

CHAPTER 10

ONE DAY, DURING SUMMER, I WAS CLEANED AND BRUSHED with extra care. Willie was kinder than usual. I noticed a small tear running down his face. 'Look at you!' said Willie. 'You look so handsome. I hope the ladies like you.'

'If the ladies like him, then he'll have a good home for the rest of his life,' said Farmer Thoroughgood.

They tied me to the front of the carriage and we rode out of the village until we came to a pretty house surrounded by flowers.

The boy rang the doorbell. 'Are the ladies home?' he asked a servant.

'Yes, they are here. I will call them,' said the servant.

We waited for a while until three ladies came to see us. One was tall and pale, and was wearing a white shawl. Her name was Lavinia; the lady next to her had rosy cheeks and a big smile. She was Miss Ellen. The third one was a very serious woman and looked very important. That was Miss Blomefield.

'He is beautiful,' said Miss Ellen. 'I like him!'

'Look at his knees,' said Miss Blomefield.

Then a young man came to look at me. At first, he was as pleased, but then he too saw my knees. 'Farmer Thoroughgood, I don't think this horse is suitable,' he said. 'Look at those knees!'

'Well, many horses have knees like that, but it's not their fault,' said Farmer Thoroughgood. 'Try him for a week and you will see he is as safe as any other horse. You can send him back if you aren't happy.'

They all agreed that I would stay for a week to let the groom decide if I was good enough for the ladies.

The groom took me to my stables and began to brush me. As he did that, he noticed the star on my face. 'I've seen a star like that before,' he said. 'It is like the star that Black Beauty had.'

He looked at me again and examined me more carefully. 'That white foot is like Black Beauty's foot... and the white hairs on his back... Black Beauty? It's you! Isn't it?'

I was surprised that he knew me. I looked at the groom but didn't

