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The Fire Horse: No One Wanted The Horse Named Neville. Then Along Came A Rider Who Lived For Long Shots.



Synopsis

If ever a horse seemed fated to die young, it was Neville Bardos. Unwanted as a racehorse, he appeared a likely candidate for the glue factory. Through luck and hard work, he dodged that bad ending to become a surprise contender for the 2012 U.S. Olympic team in equestrian eventing. Then, on May 30, 2011, the barn he shared with ten other horses began to burn. Neville's lungs were scorched black, and he faced the fight of his life just to survive. Future glory was surely nothing but an empty dream. Or was it?"The Fire Horse" is the true story of a friendship between horse and rider so strong that it has carried them through their respective hard times to the brink of legend. Australian Boyd Martin saw a streak of potential no one else had seen in the stubborn and unpredictable horse. He bought him for \$850 and named him, fittingly, after a notorious local gangster. And so began a relationship that had its share of ups and downs. Martin was something of a long shot himself, having once pretended to be an expert on breaking horses on the basis of a single book he read on the way to taking a job as a trainer. Over the years, he and Neville developed a hard-won appreciation for each other and appeared to be on the verge of success on the competitive equestrian circuit when the unthinkable happened. Now they're in London as members of the U.S. Olympic team."The Fire Horse," by bestselling author Elizabeth Mitchell, is the deeply moving chronicle of a horse and his rider and their determined rise from the ashes.

ABOUT THE AUTHORElizabeth Mitchell is the author of the nonfiction books "Three Strides Before the Wire: The Dark and Beautiful World of Horse Racing" and "W.: Revenge of the Bush Dynasty" (both from Hyperion). Her bestselling Byliner Original e-single "The Fearless Mrs. Goodwin" is a reported historical narrative. Mitchell was executive editor of "George" magazine and features editor at "Spin" magazine. She lives in Brooklyn, New York.

PRAISE FOR "THE FIRE HORSE"Elizabeth Mitchell has crafted far more than a tale about a gifted horse and rider in the world of eventing. This is the heartwarming story about an imperishable bond between a man and his horse—one that began when Boyd Martin acquired a failed racehorse off the track, turned him into an eventing star, and then saved the life of this game and gutsy charge when he was trapped in his burning stall during a terrible stable fire. Neville Bardos's remarkable comeback under the devoted Martin, as a U.S. Olympic hopeful in the 2012 eventing competition, gives the tale an ending as warm and unlikely as any in equine literature." •William Nack, author of "Secretariat: The Making of a Champion"

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Customer Reviews

I'm a sucker for animal stories, and I especially like stories about the underdog, that animal who shows that he's more than most people assume he is. There's something very special about those animals who've been discounted, rejected or thrown away. You see a deep understanding and a different sort of affection and love in those eyes gazing back at you. In this true story, we meet Boyd Martin, a determined and out-going personality in his own right, and also an animal lover. He takes a chance on a horse no one seemed to want, a horse no one had any real patience or understanding for. This horse is said to be too difficult, maybe too scrappy. Kind of bold like Boyd himself, and you just know that these two strong-willed characters were meant to find each other. Boyd looks at this horse and sees the pure spirit there, all that strength and personality looking right back at him. Boyd buys the horse (renamed Neville) fairly on the cheap. But eventually, this "eight-hundred-and-fifty-dollar racetrack reject" becomes a winner on the international stage, with he and Boyd as part of the U.S. contingent at the Olympics this summer. And while that's impressive and a true underdog showing us just what he's made of, the real story here is that Neville's more than just a winner. He's a friend, a partner, and if you happen to be an animal lover, too, you know just what that means. A man and a horse finding each other, seeing and trusting the best in each other, they end up helping each other through some very trying and devastating times. Just as the

story made me cry, it also made me smile. Touching and uplifting, it's a story of courage, endurance and hope. A story of true friendship that goes both ways; one saving a life, the other saving a soul. The love of and for an animal can do amazing things when given the chance.

I enjoyed the book. It was nice to read about the love of sport and the love for horses. I kept reading as fast as I could, to see what was happening next. I enjoyed the book very much.

This is truly a fascinating true story, I remembered reading an article about it back in 2012 during all of the Olympic buzz. When I recently discovered this book I jumped at the chance to read it and hear more about this amazing duo. However, I do feel like this was somewhat of an abbreviated version. While it wasn't bad, the writing just seemed a bit rushed. I feel like there is so much more detail that could have been written here.

Almost any story about horses appeals to me. Loved the story about Neville but lacked depth. That is the authors fault.

I had never heard of this story before. As amazing story as "The Eighty Dollar Champion" about a horse and his rider and their successes in life.

Well written. Did not want to put it down even though I knew the general story. Neville Bardos is one tough cookie.

Good read. Hard to put down.

I was totally taken in by this story. I had read about the barn fire long before I learned who Boyd Martin was. I was new to the riding world back then... It was quite the revelation for me to put the horse and the rider together as I was reading as THAT horse and THAT rider. Learning much more about both of them was awesome.

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