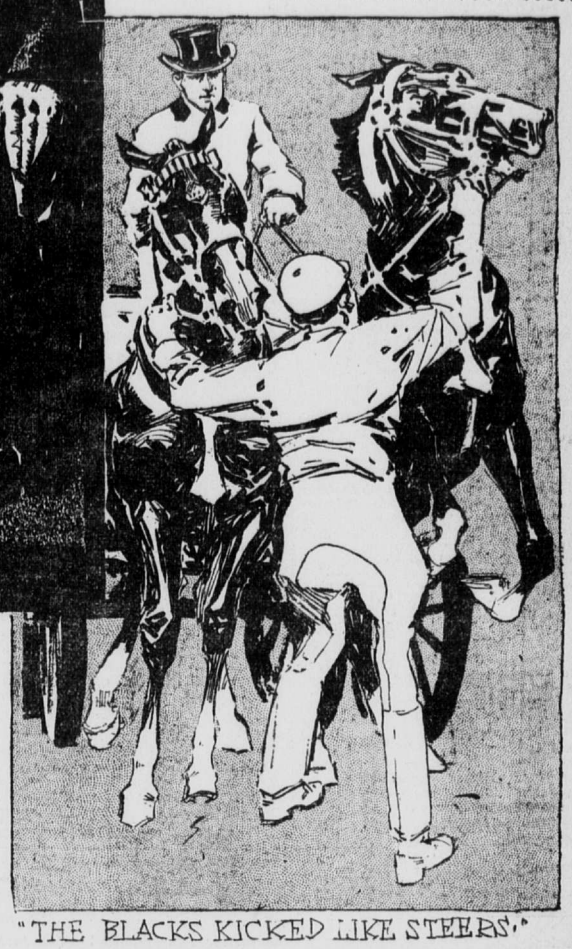
Young Blood

A Horse Show Story

By Belle Moses

"YOU'LL NOT DENY WE'RE DRIVING A HANDSOME TURNOUT"

"'GET DOWN AT ONCE!' ORDERED HIS MASTER.



"THE BLACKS KICKED LIKE STEERS."

"NOW look here, Johnny, my mind's made up. If Mr. Arnold' meaning to exhibit at the horse show, it's my business to see him through tomorrow. 'Jerry,' he says to me, 'when I raise a match pair of black carriage horses I'll make the town talk.' Now he's goin' to make the town talk—and I'm goin' to help him, for you'll not deny we're drivin' a handsome turnout," and Jerry used his whip in a loving flick upon each glossy back. The blooded animals, responsive to his lightest touch, sprang forward, their proud necks arched and their ears pointed straight. "There, there, my beauties—so—so," said Jerry soothingly. "My, but ain't it wonderful how the sound of a voice'll quiet 'em! That's breed, John; it tells pretty nigh always in horses and folks. You ain't listenin' to my remarks," and Jerry's nudge roused the footman with a start.

"Quit that," said John, sharply; "no, I'm not listening'. You're talkin' rot. If you think I can take that mettlesome pair, that's as skittish as—as thunder, for a prize drive around the ring, before all them grinnin' lackeys and all the swells in town, you've mistaken your man; and with that raw hand, Sims, a-settin' beside me, and me a-thinkin' what a guy he looks, how can you expect me to manage a team like this?"

"I'm afraid, Johnny, you're not quite bright. I never knew how much was lackin' before this carriage practice." Jerry looked at him critically, with the old merry twinkle in his eye. "Still, as I keep a-tellin' you, it's young blood must show up this day. I wouldn't match the blacks with these gray-siders"—he passed his hand, with an unconsciously regretful movement, over his closely cropped English mutton chops, and something like a sigh escaped him. "All you've got to do," he added, more briskly, "is to keep a firm rein, look straight at their ears and talk to 'em gentle. They're fond of pleasant conversation; it's kind of music to 'em, and they keep time."

"Humph!" grunted John. "I leave all that tomfoolery to you. I never had a conversation with horses in my whole life. I say 'git up' and 'whoa,' and if they don't happen to hear them remarks, I pull one way, and then I pull another, and if that don't do, the whip's handy enough."

"Don't you never use a whip on them!" said Jerry, flaring up. "Romeo and Juliet's been brought up different, I can tell you."

John chuckled. "I knew that would get a rise out of you," he said, "but honest, Jerry, I feel kind of done up and knock-kneed; my nerves is terrible."

