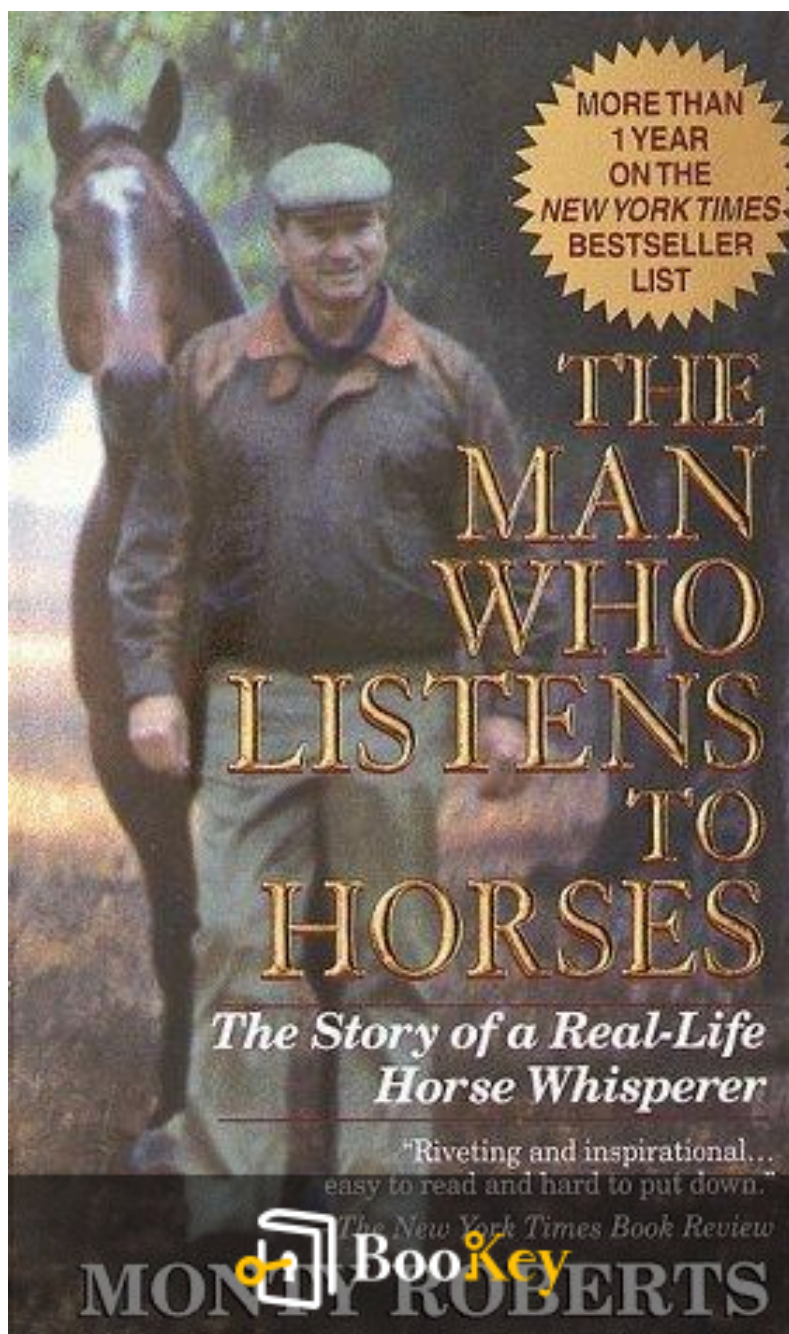


# The Man Who Listens To Horses PDF (Limited Copy)

Monty Roberts



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# **The Man Who Listens To Horses Summary**

Discovering the Silent Communication of Wild Horses

Written by New York Central Park Page Turners Books Club

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## About the book

In "The Man Who Listens to Horses," Monty Roberts recounts his unique journey of understanding and connecting with horses, which began during his solitary summers in the expansive high desert of California. As a thirteen-year-old in 1948, he spent countless hours observing wild horses through binoculars, captivated by their natural behaviors and interactions. His nights were illuminated by the moon as he sought to decipher the silent language of these majestic creatures.

Roberts felt an instinctual pull toward grasping the deeper meanings of their movements and sounds, sensing that he was on the cusp of discovering something transformative for both horses and humans alike. This period of quiet observation not only nurtured his fascination with the animal world but also laid the foundation for a revolutionary approach to horse training that would challenge traditional methods. His experiences would ultimately redefine the human-horse bond, marking the beginning of an extraordinary journey that blended empathy, understanding, and communication without words. Through his profound connection with these animals, Roberts would emerge as a key figure in the field of equine psychology and learning.

