



Dynamo

Eleanor Gustafson

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Jeth Cavanaugh is searching for a new life along one of Pennsylvania's mountain ridges when he stumbles upon a stable of show jumpers owned by Rob and Katie Chilton. Throw in a volatile gaited stallion named Dynamo, and Jeth will do anything to work there. He earns his living by training and showing Rob's jumpers, but Dynamo is his primary passion. Everything changes when God enters his life--in the unconventional form of a hard slap by an old girlfriend--and ignites a new, greater passion within him. But along with fervor comes fear at the undeniable evidence of God's hand on his life. Inexplicable events, both good and bad, make him moan plaintively, "Why does God do this to me? I get the feeling I'm being set up for something." He is, indeed. Jeth's life is anything but predictable, much like the God he serves. The real Dynamo and his ultimate trainer emerge out of an excruciating mix of disaster and brokenness, which are never beyond the reach of redemption. This story is God in your face: Who is He, really? What does He ask of us?

Dynamo Details

Date : Published April 1st 2014 by Whitaker House (first published March 1st 2014)

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Author : Eleanor Gustafson

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From Reader Review Dynamo for online ebook

Kimberly says

Dynamo is the name of a horse, one of the main characters in this story. Throughout the book we see the relationship between Dynamo and Jeth.

Jeth has found himself at Rob and Katie Chilton's ranch. This ranch trains, shows and sells horses. For someone like Jeth, who loves horses and needs a breather from the hard times he has experienced, this may be the best place.

Dynamo is his challenge as he decides he should be the one to tame this horse. However, he is amazed at the spiritual lessons he is able to learn from this horse.

The author was able to use her own love and knowledge of horses to good use in this book. God's presence is shown throughout as she weaves the lessons that need to be learned in surprising ways.

I highly recommend this book to anyone who loves horses, or any animals.

I received this book from bookfun.org in exchange for my honest review.

Burton W. Cole says

I am not a horse person. I showed cows when I was a kid. So I wasn't sure what to expect, or if I'd even understand, when I began reading Eleanor Gustafson's latest novel "Dynamo" about a horse trainer named Jeth and a majestic stallion named Dynamo.

I stayed up until 4 a.m. to finish reading this "horse" book, so thoroughly did it draw me in.

It turns out that Dynamo is a journey book—the sometimes bumpy journey that new Christians take learning their faith, and the journey that can shake veteran Christians who thought they had their faith cinched in tightly until it slammed against a high gate. And there's a Master Trainer who knows when we need disciplined and when we need loved back onto the course He's chosen for us to run.

If you love horses, especially jumpers, great. You'll get even more out of this book than I did. If you haven't a clue, it's okay. "Dynamo" is more about you and your relationships than it is about stalls and sawdust. Ellie's captivating writing whisks you away on an adventure full of surprises. I was jarred more than once because I thought I knew where the story was going, and suddenly, like the jumpers Jeth trains at Morningstar Stables in Pennsylvania, we've leaped somewhere else. "Dynamo" sure wasn't what I was expecting. It's more.

Paula says

Dynamo by Eleanor Gustafson is a well-developed and written novel on redemption, temptation, and following God's Holy Spirit when He nudges. I enjoyed the book immensely except for one part (which I won't comment and reveal.) in the plot that I wasn't expecting. Jeth Cavanaugh has just been released from prison and is looking to begin a new life, but who will hire an ex-con? God has someone in mind. As Jeth is walking on the backroads in Pennsylvania, he comes upon a small private horse farm in need of repair and an energetic stallion, Dynamo, that catches his eye. The owners, Rob and Katie, are Christians just starting out in buying, selling, and training horses to jump. Just up Jeff's alley. Jeth offers to work for just room and board in a small trailer and begins his journey back into the horse world. Along the way, influenced by Rob and Katie, he gives his life to God, but the temptations are great – former friends, an old girlfriend, and even Katie. Can he survive and keep true to God? You will have to read and find out. This book kept my interest until the end, and I recommend it highly. I received a copy from the author and publisher of The Book Club Network in exchange for an honest review.

Anne Campbell says

I have been hooked on horse stories since I first read Thunderhead when I was probably about ten. Heroic stallions and the equally heroic humans who love and train them just fill up my heart, and this one maybe makes it overflow!