Jerry glanced at him with scorn. "You'd better take a 'bracer' before you go in the ring."

"You'll be by, won't you, Jerry, in case——"

"Devil a bit," said Jerry sharply. "I'll wait outside for the master and missus with the old team." To be "by" and see another person drive his pets wasn't consistent with human nature, but John's research in that direction was somewhat limited. "I've had my day," said Jerry; "I ain't complainin'. I jockeyed it for a while when I was a featherweight. You wouldn't believe it, would you, John?" and Jerry slapped his broad chest good naturedly. "But I wasn't cut out for a jockey; I began to get 'chunky,' and when they took to starvin' me to keep me thin I gave up the trade. 'Jerry,' says I to myself, 'you've got to grow like God made you,' and a coachman's been the size of it ever since."

"It must be grand to be atop of a racer," said John, forgetting his own troubles in the picture Jerry conjured up.

"There's nothin' like it. Of course in drivin' you can get mighty close to a horse and his tricks, but they come to you at the other end of the reins. On his back you get the life of him, you feel him making up his mind, you know when he's goin' to take a spurt, you know when he's goin' to slack up, and once you've won a race——" Jerry blinked from sheer excess of emotion.

"Did you ever win?" asked John.

"Well, you'd better believe! It ain't the way of the world, John, to be rakin' up failures. Why, I rode Daisy Bell when she broke the record. I can feel the quiver of her lean, brown body now. That was a race! When we reached goal folks went wild. It's a wonder the din didn't scare Daisy Bell into a fit, and as for me—I was treated till I couldn't stand straight. That was my last ride. I sobered up wonderful afterward and went to prayer meetin' regular. Them was salad days, Johnny; you ain't never had 'em, because I took you in hand early and brought you up better. You were naturally worse than me, though I do say it," said Jerry complacently. "You'll do me proud," he added, "when you get your picture in the paper and the blue ribbons on Romeo and Juliet."

Again John grunted; he could not respond with proper enthusiasm; he felt somehow like a fish out of water. He was eminently conservative in his notions and Jerry had not preached his principles of caste to dull ears.

"I hope," remarked Jerry, as they got closer to the great humming city, "that Sims'll thrive the bays in all right tomorrow. The master was willing to trust him, but, between you and me, Johnny, Sims is better at waitin' on table and polishin' door knobs."

"That's what I say," said John, indignantly. "The idea of puttin' him up beside me! Why, little Jerry'd cut a better figure!"

"Oh, I'm not talkin' about settin' up straight and foldin' his arms. There ain't no brains to that," said Jerry, with one of his characteristic nudges. "Now perk up, Johnny; we're comin' to town, and I'm goin' through back streets to get these horses to stable on the quiet. We'll give 'em a good grooming, and we'll find our own shakedown at the club, lad. That'll hearten you up a bit."

The last days of the horse show dawned brilliantly. Jerry and John were early astir, for Jerry was determined to leave nothing undone. Romeo and Juliet were visited a dozen times and the carriage and accoutrement were overhauled under Jerry's microscopic eye. He then turned his attention to John, whose spirits ebbed with the fleeting hours; he curried him and barbered him and polished him and brushed him and scolded him, and finally, after an exhausting day, towed him triumphantly to the Garden entrance, an immaculate image of despair.

"Well, good luck to you, lad," and Jerry pushed his charge over the threshold, with a parting slap on the shoulder and an encouraging smile. "I'll go to the Carpenters now for my people and send Sims along to keep you company; he'll be all right and proper when I let him go, don't fear," and Jerry went away with the feeling of having led an innocent lamb to the sacrifice.

At 8 o'clock the carriage of the Arnolds, with Jerry on the box, stood in front of the great meeting place of fashion. Sims, after due inspection, was hurried round to the side; there Mr. and Mrs. Arnold and young Winston got out of the carriage and paused for final instructions to Jerry. Mr. Arnold looked at his watch.

"Our entry is booked for 9:30; we'll drive straight out home, Jerry, in this old carriage, with you and John, and leave Sims to look after the prize winners; you can come in by train tomorrow and drive them home."

"All right, sir; good luck." Jerry touched his hat and looked after them longingly as they vanished into the radiance beyond; then, gathering up the reins, he moved out of the line and the glare of the electric lights.