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## About the author

In *\*The Man Who Listens to Horses\**, Monty Roberts shares his journey of discovering a unique approach to horse training through deep observation and understanding of equine behavior. Raised on a ranch, Roberts developed an intimate connection with horses from a young age, but it was his experiences with wild horses that truly shaped his philosophy.

Roberts noted that horses communicate primarily through body language and subtle movements, relying heavily on non-verbal cues to express their feelings and intentions. By learning to interpret these signs, he found he could connect with horses on a deeper level, fostering trust and respect rather than using dominance or fear.

This revelation led to the creation of "Join-Up," a groundbreaking technique that allows trainers to establish a voluntary partnership with untamed horses. Rather than breaking their spirit, Roberts emphasizes understanding and cooperation, proposing that a genuine bond can be formed through empathy and patience. This chapter lays the groundwork for Roberts' revolutionary methods, highlighting the necessity of mutual understanding in fostering harmonious relationships between humans and horses. Through Join-Up, Roberts not only aimed to transform the training process but also to change the way people perceive equine intelligence and emotion.

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# Chapter 1 Summary: The Call of the Wild Horses

## Chapter 1: The Call of the Wild Horses

In the summer of 1948, thirteen-year-old Monty Roberts embarks on a transformative journey in the high desert of Nevada, where he first encounters the beauty and complexity of wild horses. His solitary observations of a dominant dun mare asserting her authority over a young colt become pivotal moments that shape his understanding of horse behavior. Through these interactions, Monty learns that horses communicate using subtle body language and signals, insights that will later become foundational to his unique approach to horse training.

Set against the backdrop of post-World War II California, Monty's experiences take place during a time when wild horses are increasingly vanishing. Many are captured and sold to rodeos, while others face slaughter for dog food, leading Monty to contemplate the fate of these majestic creatures. Resolved to make a difference, he proposes supplying mustangs for the Wild Horse Race at the Salinas Rodeo, igniting his entrepreneurial spirit and igniting a lifelong passion for the preservation and understanding of wild horses.

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Joined by his friends Ralph and Vivian Carter, Monty embarks on adventurous expeditions into the Nevada desert. These experiences deepen his appreciation for the wild horses' natural behaviors and instincts. He becomes acutely aware of their communication methods, which guide him as he begins to gather and train mustangs for eventual auction. This chapter emphasizes Monty's commitment to developing a bond based on trust, steering away from traditional methods of breaking horses through force. Instead, he envisions a kinder, more empathetic approach that prioritizes understanding over dominance.

Ultimately, Monty Roberts invites readers into a world of discovery and passion, where a profound connection is forged through the silent language of the wild mustangs, setting the stage for his future endeavors in horse training and advocacy.

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# Chapter 2 Summary: Growing Up with Horses

## Chapter 2: Growing Up with Horses Summary

In this chapter, Monty Roberts shares his formative experiences with horses, revealing how his childhood in Salinas, California, during the Great Depression was intertwined with these majestic animals. His earliest memories are steeped in the equestrian world, where his mother taught riding lessons, and the scenic Salinas Valley provided the backdrop for countless adventures on horseback.

Monty's family operated a sizable equestrian facility that delivered riding lessons and horse training. This environment fostered Monty's early proficiency in riding, particularly driven by his father's ambitions for him to become a champion. While his brother also displayed talent, Monty drew more of their father's focus, which shaped his youth and aspirations.

However, a pivotal aspect of Monty's upbringing was the harsh and traditional training methods employed by his father, particularly the practice known as "sacking out." This brutal technique involved tying horses and exposing them to distressing stimuli to break their spirit. Monty's innate empathy for these horses urged him to seek a kinder approach, rooted in

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trust and communication rather than fear.

As Monty matured, he began to reject his father's authoritarian training style. A significant turning point occurred when an attempt to train a horse differently resulted in a severe beating from his father. This incident solidified Monty's resolve to forge his own path, free from the constraints of his father's expectations.

Amid these personal struggles, the impact of World War II brought further disruptions to Monty's life. The internment of Japanese-Americans, who were integral to the equestrian business, forced substantial changes. Despite these upheavals, Monty found solace working with horses, which fueled his determination to succeed in riding.

A particularly poignant relationship with a horse named Brownie provided Monty with a sense of stability and love, contrasting sharply with his tumultuous relationship with his father. This bond deeply influenced Monty's perspective on horse training, marking the beginning of his lifelong commitment to understanding and nurturing horses.

