



Down On The Farm!

The World's Smartest Horse

I was born to run very fast and win horse races. My name is Lukas. My great-great-grandfather was a famous champion and my owners hoped I could be like him. I tried very hard to do what they wanted, but my legs weren't strong enough. Thoroughbreds like me are raced when we're only two years old, so I got hurt and couldn't race anymore. My owners found a new stable for me, but when my legs healed I was even slower, so they gave me away to someone else. This owner didn't want to keep me either, so I went to several other homes which got worse with each move. Finally, I ended up with people who couldn't feed me and I got very skinny and sad.

One day, a lady drove by and saw me. She felt so sorry for me she offered to buy me. This lady was a trainer and wanted me to be a jumper. I tried my best, but the work was very hard and it hurt my sore legs. She put me up for sale too because she didn't want to keep a horse who couldn't win ribbons. I was advertised as a kind and sensitive horse - I was going to another new home, but this time it would be different.

My next owner, Karen, had loved horses since she was a little girl. Her parents were too poor to buy her much, least of all a horse. So, when she grew up, she became a nurse and bought horses with problems, fixed them and found good homes for them. She fell in love with me at our first meeting. I had a lot of bad habits by then and was very wild. I was already nine years old and didn't know how to behave. It took Karen a long time to gain my trust and attention, but she wouldn't give up on me. For the first time in my life, I was allowed to be myself and she paid attention to what I wanted.

I had a hard time focusing, so Karen helped me understand lessons using fun games. We played with all sorts of toys and I finally felt like I was special to someone. She gave me choices and showed me how to make the right decisions and I began to learn some very interesting things. Karen saw that I could be good at a lot of things. Her belief in me made me feel like I could succeed. I may not have been very fast, but maybe I could be the best at something else.

Karen and I were having so much fun! She used tricks to build my confidence. Before long I was able to smile, nod yes, shake my head no, bow, curtsy, step onto my pedestal, wave, pose and hold it, pretend to be lame, yawn, kiss her - even give her a big face lick if she asked! I could do the Spanish Walk (a big high walk), Passage (like skipping), stay and come, lay down, sit, fetch and catch. I did all these things out of love for Karen. She lets me be free and doesn't use any equipment (she doesn't even own a whip), so people can see that animals can be trained without any force.

Karen could see how much I enjoyed learning and was always trying to come



up with new classes for me. Her belief that animals would be treated better if people realized how smart we were gave her an idea. How much could I really learn? So, together, we explored this patiently and kindly. Karen showed me different ways to think. I was able to understand many words and lessons and I became very calm and wise. I learned to spell, count, identify shapes, pick a color, put things where Karen asked, and understand same/different, bigger and when something was absent.

Now, I'm very famous - the World Records Academy has recognized me as the World's Smartest Horse and Guinness World Records has officially recognized my history making achievement: "Most numbers identified by a horse in one minute." This seventeen year old met all the guidelines and identified NINETEEN numbers in less than sixty seconds.

I've been on NBC, CBS, ABC, CNN, HLN, Inside Edition and the Associated Press and America on Line have done feature stories about me. Karen has talked about me on Pet Talk Radio, Pet Talk Live Radio, Pet Place Radio, Animal Radio and RFD-Radio and I have appeared in newspapers, forums, blogs and newsletters all over the world. I was nominated for the 2010 Equine Vision Award sponsored by Pfizer and American Horse Publications. My web-site (<http://www.playingwithlukas.com>) has been visited by friends from fifty-one countries (I'm a million hit horse now!) and I have my own book and documentary. I have been invited to appearances all over the country and Karen makes speeches about me too.

But it gets even better - Karen and I donate our time and services to share the happy results of kind training and to show how smart and wonderful animals are for their improved treatment. My favorite is meeting children. Karen dresses me up in costumes so they can see how fun horses are. I'm also the Spokeshorse for several rescue organizations and a therapy practice for sick people. The best part - Karen tells me that I am a champion after all.