He left his box for a moment to adjust some piece of the harness, and his hand strayed caressingly over the smooth flanks of the bays. They knew his touch and turned their heads toward him with a half suppressed whinny. Jerry threw a loving arm around each glossy neck.

"It's young blood they want, my beauties," he said softly; "you and me ain't in it, but we're proud all the same—eh, Sultan; eh, Princess! We've raised a family, we have, and they're better than all the blue ribbons."

The intelligent creatures rubbed their noses against his coat sleeves, and Jerry, looking up, was aware of a strange mist between his eyes and the steady glow of the electric lights.

"Don't be a fool," he said, to no one in particular, as he went back to his box, and squaring his shoulders, settled down to his long wait.

There was no John to talk to, and Jerry's reminiscent spirit walked abroad this night. The long line of waiting carriages faded from his view, the hurry and bustle of the city sank into the music of the past; the past—with its open country, its green fields, its lusty, hearty youth, its vigorous manhood, and all the strength of its riper years.

"Young blood, young blood," he repeated more than once, as familiar sounds floated out to him. An hour passed; Jerry looked at his watch—a quarter past nine! The fate of Romeo and Juliet hung upon the next half hour. Every thought was now concentrated upon the thoroughbreds. He had no fear for the horses; they were well trained, sensitive animals, but John—for the first time Jerry's courage wavered. Suppose at the last moment John's nerve forsook him; the blacks would be sure to bolt in the ring. Oh, the disgrace of it! Perhaps he had been foolish after all. John had been his choice, but if he made a mess of it, what would the master say? And his "Miss Ethel," whom he never failed—what——

"Jerry!" A tall, cloaked figure came hastily forward out of the shadow. It was Mr. Arnold himself.

"It can't be done, Jerry. John's got stage fright, and I won't let him go in the ring. He has the grip of a kitten, and when he mounted the box the blacks kicked like steers, then they balked and refused to move. They're getting mad, and foamy and restive. I'm sorry to disappoint John, but there's only one way to win my blue ribbon, and only ten minutes to decide. Here Sims, take the reins. Come on, Jerry."

Jerry rose mechanically and stood staring down incredulously at his master.

"Get down at once!" ordered his master. "I tell you there's no time to lose."

"But"——began Jerry.

At this moment the entrance door swung wide and young Winston rushed bareheaded into the street. After him came Mrs. Arnold, the train of her gown over her arm, her evening wrap thrown carelessly about her, her face pale with excitement.

"Not a moment, Jerry," she called, her sweet voice ringing imperiously out into the night.

Jerry started at the sound. All his life, it seemed, he had obeyed that voice without question. The carriage robe, still wrapped about his knees, dropped from him like magic; the reins fell from his hands into Sims' uplifted ones, and Jerry stepped down.

For an instant he paused, looking from one to the other of the eager faces about him. Once he tried to speak, but young Winston caught his arm and hurried him round to the side.

Half an hour later Jerry emerged, followed by a swarm of friends of the coachman persuasion, who crowded about him as he made his way to the carriage, holding in his hand a silver mounted, blue ribboned whip, the gift of his master when he had driven the blacks triumphant from the ring. He stood on the curb for a moment, a stalwart figure, topping them all, answering the rough congratulations as well as he could; then he mounted and took the reins from Sims, who slid into the footman's place.

"Oh, come off!" cried a voice in the darkness, "that's my seat as long—well—as long as Jerry's on the box." This aroused a cheer, and John sprang to open the door. The crowd scattered as Mr. and Mrs. Arnold and young Winston, with their own stream of enthusiastic friends, made their way to the carriage amid laughter and jests and good wishes.

"Home, Jerry!" cried the master, with a glad ring in his voice.

"Yes, sir." Jerry touched his hat, John closed the door and sprang up beside him, the bays pricked up their ears as they felt the firm hand upon the rein, and Jerry turned them homeward.

The night was clear and cold, just a touch of winter in the still air and the brilliance of the stars. Voices rose from the depths of the carriage—jubilant, excited voices, young Winston's ringing out above the others.

"Jerry's an old trump!" he declared. "If it hadn't been for"—here the voice trailed off in a subdued murmur. Jerry glanced at John, who sat with folded arms apparently absorbed; he did not break the silence between them for his own kind heart ached a little, even in his victory. Success for John upon this night of nights would have meant more than the mere acclamation of the multitude; it would have established his reputation as a practiced whip, and, besides, would have been the beginning of a pedigree for little Jerry! The whip would have been a rare trophy for the youngster to inherit. By Jove! he should, anyway, and Jerry cut the air with it with such force that the horses started forward and John awoke from his reverie.

