

Acting Edition

Horse Girls

by Jenny Rachel Weiner

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|| SAMUEL FRENCH ||

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HORSE GIRLS received its New York Premiere at The Cell, A Twenty First Century Salon (Nancy Manocherian, Founding Artistic Director; Kira Simring, Artistic Director) in New York City on December 18, 2014. The performance was directed by Sarah Krohn, with sets by Daniel Geggatt, costumes by Sienna Zoë Allen, lights by Alex deNevers, sound by Ben Truppín-Brown, special effects by Amanda Perry, and fight choreography by Alex J. Gould. The Production Stage Manager was Justice Longshore, the Assistant Stage Manager was Hannah Brooks, the General Manager was Rachel Birnbaum, and the Press Representative was Ron Lasko/Spin Cycle. The cast was as follows:

ASHLEIGH WHITFORDOlivia Macklin
TIFFANY GESUVIAAngeliea Stark
ROBIN GESUVIA Maddie Sykes
MARGARET FLANAGHAN Kaley Ronayne
BRANDI MARSHALLKatie Lawson
CAMILLE LOWENSTEINAnna Baryshnikov
TRISH LOWENSTEINEleonore Condo

HORSE GIRLS was developed at Fordham University and Primary Stages and received a workshop production in Ars Nova's ANTFest on June 14, 2013 directed by Sarah Krohn.

HORSE GIRLS had its world premiere in association with Collaboration in Chicago on August 1, 2013, directed by Rebecca Stevens, and made its West Coast Premiere at Annex Theatre in Seattle on October 28, 2014, directed by Norah Elges.

CHARACTERS

LADY JEAN LADY OFFICERS

ASHLEIGH WHITFORD – (F, 12) President of the Lady Jean Ladies. The leader and most experienced rider in the bunch. She used to be obese. All of the girls look up to Ashleigh even though she can be horrendous; there is something dynamic and infectious about her.

TIFFANY GESUVIA – (F, 13) Vice President of the Lady Jean Ladies. Robin's older sister. Ashleigh and Tiffany have been best friends since they were born. Tiffany is infinitely jealous of Ashleigh – and always one step behind. Although a smart and an excellent rider, she is never seen because Ashleigh is always blocking the view.

ROBIN GESUVIA – (F, 11) Secretary of the Lady Jean Ladies. An eager people-pleaser. The youngest in the group. Tiffany's baby sister.

MARGARET FLANAGHAN – (F, 12) Treasurer of the Lady Jean Ladies. A horse and Ashleigh zealot. Wets the bed sometimes. Has diabetes. She loves being a part of this club because it makes her feel less like a freak.

BRANDI MARSHALL – (F, 12) Historian of the Lady Jean Ladies. Isn't particularly amazing at riding horses, but she loves the animals. She loves taking care of them. She loves watching them run.

LADY JEAN LADY MEMBER(s)

CAMILLE LOWENSTEIN – (F, 13) Looks like she should be in the popular group, but it's only because she developed boobs early.

OTHER

TRISH LOWENSTEIN – (F, 13) Camille's cousin who is in from Mahattan. She is liberal, self aware, polite, and was taught to always be a gracious guest.

SETTING

The pristine white bedroom of Ashleigh Whitford; South Florida.

TIME

2014.

AUTHOR'S NOTES

When there is a / in the middle of a line, that is an indication for the next person to begin speaking.

SPECIAL THANKS

I'd like to thank Matthew Maguire, Elliot Fox, Tanya Barfield, and Cusi Cram for their countless guidance while writing this play, Lisa and Douglas Weiner, Lisa and Sal Ricciardi, Stu and Susan Rosenholtz, and Carol and Milt Sirota for their support and investment, Rachel Viola for her fierce belief in me, and Sarah Krohn for whom none of this would be possible without.