As the chapter draws to a close, Monty feels a growing sense of independence and a strong desire to carve out his identity alongside horses, rather than simply adhering to his father's legacy. His experiences reflect a journey of self-discovery and resilience, setting the stage for his

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development into a humanitarian horseman dedicated to respecting and understanding these animals.

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## Chapter 3 Summary: East of Eden

In Chapter 3 of "East of Eden," we journey through the formative years of Monty Roberts, who, at the age of fourteen in 1949, possesses a wealth of experience as a professional rider. Encouraged by his father, Monty immersed himself in the rodeo circuit, particularly excelling in bulldogging—a demanding event that requires great skill to physically subdue cattle. His dedication culminated in winning the National Intercollegiate Rodeo Association bull-dogging championship in 1957, despite facing challenging weather conditions during the competition.

The chapter sheds light on the inherent dangers of rodeo sports, including bull riding, which Monty ultimately gave up at the urging of his future wife, Pat. She expressed concern over the high risk of injury associated with the sport. Alongside his rodeo pursuits, Monty found himself drawn to horsemanship competitions, emerging as a standout in the newly established horsemastership event, where his extensive experience with horses provided a distinct advantage.

Monty's narrative reflects on his limited formal education, emphasizing his preference for learning through hands-on experience with horses. A pivotal figure in his life was Sister Agnes Patricia, whose teaching philosophy greatly influenced Monty, shaping his views on mentorship and learning. As he navigated the tumultuous waters of adolescence, he wrestled with the

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desire for independence from his father's strict expectations.

As the chapter progresses, Monty's evolving understanding of horsemanship takes center stage. He emphasizes the importance of empathy and connection, especially in his work with wild mustangs, envisioning a bond that facilitates effective training. This approach marks a stark contrast to his father's harsh methods, highlighting Monty's commitment to a philosophy based on compassion rather than punishment.

Monty's personal life is enriched by the introduction of his beloved horse, Brownie, with whom he shares a profound bond. This relationship symbolizes Monty's shift towards a more humane approach to training, in line with his belief that effective communication with horses stems from respect and understanding.

The chapter culminates in contemplative reflections on Monty's experiences growing up in a high-pressure environment, where he balances competition, personal relationships, and the weight of his father's expectations. Through this journey, he gradually distances himself from his father's domineering influence, steering towards a training philosophy that honors the individuality of each horse.

Ultimately, Monty Roberts' narrative intertwines themes of love, loss, mentorship, and personal evolution, illustrating his quest for

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self-understanding as he carves out a unique identity in the world of horsemanship, grounded in empathy and mutual respect.

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# Chapter 4: The Sand-Castle Syndrome

## Chapter 4: The Sand-Castle Syndrome

In this chapter, Monty Roberts offers a candid reflection on his tumultuous relationship with Hastings Harcourt, a wealthy yet emotionally unstable millionaire whose unpredictable nature creates chaos in Monty's life. The chapter opens with an evocative metaphor: akin to a child who delights in both building and demolishing a sandcastle, Harcourt embodies a duality of ambition and destruction.

Monty recounts their initial encounters, beginning when Harcourt sought Monty's expertise to train a new string of quarter horses. One of these horses, Travel's Echo, quickly catches Harcourt's eye, especially when Monty showcases the horse's talents at a high-profile event attended by society elites. Driven by ambitions of establishing a premier thoroughbred racing operation, Harcourt encourages Monty to travel abroad, seeking new ideas and insights to realize this grand vision.

However, the narrative takes a darker turn when Harcourt experiences a mental health crisis, leading him to contemplate selling off the farm and his horses. Monty's empathetic nature compels him to support Harcourt, but he

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soon finds himself under immense pressure as Harcourt's erratic decisions become increasingly destructive. In a shocking move, Harcourt orders the termination of several horses, including Travel's Echo, revealing a cruel side that disturbs Monty deeply.

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# Chapter 5 Summary: Flag Is Up Farms Regained

### Chapter 5: Flag Is Up Farms Regained

## Return to Flag Is Up Farms

Monty Roberts reflects on his bittersweet return to Flag Is Up Farms after a year away, accompanied by his horses Johnny Tivio, Jess, and Cadillac. The once vibrant home now felt empty, filled with echoes of cherished memories. With Pat by his side, Monty set about restoring the farm's warmth and life, unpacking familiar furniture and adorning the walls with art. Eager to reestablish connections with the horses, Monty felt a surge of excitement but soon encountered a significant challenge with a horse named Fancy Heels.

## The Elko Horse Show

At the Elko horse show, Monty, along with friends Dave and Sue Abel, marveled at the exceptional ranch horses on display. There he discovered Fancy Heels, a promising competitor who won his class. Overcome with confidence, Monty decided to purchase the horse despite never having ridden him before, buoyed by encouragement from his friend Randy Bunch.

