

Four Hooves and a Mane

*Nobody loved horses more than I did.
How was it fair that Sandy got one and I didn't?*

By Kelly Paquet

(Based on a true story)

"Thou shalt not covet" (Exodus 20:17).

Did you ever wish for something so long and so hard that it was on your mind every single day? I did. I wished for a horse. From the time I could recognize four hooves and a mane, I wanted my own horse.

We lived in Maine, USA, out in the country, but my family couldn't afford a horse. That didn't stop me from wishing and praying and nagging my parents for one, though.

One sunny August morning, just before my 13th birthday, I looked out our big front window. Down the hill, at my friend Sandy's house, a horse trailer was pulling in! Sandy's dad stepped behind the truck and led a beautiful mare down the ramp and up to the pasture behind their house.

Sandy's parents had bought her a horse! I couldn't believe what I was seeing! At that moment I thought, *Sandy probably just wants to be popular. She's not really interested in loving a horse and caring for it like I am. It's so unfair!*

I sat down and started crying. I knew I was the one who was being unfair. I knew I was feeling angry and jealous. But right then I didn't care.

Mom tried to comfort me. She told me that Sandy would probably let me ride sometime. But I didn't want to be comforted. I wanted to get to know that horse and ride her, and I was going to do it my own way.

A few days later I snuck over to visit Sandy's horse, Lady Samantha. You couldn't see that part of the pasture from Sandy's house, so I was sure no one would find out. I made friends with Lady, and I started going there whenever I could to ride her all around the field. Because she was just grazing when I visited, she didn't have a saddle or bridle on, so I rode her bareback and with no bridle.

Then one day my secret was found out. Sandy came looking for Lady, and from far away she spotted someone sitting on her. She yelled, "Hey! Get away from that horse! Hey you! Get out of there!"

I got down off of Lady and ran away as quickly as I could! I hoped Sandy hadn't seen who it was. But she must have known. Everyone knew how much I loved horses.

Back at home, I felt terrible. Maybe Sandy's parents would call my parents. I was afraid of what would happen next. But as I waited, I also thought about what could have happened because of what I had done. I could have been hurt. Or I could have accidentally hurt Lady.

Then I thought even more about what I had done. I had trespassed on my neighbor's property. I had ridden her horse without permission. I had been dishonest!

I began to realize what I had to do. I prayed for forgiveness and for courage. Then I picked up the phone and called Sandy. She answered. I took a deep breath and said, "Sandy, I'm sorry! It was me riding Lady Samantha."

Sandy was really angry. I told her again how sorry I was, and I told her about how jealous I had felt. I promised never to do it again. As she listened, she got less angry and began to forgive me.

After a while Sandy said, "I know what! You can come over on the days I have my riding lessons, and I'll give you a

lesson afterward. And you can help me take care of Lady, too if you want."

I was thrilled. I tried to get rid of all of my jealous feelings, and I said yes.

During the next few years, Lady carried Sandy and me on many adventures, and I learned many lessons. But I think the biggest lesson I learned was never to let my wants and wishes gallop away with me! ♦

The author lives in Maine, USA.



"I will be honest with Heavenly Father, others, and myself."
My Gospel Standards

ILLUSTRATION BY SUZY GERHART