

Circle C Beginnings #1

Andi's Fair Surprise

Chapter 1 Excerpt

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A Peek into the Past

Andi's Fair Surprise—excerpt

New Words

calf	a baby cow
dull	not exciting; boring
exhibits	the booths at a fair that show animals, crafts, and other fair items
foreman	someone who helps the rancher take care of his ranch
grandstand	the seats at a fair where people can watch big events like a horse race
lasso	a rope
livestock	farm animals
midway	the part of a fair where you find games, food, and thrill shows (and, in our day, rides)
soot	tiny specks of leftover wood or coal after it is burned
thrill show	an exciting event at the fair, like the sword swallower or the strong man

Andi's Fair Surprise—excerpt

Chapter 1 Ribbons and Roosters

Andi Carter jumped off the back porch and ran across the yard. She was always running . . . or jumping.

Right now she was carrying her very own lasso.

“Here, Duke!” she called.

Andi wound her lasso into big loops and called Duke again. Where *was* that dog?

Just then a big yellow dog ran up, tail wagging. His tongue came out. He licked Andi's face.

Andi wiped her cheek. *Yuck!* Dog kisses.

But she patted Duke on the head and said, “Good dog. Now, sit.”

Duke plopped down. His tail thumped the dusty ground.

Andi backed up. She took one step, two steps, three steps . . . all the way to ten steps.

“Hold still, Duke,” she told the dog.

Duke cocked his head and whined, but he sat still.

Andi swung the lasso over her head. Then she threw it out as far as she could.

Andi's Fair Surprise—excerpt

Thunk!

The rope came down in a tangle on Duke's nose. He yelped and dashed away.

“Come back here!” Andi shouted. Duke kept running.

“How am I ever going to learn to be a cowboy if you don't let me practice roping you?” she yelled at Duke.

Andi kicked the dust. She wished she could lasso a real calf. But her big brother Chad would not let her. He said a calf was too big and too wild for a six-year-old girl to rope.

Roping a horse was Andi's second-best idea. Her pony Coco always stood still when Andi tried to throw a lasso around his neck. She missed every time. Coco was a little bit too tall.

That left the ranch dogs. But they always ran away when Andi's lasso hit them on the head.

Andi wound her rope into loops again and let out a big breath. “What is left to lasso on this ranch?”



Andi's Fair Surprise—excerpt

Then she smiled. The chickens!

“Here, chick, chick, chick,” Andi called to the hens scratching in the dirt.

She looked around to see if Henry the Eighth was nearby. That mean old rooster would not like it if she lassoed his hens.

For once, Henry was nowhere in sight.

“He’s probably waiting to jump out and peck me,” Andi said to herself. She did not like that rooster.

Not one teensy bit.

But Henry the Eighth was not waiting to jump out at Andi. He could not jump out and peck anybody. He was sitting in a cage near the chicken coop.

Andi’s friend Riley was standing right next to him.

Andi dropped her rope and ran over to Riley.

“What’s Henry doing in that cage?” she asked.

“I’m getting him used to it,” Riley said. “I’m taking him to the fair next week. I figure he’ll win a blue ribbon. He’s a beautiful rooster.”

“He’s a *mean* rooster,” Andi said. But her heart started to thump. *A blue ribbon!*

Andi's Fair Surprise—excerpt

“I want to win one of those ribbons too,” she told Riley. “So I’m going to take Taffy to the fair. She’s the prettiest foal in all of California. She’ll win a blue ribbon for sure.”

Riley laughed. “You can’t take Taffy to the fair. They don’t have contests for baby horses.”

“Just because you’re eight years old doesn’t mean you know everything,” Andi huffed. “If you can take Henry to the fair, then I can take Taffy.”

Riley shrugged and pointed. “There’s Chad. Go ask him and see what he says.”

Andi’s big brother was heading for the barn. Riley’s Uncle Sid—the ranch foreman—was with him. The men were talking and laughing together.

Andi skipped over to her brother. She gave him a big smile.

“Guess what, Chad,” she said. “I’m taking Taffy to the fair. She’ll win a blue ribbon, on account of she’s so pretty . . . and smart.”

Chad didn’t say anything.

Sid raised his eyebrows and didn’t say anything either.

“Riley’s taking Henry, so I can take Taffy,” Andi explained. “Right?”

Chad shook his head. “Not this year. Taffy’s too little, and so are you.”

Andi stamped her foot. Dust flew up. “I am *not* too little!”

Andi's Fair Surprise—excerpt

Everybody was always telling Andi she was too little.

“I’m sorry, but you are not taking Taffy to the fair,” Chad said.

“Taffy is my very own horse,” she told Chad. “I can take her if I want to. I’m going to get her ready right now.”

Andi turned and stomped away. “You are not the boss of me!” she yelled over her shoulder.

Bossy old Chad. He was always spoiling her great ideas.

Andi ran toward the pasture, where Taffy and Coco were eating grass.

Suddenly, Andi felt something tight go around her. She felt a quick jerk.

Then *thud!* She was sitting on the ground.

Just like that.

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