth leans the rake against the fence.
She grabs her bike and rides up the road.

EXT. BETH’S HOUSE – DAY
Beth races on her bike up her driveway.
She leans it against the house and runs up the front stairs.
INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Mrs. Garner sits in the living room and reads the paper.

She looks up as Beth enters.

BETH
Sorry, mum. I’m late.

Mrs. Garner looks up from her paper.

MRS. GARNER
I’ve had enough of this Beth. You are ignoring your chores for those horses.

BETH
Sorry, mum. The horses are important to me. I, I, just lost track of the time.

MRS. GARNER
Beth, so far I’ve been covering for you. But with summer comes a lot more outdoor work. It takes all of the family to maintain our house. You need to do your share.

Beth stands at the door frame and looks pensive.

Mrs. Garner stands up.

MRS. GARNER
Your dinner is in the oven and the dishes are soaking in the sink. I know you are working for your lessons, but at your age, your first responsibility is to your home and family.

Mrs. Garner walks out of the room.

Beth brushes her hand across her forehead, SIGHS and heads towards the kitchen.
EXT. OUTDOOR Paddock – DAY

On a picnic table near an outdoor paddock, Beth sits and eats her lunch.

She watches Buddy eat grass in the paddock.

Dylan hobbles over with his cane.

**DYLAN**

Hi Beth. How come you’re looking so glum?

**BETH**

Dylan. What about you? How are you feeling?

**DYLAN**

Schools out. I don’t have to hurry for anything but this ankle slows me down.

Beth turns and looks at Buddy as Dylan sits beside her.

**DYLAN**

So how come you are so glum?

**BETH**

I know your mum has Buddy for sale and I’m afraid she is going to sell him before I can ride him in the fall competition. Jeff feels we have a good chance to win our division and then I might have enough money to buy him.

**DYLAN**

I’ve looked in on your training with Jeff, and you and Buddy look good together. But win the competition, oh boy, my sister would be mad.

**BETH**

How can Veronica think about winning? She is spending her time at summer school when she should be training with Shadow.
Dylan LAUGHS.

DYLAN
Don’t ever tell her that.

Beth and Dylan walk over to the paddock fence.

Buddy comes towards them.

Beth feeds Buddy a carrot.

DYLAN
I don’t have my guitar to serenade you so I’ll whistle a song I’m learning to play.

Dylan WHISTLES out of tune and Buddy puts his ears back.

BETH
Dylan, you better stick to your guitar.

Buddy tosses his head.

BETH
Even Buddy agrees.

EXT. FARMHOUSE – DAY

Dylan takes out the mail from the mailbox on a post at the road.

He turns and hobbles back down the lane down to the house while he holds the mail.

Coming from the road in a pickup truck, Jeff pulls up to Dylan.

JEFF
Hi Dylan. Hop in and I’ll give you a ride to the house.

INT. PICKUP TRUCK – DAY

Jeff leans over and opens truck passenger door.
Dylan slides in and places the letters between them.

DYLAN
Thanks, Dad. This is good timing. My ankle was starting to hurt again.

As the truck moves, the letters pan and a few have overdue stamps on the envelopes.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - DAY

The pickup comes to a stop in front of the house.

INT. PICKUP TRUCK - DAY

Jeff picks up the pile of letters and turns to Dylan.

JEFF
I need to talk to your mum anyways. I’ll go deliver this mail.

DYLAN
OK dad. I’ll see you later for our guitar lesson.

INT. WENDY’S OFFICE - DAY

Jeff enters Wendy’s office and throws the mail on her desk with the overdue envelopes on top.

Wendy swings around from her computer screen.

JEFF
What’s the meaning to this? Look at all these overdue notices. What’s going on?

Wendy reaches over and takes the mail and puts it aside.

WENDY
It’s my problem. I’m the owner of this farm. Why do you think Buddy is for sale?
JEFF
I have an interest too. For our son and my livelihood here. Don’t forget, I’ve been paying for the feed for the horses.

Wendy puts her hands over her face and CRIES.

WENDY
I don’t know what to do. I don’t know who to turn to.

Jeff moves towards Wendy.