"What on earth are you doing, Jerry?" he demanded.

"Thinkin'," said Jerry laconically.

"Sounds like you were a-foolin' with gunpowder—don't think so loud."

"Your thinkin' don't make so much of a noise—eh, Johnny?"

"Well, I guess not," said John, whose sense of humor had not strengthened with his years. They drove in silence a few moments longer, the horses tugging at the reins, fresh and eager for exercise. They had lost the last twinkling lights of the city, and the country road stretched clear before them.

"I wonder," said Jerry at last, "how much I'd be worth if I had a dollar for every trip I've made along this line. I don't seem to get tired of it, there ain't a stick nor a stone but hasn't its own little tale—my sakes!"

"There you go—moonin' along," said John contemptuously; "ain't you got nothin' better to do with your time, Jerry?"

"And how many folks I've driven," pursued Jerry imperturbably. "Could you count 'em, Johnny?"

"Well, that's most too big a sum for me."

"And the things that's happened," went on Jerry, growing dangerously reminiscent—"parties, balls, weddin's and christenin's—they all come mighty quick in this family. There was once we had to race in town for the doctor—you remember how cold it was that night?—it was the only time I had to lay whip on the bays—but we saved Miss Ethel—God bless her!" Jerry's eyes grew dim. "And there was another time; that day when—when"——

"Jerry!" called a boyish voice from the carriage depths, and young Winston opened the door and sprang out. "The night is so fine I'd like to run home across the fields."

"I'll wait for you at the turn of the road," answered Jerry, as the slight figure vanished in the darkness.

"No need, Jerry," said Mr. Arnold. "He's bound for home by the short cut. You can drive ahead."

"The turn of the road—how we're always strikin' up against it," said Jerry, as he tightened his reins and the horses quickened their pace.

"It comes natural like on the way home," said John, the literal.

Jerry glanced at him scornfully. "It comes into everything, Johnny, take my word for it. There's always a turn of the road somewheres."

"Yes," admitted John, "and in that there ring in the garden you're always turnin'."

Jerry opened his lips to jeer at his underling, but closed them again, with only the slit of a smile. John could no more help his limitations than he could help——

"Sit up straight," he commanded, more from force of habit than from necessity. "We're gettin' on to it now, and we must make the homestretch in the blue ribbon style. See here, lad," he began, after a pause, "I was sorry about tonight."

"Why?" asked John, bending forward and looking him full in the face. "I don't look ailin', do I?"

Jerry met the laughing eyes and laughed, too.

"I don't see as you do," he owned.

"I never meant to go in that ring," began John, impressively.

"What are you talking about?" said Jerry, incredulously.

"Gospel truth. I made up my mind when we came to town yesterday that even them beauties wouldn't drag me in—I'd get out of it somehow. It wasn't a mite of trouble to make 'em rear and prance, an' you bet I done it. Lord! but Mr. Winston pretty near took my head off. 'Don't you know what you're doin'?' he called. 'Yes, sir,' says I, knowin' well enough. 'You're drivin' 'em wild!'—he jumped round excited then. 'Father, go for Jerry,' says he. 'Hold 'em still, if you can, John, till we come back,' and off he bolted, too. I had got 'em sort of frisky,' owned John with a chuckle, 'but it only warmed 'em up to do stunts when you came along, and when I seen old Sims shoved off my perch—I didn't care much what happened. It ain't in nature, Jerry, for me to play first fiddle yet. I'd have felt like a freak in a dime show," and John wound up breathless from this unusual peroration.

"Johnny, you're a fool!" said Jerry softly, and his strong clear cut face grew very gentle in the darkness.

The lights from the old homestead twinkled out a blithe welcome as they drew near. The doors were flung wide, and as Jerry turned into the avenue there was hearty cheering, led by the high pitched voice of young Winston, who had assembled the entire household to greet the victor. There he stood on the top step, waving his hat and shouting boyishly:

"Three cheers for Jerry and John—and the blacks—who can't be beat! Three cheers for Mr. Arnold's prize winners! Three cheers for the whole team! Now, all together—one, two, three!"

