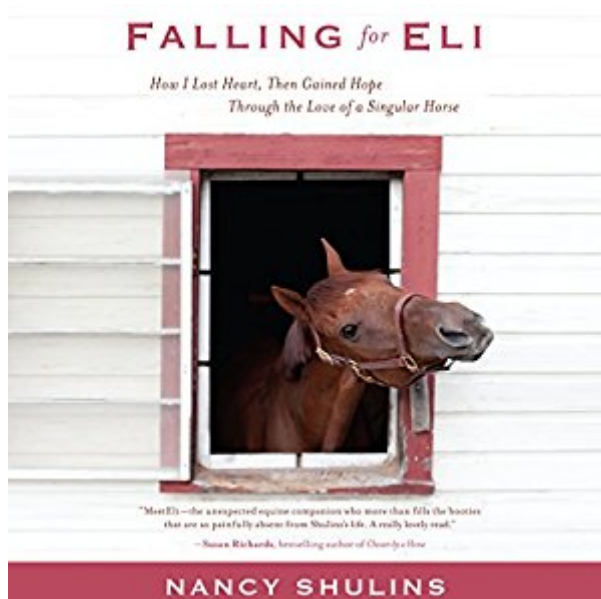


The book was found

Falling For Eli: How I Lost Heart, Then Gained Hope Through The Love Of A Singular Horse



Synopsis

Nancy Shulins had a great career, a loving husband, and was looking forward to having a family. Cheering as her friends got pregnant and dutifully bringing gaily wrapped gifts to every baby shower, she suffered bout after bout of unsuccessful infertility treatment. Devastated, she slowly heals through the most unexpected route: the love of a good (if cranky) horse named Eli. Everyone knows a woman who loves horses. Maybe she rides whenever she can find the time, maybe she rode as a young girl, or maybe she just devoured the Black Stallion books. Twenty years ago, Nancy Shulins let go of one dream - having a child - and worked toward another one: learning to ride and, eventually, having her own horse. In the process, she learned what it means to love another being so much you can't imagine life without them. Falling for Eli is about learning to break a sweat rather than break down, to try your best even if you'll never be the best; it's about learning to stand on your own six feet.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

A good book, song, story, play or movie can sometimes inspire you, teach you, move you to laughter, bring you to tears or touch the core of your soul. A great one can do all of these things. Eli is a great one. No, it's not Pulitzer Prize material (though the author was nominated for one as a journalist) but if one can make a dressage comparison here where a ride is "foot perfect" then I would have to say Eli's story is "word perfect." It engaged me from the outset and kept me engaged throughout. Admittedly, as I have a horse Eli's exact age, who has had her share of mishaps and confinements, I could readily identify with Eli's story. She is a dressage horse who was challenging

in her youth, from whom I took a spill long ago that not only broke ribs but my pelvis as well and who, through patience and committed determination, gave me the best dancing partner a girl could hope for. A trusted partnership has been the best gift of all. Eli's story, Nancy's story, mirrors my own. Nancy is a gifted craftswoman. Her ability to crawl inside her feelings - my feelings - is truly remarkable. The joy of connecting with horses, the fear of actually owning and being responsible for one, the highs of a ride gone well and the lows of one gone wrong, the quiet, serene moments we spend in silent companionship, the ways we understand our charges' nuances and character, the utter protectiveness we have when placing them in someone else's care, the anxiety (and guilt) over decisions we make (or don't make) for our silent partners, that other worldly place we go to when a vet is giving us potentially devastating news, the friendships we make, the places we go, the things we experience, the lessons we learn, all of them are here in this beautiful book. If you don't have a horse this is still a great story of the remarkable bond that can exist between a human and an animal. If you do have a horse - you're in for a sweet ride.

What a frustrating read. I couldn't get past the abuse of the trainers towards Nancy (and Eli in the case of the first one). Grow a pair and take a cue from Dr. Phil who's one and only smartest line is "you teach people how to treat you". Zero tolerance, Nancy!!! Second, why not ride this poor, injury-prone equine as a pleasure trail horse? All the dressage drama and subsequent pain could've been avoided. It's like the author was constantly punishing herself. So odd. Third, but probably the most important, the CARROTS!!! On my lord, the carrots. 20 pounds a week?! Who in their right mind thinks that's okay? Over treat with something else for gods sake! I cringed every time I had to read about the carrots. Painful. Lastly the book just up and ended out of nowhere. After making it through to the final pages I needed more than the trite parting sentences I got. Ugh.

A friend of mine was reading this book and raved about it. Although I am not a rider (or a woman - it seems there aren't a lot of males in the world of horse riding) I really loved it. The writing is colorful, the characters are engaging, and I went from page to page following Nancy as she discovered herself and the joys and challenges of riding and ownership through her relationship with Eli. Along the way I learned a lot about the care and feeding of horses and the depth of feeling they share and can evoke. I think it a great read for any age!

I loved this memoir...I love Eli. Nancy Shulins is an amazing writer, and is able to capture for her readers the pathos and the humor as she moves from the devastating reality that she will never have

children to the joy of owning and caring for Eli, a "singular" character indeed. One doesn't need to know horses or experience infertility to identify with Ms Shulin's journey from sorrow to hopefulness and love.

Shulins gives voice to the depth of love, and ups and downs experienced by many of us horse owners. As mighty and majestic as they are, horses are also fragile, prone to injury. This book helped me cope when my horse had hoof surgery, followed by repeated recuperation periods. I found a friend in her pages who understood my angst and joy. Also laugh out loud funny at times. Very insightful and descriptive writing. Anyone who has a pet they consider to be a family member will enjoy this book.

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