



An Appaloosa for Angie

by Bonnie Highsmith

- 1 "But Angie," said Mrs. Mullin, "why does it have to be an Appaloosa? Dad would be happy to buy you a horse—a pinto, perhaps—but you know that Mr. Gregg's Appaloosas are terribly expensive."
- 2 "But, mother," Angie explained, "I don't want just *any* horse."
- 3 Angie's eyes sparkled as she remembered the beautiful little colt that had been born a few weeks ago on Mr. Gregg's farm. "Mother, you should see him. He's absolutely perfect—all white with little dark-red spots."
- 4 "I'm sorry, Angie," her mother repeated firmly, "but we can't afford it, dear."
- 5 Angie put on her coat and picked up her lunch bag. "It's all right, mother," she said as she went out the door.
- 6 But as she passed Mr. Gregg's farm on her way to school, Angie knew that no horse, not even a pinto, would take the place of the Appaloosa colt.
- 7 She paused at the pasture gate where the little horse was frolicking—kicking up his heels in the sweet grass. She whistled, and the colt stopped and pricked up his ears. Angie laughed, and then realized that she would be late for school if she lingered much longer.
- 8 Ever since Mr. Gregg had purchased the

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- herd and told Angie the history of the Apaloosa, she had had her heart set on owning one. Hundreds of years ago, Mr. Gregg had said, the Nez Percé tribe, from which Angie herself was descended, had raised the Apaloosa. The horses were valued highly for their unusual markings and tremendous speed. Eventually the Nez Percé were driven off their land by settlers of the American frontier, and many of the horses were stolen or killed in battle. Finally the breed was practically extinct.
- 9 But years later a renewed interest in the Apaloosa developed, and after a careful search a few of the horses were found. It was many more years before the pure strain of the unique breed was again established. Mr. Gregg said there were now more than fifty thousand of them.
- 10 The school day seemed endless, and Angie just couldn't stop thinking about the colt. Storm clouds were building as she started home; by the time she reached the Gregg farm, the wind was blowing hard and it was starting to rain.
- 11 Angie just had to stop long enough to see the colt. But where were Lady Belle and her colt?
- 12 Suddenly Angie heard a shrill whinny coming from the grove beside the creek. Angie quickly scrambled under the gate and darted across the pasture. By the time she reached the grove, Lady Belle was rearing on her hind legs, pawing at the air.
- 13 When Angie saw the reason for the mare's terror, her heart jumped to her throat. The colt was in the creek, not more than three meters (ten feet) above the rapids. He was pinned under a tree limb and he was kicking frantically and whimpering. Only his head was above water.
- 14 For a moment Angie froze helplessly, then a quick glance in the direction of the barnyard told her Mr. Gregg's truck was gone. Suddenly she remembered—he and her father had gone to an auction sale at Stanwood, and Mrs. Gregg was spending the day at her sister's.
- 15 Angie was all alone—and she had to save the precious colt! She sloshed through the mud to the barn, grabbed two ropes from a peg, then hurried back through the rain. Lady Belle was slapping at the water with her right hoof.
- 16 With shaking fingers, Angie tied the end of one rope round her waist and the other end to a cottonwood tree along the bank. She grabbed the extra rope and plunged into the creek. "It's all right, little boy," Angie panted as she reached the colt and tied the rope round him, just behind his front legs.
- 17 The cottonwood limb was only a small one, and Angie hoped it would not give way before she got back to shore. She could feel the current pulling at her legs. If the branch slipped now, she knew that she couldn't keep the colt from washing over the rapids.
- 18 Angie fought against the current until she felt solid ground beneath her feet again. She loosened the rope round her waist and took a firm grip on the one tied round the colt. She would have to pull hard, running upstream as fast as she could. With a mighty tug, she ran.
- 19 Moments later the wet, shivering colt struggled to his feet on the bank just as Angie heard the truck come to a screeching halt.
- 20 "Angie!" Her father and Mr. Gregg leaped from the truck.
- 21 Before she could answer, she was in her father's arms, and she could feel his heart pounding.
- 22 "We saw you as we came round the bend in the road," her father said. "That was a foolish thing to do."
- 23 "Foolish, maybe," said Mr. Gregg, "but very brave. So brave that I think she deserves a reward—a very special reward." He smiled, nodding at the colt, who was being nuzzled by his mother.
- 24 "You mean—" Angie gasped.
- 25 "According to an ancient belief," Mr. Gregg said, "if you save a life, you are then responsible for that life. I guess that makes the colt yours, Angie."
- 26 The two men smiled as Angie pulled the colt into her arms. The little colt nickered in agreement and pushed his wet nose against Angie's shoulder.

How Well Did You Read?

The sentences below describe events in the story. Put the four events in the correct order by lettering each one *a*, *b*, *c*, or *d*.

