

# The Tamer of Whirlwind

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Hailey was sitting and reading a book in the hayloft when an outbreak of shouting and neighing and pounding of hooves started outside the stable. She scrambled over to the small window and shoved it open. There standing in the dappled sunlight in the entrance to the barn was the most beautiful horse Hailey had ever seen. He was a dark, rich, creamy palomino and the way he held himself, the stance of absolute self-confidence took Hailey's breath away. Immediately her imagination ran wild with her. She imagined herself, proud and tall, sitting astride the beautiful horse. Riding him along the beautiful tracks around the barn and rubbing him down after long days outside. Her daydream was interrupted by another outbreak of stamping and shouting. Whirlwind. That's his name.

Whirlwind. She closed the window and raced down to help her dad and Uncle Jones.

"Isn't he a beauty," Uncle Jones said afterwards. "What should we call him?"

"Whirlwind," Hailey said at once.

"That's a great name for him honey," Hailey's dad said. "It fits him perfectly. Well, I'd better get going. Those sheep won't shear themselves. Hailey, will you milk the cows?"

Hailey nodded and stood up. She wanted to stay with Whirlwind for longer. All through milking she was preoccupied and she narrowly missed being kicked by the troublesome cow that always caused problems. Just as she deposited the milk in the dairy, she ran into her mum. Hailey's heart sank. This could only mean one thing. What her mum said confirmed those fears.

"Dinner's almost ready. It's time for you to come in and tidy yourself up."

"But Mum! I wanted to go back to Whirlwind!"

"No Hailey! You can't go back to the new horse. You can go back after dinner!"

Hailey groaned and stamped back inside. She ate her dinner quickly but before she could escape, her mum told her to go do her homework. There was a shouting match but, as usual, her mum won and Hailey tramped angrily upstairs and sat down at her desk. She picked up her pen, sighed, and started working.

Hailey didn't get to go out before bedtime, but in the dead of the night, she crept out and snuck into the garden, into the stables. There was Whirlwind, looking inquisitive. When Hailey approached him, he looked a little nervous but didn't back away. She reached out a hand and touched his velvety muzzle. This was the beginning of a nightly rendezvous where girl and horse got to really know each other.

Seven nights later...

Hailey opened the stable door and led out her gorgeous horse. She fancied herself Whirlwind's owner even though her father didn't know about her night time training sessions with Whirlwind. This time, she was going to ride Whirlwind outside. She had bought a saddle, supposedly for the horse she might get next holidays. She had also bought a bridle and had found Whirlwind's favourite type of bit. Hailey took a deep breath and mounted Whirlwind in one swift, fluid motion.

"Okay boy, let's go," she said and she squeezed his sides. Whirlwind took off like a rocket. At first Hailey was startled, but then she started laughing. It was the best feeling in the world. She gently pulled on one of the reins and Whirlwind responded instantly, turning and galloping back to the stable. Hailey almost yelled for joy, but she knew she couldn't wake up her father, because he would ask her millions of questions about how she did what he thought no man could do.

The next morning....

"Hailey, will you come and help me get Whirlwind out of his stall please," Hailey's dad said.

"Sure dad," replied Hailey, hoping she would be able to do it without Whirlwind showing her dad what she had been so carefully hiding. Unfortunately for her that was not an option. When she walked into the barn, Whirlwind stuck his head out of his stall door and nickered a greeting. When she got into the stall and clipped on his lead rope, he nudged her affectionately. Her dad was watching with a keen eye and Hailey knew that she was busted.

"Hailey, how have you managed to tame him?" Her dad asked in a menacingly calm voice.

"Dad, I'm sorry I didn't tell you but I've been training him during the past week at night." Hailey said miserably.

"It's fine Hailey. If he trusts you he's yours." Hailey was stunned. Had she heard correctly? Her dad smiled and she flung herself into his arms and thanked him with all her heart. Then she turned to Whirlwind and gave him an enormous hug.

"Your mine boy," she whispered. "You really are mine."

THE END

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