

Circle C Beginnings #2

Andi's Indian Summer

Chapter 1 Excerpt

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New Words

captive	a person who is kept in a place where he or she does not want to be
cookhouse	a building used for cooking, where the cowboys eat their meals
cowboys	the men who work on a ranch
hayloft	the place upstairs in the barn where hay is kept
jim-dandy	very good; great
mush	hot cereal
novel	a long story; a book
<i>ohóm</i>	the Yokut word for "no"
pasture	a grassy field for horses and cows
Yokut	a peaceful Indian tribe in California

Andi's Indian Summer

Chapter 1

Big News

“Hey, Andi!” Riley yelled. “Come see what I have.”

Andi did not want to see what her friend Riley had. Not today. She was too busy. She was leading her very own baby horse, Taffy, around the pasture.

Taffy's mama, Snowflake, was helping. Sometimes Taffy didn't want to follow Andi. When that happened, Snowflake gave her baby a push with her big, white nose.

Obey Andi! Snowflake seemed to be saying.

Riley climbed over the rail fence and jumped down. “Did you hear me, Andi? I've got something to show you.”

Riley *always* had something to show Andi. Sometimes he showed her a new riding trick. Sometimes he pulled a frog or a snake out of his pocket.

Just last week, Riley showed her a new litter of kittens in the barn.

Most of the time, Andi liked to see what Riley had in his pockets. She liked to watch him do tricks on Midnight, his big, black horse.

But not today.

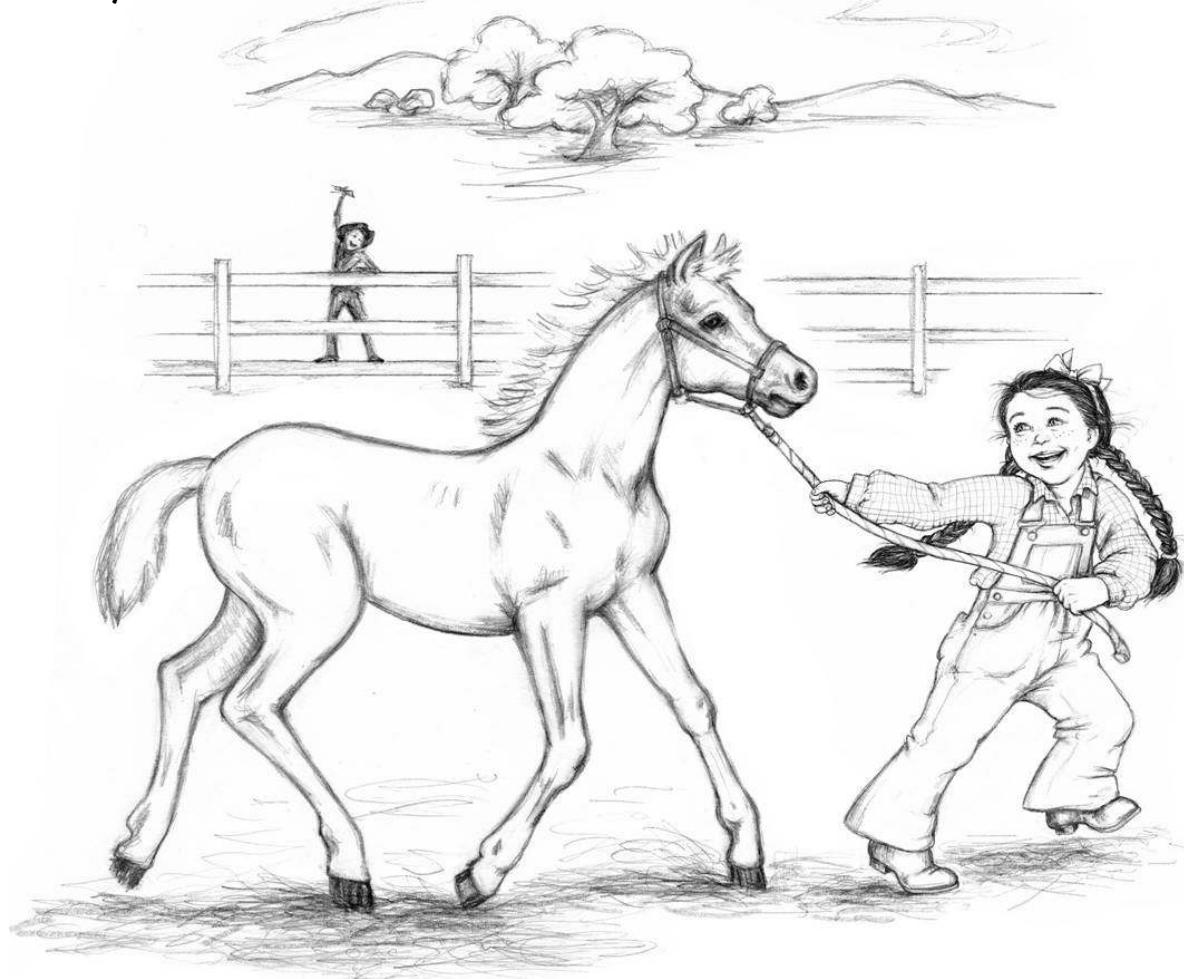
“I'm busy,” Andi said. She pulled on Taffy's lead rope and kept walking. “I'm training Taffy. All by myself. Chad said I could.”

