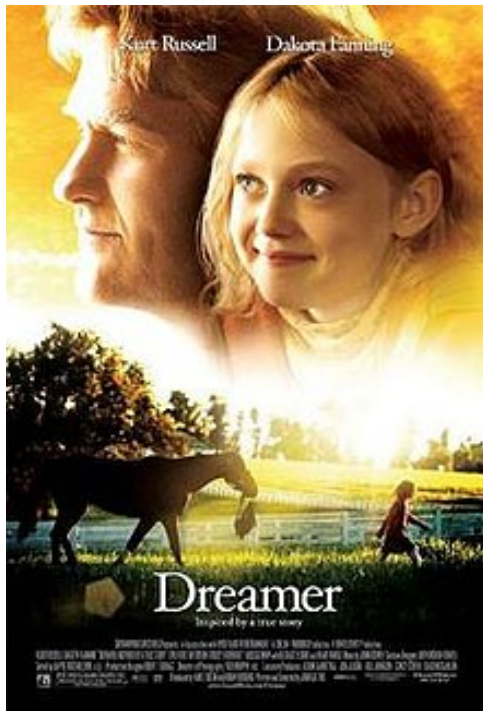


# Movie Analysis- Dreamer (2005)

Because why not re-visit your childhood?

Tessa Yohan, Sunday, April 28th



You know, the horse movie that, in the early 2000s, turned nearly everyone it could into a horse girl?

Yes, that film. We became aware of how many ideas were in the picture that we had overlooked as kids around halfway through. Here are the opinions and research on the movie Dreamer from your favorite college student who doesn't get enough sleep. This classic childhood movie that spoke to me so profoundly from ages 7-14 tells the story of

racehorse Mariah and her storm. The film Dreamer

is based on a true story of the unfathomable—a horse who fractured a bone and then raced again. Mariah's Storm won the 1995 Turfway Breeders' Cup. Mariah is an American thoroughbred racehorse bred by Donald T. Johnson's Crescent Farm in Lexington, Kentucky. She was severely injured while racing but subsequently fully recovered and resumed her track racing profession. Mariah's Storm, a talented filly, immediately began accumulating points for a berth in the 1993 Breeder's Cup, when she would have been one of the favorites. Then she cracked a left front cannon bone in the Alcibiades Stakes, a severe injury that may have terminated her career. Her owners and trainers, however, maintained their trust. The fracture

ultimately healed, but the issue of whether she would ever race again persisted. John Gatlin, the film's writer and director, uses his artistic license and runs with it while we watch. The cast is outstanding; Ben Crane (Kurt Russell) is a horse trainer struggling to connect with his brilliant daughter, Cale (Dakota Fanning). But then a horse named Soñador (Mariah Storm) suffers from a fractured leg when its nasty owner (David Morse) races her against Ben's advice. Rather than euthanize his client's wounded horse, Ben adopts her and welcomes Cale into the family business. Grandpa (Kris Kristofferson) encourages Soñador to run again. To close off this fantastic synopsis of the film with such a surprisingly notable cast (good for whoever was the casting director), in my research, I found out that Kurt Russell actually purchased Dakota Fanning a genuine Palamino horse called Goldie after the film was released, which makes me chuckle and raise my glass to a full circle moment.



Horse movies, in general, have a notable place within media industries. Some like to call them Genre Demand (Of course, a term with another self-explanatory name). The world of media industries has grown to encompass innumerable stories and seemingly limitless genres since the first movie was created in 1895; nevertheless, time isn't always kind, and certain genres could never survive past their specific age. This indicates that several film genres that were prominent in the past have become less common in the modern era. While many people would believe that all of the genres on this list are archaic and out of style, some rose to prominence relatively recently and then wholly faded away. By no means is a genre that was out of style incorrect. When a genre becomes less popular, it usually indicates that many films have been produced in that genre and that interest in it has faded. This is

frequently demonstrated by a genre film that performs poorly or by multiple consecutive flops. Executives and authors would then realize that viewers were moving away from one genre and toward something else. Regrettably, this means that many genres need to be remembered. That being said, it also implies that these genres might resurface.

Horse movies, and I don't know if this stays true to the modern-day (and I am talking about today) age, felt like they peaked in the early 2000s, or maybe it was just my age. You may ask yourself why does this age demographic loves horse movies, and how did I fall into this trap? Looking back on my past, I realize it all started innocently enough. One day, you're minding your own business, watching TV, and suddenly, you're entranced by majestic horses galloping across the screen like they're auditioning for "America's Next Top Stallion." No, seriously, all you want is to be

connected with these animals, so you beg and get your parents for anything to do with horses so you can make this connection with a horse that does not actually happen in real life. Next thing you know, you're convinced you can



communicate with horses through telepathy because, of course, you are young and don't realize the horse you have been hanging with just knows you will give it food, so then you find yourself raiding your neighbor's garden for carrots to coax them into your backyard and make them yours. It's truly a slippery slope from "Black Beauty" to "Black Beauty: The Sequel" to "Black Beauty: The Reboot, featuring CGI unicorns, and the movies keep on coming.

So, back to the film analysis at hand... aside from her accident and recovery, Mariah Storm's life and career show no similarities to the horse at the core of Gatins' fictitious script. As you can see, this movie follows the real story loosely. When they say a true story inspires a film, it's a fine line; it means the movie is not a true story; a true story inspired it. It's almost like, "Hey Tessa, did you hear the story about that lady who drove her children into the river, and they all drowned? Yes, I did, and it inspired me to write a movie about a gorilla!" This is not as dramatic as it would be in a movie. They take Mariah's Storm's narrative and turn it into a family coming-of-age story following the recovery and voyage of the horse Soñador with, of course, a young girl, in this case, Cale, who comes to age from a connection that this young girl (me at ripe age of 10) DREAMED about with a horse. Our noteworthy cast does a great job acting in this low-budget film, with particular props to Luis Guzmán and Kris Kristofferson, as they really acted like they were being paid billions.

Mariah's Storm's Tale gained popularity when published, becoming one of the most-read articles in Sports Illustrated history. William Nack, a notable horse and boxing writer, penned it. The most compelling evidence of Mariah Storm's initial vow may be found in her Foles. She is the dam of numerous racing champions, the most noteworthy being Giant's Causeway, the 2000 Horse of the Year, and sire of Noble Causeway, who competed in the 2005 Kentucky Derby. Mariah's Storm produced 13 named foals, 11 of which started and eight of which won. Her significant foals are listed below:



Giant's Causeway (1997, Storm Cat) was Europe's Horse of the Year in 2000. Noble

Causeway, in turn, sired Samraat, who won several graded stakes races. He won the Withers Stakes and the Gotham Stakes in 2014, then finished second in the Wood Memorial and sixth in the Kentucky Derby.

Gatin spent most of his life immersed in the world of horses and horse racing. "When I was growing up, we lived near the Roosevelt Horse Farms in upstate New York"(Dulay). He talks more about the purpose behind the movie and why he took his creative license to this point. "The way the New York papers described the horses — they gave them personalities. The horses came alive as actual characters. I thought it would be great to make a movie about those characters. I started going to the racetrack and following them like athletes, watching their careers as they started going for the big races, the classics. These horses are bred to race and be super athletes, but some have more heart and drive." (Dulay). Gatin definitely took that "heart in the drive" to his storyline when creating the manuscript and honestly created a movie that parents could get behind due to the spectacular cast and children as I found myself doing begging to watch even though my 21-year-old min is saddened that "based on a true story" doesn't mean much.

Works cited:

Dulay Cindy Pierson. "John Gatin's movie Dreamer: Inspired by a true story, Mariah's Storm"

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