You see, there's this guy fresh out of prison (Jeth Cavanaugh) looking for a job, and there's this vicious stallion (Dynamo) who'd lots rather kick, buck, and bite than be ridden, but he's the most amazing five-gated show horse Jeth has ever seen. They meet at the stables of Rob and Katie Cavendish, and Rob hires Jeth to help train and show jumpers--which Jeth does to perfection, but he longs to show Dynamo.

Showing and training horses is the perfect escape for Jeth. He needs to forget his former boss's daughter, Janni Wingate. Dear Daddy Wingate had made sure Jeth went to prison on trumped-up charges, and even if the sentence was only two years, he is now branded for life. If Janni ever sees Jeth again, her father now makes sure his own daughter will face prison or death!

When Jeth meets up with God, his life is radically changed, and not all the changes sit well with Jeth. Janni makes him an offer he can't refuse--but he refuses it anyway and earns himself a stinging slap. Things go downhill, but God begins doing unbelievable things through this ex-con even while he's at his lowest point.

And Dynamo--Jeth's heart's passion and enemy--begins to show eye-popping progress.

I wish I could give this book ten stars. Buy from Amazon or Barnes and Noble.

I received a free copy of this book from the author in return for an honest review.

Lisa Johnson says

Title: Dynamo
Author: Eleanor Gustafson
Pages: 304
Year: 2016

Publisher: Whitaker

My rating is 5 stars.

Jeth is a man searching and running at the same time. Jeth is a lover of horses, rides well and is knowledgeable, but don't say a word about God to him. Until he turns on a road that he thought took him somewhere else and he ends up at a small ranch with two people who love the Lord. Rob and Katie take him on though they can only offer him a roof over his head. They lay down some guidelines that Jeth must adhere to.

Jeth is very transparent with the owners regarding his past and what he does and doesn't believe. However, more than anything, Jeth wants to get back to riding horses and showing them at various events. One would think the story couldn't be more than a nice tale that leads to redemption and reconciliation, but is it really? I found the book very compelling to read and couldn't help myself from turning pages long into the night! Jeth is a very interesting character whose spiritual experiences and questions are deep. He won't take platitudes either. Jeth finds an elderly woman in the area's small congregation that understands him and mentors him some named Maybelle, or I should say she picks Jeth out.

The interactions between various characters kept me very interested because I wasn't always able to see where the author was leading. What drew me most into the book were the spiritual themes running throughout the story. I am not sure exactly how to explain them, but yes there is faith, spiritual warfare and struggling with understanding suffering. However, Jeth has a spiritual encounter with God that changes him and challenges him in a way I don't remember reading in a story.

A person doesn't need to understand the nuances of the various types of horses or shows that occur to really enjoy the tale that will grab your heart and mind. I cannot wait to see what the author offers to audiences next, but until then don't miss reading a very action-packed and highly engaging story!

Disclosure of Material Connection: I received one or more of the products or services mentioned above for free in the hope that I would mention it on my blog. Regardless, I only recommend products or services I use personally and believe will be good for my readers. I am disclosing this in accordance with the Federal Trade Commission's 16 CFR, Part 255. "Guides Concerning the Use of Endorsements and Testimonials in Advertising."

Brenda says

What a gripping read! I knew nothing of horses of showing them, training them, etc. The entire horse world was unknown to me, I see what I was missing when reading this story. It takes you to the behind what the public would see and takes you to the farms where the horses are grown, trained, and then shown. Bought and sold. This is the story of Jeth Cavanaugh who is searching for a new life and takes a wrong turn and ends up at the home of Rob and Katie Chilton who train and show horses, they teach children to ride jumpers, etc. Rob and Katie are devout Christians and even though Jeth has been in prison, they see that he is a horse whisperer they have a horse Dynamo who really can't be managed or ridden by anyone until Jeth comes along. They hire him for room and board and the little money they can scrape up and on Sundays they don't allow Jeth to work, he can go to church with them if he likes. Since he can't work and has not much money he decides to try it out. It's not so bad, he returns. Slowly the word of God makes its way into Jeth and changes his life. He has a day where he is really tested and that is the day that changes everything for him. Dynamo is a leading character in Jeth's life throughout this book as well as the word of God as brought front and center by the author. This book takes hold of you and you can't put it down. It's hard to go about your daily chores when all you can think about is getting back to the story to see how it ends.

This is a telling story, one that stays with you when you aren't reading and has you compelled to finish it and see the story to the end. I loved this book!