Andi felt a lot bigger than six years old today. For once, her big brother Chad was not helping with Taffy. He was too busy. He said Andi could do it if she was careful.

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Andi wanted to be careful with Taffy. She wanted to show Chad she could do everything just right. No mistakes. Then Chad would let her train Taffy by herself on other days.

Maybe.



Andi was much too busy to look at anything Riley had. Even if he had a fat, green, extra-jumpy frog to show her.

Riley ran across the pasture and grabbed her arm. “You have to see what one of the cowboys gave me.”

Andi stopped. She couldn't walk very far with a big, eight-year-old boy holding her arm.

Taffy stopped walking too.

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Andi smiled and patted Taffy. "Good girl."

"Don't you want to see what I have?" Riley asked.

Andi frowned. It looked like Riley was not going to leave her alone.

"What is it?"

Riley let go of Andi's arm. He reached into his back pocket. Then he pulled out a wad of rolled-up papers. It looked like a book.

Andi wrinkled her eyebrows. *A book?*

Books did not make Andi feel very excited—especially since she couldn't read.

Andi squinted at the yellow-brown book in Riley's hand. It looked old and worn out. It looked like hundreds and hundreds of people had read it before Riley got it.

She let out a big breath. "What makes you think I want to look at a book?"

Riley bent close to Andi's ear, like he was telling her an important secret.

"This isn't just *any* book," he whispered. "It's a . . . *dime novel*."

Andi didn't say anything. She didn't know what Riley was talking about. It looked like a plain old book to her.

What was so secret about that?

She shrugged. "So what?"

"Don't you know what a dime novel is?" Riley asked. Then he laughed. "*Everybody* knows about dime novels."

Andi scowled. She didn't know what a dime novel was. And she didn't care, either.

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Andi was not going to stand around and let Riley laugh at her. She was not going to let him show off that he knew something she didn't know.

Not for even one minute.

"Come on, Taffy," she said, pulling on the lead rope. "Let's get away from Mr. Too-Big-for-His-Britches. He thinks he knows everything."

"Wait!" Riley said. He started talking fast. "It's a book with a paper cover that costs one dime. Just ten cents. The inside pages are a little worn out, but take a look at this cover."

Riley stuck the book in Andi's face.

That got her attention.

The cover of Riley's book was full of bright colors and scary-looking Indians. The Indians had war paint on their faces. They were sneaking up on somebody.

Andi's heart started beating fast.

She had never, ever seen a book like this before!

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