EXT. FARM TRAIL – DAY
Beth on Buddy walks on the farm trail beside the fence.
The reins are loose.
Buddy’s neck stretches forward in a relaxed walk.
A ground hog pokes its head out of a hole.
Buddy snorts at it.
Beth LAUGHS.
Beth pats his neck, leans forward and runs her hand up his neck towards his ear.

BETH
Buddy, you’re so funny. It’s just a groundhog. Come-on. We better head back to the barn.

They walk up the lane to the stables.
Beth dismounts as Jeff appears.

JEFF
Beth, what’s wrong? You look so blue.
BETH
Oh, hi Jeff. I’m just worried that I won’t have the money to buy Buddy before someone else does. I don’t think I’m making enough money fast enough.

JEFF
Don’t worry quite yet. Remember you have a really good chance to win your division in the upcoming big competition.

BETH
Thanks, Jeff for your vote of confidence. We have been training very hard.

JEFF
Yes, Beth. I have noticed that.

Beth smiles at Jeff and leads Buddy into the stables.

INT. TACK ROOM - DAY

In a comfortably-sized room, there are saddle racks on one wall with saddles, another wall has a waterfall of halters and bridles, and on the third wall are a sink, microwave and small fridge on a counter with cupboards below.

Beth sits on a tack truck against one wall and rolls bandages.

Veronica stomps in.

VERONICA
Beth, so this is where you are? I want to talk to you about Shadow.

BETH
Hi Veronica. After I finish cleaning up the tack room, I was going to school Shadow.
VERONICA
Now you’ll need to school Shadow everyday. The competition is getting closer. I plan on blowing the competition away.

BETH
Every day? Isn’t that a bit excessive?

VERONICA
What do you care? You’re getting paid.

Veronica stomps out.

Beth stares after her.

Dylan comes in.

DYLAN
That’s my sister. Wow, is she in a mood!

Beth looks up to Dylan in dismay.

BETH
So you heard. How am I going to handle the extra work of riding Shadow every day and get home on time to do my chores there?

DYLAN
Let’s figure out how I’m going to help you.

EXT. OUTDOOR RIDING RING - DAY

Beth rides Buddy at a sitting trot around the perimeter of the ring.

Jeff is in the centre and scribes his own small circle as he follows Beth’s progress.
JEFF
That’s a good forward trot, Beth. Make sure he maintains his rhythm. It’s your responsibility as his rider to make sure his forward impulsion comes from his ‘engine’ – his quarters. Focus your attention on feeling what his quarters are doing!

BETH
At the same time as I’m watching where we’re going?

JEFF
Don’t worry. It’ll all become second nature. At the next corner, let’s have a final canter. Keep the transition into canter smooth. The power comes from his quarters, not a leap from his forehand. Sit up, Beth; tell him that with your body muscles, you’re going to ask for a change. You can’t expect to be smooth and rhythmic without preparation! Release a little with your fingers on the reins so his energy can come through from behind. The judge will want to see Buddy, not you.

Buddy moves smoothly into a canter, keeping his head level and his strides even.

JEFF
Lovely, Beth! Very nice! Canter once around the ring and then ask him to come down to a walk. Remember to tell him you want a change: prepare him for the transition with a half halt from your body.

Buddy canters steadily around the ring once.

As Beth prepares to ask Buddy to walk, she sits up straighter in the saddle and subtly tightens her fingers on the reins.

Once Buddy responds and comes to a walk, she relaxes slightly.
JEFF
Very good, Beth! All your work is really paying off. Give him a pat for a job well done and then cool him out on a long rein.

BETH
Thanks, Jeff. What a great lesson!

Jeff approaches Beth and Buddy and pats Buddy on the neck.

JEFF
You keep this up, you and Buddy have a very good chance in that big competition.

Beth grins widely and moves Buddy off to walk him around the ring to cool him out.

EXT. PADDOCK – DAY

Beth walks up the rail fence with a bag.

Buddy sees Beth, NEIGHS, and walks up to the fence.

Beth pulls out a carrot and feeds it to Buddy.

Beth pats Buddy on the nose as he eats the carrot.

BETH
Oh Buddy, you’re a wonderful horse. I know Mrs. Spears doesn’t ride you anymore, but I can’t understand why she would want to sell you.

Buddy nudges into Beth’s bag.

Beth LAUGHS, takes out an apple and feeds him.

