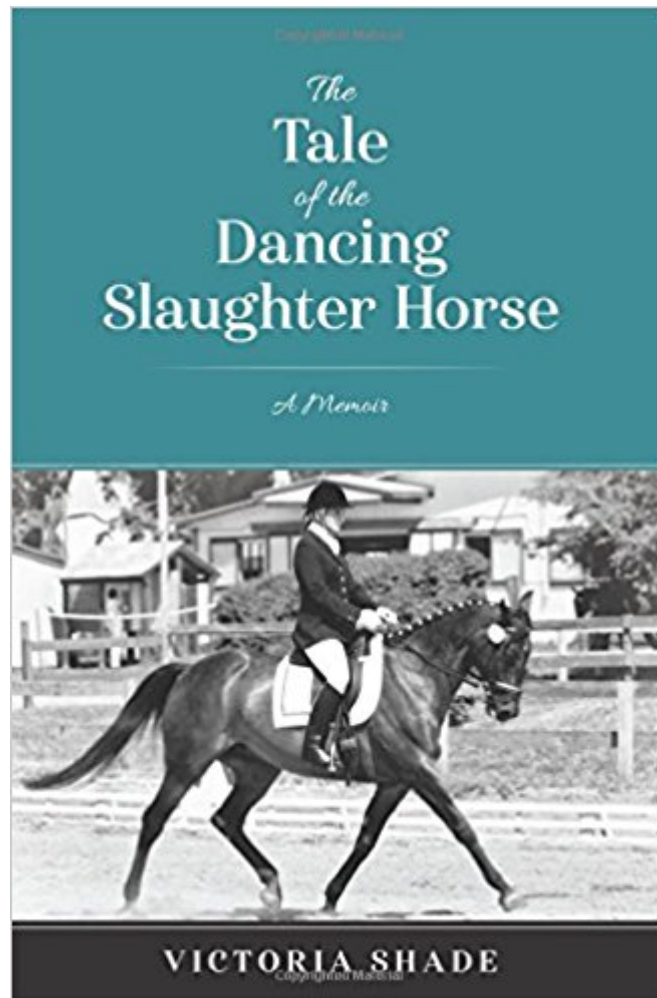




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# The Tale Of The Dancing Slaughter Horse: A Memoir



## Synopsis

When Victoria meets Moonshine, an ex-racehorse saved from the slaughterhouse and abuse, she despairs at having to ride such a difficult horse. The pair compete in dressage, a sport that tests the unity of horse and rider as they engage in what can only be called dancing. They compete against horses bred solely for the sport, always struggling to overcome the bias against horses like Moony. As she grows and comes of age, Victoria teaches Moonshine to trust, and Moony teaches Victoria the importance of heart and perseverance. Together, they master many trials and compete in the Junior Nationals in this inspiring and compelling true story of how a girl and her horse changed each other's lives forever.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Gr 7 Up • This dressage-focused memoir features strong characterization through the use of dialogue. Shade, the daughter of Romanian immigrants, is hooked on horses. When she meets Moonshine, an abused and abandoned ex-racehorse, she initially finds his belligerent behavior an unwelcome challenge. But, as in most romances, first impressions prove to be wrong; Moony has it in him to be a great show horse, and he ultimately becomes the love of young Shade's life. As Shade trains vigorously throughout her teens, she learns that dressage isn't just about fancy moves but about the connection between horse and rider. She must learn how to "keep her seat" while facing naysayers. Readers similarly devoted to a sport might understand a life of being coached, traveling to events, and connecting more with athletic peers than classmates. Shade lives to ride, daydreaming about the stable during school and framing teenage milestones (taking the SAT,

getting a driver's license) in terms of her future as an equestrian. Family drama, particularly around money, is the only counterpoint to an abundance of insider details that may be lost on nonriders. There is some in-context profanity, mostly directed at Shade's father, portrayed as a narcissistic deadbeat. VERDICT Recommended for horse lovers and teens who enjoy redemptive memoirs about unlikely pairs. —Miriam DesHarnais, Towson University, MD

"A fantastic read! I highly recommend to anyone who loves horses. It strengthened my belief that with enough love and patience, nearly any horse can become a champion!" (Sue McDonough, New York State Humane Association) "This is a wonderful love story captures the essence of the bond between horse and rider and highlights the author's resolve to prove her rescued, slaughter-bound horse has the talent to compete in the dressage ring, despite an extremely difficult past and questionable conformation. You will ride every stride together with them, as they train, win, celebrate, and turn what might have been a story of pathos and tragedy into an exhilarating narrative of resilience and success against the odds." (Valerie Pringle, Equine Protection Specialist, The Humane Society of the United States)

Unable to afford a horse of her own, Shade accepts her trainer's suggestion that she ride the abandoned horse, Moonshine. Abused by her former owners, Moonshine presents an almost insurmountable challenge to the girl's determination to turn him into a proper dressage mount. Along the way, she learns about the true challenge of dressage and her own abilities. As a half-Thoroughbred, half-Quarter horse, Moonshine matches no one's ideal of a dressage horse. Competing head to head against warmbloods, the duo overcomes the challenges to go as high as they can, eventually competing in the Junior Olympics. I knew that dressage riders have to work hard, but I had no idea how hard it is to compete at the highest level. Victoria meets challenge after challenge head on, overcoming her own shortcomings as well as that of her horse, to rise to the highest level of competition.

This was a very good read and explained the invisible bind humans can have with animals! The neglect and abuse Moony endured, which caused him to be very wary, contentious, and mean, was eventually released by the love, kindness, and patience of the owner. It was absolutely a learning experience, not only for the horse, but also for the rider. Learning to tune into each others needs, was what all the fuss was about!

An uplifting story about a young woman coming of age and how riding taught her many of life's lessons. The way Victoria describes certain situations and places make me feel like I was there with her. Never having spent much time around horses myself, this book gave me insight to the delicate relationship between a horse and their rider and left with me a whole new appreciation of them. Definitely glad I picked up this book!

What a lovely and inspirational story with a wealth of insights for anyone who is interested in understanding the power and depth of the equine-human relationship process. I thoroughly enjoyed this book and highly recommend it.

I really found this book easy to read. I wonder how much was true to life- as Victoria's father does sound like a nasty one. Her rapport with the horses was good, and her commitment to learning. I highly recommend this story.

great read

You don't have to have any knowledge of the competitive horse world to thoroughly enjoy and appreciate this book. A true coming of age story in which we also are lucky enough to witness Victoria and Moony's relationship grow. It's a wonderful story which has the ability to touch everyone. The moral here is anything is possible if you work hard and believe.

Being an amateur rider myself on a rescued horse, I related to this story and thoroughly enjoyed this couple's accomplishments. Just goes to prove the old adage, hard work, smarts and a little stubbornness can take you far in the horse world!

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