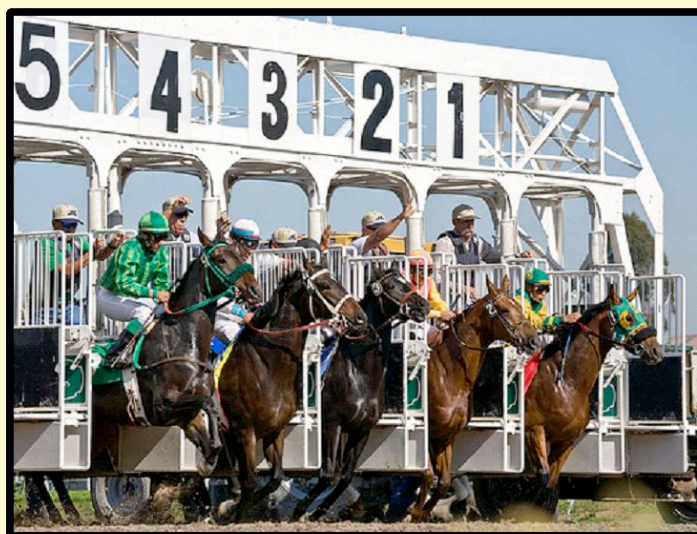


# Dixie Dust Rumors



by  
**Jenny Storm**



**Media Kit**

**DIXIE DUST RUMORS**  
by **Jenny Storm**

**Released by eTreasures Publishing**

**Contents:**

Book blurb and web pages	3
Excerpt 1	4
Excerpt 2	5
Press Release	6
Q & A with Jenny Storm	8
Jenny Storm icon & bio	12

## **Dixie Dust Rumors**

### **By Jenny Storm**

Who could be luckier than a young girl whose father trains racehorses? That is, until false accusations could cause the loss of not only their livelihood and the horses they love, but their dreams. Due to the belief that horse racing is a crooked sport, even unsubstantiated rumors can be fatal to a trainer's career. Twelve-year-old Rose Olen is determined to find out why a journalist printed innuendos that make her father's business practices sound unethical without checking facts. Aided by her friends Maya Sanchez and Libby Kim, and her younger brother Simon, they investigate the charges and come up with a scheme to foil the reporter. They juggle responsibilities at school, the contempt and ridicule from other students, and responsibilities at the track as they search for the truth behind the *Dixie Dust Rumors*.

**The Jenny Storm Webpage:**

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**Published by eTreasures Publishing:**

<http://www.etreasurespublishing.com>

**Excerpt:**

“So, is your Dad, like, going to jail?”

I turned around. The school hallway seemed both noisy and quiet simultaneously. I faced Sue Allen, probably my least favorite person in the school, and her giggling posse of Ellie Katz and Tracey Vitella. The only reason I was even polite to Sue was because my dad trained horses for her dad. “Why would my Dad be going to jail?”

“You don’t know?”

“Why would I ask if I knew?”

“Unless she thinks it’s okay, what he did.” Ellie began tittering again. Boys liked it, but that high-pitched cackle made me want to slap her.

“Like, where have *you* been all day?” Sue rolled her eyes.

“Science class. And before that, a math test.” I glared at her. “Why do you want to know my schedule?”

“You are so lame, so out of it,” Tracey sniffed. “Brian heard it on the radio in shop class.”

“Heard what?”

“That your dad’s under investigation.”

“For what?”

“For fixing a race or something. I don’t know.” Sue shrugged. “All I know is that your dad’s a crook.”

**Dixie Dust Rumors Excerpt 2:**

I took a deep breath. I flipped on the porch lights, and flung open the door, wielding the baseball bat with as much threat as I could.

“Hey!” I shouted.

Three figures dashed from various points around the house and ran down the sidewalk.

“Hey!” I repeated.

One of the figures turned back and pulled something out of his pocket. There was a blinding flash of light. I staggered back against the doorway. The three figures jumped into the car and sped off.

I squeezed my eyes shut. When I opened them, I stared at the outside of the house in disbelief. Someone had spray-painted “cheater” over and over again in red paint on our pale blue house. The way the paint ran down, it looked like blood.

I heard screaming. At first, I thought maybe I’d screamed without knowing it. Then, I realized it was Maya.

