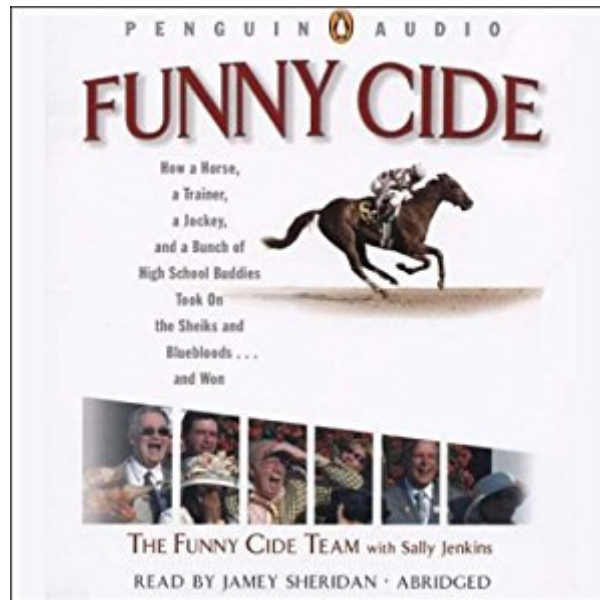


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# Funny Cide



## Synopsis

In America in 2003, Funny Cide became the people's horse', the unheralded New York-bred gelding who inspired a nation by knocking off the champions and their multi-millionaire owners and sweeping to the brink of the Triple Crown. Trained by a journeyman who had been knocking around racing for more than thirty years, ridden by a hard-luck jockey, and owned by a tiny stable founded by a band of high school buddies who tossed in a few thousand dollars each and decided to follow their dream, Funny Cide became a blue-collar hero with a bit. His story is crammed with colourful characters only one of which happened to be a horse. Written with Sally Jenkins, co-author of Lance Armstrong's number-one bestseller *It's Not About the Bike*, Funny Cide tells the whole story the parts we know and the parts we never suspected as it follows the group's emotional ups and downs against overwhelming odds, illness and even scandal, to capture the imagination of millions. It is a book for the underdog in all of us. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

The bookstore near where you live probably has many categories --- fiction, nonfiction and children's books, if nothing else. If it's a large enough bookstore, there are perhaps books that focus on religion and spirituality, health, self-help, recovery, and sorrow. It is one of the deficiencies of the bookstore experience that there is not a corresponding section about joy. If there were, this new book by Sally Jenkins would be there. The improbably titled *FUNNY CIDE: How a Horse, a Trainer, a Jockey, and a Bunch of High School Buddies Took On the Sheiks and Bluebloods ... and Won*, is

steeped in joy. It is a gambler's joy, the joy you get when you figure out a point spread or get the right scratch-off lottery ticket or hit the winning exacta. But it is a pure, untrammelled joy, nonetheless. And in a culture so steeped in loneliness, anxiety and depression, anything that can promote and celebrate joy is a universal good. The story begins where stories about horses usually commence --- in a stable. In the wee small hours of the morning, an Oklahoma-bred mare gave birth to a foal at a New York farm. He was one of 33,689 foals born that year, and as Jenkins says, there were no thunderbolts present at his birth. He was a young colt, given the name of Funny Cide, and largely left to grow up to see if he could amount to anything. No one at this stage of the game expected that this horse would be anything special. Jenkins --- writing on behalf of the entire Funny Cide "team" --- tells their stories as well.

I have never really been all that into horse racing except to make a point of watching the Kentucky Derby every year (it's a couple of minutes long after all! That's not exactly a Herculean commitment). Nonetheless I picked up this book to see what the deal was behind Funny Cide, and I was very surprised with this great little story. There's a sort of All-American, virtuous underdog who beats the establishment through honesty and hard work charm to the story. The owners of Funny Cide were a group of friends from tiny Sacketts Harbor New York who wanted to do something different with their lives. So they pooled their comparatively meager savings (for the world of Horse Racing) and wanted to buy a race horse to just try to get into the Kentucky Derby (the concept of winning practically never crossed their minds. Even getting in was a sort of fictitious goal.) Instead of a race horse, all they could really afford was Funny Cide however. (After going through a few others first.) From the author's description of Funny Cide as a horse (I can't really say for myself, they all look the same to me) the concept of Funny Cide winning the Kentucky Derby must be comparable to, say, seeing Richard Simmons rocket past a Kenyan to win the Marathon at the next Summer Olympics. Funny was some sort of gangly looking runt, and a gelding at that. The crew from Sacketts Harbor were clearly not lusting for Empire in the horse racing world, they just wanted to have fun. But they picked their horse and stuck by him. Their trainer was a very old and sympathetic character who was quite good at what he did but apparently hadn't racked up any accolades just yet. He's the kind of guy you really wanted to see get just one real victory before he moves on.

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