Here is the review as found on Good Reads:

Jeth Cavanaugh is searching for a new life along one of Pennsylvania's mountain ridges when he stumbles upon a stable of show jumpers owned by Rob and Katie Chilton. Throw in a volatile gaited stallion named Dynamo, and Jeth will do anything to work there. He earns his living by training and showing Rob's jumpers, but Dynamo is his primary passion. Everything changes when God enters his life--in the much like the God he serves. The real Dynamo and his ultimate trainer emerge out of an excruciating mix of disaster and brokenness, which are never beyond the reach of redemption. This story is God in your face: Who is He, really? What does He ask of us? unconventional form of a hard slap by an old girlfriend--and ignites a new, greater passion within him. But along with fervor comes fear at the undeniable evidence of God's hand on his life. Inexplicable events, both good and bad, make him moan plaintively, "Why does God do this to me? I get the feeling I'm being set up for something." He is, indeed. Jeth's life is anything but predictable, m

Brenda Schneider says

A wonderful Christian book that is a gripping and powerful story. Could not put it down. I won this book in a goodreads giveaway

Vickie Jameson says

I don't like to leave bad reviews or give a book less than 3 stars, but this book wasn't for me. Had to stop reading about 1/2 way through because it made no sense. It also seemed to infer that Jeth became a "Christian" because he chose right over wrong, but that's not how it works. Reading the other reviews, it seems that I'm in the minority so I'm not sure what I'm missing. I guess you'll have to read it for yourself to find out. Happy reading!

Deb Haggerty says

Deb's Dozen: 12-word summaries - God's power manifested in a new believer – a dynamo of faith. Awesome!

Recently I was in the New Hampshire mountains at the New England Christian Writers' Conference. My good friend, Cyndi McDowell, had insisted that I come – that I would find my “people” here. She was so right – I reconnected with some friends I'd not seen for a long time. I found some new friends who live in the area. I heard some incredible speakers and met some wonderful writers.

One of the writers is Eleanor Gustafson – when she heard I reviewed books here on my blog, she asked if I'd be willing to review her book – Dynamo - if she gave me a copy. I, of course, agreed to read the book, but made no promises about the review. Understand, I don't post reviews of books that I don't like – so not every book I receive gets a review.

Am I happy that Eleanor gave me her book – Dynamo is the most spell-binding, I-couldn't-put-the-book-down-and-stayed-up-all-night-reading book I've had the pleasure to read in years! The writing is superb. The story is captivating. The characters are believable. God's power is evident.

The main character, Jeth, just got out of prison and is struggling. He has no sense of belonging or of hope. The woman he loves is forbidden to see him – he drives off through the Pennsylvania countryside with no real destination. Losing his way, he comes upon Morningstar Farm – and stops because of the horses and the jump course he sees. Rob and Katie Chilton take him in and so begins Jeth's rehabilitation. Still on parole, he must meet Rob's conditions of no drinking, swearing, and smoking in order to stay. He must go to church with them on Sundays – and he has to work hard to be able to ride. And he so wants to ride – he's ridden jumpers almost since he could walk. And then there's Dynamo – a black stallion with a temper and a five-gaited pace. How Jeth and Dynamo become a dynamic duo will draw you in until you're lost in the drama of the story. And throughout the book, the most powerful character is God – a God who has laid hold of Jeth and won't let go. But then He does say that once we're His, He'll never leave us nor forsake us, doesn't He?

In my book, Dynamo deserves 5-plus stars – you'll definitely want to get and read the book – liking horses is not a requirement although you'll love that part of the story as well.

Eleanor is a delightful woman. Here's how she describes herself on her website, www.EleanorGustafson.com:

What have I done in life? Everything from being a minister's wife, teacher, musician, writer, and encourager, to horses, building houses, tree farming, and making maple syrup – all of which has been helpful fodder for writing fiction. My passion is God, and then comes loving people and writing. My favorite books are the Bible, Jane Eyre, and Pride and Prejudice. My music of choice is classical – it feeds my soul. However, wherever worship is going on in whatever musical language, I'm there—happily.

I am looking forward to reading another of Eleanor's books, The Stones, about King David. If that book is even half as well written as Dynamo, I'm in for a treat!

Brent Soderstrum says

I won this book through GoodReads first read program.