BETH
I bet nobody else would feed you apples and carrots like I do. Buddy can you stop time so I can earn money to buy you?

Beth reaches up and rubs his ear.
Buddy bends his head into her bag.
Beth feeds him another carrot.
She continues to pat him.

**BETH**
Buddy, we have to practice real hard.
We need to win that competition so
I can get the money to buy you.

Buddy bobs his head up and down.
Beth LAUGHS and feeds him another apple.
She gives him another pat.

**BETH**
Bye Buddy. See you tomorrow.

Buddy watches as Beth bicycles down the lane.

INT. BETH’S BEDROOM - NIGHT
Beth sits cross-legged on her bed in her pajamas and leafs through a horse magazine.

There is a KNOCK on the door and her mum opens the door and enters the room.

**MRS. GARNER**
Hi sweetheart. Ready for bed?

**BETH**
Almost, mum. Just thought I’d look through this magazine for a few minutes.
Is everything okay?

Mum sits down on the end of the bed facing Beth.

**MRS. GARNER**
Yes, fine. Is that one of your horse books?
BETH
Yes. It has a good article on preparing for transitions that I wanted to read. Buddy and I can do them pretty well most of the time, but Jeff still wants us to get them so that they are steadier all the time.

MRS. GARNER
You’re enjoying your lessons aren’t you?

Beth gets a huge grin on her face.

BETH
Oh yes! I want to buy Buddy! He’s wonderful and Jeff says we get along ever so well together. I’m trying very hard to save as much money as I can, but it’s so hard. And now that Jeff has entered us in the big benefit competition I’m trying to figure out how to afford the riding clothes I’ll need. I want to look really good so I can show Buddy to his best and besides if we can win, there’s prize money that I can put towards buying him.

Beth’s face turns sad.

BETH
If no one else comes to buy him first, that is.

MRS. GARNER
I have a surprise for you, honey. I’ve been in touch with Mr. Tandy, quite often in fact, about your progress with your Buddy and his hopes for the two of you in this show. Your Dad and I have decided to buy you your show clothes! But honey, we can’t buy you anything fancy, just the plain and durable set. We are proud of the dedication of purpose that you are showing over this love of yours.
BETH
Oh Mum! How wonderful! Oh! I’ll make you proud of me, I promise.

Beth jumps up to hug her mum.

INT. STABLES - DAY

Buddy stands in cross ties with his bridle and saddle removed and draped over a saddle rack on a stall wall.

Jeff, Wendy and a woman, ERICA MALONE, in riding clothes, stand in the aisle way in front of Buddy.

Unseen, Beth enters the barn from a door in the aisle behind Buddy. She observes the woman shaking hands, first with Jeff, then with Wendy.

ERICA
Yes, Mrs. Spears. I am most interested in purchasing the horse. He would appear to be a good match for me. You do understand, I hope, my need to have my veterinarian perform a pre-purchase. That may take a week or two to set up as at this moment, I understand he is out of the area.

WENDY
Of course we understand and would expect nothing less.

JEFF
Buddy is scheduled to show in the big benefit competition coming up. Perhaps you would like to attend the show to watch him?

The woman frowns. Her demeanor remains stiff and formal.
ERICA
I was not aware of that. As a serious buyer for this horse, I can not possibly permit exposure to that environment and that amount of risk. Why, he could be hurt traveling to the show or kicked by another horse. No, most definitely not.

JEFF
Excuse me, Ma’am, but entries have already been made. And I can assure you that all possible precautions would be taken.

ERICA
No! Most definitely not. I will not consider it.

The woman turns from Jeff to Wendy.

ERICA
Good-bye again, Mrs. Spears. I’ll inform you when my veterinarian can visit.

The woman walks stiffly and quickly from the barn.

Beth remains at the far end of the aisle, her mouth open and her face showing dismay.

INT. WARM-UP RING – DAY

On the pillars in the walkway outside of the warm-up ring, maps of the show ground point to various rings.

A steward with a clipboard, checks the riders into the ring.

Wearing a competition number, Beth leads Buddy up to the steward and pauses as she checks in.

Beth leads Buddy to a mounting block at the side and settles in the saddle.

Veronica on Shadow walks up to her and Buddy.
Shadow NEIGHS at Beth and Buddy.

