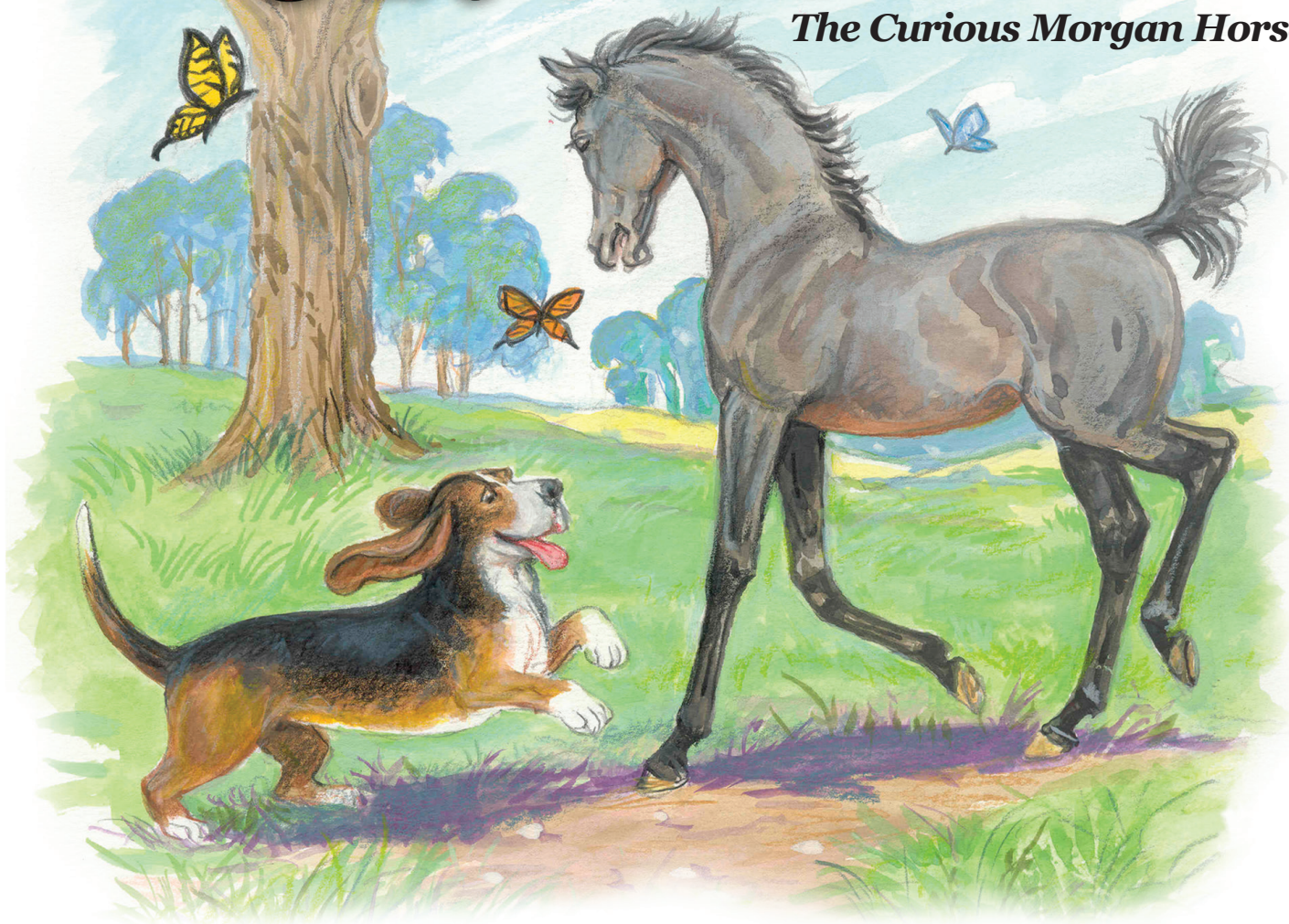


Shadow

The Curious Morgan Horse



***To Rusty—
a very special Morgan Horse.***

E.F.F.

***To Nancy—
for carrying on the Morgan Horse tradition so well.***

J.M.



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One beautiful spring morning, on the hill behind the big, red barn, a baby horse was born. Her name was Shadow, and like her mother Frosty, she was a Morgan Horse. She had tiny little hooves, soft gray hair covering her body, and long, curly whiskers at the tip of her nose. Her mane and tail were black, and she had the brightest blue eyes that her mother had ever seen.





Shadow loved to run and play in the field where she and her mother lived. She would jump toward the sky, kick her back feet up high, and chase the butterflies who flew into her pasture. Shadow would run, and run, and run until she came within a few inches of the wooden fence that surrounded her home. Then she would stop and stare at the mysterious woods beyond the fence. How she wanted to travel into the woods to see what lived among its tall trees!