There was both good and not so good with this book. Let's start out with the good. It is a good story about the ups and downs we all face regardless of whether you are a Christian or not. The backdrop of this novel is the training and showing of both American Standard Bred horses and jumpers. I rode in the quarter horse western pleasure circuit as a kid so I was able to identify much of what went on with Jeth who trained and showed horses. Jeth was recently released from prison and was looking for a job. Rob and Katie, Christians, hire Jeth and give him a chance. Jeth does a good job for them and works on training a stallion named Dynamo who is a handful. Jeth eventually becomes a Christian after going to church with the Chiltons and seeing how they live their lives.

I enjoyed how Gustafson showed that even when you become a Christian life doesn't all of a sudden become a blessed walk in the park. We still struggle in this world and still sin brings problems. Forgiveness is a huge theme and was well illustrated in the lives of all the characters. The thing I liked most of the story was the example given of showing love to our "enemies" and how that can be used by God to bring others to Him.

Now for the things I didn't like about the book. What's up with the spy stuff? Not sure why something like that was even needed. A big reach by the author. I was also not a big fan of Janni and her relationship with Jeth. There was such a better way to end the story. I was just let down at the end of it. What happened to

Cindy? She just fell off the face of the map.

Good start and disappointing finish.

Trinity Rose says

Dynamo by Eleanor Gustafson is such an excellent book. I thought it would be good when I read the back, but nothing prepared me for how fantastic it is.

Jeth made mistakes in life like we all do, but he learned many lessons from his and tries to live differently. Rob and Katie believe in Jeth and not many people ever had. Jeth knows nothing about God, but he has plenty of questions and not the ones you would expect. Another wonderful character in this book is Maybelle. She isn't in many scenes, but she plays a huge part as being Jeth's angel and always is there to help him with whatever life throws at him.

Nothing is common about this story. It is so full of love, peace, forgiveness, life and loss. It is really, really a book to read. Eleanor Gustafson is a new author to me, but she is now a new favorite. If her other books are half as good as Dynamo they would be worth reading. I highly recommend Dynamo.

Thank you to Whitaker House for providing this book for review. I was not required to write a positive review. The opinions I have expressed are my own. I am disclosing this in accordance with the Federal Trade Commission's 16 CFR, Part 255

Linda Marie Marsh says

A Christian book about a troubled but talented young man Jeth....gifted with the ability to sense or read horses. It's a book about 2nd chances...and more. As you read you'll see the analogy between Jep the young man and Dyanmo - the horse few thought could be made to be tame. The power of belief and faith works ...

An amazing book if you are a horse lover, a christian, both, neither, a book with a powerful message.

Joan Arning says

Dynamo is an excellent story of a man who desires to do God's will! Jeth Cavanaugh is a strong character who has just been released from prison and needs a job. Rob and Katie Chilton run their stable on Christian principles and anyone working for them has to follow some of these principles too. Jeth will agree to anything to work with the amazing stallion, Dynamo. The characters in this book face real life situations - some not so pretty! Eleanor Gustafson has written a fast paced novel with unexpected events. I recommend Dynamo even if you don't like horses! I was given the book by Book Fun (The Book Club Network) and this is my honest review.

Andrew Ziegler says

There is a lot of BIG Biblical stuff going on in this book. The main character deals with a spiritual journey that is akin to a prophet from the Old Testament. I enjoyed the trials and warfare that Jeth endured during the book, as well as trying to line up those examples with what I remembered from the Bible itself.

As I said, there is a lot going on here to chew on. Enjoy.

Daphne Self says

God takes the bad and makes it good. God equips the called. Sentences to sum up the novel, Dynamo.

Powerful, gripping, and gritty...these are only a few words to try to describe the wonderful story brought to life by Eleanor Gustafson.

Jeth Cavanaugh may be raw and rough, but he knows horses. One decision to travel down a road led him on a journey for which he wasn't prepared.

Little by little Jeth come to know Jesus and His sacrifice for us all. Little by little his soul is revealed, mirrored by the beautiful stallion, Dynamo.

The dialogue in Dynamo is real and at times gritty (never overstepping the boundary of Christian morality). The emotions are straightforward and yet complex.

The characters' involvement with each other contributes to their growth.

Indeed, Jeth is being "set up for something", but that something is great.

I cried when a beloved character died. I cheered when a character was saved. I moaned when trouble came.

All in all, Dynamo is a great Christian literary fiction. The growth and journey of the character made a strong impact upon this reader. It stayed with me long after I turned that last page and closed the book.

I encourage all readers of general and literary fiction to immerse themselves in this story and take the ride of their lives.

Superb, Eleanor Gustafson, superb!