- 1 Angie ran to the barn and got some ropes.
- 2 Angie's mother told her she could not have the colt.
- 3 Angie whistled at the colt before going to school.
- 4 Mr. Gregg gave the colt to Angie.

Write the letter of the best answer for each question.

- 5 Which of these events is most important in deciding how the story turns out?
 - a Angie tells her mother that she wants the colt.
 - b Angie saves the colt's life.
 - c Angie goes to the barn for some ropes.
- 6 Why did Angie's mother object to getting the colt for her?
 - a She thought Angie would not take good care of it.
 - b She thought Angie was too old to have a pet.
 - c She thought that the colt was much too expensive.
- 7 Why is it appropriate for Angie to own an Appaloosa?
 - a Angie is a descendant of the Nez Percé tribe.
 - b Angie's father has always raised Appaloosas.
 - c Angie is very skilled at training and riding horses.
- 8 Why did Mr. Gregg give the colt to Angie?
 - a She wanted the colt very badly.
 - b Her father offered Mr. Gregg a great deal of money.
 - c Angie had saved the colt's life.

9 Which of the following could serve as another title for the story?

- a A Colt for Angie's Bravery
- b Training an Appaloosa
- c Nez Percé Horsemanship

Learn about Words

Vocabulary

A You can often tell the meaning of a word by reading the words around it.

Look at each number in parentheses. Find the paragraph in the story with the same number. Then find the word that fits the given meaning. Write the word.

- 1 in every possible way (3)
- 2 being playful; having fun (7)
- 3 became aware (7)
- 4 great fear (13)
- 5 stood without moving (14)
- 6 stop (19)
- 7 rubbed with the nose (23)
- 8 neighed; whinnied (26)

B A word may have more than one meaning.

Look at each number in parentheses. Find the paragraph in the story with the same number. See how the word in **heavy type** is used in the paragraph. Decide whether it has meaning **a**, **b**, or **c**. Write *a*, *b*, or *c*.

- 9 **herd** (8)
 - a group of animals of one kind
 - b large number of people
 - c common people
- 10 **strain** (9)
 - a injury
 - b tremendous pressure
 - c line of descent

Word Study

- C** Joe knows May and May knows Joe.
Joe knows May and **she** knows **him**.

The words *she* and *him* are pronouns. Pronouns are words that are used in place of nouns. In the example above, notice how *she* takes the place of *May*. Notice how *him* takes the place of *Joe*. Some other common pronouns are *you*, *he*, *it*, *her*, and *them*. Each sentence below has a noun in **heavy type**. Later in the sentence there is a pronoun that takes the noun's place. Find that pronoun and write it.

- 11** **Amy**, aren't you leaving?
12 **Ramón** was tired, so he took a nap.
13 **Estella** is sure she can win.
14 Take the **dishes** and put them on the table.
15 If you see **Sandy**, tell her to come.
16 Take this **ball** and toss it to Mario.
17 Frank bought his **mother** the dishes she wanted.
18 **Eula** asked if she could leave.

- D** Jill hopes **she** will score six points.
If the cap belongs to Joe, give **it** to **him**.

In these examples, *she* is a pronoun that stands for *Jill*; *it* is a pronoun that stands for *cap*; *him* is a pronoun that stands for *Joe*. To understand what you read, you must be able to tell what nouns the pronouns stand for. Each sentence below has a pronoun in **heavy type**. Find the noun that it stands for. Write the noun.

- 19** Effie told me **she** needed help.
20 Lela said, "Help **me** bake this pie."
21 Fred says **he** never salts his eggs.
22 Please take that ladder down and put **it** in the garage.
23 Bonnie, **you** passed the test.
24 The boys said, "**We** will play in the park."

- 25** If the pearl belongs to Ron, give **it** to him.

- 26** Leona wouldn't tell me what **she** had in her lunchbox.

- E** As you use the dictionary, you will find that many words have more than one meaning—also that a word can serve as more than one part of speech. Used one way, *pair* is a noun. Used another way, *pair* is a verb. A dictionary will generally use *n* to identify a noun and *v* to identify a verb. Here are some words defined both as nouns and as verbs:

plot (*n*) the events of a story, play, etc.

plot (*v*) to plan secretly

cap (*n*) a hat with no brim

cap (*v*) to put a cover on

dot (*n*) a tiny round mark

dot (*v*) to cover, as if with dots

Notice how those words are used below. Decide if each one is acting as a noun or as a verb. Write *n* or *v*.

- 27** Little cottages **dot** the hillsides.

- 28** I wore my **cap** to the stadium.

- 29** The film had a very weak **plot**.

- 30** Don't forget to **cap** the sauce bottle.

- 31** "Let's **plot** our escape," said Louie.

- 32** Should the letter *i* have a **dot** over it?

- 33** You should **dot** the pie with butter before putting it in the oven.