

## <Finding Midnight Blue>

It was midnight. The weather was freezing and even the air seemed to be frozen. Astrid's parents, Frank and Sue, were driving to their friend's stable for an emergency. Three of the horses escaped from the stable due to a broken stable gate. They had to be brought back home as quickly as possible, otherwise they could freeze to death.

Suddenly it snowed so much that the road was instantly covered in snow and it became very slippery. Even the fog got severe and it blocked Frank and Sue's sight while they're driving. Crash!! Suddenly, the big truck next to Astrid's parents' car slipped on the icy road and lost control. Unfortunately, it bumped Astrid's parents' car and knocked it over. Astrid's parents died right on the spot. Astrid was only 15 at that moment. When this incident appeared on the news, people panicked because Astrid's parents were world famous dressage riders and they had become even more renowned when they became the best horse riders couple.

They had a horse named Midnight Blue, who was a popular known worldwide and beloved. Midnight Blue was a very special horse. He was a black Friesian horse and had a unique white star mark on his forehead with sparkling blue eyes. He was tall as a giraffe, and fast as a wind. His delicate skill for dressage was just remarkable. So this was the horse that everyone wanted to have, or even the offspring if there were any. After seeing this news, Alice and her family immediately rushed to the hospital where Astrid was mourning and weeping on the cold floor. Alice was Astrid's best friend. Astrid and Alice were like family, having known each other since they were very young. Alice's parents tried to comfort Astrid and stayed with her during the whole funeral ceremony. After all the process was over, they decided to raise her within their family along with Alice. Also, they helped Astrid to keep and take care of Midnight Blue in their stable.

2 years later, Astrid became a brave, fearless, outgoing and athletic girl. She loved animals, especially horses. Meanwhile, Alice became a very smart girl. She always likes studying and reading books. But they both liked to play with animals. Every morning, when Astrid and Alice woke up, they always went to the stable where Midnight blue was staying. One day, as usual, Astrid and Alice went to the stable to check up on Midnight Blue and it was gone! The space where Midnight Blue was supposed to be was empty.

First, Astrid rushed into the house and Astrid asked Alice's mom if she had seen Midnight Blue. But unfortunately Alice's mom said that she didn't nor anybody else in the house. While Astrid was talking to Alice's mom, Alice started to search for Midnight Blue all the nearby stables. Astrid was too anxious and could not stop worrying that she wouldn't be able to find Midnight Blue. She promised herself that she would never give up finding Midnight blue. She just couldn't live without Midnight Blue. It was the only friend that Astrid could remember all the precious memories with her parents. So she reported to the sheriff urgently that the horse was missing.

Astrid and Alice started to visit every neighbor they could and asked if they knew anything about Midnight Blue. They gave their neighbors detailed information and features about Midnight Blue. Astrid and Alice scoured the area around the village, but found no trace of a horse. Then! A small boy who looked about 10 years old approached and told them he saw Midnight Blue on a large abandoned farm. Upon hearing that, Astrid managed to hold back the anticipation and joy, and dashed with Alice to that huge abandoned farm. When they arrived, Astrid called Midnight Blue in an excited

voice, but they couldn't hear anything. They couldn't even hear the sound of a bug on the farm and saw not even a shadow of a living creature. Astrid's excited face turned into agony and grew darker and darker.

Astrid tried so hard to find Midnight Blue for so long, and she couldn't hide her upset mind because she couldn't find any clue. To refresh her mind, she began to walk helplessly through the dark and deep forest she had never been before. The forest looked quite dim because it was foggy and the trees were blocking the light coming in. The deeper she went, she couldn't see well so she thought she should get out of there. But then! Somewhere she began to hear the sound of a horse crying. Astrid listened closely and it sounded like Midnight Blue, so she went to the side where it sounded, and found a small cabin that looked very old. She went into it carefully and finally found Midnight Blue tied to a short rope. Astrid started to cry in relief when she saw Midnight Blue. Astrid was eager to bring Midnight Blue home right away, but she couldn't help but wonder who would dare to commit this evil crime. So she decided to wait in the cabin for the horse thief to come.

At night when the dark came down, Astrid began to hear the footsteps and the sounds of some people talking. She listened nervously and attentively with pounding heart, and then she realized that the voices were quite familiar. Astrid couldn't hide her surprise when she encountered the faces of horse's thieves. It was because the thieves were ALICE and her family!!! Astrid immediately called the sheriff, and a few minutes later the sheriff fought them. Later, Astrid asked Alice why she stole Midnight Blue. Inevitably, Alice began to tell the whole story. Alice said that her father's company is bankrupt so she had to steal a horse to earn money. After all, Midnight Blue was such a famous horse that everybody wanted. People would buy Midnight Blue just to get her offspring. More surprisingly, Alice's parents intentionally caused the car accident. This really did break Astrid's heart. As a result, Alice and her family were locked up in the prison for 20 years and Astrid lived happily with Midnight Blue.