VERONICA
Shut up Shadow. What are you doing here?
How did you get here? My mom said
Buddy’s new owner said he couldn’t come.

BETH
Buddy’s not sold yet.

In disgust, Veronica turns and urges Shadow into a trot.

Beth moves Buddy forward in a walk avoiding other horses
and riders.

EXT. MAIN COMPETITION RING – DAY

People mill around: some stand by, some go to their seats
in the bleachers, others collect in small groups.

Just outside the main competition ring, Beth sits mounted
on Buddy.

On the left side, Jeff stands beside them and he holds a
towel and wipes Buddy’s face and nose and then polishes
Beth’s left boot.

He pats Buddy’s neck.

JEFF
You’re up next Beth. Remember Buddy
knows his stuff. You’ve worked hard
and can do a good job. Now go and
show them how it’s done.

Beth nods.

She gathers Buddy’s reins and heads Buddy to the ring.

Over the load speaker, we hear the announcer’s voice.

ANNOUNCER (V/O)
Next rider number fifty.

Beth and Buddy circle the outer ring at a trot.
Three judges and their scribes sit at tables around the ring with designated alphabet letters.

One of the judges RINGS a bell.

Beth enters the arena at ‘A’ at the required posting trot.

She halts at ‘X’ and salutes the judges.

Standing, the judges acknowledges the salute with a nod.

Beth proceeds by moving into a sitting trot and turns right at ‘C’ in front of the judge.

At the entrance to the ring, Jeff stands and watches Beth.

Wendy walks up to Jeff and watches Beth.

WENDY
Jeff, why did you bring Buddy against my wishes?

Wendy and Jeff watch Beth.

Beth performs a steady and smooth transition to canter.

JEFF
Good girl!

Jeff turns to Wendy.

JEFF
You saw. That’s why.
Veronica should be warming up Shadow.
Her test is three rides away. Wendy, could you make sure she is ready?

Jeff and Wendy turn to watch Beth finish her test.

Beth proceeds up the long side in extended trot.

She makes a smooth transition to an ordinary sitting trot at the end of the arena’s long side.

At the letter ‘A’, she turns down the centre line towards the judge who sits at ‘C’.
Beth and Buddy halt at ‘C’ and salute the judge, ending the test.

The spectators APPLAUD.

Wendy turns to Jeff.

WENDY
Buddy and Beth did a good test.

INT. WARMUP RING – DAY

Several horses and riders warm up for the test – some at a walk, some at a canter, some at a trot.

Veronica in the centre of the ring urges Shadow with her leg movements.

VERONICA
Come on Shadow.

Shadow stands still with his head high in the air immobile.

Shadow notices the milling crowd outside the warm-up ring.

His ears pin back when a big noise of SHOUTING and CLAPPING come from the outside.

Shadow wheels around in a 180 degree circle.

Suddenly another rider at canter cuts in front of Shadow.

Shadow jumps sideways and bolts towards the exit.

As he closes to the side boards of the warm-up ring, he turns to run around the ring.

Veronica loses her seat in the saddle, hits the side boards and lies still in the dirt of the ring.

From the crowd, Wendy rushes into the ring to her side.

She sees Veronica motionless and YELLS OUT.
WENDY
Someone call an ambulance.

EXT. COMPETITION GROUNDS – DAY
Beth dismounted, walks with Buddy and Jeff.
Dylan runs up to them.

DYLAN
Dad, Veronica fell off of Shadow. Mom’s going with her to the hospital. The steward’s got Shadow.

JEFF
Beth, you’ll have to cool out Buddy yourself and put him away in his stall. I’m going to see about Shadow.

INT. COMPETITION BARN’S STALL – DAY
Beth pats Buddy as he munches on his hay.

BETH
Buddy, you did well. Dylan and I are going to check the scoreboard.

EXT. COMPETITION SHOW GROUNDS – DAY
People mill around the scoreboard.
Beth points to the scoreboard with Dylan beside her.
She gives him a big hug.

BETH
Oh, no. Look Dylan. I won!
The two turn and see Jeff behind them.

JEFF
Beth, that is an excellent score. You and Buddy did well.
Beth faces Jeff with tears in her eyes.

