

# The Gift Horse

Ruth: OK, OK. Thank you. So, this is my list. Of mothers. Famous mothers. Someday I will join their ranks. Foggy as pieces of my childhood are, the parts I do remember are dreamlike sepia-toned or kodachromed romps through dandelion-covered fields and across pebbled streams. I was Laura Ingalls, from the book, not the TV. Jo, from the book, not the movie. And at the height of my ongoing identity issues, Anne of Green Gables. So my mom was hard-pressed to find young black literary heroines. She made up for it by supplying me with a steady stream of caramel- to cocoa-colored dolls. I only remember one blue-eyed baby. The Christmas Black Baby Alive was on back order. She had the prettiest curly hair and all the white moms bought her...which is truly amazing, considering the toy companies hadn't even started making black Kens. I think they were afraid Barbie would start dating Kenjufu...or Ken-dall Jackson, get it. Anyway, dolls were little people to be treated with care and respect. At least until that great day when I'd have to put aside the things of childhood and reign as kick-ass numero uno mother supreme of the century. So. I really was trying to say something. I always knew I'd be a great mom. I don't know what happened, but I think I know where. Somewhere around the edges of a pre-mid-life-crisis. Really it started years before that, in my first week of college, where I met the only man I've ever really trusted with my heart and soul.