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## **Challenges with Fancy Heels**

However, Monty's initial enthusiasm quickly turned into frustration as he struggled to train Fancy Heels. The adjustments needed proved to be far more extensive than he anticipated. Over several months, he failed to enhance the horse's performance, ultimately leading to the tough decision to sell Fancy Heels to a ranch that could better meet his needs, allowing the horse to engage meaningfully in work.

## **Crawford Hall's Injury**

In a poignant turn, Monty's narrative shifts to his friend Crawford Hall, who faced a life-altering riding accident resulting in severe spinal injuries. Monty and Dave rushed to support Crawford, who was grappling with the realization that he might never ride again. Despite his formidable challenges, Crawford remained determined to stay connected to horses. Inspired by Crawford's spirit, Monty crafted a plan for him to help oversee operations at Flag Is Up Farms.

## **Rehabilitation and New Beginnings**

Monty welcomed Crawford to live and work on the farm, where he gradually became a vital part of the team, managing training operations.

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Crawford's resilience and dedication became a source of inspiration for everyone around him, highlighting the uplifting bond between humans and horses even in the face of adversity.

### **Johnny Tivio's Passing**

As the chapter unfolds further into sorrow, Monty mourns the sudden death of his beloved horse Johnny Tivio, who passed away from a heart attack on his birthday. Reflecting on their extraordinary bond and Johnny's remarkable capabilities, Monty prepares a special burial site to honor his legacy, encapsulating the deep emotional connections that exist between horses and their caretakers.

### **Toward Healing**

Amidst his own health struggles following an injury, Monty finds parallels between his experiences and Crawford's challenges, reinforcing themes of resilience. He gains solace from Dually, another horse that brings joy and companionship into his life.

Overall, this chapter intricately weaves themes of recovery, loss, and the bonds forged between humans and horses, illustrating the strength and resilience required to navigate life's unpredictable challenges.

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# Chapter 6 Summary: Deer Friends

## Chapter 6: Deer Friends - Summary

In November 1977, while riding his horse Johnny Tivio on his farm, Monty Roberts witnessed a desperate scene: a group of coyotes attacking an old doe. Demonstrating his deep compassion for animals, Monty intervened and chased the coyotes away, assessing the doe's injuries and realizing she had two fawns to protect. Concerned for their safety, he decided to save her, naming her Grandma.

To ensure Grandma's safety, Monty and his dedicated staff constructed a coyote-proof enclosure, providing her with food and water. Much to Monty's surprise, she adapted well to her new surroundings, discovering that wild deer could, indeed, survive in captivity.

Understanding the need to establish trust, Monty utilized gentle movements and non-threatening gestures, drawing on his experiences with horses to communicate effectively with Grandma. Over time, the two developed a deep bond, leading Monty to gain insights into the intricate flight responses of deer, which also enhanced his understanding of equine behavior.

As he continued his work, Monty introduced a young male deer named

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Yoplait into his care. Unlike Grandma's calm demeanor, Yoplait displayed a more possessive nature, fiercely loyal to Monty while displaying aggression toward unfamiliar faces. Monty performed various bonding experiments, such as leaving items with his scent, which further illustrated the unique personality traits of each deer.

Yoplait's resilience shone through when he suffered from a serious car accident. Monty treated his injuries and marveled at the deer's extraordinary healing abilities, which reinforced his respect for the strength inherent in wild animals.

Monty's journey with deer also included working with a young female named Patricia, who posed challenges due to her distance, and another named Feline, who was more affectionate and responsive. Each deer presented unique behaviors that enriched Monty's understanding of animal communication.

The chapter touches on Monty's experience raising orphaned fawns. Initially left to fend for themselves, he eventually took in these helpless creatures, nurturing them with goat's milk until they were old enough to return to the wild.

Through his experiences, Monty realized that deer possess a remarkable intelligence and sensitivity. He honed his communication skills, drawing

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parallels between deer behavior and that of horses, fostering a nuanced understanding of interspecies interactions.

In conclusion, Monty Roberts's interactions with Grandma, Yoplait, Patricia, and Feline illuminated profound lessons in animal communication. He considered himself multilingual, having developed an ability to understand various species, showcasing the complexities and joys of his work with both horses and deer.

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# Chapter 7 Summary: The Invitation That Changed My Life

## Chapter 7: The Invitation That Changed My Life

In December 1988, Monty Roberts, a pioneering figure in horse communication, received an unexpected phone call from his friend John Bowles, who had exciting news: the Queen of England wanted to meet him. This unexpected opportunity arose through Sir John Miller, a former equerry to the Queen who had witnessed one of Monty's demonstrations and saw the potential for Monty's techniques to enlighten royal equestrian practices.