One day, the rooster who lived in the barn wandered into Shadow's field and told the young horse about his amazing adventures in the woods beyond the fence.

"You really went into the woods?" asked Shadow in disbelief.

"Yes, many times," answered the rooster as he puffed out his chest. "In fact, the last time I traveled into the woods was yesterday. I was gone for several hours and met lots of wild animals."

"Did you see a bear?" asked the curious horse.

"Yes!" exclaimed the rooster.

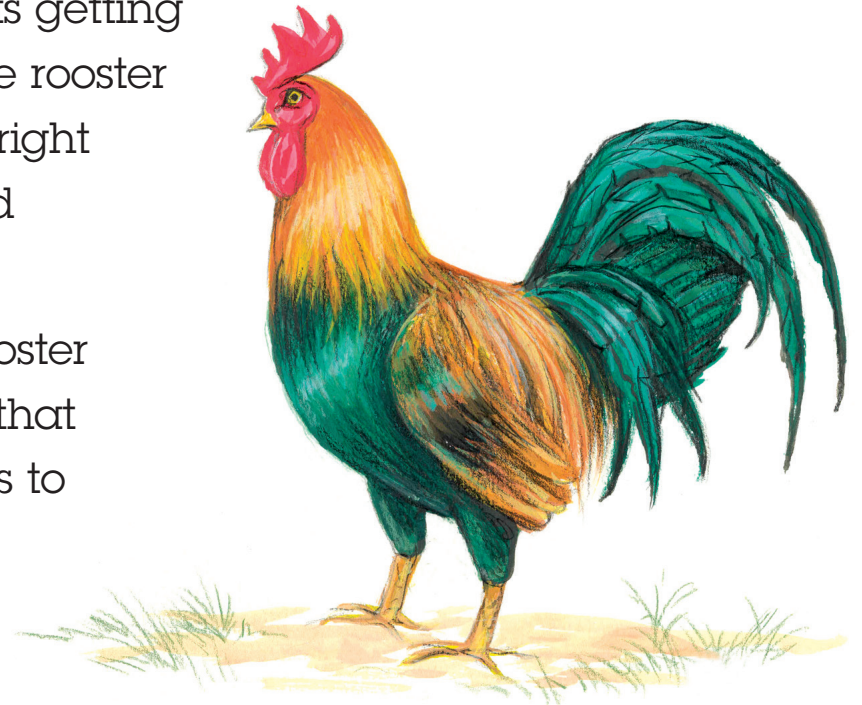
"Did he scare you?" asked Shadow.

"He roared at me, but I wasn't afraid. I cock-a-doodle-dooed and he ran away," bragged the rooster as he puffed his chest out even further. "Then I met a deer who showed me a magical pond. The water sparkled and the deer told me that anybody who drank from the pond could fly!"

"Wow!" exclaimed Shadow. "Did you drink the water?"

"No," said the rooster. "It was getting dark and I had to go home." The rooster scratched the ground with his bright yellow feet and then turned and walked away.

As Shadow watched the rooster return to the barn, she decided that she wanted to go into the woods to find the amazing pond.



Later that day, when Shadow told her mother Frosty about the magical pond, her mother just smiled and scratched Shadow's neck with her teeth. Frosty knew that the rooster had never gone beyond the fence. The rooster was really a silly bird who was afraid to leave the safety of the barnyard. Every day he made up stories of his wild adventures because he thought it made the other animals like him.

When Frosty told Shadow about the rooster's stories, the young horse refused to believe her mother. "Why would he make up stories?" asked Shadow. "I know there's a magical pond. I just know it!" she exclaimed as she ran off to chase a butterfly.



The next day, the sky was filled with storm clouds. The wind began to blow and soon the rain was falling. There was lightning and thunder crashing all around the horses.

Shadow clung to her mother's side, waiting for the storm to pass. Suddenly, Shadow heard such a loud crashing sound that she jumped. "Mommy," she said softly, "I'm scared."

"It's okay," replied Frosty. "It was only a tree falling to the ground. The storm will be over soon." But Shadow, still very frightened, closed her eyes and pushed closer to her mother.

Finally, the rain stopped and the roar of thunder drifted far away. The storm was over. Shadow opened her eyes and looked at her mother. Frosty smiled, nuzzled her baby, and began to eat grass.



Shadow was so happy that the storm had ended. She ran, and ran, and ran all around her pasture. As she approached the far corner of her home, she saw something that she needed to explore. The tree they had heard falling during the storm had crashed into the fence.

