



Dark Horses and Black Beauties: Animals, Women, a Passion

Melissa Holbrook Pierson

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"Thought-provoking.... A lovely testament to horses and women from all walks of life."—Karen Stone, *Chicago Tribune*

In a phenomenon too prevalent to be mere chance, little girls all over the Western world wake one day to find themselves completely taken over by the love of all things equine. Melissa Holbrook Pierson was one of those horse-crazy girls who later returned to riding with a new appreciation for the nature of horses. Melding memoir, sociology, history, anecdote, and a bit of prose poetry, *Dark Horses and Black Beauties* delves beneath the shallow hypotheses explaining women's connection to horses to look at how this communication with another animal opens us up to a new apprehension of the larger "natural" world. "A fearless book: unflinching, honest, and kind."—*Village Voice* "The play of her mind...is subtle and quick; coltish, one wants to say, and one would be right."—*The New York Times*, Richard Bernstein "So beautifully written that it instantly captivates."—*Newark Star-Ledger* "She muses to deep and lyrical effect in her new collection of slender and delicate essays on horses and women."—Richard Bernstein, *The New York Times* "A meditation intended to dispel those tiresome Freudian theories aimed at the universal fascination women seem to have with horses."—*The New York Times Book Review*, Jillian Dunham "A fearless book: unflinching, earnest, and kind."—*Village Voice*, Emily Jenkins "This is a poignant, charming, and realistic book."—Maxine Kumin "Whoever likes animals will love this book, and better yet, whoever seeks to fathom the mysterious relationships between ourselves and other species will be transported."—Elizabeth Marshall Thomas, author of *The Hidden Life of Dogs* "As passionate as it is informative....Rich in history, romance, and charm, Pierson's devotion to horses is always engaging, and most of all, moving."—Brenda Peterson, co-editor of *Intimate Nature: The Bond Between Women and Animals* "Pierson's...writing...is well suited to her subject, containing bits of breathless enthusiasm one moment and peaceful contemplation the next."—*Publishers Weekly*

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