Such an uproar as floated through the stately trees had never been heard in many years. Jerry's face flushed and his eyes kindled, for this was the praise he loved most. But he said nothing, only his hand was firmer on the rein, and his figure even more erect, as he drew up before the house. At once the din grew louder. John sprang down to open the door and Mr. and Mrs. Arnold joined in the fun. Poor Jerry had nowhere to hide his head, for cheers encompassed him round about; up on the steps, down on the curb, and close to the carriage wheels, a thin, childish treble took up the refrain.

Jerry stooped suddenly and caught the small figure in his arms.

"It's my turn now," he said, "but wait a bit, little Jerry, young blood will tell!"

Imitation Diamonds a Fad

"COUNTERFEIT diamonds are worn much more generally than most people suppose," said a Broadway dealer. "They are advertised as made out of a variety of materials—even to quartz crystal coated with a solution of diamond dust in hydrofluoric acid; a total impossibility, by the way—but there is nothing for the purpose like the good old French 'paste.' What is it? Why, nothing in the world but a very fine quality of glass, with a large percentage of lead as an ingredient.

"But the processes employed in making this kind of glass must be conducted with the utmost nicety in order that it may have the requisite brilliancy and hardness, whereas for the best table glassware white quartz sand is employed, for 'paste' this material is mixed, half and half, with powdered rock crystal. Then carbonate of soda, calcined borax, saltpetre and red lead are added in due proportions, and the mass is fused by heat in a crucible, being finally permitted to cool slowly.

"Upon the care taken in the details of the process depend the density, transparency and beauty of the 'paste,' which, when the stuff is cold, is ready to be cut up into pieces suitable for preparation as 'diamonds.' Such preparation consists of cutting with the help of a wheel and diamond dust, much in the same way as real diamonds are made ready for the market. The artificial gems thus made—the best of them, that is to say—possess considerable brilliancy and fire, so that any person not an expert would be likely to be deceived by them.

"Millions of these imitation diamonds cut in France, where the manufacture of them is a great industry, are imported into this country annually for use in cheap jewelry. The ordinary ones cost twenty-five cents apiece wholesale, and are set in plated pins, rings and brooches at Providence and Attleboro, R. I. Several big factories in those cities are kept busy at this sort of work, employing hundreds of men and women the year around. Rhode Island, indeed, turns out most of the cheap jewelry in the United States.

"From the same kind of 'paste' but of a superlative quality, are made high class counterfeit diamonds, which sometimes sell for $10 or more apiece. They are cut by skilled diamond cutters, almost as carefully as real diamonds, and to the casual eye they are just about as brilliant. So much depends in this sort of work upon the correct utilization of optical principles that a perfectly cut 'paste' gem may actually have more fire and beauty than a poorly cut real diamond.

"You may put it down as a fact that most of the diamonds actresses lose are in reality 'paste.' Sometimes an additional brilliancy is lent to them by introducing a little silver in the setting at the back of the 'stone.' The same sort of lead glass, I might mention, is used for making artificial emeralds and rubies, suitable coloring substance being added to the mixture before fusing. Fakirs, particularly in the west, find an easy market for such 'gems,' sometimes selling them actually by the carat to contribute an additional suggestion of preciousness to their wares.

"Where the swift Idar flows into the Nahe, a tributary of the Rhine, are located, in a beautiful valley, the towns of Oberstein and Idar, the inhabitants of which, ever since the fourteenth century, have subsisted by cutting the rare and wonderful agates found in the hills of that neighborhood. Not only agates but topaz; amethyst, carnelian, jasper, rock crystal and lapis lazuli they cut, the value of the output amounting to more than $1,000,000 annually. But the most curious part of their business consists in supplying agates for the African trade, which, in order to satisfy the exacting taste of the native chiefs, must be carved in peculiar forms.

"If you would have evidence of the extent to which artificial gems are worn, particularly 'diamonds,' you have only to take notice of the number of shops which are devoted to the sale of this class of goods. At intervals, when business is dull, they attract custom by tremendous cuts in prices. But the profits on jewelry of this kind are usually so enormous that such reductions are not ruinous, a considerable margin of gain being left even when the dealer marks down his goods 300 or 400 per cent."

THE AID WE GIVE

We haven't time to give them aid
Whom fate is keeping down;
They might go forward unafraid
To honor or renown
If we could halt some times to lend
A hand or voice a hope;
They can't expect us to descend
To where they drudging grope;
We cannot help them bear their woes
Or lift them when they fall—
We keep so busy helping those
Who need no help at all.
—Chicago Record-Herald.