

My Early Home.

Saathi

Date _____

I have never forgotten my mother's advice; I knew she was a wise old horse, and our master thought a great deal of her. Her name was Duchess, but he often called her pet.

Our master was a good, kind man. He gave us good food, good lodging, and kind words; he spoke as kindly to us as he did to his children.

We were all fond of him, and my mother loved him very much. When she saw him at the gate she would neigh with joy, and trot up to him. He would pat and stroke her and say, "Well, old pet, and how is your little Darkie?" I was a dull black, so he called me Darkie; then he would give me a piece of bread, which was very good,

and sometimes he brought a carrot for my mother. All the horses would come to him, but I think we were his favourites.

My mother always took him to the town on a market day in a light gig.

There was a ploughboy, Dick, who sometimes came into our field to pluck blackberries from the hedge. When we had eaten all he wanted, he would have what he called fun with the colts, throwing stones and sticks at them to make them gallop. We did not much mind him for we could gallop off;

but sometimes a stone would hit and hurt us.

One day he was at this game, and did not know that the master was in the next field; but he was there, watching what was going on; over the hedge he jumped in a snap, and catching Dick by the arm, he gave him such a box on the ear as made him roar with pain and surprise. As soon as we saw the master we trotted up nearer to see what went on. 'Bad boy!' he said, 'bad boy! to chase the colts. This is not the first time, nor the second, but it shall be the last. There — take your money and go home; I shall not want you on my farm again.'

So we never saw Dick any more. Old Daniel, the man who looked after the horses, was just as gentle as our master, so we were well off.

(Adapted from Black Beauty
by Anna Sewell)

Words to know

box - hit

brook - a small stream

colt - a young male horse

gallop - the faster pace of a horse.

gig - a light, two wheeled carriage.

lodging - living space.

meadow - a grass covered field.

plough - to dig up an area to make it ready for planting

rushes - plants

well-bred - having or showing good manners, being of good quality.

Whinnied - past tense of Whinny:
the noise a horse makes.