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## **DIXIE DUST RUMORS RELEASED BY ETREASURES**

### **YA Horse Racing Mystery to hit the digital market in May**

Who is luckier than a young girl whose father trains race horses? Twelve-year-old Rose Olen loves her life as the daughter of a racehorse trainer -- until allegations of impropriety by a journalist throw her father's career and Rose's reputation at school in jeopardy. DIXIE DUST RUMORS, the debut YA mystery under the Jenny Storm name, releases from eTreasures Publishing ([www.etreasurespublishing.com](http://www.etreasurespublishing.com)) early this summer. With an intelligent, inventive heroine determined to save her father's reputation, this fast-paced mystery set against the fascinating backdrop of thoroughbred racing is a perfect choice for middle-grade readers. Rose and her friends also have to deal with the snobbish kids from school, her younger brother's repeated trips to the principal's office, vandalism to the property, vindictive rumors against the family, and worry about whether or not they'll be invited to the upcoming dance.

Jenny Storm has covered horse racing for ten years, which appears under the Devon Ellington name. She publishes under a half a dozen names in both fiction and non-fiction, and her plays are produced all over the world. She has a special fondness for horse-related charities, including New York Horse Rescue ([www.nyhr.org](http://www.nyhr.org)), who will receive a portion of royalties from DIXIE DUST RUMORS.

For more information on the book and to read an excerpt, visit the Jenny Storm webpage: <http://www.devonellingtonwork.com/jennystorm.html> or “friend” Jenny on MySpace: <http://www.myspace.com/jennystormya>.

## **Q & A with Jenny Storm about DIXIE DUST RUMORS**

### **Question: What was the inspiration for this book?**

**JS:** Several years ago, an excellent jockey was accused of impropriety in a big race by a so-called journalist with only two published articles to his name. It was ridiculous and infuriating, a way for this pseudo-journalist to get attention during a prominent race. Any four-year-old could see there was nothing to the story. The racing community investigated, as they must, and the jockey was cleared. But the days and weeks during the investigation gave the vindictive ample opportunity to unfairly malign the horse, the jockey, the trainer, the owners, etc. The situation made me angry. I'd wanted to write a YA set against horse racing, and I started playing the "what if?" game. The story came together very quickly, although, as it developed, it unfolded very differently than what inspired it. Which is as it should be -- I'm writing fiction!

### **Question: Are the characters based on real people?**

**JS:** No. They're very much their own people. There are certain professional tendencies I put in, but no one person is the root of a specific character. Even when a specific person is the inspiration, in some of my other work, when I do my job properly, they evolve into individuals very different from the inspiration. That's part of being a writer -- letting your characters be who they are, not trying to force them into being a cipher for an idea, or keeping them in the mold of real people. If you want to write about real people, then write non-fiction.

### **Question: Do you spend a lot of time at the racetrack?**

**JS:** Not as much as I'd like. I get out there several times a season on normal race days, and I've covered the Triple Crown for ten years and the Breeders' Cup for nine years. At the period I researched this book and several other pieces in which racing appears, I went to the track at least once a week, sometimes more.

### **Question: Why do you like horse racing?**

**JS:** It's artistic. It's poetry in motion. There's so much beauty involved. These animals are huge -- over a thousand pounds. And they're so fragile. No matter how many horses you encounter, thousands of them, each horse has its distinct personality. Every horse has to be trained as an individual, and yet conform to industry standards. They're pack animals, yet they have to stand out from the pack in order to win.



**Question: But there's so much controversy about the sport. People claim it's cruel, the horses are abused, etc., etc.**

**JS:** There are problems in the sport. Every time a horse breaks down, it's a horrible loss. Think Eight Belles, who broke down just over the finish line after coming in second in the 2008 Kentucky Derby. Think Barbaro -- he had thousands of people rooting for him all over the world. Think Spook Express, one of my all-time favorite horses who suffered a horrible accident and died in what would have been her last race. Eight Belles's death sparked the beginning of some real change in the industry. There's more to be done, as far as regulating and banning medications, making surfaces safer, etc.

And there's the dark side that most people never see: The foals born because mares are kept pregnant all the time and their urine collected for hormone replacement therapy. The mares-in-foal sent to slaughter because they're not thought to be worth enough to keep alive. The retired or injured horses sent to slaughter because they no longer earn their keep. That's where the network of rescue organizations, such as New York Horse Rescue come in, and why their work is so important.

I think it's important not to shy away from the dark side of the industry, especially in fiction. I deal with it in several pieces (under various names) and will continue so to do. One can tell a lot of truth in a fictional context, and help people see things in a new way. Remember, too, it's not just horses that are subject to abuse and slaughter -- look at all the dogs and cats dumped at shelters or in parks or tied up and abused each year. It has to stop.