~*BoYz may coMe and Boyz mAy Go, bUt hOrSes aRe 4eVer...*~

(The pristine bedroom of ASHLEIGH WHITFORD: white bedframe, white pillows, white comforter, white cabinets and dressers, white rocking horse, white carpet, white walls.)

(There is a trophy case with many, many trophies; one is larger than the rest.)

(There is a bowl of chips in the center of the room and a plate of carrots and ranch. A stack of journals and sparkly stickers are sprawled out. There is a laptop close at hand.)

(A karaoke machine sits on a shelf.)

(Lights up.)

(MARGARET is practicing her recorder. Some of the girls are playing “horse.” Some of the girls are eating. ASHLEIGH is working at her desk. TIFFANY is looking at ASHLEIGH. The world breathes as we see the girls in their natural environment.)

(Light shift – in ASHLEIGH’s head.)

ASHLEIGH. BRAID MY HAIR.

(shift – back to normal)

Who wants to braid my hair?

MARGARET. Oh I/do!

ROBIN. I do!/
/

MARGARET. Get out of my way!/
/

ROBIN. Shut up, Margaret, move!

(The girls fight to braid ASHLEIGH’s hair.)

ASHLEIGH. Whoever wants to better get here first because that’s who I will let sit next to me for the rest of the meeting.

(MARGARET gets there first.)

(ASHLEIGH continues writing in her journal, making checklists, preparing for the meeting.)

ROBIN. Oh, Ashleigh, by the way, Camille wanted me to tell you she's running a few minutes late.

ASHLEIGH. What are you talking about?

ROBIN. She said she texted you.

ASHLEIGH. I didn't get a text. Why does everyone know about this but me?

(ROBIN shrugs.)

TIFFANY. Hey Ash?

ASHLEIGH. I'm like really busy right now. Does what you have to say have to do with the meeting?

TIFFANY. Oh, I just wanted to know if you wanted to go to the mall when this is over. My mom said she'd drive us.

ASHLEIGH. That's so sweet. I don't think so. I have like so much paperwork to do.

TIFFANY. No totally.

(TIFFANY, defeated, starts to paint her nails.)

(CAMILLE enters dragging TRISH in by the hand.)

CAMILLE. Hey girls!

ROBIN. You guys! Camille is here!

ASHLEIGH. (referring to TRISH) Who's this?

CAMILLE. My cousin, Trish. She's from the city. Remember I told you she was gonna sit in today?

(Beat. Blank stare.)

Is that OK?

ASHLEIGH. Whatever.

TRISH. (cheery) Don't worry I won't bother anybody.

(uncomfortable beat)

CAMILLE. Let me introduce you to everyone.

OK well this is Robin – she's our secretary and like the nicest person I know –

ROBIN. Thanks, Cam! You're so sweet!

CAMILLE. This is Tiffany, Robin's older sister – she's our vice president. Her and Ashleigh have known each other since they were like infants, she's also an excellent rider, like second best in our group, she just started competing internationally like Ash – the rest of us are pony club – Tiff owns her own horse and she's like really smart like she gets A's and stuff and she's like really really pretty, as you can see –

TIFFANY. Camille, you're exaggerating –

ASHLEIGH. I own way more than one horse.

CAMILLE. She's lying –

ASHLEIGH. Excuse me?

(beat)

CAMILLE. I was talking about Tiffany.

(beat)

Anyway, Ashleigh *technically* owns all of our horses except for Tiff's but we've been riding them since they were foals and like we would give our *life* for them/

ROBIN. We really would –

CAMILLE. – Right, Ash? That's what you always say?

(ASHLEIGH pretends like she didn't hear her.)

(CAMILLE waits for an answer. She doesn't get one.)

CAMILLE. Brandi is on her way I guess – she's our historian and you'll like meet her soon or whatever.

This is Margaret, our treasurer –

(MARGARET waits for more of an introduction.)

and this...is Ashleigh. She is the leader of the group, our president, she started the whole club and everything. And this is her house. See outside?

(CAMILLE moves TRISH to the window to peer outside.)

