

**BOOK TITLE:** *The Black Stallion*

**AUTHOR:** Walter Farley

**POINT OF VIEW:** 3<sup>rd</sup> person

**SETTING:**

**Time:** Probably early 1900s, '20's-40's,

**Place:** Begins on a tramp steamer on the Arabian Sea, then moves to an uninhabited island, then to New York City and suburbs

**Mood:** Mysterious, exotic

**Plot Stage 3**

**Climax:** Alec and the Black travel to Chicago by train for the race, accompanied by Henry, Jim, and old Napoleon. At the race track, Sun Raider and the Black immediately clash, and Sun Raider kicks the Black viciously at the start of the race. Briefly delayed as Alec tries to examine the Black's bleeding leg, the Black speeds after the horses with Alec barely in the saddle, passing Cyclone and then Sun Raider, overcoming his late start to finish first.

**Plot Stage 2**

**Conflict, Rising Action:** The Conflict is introduced the next day when Alec follows the Black to a spring-fed pool. The Black violently charges toward Alec, but at the last moment halts and turns back, and Alec is able to drink water. **Will Alec be able to tame and train the Black?** The Rising Action begins as Alec works to save himself and the Black, building shelter and gathering food. The Black begins to trust Alec; eventually Alec succeeds in riding him. One night his shelter catches fire, which grabs the attention of a passing ship. They bring Alec and the Black aboard, and in a couple of weeks they arrive in New York City, where Alec is reunited with his grateful parents. His father agrees that he can keep the Black if he can find a place to board him. In their city of Flushing, their neighbors the Daileys agree to let the Black stay in their stable, with another old horse, Napoleon. Henry Dailey recognizes the Black's potential and begins training him and Alec to race. Napoleon is always at the Black's side, and seems to calm him. Henry cannot locate evidence of the Black's pedigree, which eliminates his chance to compete in the racing circuit, but eventually, through the help of Joe Russo and Jim Neville, the Black is accepted to race against the two fastest horses in the country, Sun Raider and Cyclone.



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**Plot Stage 4**

**Denouement:** The Black's leg is bleeding profusely and Alec's only thought is for his horse's wellbeing. The vet arrives to examine him and proclaims that the wound is only superficial and that he will be fine. Assured of the Black's safety, Alec finally has the thrill of realizing they have won. Henry accompanies him and the Black to the Winner's Circle, where they are presented with the rose wreath and a gold trophy by the Governor. To Alec's surprise, they are joined by Dad and Mother, and then Jim leading Napoleon.

**CHARACTERS:**

**Protagonist:** Alec Ramsay

**Antagonists:** Main: the wild Black Stallion; Minor: the racing circuit authorities

**Other Important Characters:**

**Dad and Mother,** Alec's parents

**Henry Dailey,** a former champion jockey who stables the Black and trains him and Alec to race

**Mrs. Dailey,** Henry's wife

**Joe Russo,** a young newspaper reporter who writes about the Black

**Jim Neville,** a nationally syndicated sports writer who brings the Black to the attention of the race world

**Tony** the huckster, an old world Italian immigrant who drives a wagon

**Napoleon,** Tony's horse, who bonds with the Black

**Plot Stage 1**

**Exposition:** As the story opens, Alec, the main character, has just left a 2-month visit to his missionary uncle in India, where he learned to ride horses. He is headed home on *The Drake* to New York, through the Arabian Sea, the first location of the setting. In the Red Sea they stop at a small Arabian port where a majestic but wild black stallion is brought aboard. Alec attempts to befriend the powerful and dangerous stallion by bringing him sugar lumps. On the coast of Spain, a raging storm hits, the steamer is damaged and begins to sink, and the Black breaks out of his stall and leaps overboard, knocking Alec into the water. Alec grabs the rope attached to the Black's halter as he swims past, and the Black drags him along for hours, until they reach an island. Alec collapses on the beach and the Black runs off.

**THEMES**

Resourcefulness/Survival

Perseverance

Teamwork

**CONFLICT**

Man vs. Nature, Man vs. Society

Will Alec be able to tame and train the magnificent but wild Black Stallion to reach his full potential?

**Plot Stage 5**

**Conclusion:** Alec learns that they have broken the world record. The sports announcer asks Alec to speak and he says, "The Black was every bit as good as we believed him to be. We knew he had it in him, and he proved it today." Cyclone and Sun Raider's owners congratulate him. He proudly leads the Black off to enjoy his victory oats.