As far as racing itself being abusive, I disagree. These horses are bred to run. That's their purpose in life. A horse who's not allowed to run gets extremely neurotic, because it can't fulfill its purpose. The majority of trainers and grooms and track workers and many of the owners truly love the horses in their care. They're with them every day, loving them, caring for them. They know the horses' quirks and needs and eccentricities. Most of the people working in the industry are passionate not just about the competition of racing, but the animals involved. And nothing can break your heart like horse racing. The love and care provided by the majority of people involved in the sport -- let me just say that the world would be a better place if more people were that dedicated to loving care. And they're working to weed out the abusive people.

**Question: You mention in your bio that you collect YA mystery fiction from the early 20th century. Tell us a little about that.**

**JS:** Most of us are familiar with Nancy Drew and the Hardy Boys. But there were dozens of series books for YA readers in the early 20th century, and they are amazing. There's a character named Ruth Fielding, who did fascinating things like work for the Red Cross, etc. She grew and aged during the course of the series, and wound up married, balancing family life with a career as a screenwriter in Hollywood in its infancy. Vicki Barr was a stewardess, at a time when they actually cooked meals on flights.

Some of the writing in the Vicki Barr books is sexist enough to make one cringe, but you get a sense of a time when it was fun to fly. Judy Bolton aged during the course of her series, growing up, getting married, having kids. Beverly Gray matured, going from a bright college student to an international journalist. I love the Beverly Gray mysteries, although they are very politically incorrect at this point, as far as racist remarks and wartime propaganda embedded in the books. And yet, it gives a snapshot of the social mores of the time in which it was written and published. Dorothy Dare was an aviatrix. Sue Barton and Cherry Ames were nurses (it would have been nice to see a female doctor). The Penny Parker books were written by Mildred Wirt Benson, who wrote some of the original Nancy Drew mysteries, before they were sanitized in the 50s and 60s by Harriet Adams. Penny is such a brat! It's hilarious. You can read these books and realize the casual sexism and xenophobia and propaganda during war years. You can disagree with all of it, let's face it, pre-teens and young adults are pretty savvy at this stage of the game, and yet still learn a lot from the books, in spite of the idealized view of the child and teenage years. It's a snapshot of the social mores of the time in which the books were written. The books are fascinating exercises in writing fast and for a specific market. Kids were smart and funny and inventive, outmaneuvering the grown-ups most of the time, but they could still be kids. It seems like people are expected to be mini-adults now by about age seven. These books really fall into social history, in my opinion.

**Question: What else are you working on?**

**JS:** For children and young adults? Plenty! I'm nearly done with another YA, stylistically similar to DIXIE DUST RUMORS, but with the backdrop of ice hockey, and I'm playing with some characters who are interested in sailing, rowing, archery, fencing. I tend to prefer sports that are a little more uncommon than baseball, etc. I've got a couple of ghost stories in the works, and some mysteries as a nod to the fiction mentioned above -- spooky houses, dark woods, scary lakes - that kind of thing, and some pieces that are more fantasy-based.

**Question: Will we see more of Rose Olen and her friends?**

**JS:** The book was conceived as a stand-alone, but if there's enough enthusiasm, I bet I could come up with a few more adventures for Rose and friends! I'd love to take them to Saratoga or Scotland, or one of the other locations mentioned in the book and keep the racing backdrop.

**Question: How about Justin? Will we see more of Justin?**

**JS:** (with a grin): If you ask nicely!

Visit the Jenny Storm webpage at <http://www.devonellingtonwork.com/jennystorm.html>  
and “friend” Jenny on MySpace at: <http://www.myspace.com/jennystormya>.



**Jenny Storm** publishes under a half a dozen names in both fiction and non-fiction. She's been a fan of thoroughbred racing since she was seven years old, and has written about the sport since 1999. She loves and collects YA mystery series from the early 20th century, such as Nancy Drew, Beverly Gray, Judy Bolton, Ruth Fielding, et al. She wanted to grow up to be either Nancy Drew or Beverly Gray, but writing many characters' adventures is even better. Visit her webpage: [www.devonellingtonwork.com/jennystorm.html](http://www.devonellingtonwork.com/jennystorm.html) and her MySpace page: [www.myspace.com/jennystormya](http://www.myspace.com/jennystormya).

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She is available for interviews, guest blogs, readings, speaking engagements, and radio spots.