    BETH
    But winning got me the money to buy Buddy. But how am I going to afford his monthly keep?

Jeff puts his arm around her.

EXT. BARN – DAY

A rented horse carrier pulls up beside the barn.

Jeff’s pickup pulls up beside it.

A man from the horse carrier lets down a ramp at the side.

Jeff and Beth go up the ramp and each exit with a horse.

They lead the horses into the barn.

INT. STABLES – DAY

Beth leads Buddy into his stall.

Beth takes off Buddy’s shipping boots.

Jeff approaches the stall just as Wendy and Dylan do.

    WENDY
    Beth, you gave Buddy a beautiful ride today.

Beth turns to Wendy with tears in her eyes.

    BETH
    I hope I have won enough money to buy Buddy. But I totally forgot about his upkeep.

    JEFF
    Beth, would you let me be a co-owner of Buddy?
They both turn and look at Wendy.

    WENDY
    Well, I haven’t signed Buddy’s
    sale papers yet. I would love
    to see him stay on the farm.

Beth grins and puts her arms around Buddy.

    BETH
    Thank you Mrs. Spears. Thank
    you Jeff.

Beth grins at Dylan who gives a thumbs-up.

INT. VERONICA’S BEDROOM – NIGHT

Veronica’s two friends sit in chairs as Veronica rests and
sits up on her bed.

Veronica has a neck brace and a sling around her shoulder.

    AMY
    Wait til you see the new cute guy
    in our class.

    KAITLAN
    I heard he was trying out for the
    football team.

    VERONICA
    That’s so cool.

    AMY
    When you come back to school next
    week, you’ll just have to meet him.

    KAITLAN
    You better come back. All the other
    girls are after him.

Wendy brings in a tray of sodas and cookies.
VERONICA
Why does my rehab take so long?
Darn Shadow for getting me into this fix.

WENDY
Veronica, don’t blame Shadow.
He is inexperienced. We knew your recovery would be a slow process. That’s why we enrolled you in the therapeutic riding program.

VERONICA
This is a pain.

AMY
Then we can go shopping for your new school clothes.

KAITLAN
Look at the new styles in the fashion magazines that I brought.

Wendy looks at the girls, shakes her head and leaves the room.

INT. BARN – DAY

Dylan with his guitar walks down the stairs from Jeff’s apartment.

He walks by a stall where Beth scoops feed from a bag into a line of pails.

He stops to talk to her.

DYLAN
Hey, Beth. I just finished another guitar lesson with Dad. Since you are going to be co-owners of Buddy, I’m going to write you a special song.

Beth stops in her work.
BETH
Oh, Dylan. I’m so happy. I own part of Buddy. I can’t believe it. I could hug myself.

DYLAN
I’ll give you a hug. You are almost part of the family.

Dylan and Beth hug.

Dylan and Beth overturn a couple of empty pails.

Beth sits as Dylan STRUMS on his guitar.

INT. WENDY’S OFFICE – DAY

Wendy stands near the window and looks out.

Jeff sits at the edge of her desk and looks at Wendy.

JEFF
Wendy, that was admirable of you to agree to let Buddy stay at the farm for Beth.

Wendy turns from the window and smiles.

WENDY
I remember being young and desperately wanting my own horse. And you are right. Beth and Buddy do look like they belong together.

Jeff takes some papers out of his pocket and walks over to Wendy.

JEFF
Wendy, I know you have been strained financially since purchasing Shadow. I’ve spent some time putting together a plan to secure the future of the farm. Would you like to see it?

Wendy’s lower lip trembles and her eyes fill with tears.
WENDY
Oh Jeff. Whatever would I do without you?

Wendy rests her head on his shoulder as he puts his arms around her.

EXT. OUTDOOR RIDING RING – DAY
Beth trots Buddy inside the ring.
Wendy, Dylan and Jeff lean against the fence and watch her.

DYLAN
Pretty nice, eh, mum.

WENDY
It certainly is Dylan.

Jeff puts his arm around Wendy.

JEFF
As co-owner, Wendy, you can ride Buddy whenever you want.

BETH
Yes, and Dylan, you need to learn how to ride too.

Jeff, Wendy and Dylan LAUGH as Beth brings Buddy up to the fence for all to pat his head.

FADE OUT.

THE END.