CAMILLE. Those are the stables. That's where I am every day – every morning on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday, and also after school most days. Ash, do you think I could give Trish a tour later?

ASHLEIGH. No.
It's closed.

(beat)

Sorry.

ROBIN. Ashleigh is so lucky because she only lives like ten steps from the stables – she gets to see them every day even when it isn't lesson time.

TRISH. *(trying to appeal to the group)* I bet you're wondering if I've ever ridden a horse.

(Beat. Nobody answers.)

ASHLEIGH. You can sit over there.

TRISH. Where?

(ASHLEIGH points.)

On the rocking horse?

(ASHLEIGH nods.)

You want me to rock?

ASHLEIGH. You don't have to.

TRISH. Um. Camille? Should I go?

CAMILLE. You know my mom can't pick us up until 5:30!

ASHLEIGH. And nobody is allowed downstairs without adult supervision. My mom collects Lladrós.

(ROBIN looks out the window and sees the horses –)

ROBIN. Ohmygod you guys! Look! Here they come!

(Everyone runs to the window. Except for TIFFANY.)

(She keeps painting her nails.)

ALL. Ahhh!

ROBIN. Ohmygod look how cute they are!

MARGARET. They are so good. They are just so good.

CAMILLE. They are such incredible listeners.

ROBIN. Look at Titus! He's such a ham.

MARGARET. See how they trot in a line like that? We taught them that. We teach them everything.

(To the horses –)

BYE YOU GUYS! I LOVE YOU!

(They all wave and blow kisses and yell a variation of "BYE! Bye you guys!" out the window.)

TRISH. Where are they going?

ASHLEIGH. I don't know, we aren't janitors.

(odd beat)

TIFFANY. God, Brandi needs to just get here already.

ASHLEIGH. Why? Do you have to be somewhere else or something?

TIFFANY. No.

CAMILLE. Normally Brandi is so prompt.

ASHLEIGH. Whatever, I'm annoyed too. I'm giving her five seconds.

(beat)

ASHLEIGH. Where the hell is she!?

TIFFANY. I know she was up all of last night watching the dressage championship on ESPN so she really does not have an excuse. She has a TV *in her room*. Her mom has like no boundaries.

ROBIN. Yeah. Our mom won't even let us have cell phones. Tiffany has her period for goodness sake.

TIFFANY. Robin!/
/

ROBIN. /Which means she's a woman! What? She should at least let her have a cellphone.

TIFFANY. I mean that's what I've been saying for like three months!

(ASHLEIGH presses down on a button.)

ASHLEIGH. (in a borderline offensive accent) Luz Maria?

Can you please bring us up some virgin strawberry daiquiris? The low fat kind? THANKX.

TRISH. Woah.

CAMILLE. That's Ashleigh's intercom phone. There's one in every room. That way they can talk and not even have to get up. Luz Maria brings us daiquiris almost every week.

TRISH. You're allowed to have those before dinner?

ASHLEIGH. I can do whatever I want as long as it doesn't involve fried food or Rachel Maddow.

Anyway, aren't you guys really mad at Brandi?

CAMILLE. What about innocent until proven guilty?

ASHLEIGH. Just because your cousin is here doesn't mean you have a free pass at annoying, Camille.

(MARGARET starts to play the recorder.)

Margaret, would you please stop playing that thing? It sounds like a dying moose.

MARGARET. I have to practice for the Christmas concert. I have a solo part.

ASHLEIGH. Well that's really good for you, but it's hurting my ears.

ROBIN. She plays when she's nervous. What's wrong, Marg?

MARGARET. Nothing.

(She sighs.)

I just had a hard day.

ROBIN. What happened?!

TIFFANY. Let me see your wrists.

CAMILLE. Did Kyle call you horse face again?

(MARGARET nods. The girls comfort her.)

ROBIN. Don't worry. He is such a jerk.

MARGARET. Thanks, guys.

Sometimes I wish I could just get away.

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