Preparing for the royal demonstration scheduled for April 1989 at Windsor Castle, Monty experienced a mix of exhilaration and anxiety. The significance of this event weighed heavily on him, as he understood the importance of showcasing the validity of his unconventional methods to a highly distinguished audience. Upon arriving at the castle, he was inspired by its rich history and the royal family's long-standing connection to horses, deepening his respect for the occasion.

When the day of the demonstration arrived, Monty was tasked with working with a young Thoroughbred filly—a challenge heightened by the presence of royal spectators. Overcoming his nerves, Monty employed his unique

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approach, emphasizing the bond that can develop between horses and humans. The filly responded positively, showcasing the efficacy of Monty's methods. His performance captivated the audience, earning praise from both the Queen and the Queen Mother, marking a significant validation of his life's work.

Buoyed by the success of the demonstration, Monty found himself invited to work with additional royal horses, including six from Queen Elizabeth's stable and four ponies belonging to Prince Philip. Throughout the week, Monty's innovative techniques garnered admiration from the royal family, shifting public perception of his methods and establishing him as a respected authority on horse communication.

Monty departed England with a renewed sense of purpose; the royal recognition not only validated his commitment to understanding horse behavior but also opened doors for future public demonstrations across the UK. He embarked on a nationwide tour, introducing his techniques to broader audiences than he had ever reached before.

Reflecting on this transformative experience, Monty envisioned a future filled with collaboration with the Royal Family and a greater mission to advocate for his revolutionary horse communication methods. This chapter of his life marked a pivotal turning point, shaping both his career and his personal interactions with horses, signaling a journey imbued with

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promising possibilities.

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# **Chapter 8: When a Racehorse's Worst Nightmare Is a Starting Gate**

### Chapter 8: When a Racehorse's Worst Nightmare Is a Starting Gate

## **Life-Altering Events**

In this chapter, Monty Roberts reflects on the transformative moments in his life, such as his marriage and the births of his children, which have shaped his journey. He emphasizes how his experiences with horses, particularly under the training of Johnny Tivio and Lomitas, were pivotal in his development as a horse trainer and advocate.

## **Lomitas's Early Career**

Lomitas, a promising racehorse owned by Walther J. Jacobs, showed early signs of talent by achieving impressive workout times and winning several races. Despite these early successes, he faced a formidable challenge: an overwhelming anxiety associated with the starting gate that hindered his debut at three years old.

## **Struggles with the Starting Gate**

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Lomitas's reluctance became apparent when he balked at loading into the van for a race and subsequently refused to enter the starting gate on multiple occasions. Although he managed to win a race after a frustrating struggle, the risk of disqualification loomed large. As further attempts to race resulted in violent refusals, despair set in for his owners, who were concerned about their horse's potential as a 'nonperformer.'

### **Monty's Intervention**

Recognizing Monty Roberts's reputation for rehabilitating troubled racehorses, Jacobs sought Monty's help for Lomitas. Upon meeting the horse, Monty immediately noticed Lomitas's intelligence and potential. His goal was to build trust and alleviate Lomitas's fear of starting gates through patient training.

### **Building Trust**

Monty implemented a series of trust-building exercises in Lomitas's training regimen. With consistent effort and a focus on emotional connection, Lomitas gradually overcame his fears, demonstrating remarkable progress as he learned to load into vans without issue.

### **Successful Return to the Track**

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With thorough preparation and newfound confidence, Lomitas returned to the track, successfully passing the tests required for racing eligibility. On the day of his reinstatement, Monty felt the weight of the audience's expectations. However, Lomitas entered the starting gate with composure and delivered an outstanding performance, clinching a significant victory.

## **Challenges and Triumphs**

After overcoming his initial struggles, Lomitas thrived on the racetrack, winning numerous prestigious races in Germany and rising to fame. However, his journey took a dark turn when a blackmail attempt threatened his life, causing immense anxiety for owner Walther Jacobs.

## **Overcoming Adversity**

Despite facing health challenges from poisoning, Lomitas displayed remarkable resilience, returning to training in the United States. Although he dealt with foot issues, he persevered and triumphed in his first race back, reaffirming his potential.

## **Legacy of Lomitas**

Monty reflects on Lomitas's legacy as an iconic racehorse who overcame

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many obstacles to become a champion. Following his racing career, Lomitas transitioned into breeding, where he continued to gain recognition and respect as a stallion.

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