



My New Friend

By Grace, 14 years old

Canela is a horse that came to us as a one who needed to find a home after her previous owner felt they could not care for her. She was said to have had behavioral issues, including difficulty being caught. We found that the reason for this is because she was hit by her owners often since they believed it was a way to desensitize her. Canela needed time to settle before we worked with her and needed to trust that we were not going to hit her. A few months later, I decided that it would be a good time for me to get to know Canela.

Day One, March 8: I had to work to get Canela's trust because of her past experiences. At first, I found that she didn't even want to be scratched on, so I had to start with simply hanging out with her in the fields and even at the hay feeders.



I would sit and watch her, and then began to pick grass with her. Some days I would spend hours merely being with her to build trust. I continued this process for a few days before taking the next step.

Day 4, March 20: After working on merely being near her, I began to start touching and scratching her. I worked on areas closer to her front half, such as her neck and withers and would approach with permission so she was not wary of my presence. Then I would reach out and scratch her while observing her body language. Since I had spent time with her in the field, she did not seem to mind me approaching and scratching on her neck. After a bit, I would walk away, respecting her space.

Day 5: I approached her in the same way as before and started scratching on her neck and slowly working back to the withers. This time I began scratching on her shoulders. She did not seem to mind this at all, and even began to enjoy it! She would lean closer to the delightful scratch with her eyes relaxed.

Day 6: With all of the great progress, I decided to work on touching her back half. Starting at the neck, I worked to the wither, and down to the shoulder, then began to run my hand calmly down her back, and then repeat. She did not seem irritated at the action, and she did not flinch at the contact. After a few times, though, she did walk away because she did not find me touching her back and belly as delightful as her neck and shoulder. As I predicted, she enjoys being scratched on the upper half as many horses do.

Day 7: I am now able to touch Canela everywhere without trouble. I did find that the chest and shoulder are her favorites areas to be scratched. I think it is very important to know where an individual horse's favorite spot to be scratched because it is very impactful when building trust.

Day 8: Now that Canela trusts me to touch her, I can start to groom her. Catching her was surprisingly not a problem. She had trust in me, so she allowed me to approach her. I walked up slowly with the halter and lead and asked if I could catch her. She simply lifted her head and stayed put in the response, so I approached her and put the halter on gently. I wanted to make sure I was gentle to the touch.

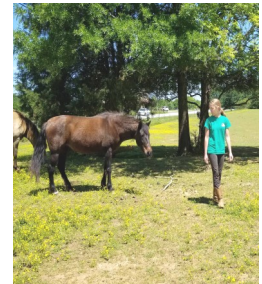
Knowing and thinking about a horse's history can lead you to understanding them, which builds a better bond. After I had put it on, I scratched her neck and shoulder. I then asked her to walk with me, and we started down the path to the barn! She followed me willingly despite her connection with another horse, Heavenly. I took her into the stall, and she was completely unfamiliar with the whole process. *(Cont. on Page 2)*

My New Friend (*Cont. from Page 1*)

She began to whinny for Heavenly, so I debated if I should try to calm her down or let her go. I decided to attempt to calm her down by scratching her and quietly talking to her in a calm voice. I was surprised when she ultimately settled and relaxed! I then got out the grooming tools and let her examine them. I started at her neck with the curry, and she moved away nervously. I stopped and returned to scratching her before currying her again. This time I talked to her and asked her to stand still. It is incredible how much of a difference it made when I spoke to her as I was grooming her! I decided to introduce her to the arena after grooming her. She walked with me, calmly, and willingly. When we got into the arena, she picked up the pace quite a bit. She was not used to the environment, so she was a bit nervous as I expected. She was also whinnying for her friend Heavenly because she was not used to being away from her either. After a few laps, I brought her back outside. She slowed down towards the end of our session, and we made great progress.

Day 9: Progress is being made! I said hello to her and took her into the stall to get groomed. She stood still quite well this time! I think she was starting to actually enjoy being groomed! I then took her into the area for a 10-minute session. She was very calm this time and walked at a steady pace. She was slightly distracted at times, and she was still whinnying for Heavenly. I used this session to work on stopping and starting her. I made sure my commands were clear so that she did not become confused. I simply said "walk" and moved forward, and she would walk with me. To stop, I would say "whoa" and freeze in place, and she would stop. I learned that she was an intelligent horse who was very gentle. By the end of our session, she was able to start and stop smoothly when asked.

Day 10: Today, I took a break from our sessions and simply hung out in the field with her. I spent around an hour watching her and picking grass with her. When I approached her, she lifted her head and took steps towards me! She is making fantastic progress!



Day 11: Great news! Canela is now comfortable being in the arena. I took her in after a good groom and walked her around. She did not whinny this time and seemed more focused on me. I worked on turning her this time and reworked on stopping and starting to make sure she had it down pat. She was excellent, so I even decided to weave her through some poles. After doing repetitions, I took her out and groomed her once again before releasing her.

Day 12: Canela is about as easy going as they get! After a nice groom and some extra scratches, I took her back in the arena for more training. This time I worked on her without a lead line! She did great! She followed willingly and stopped when asked! Her gentle gaze was on me constantly, and she was always incredibly calm. Between time intervals, I made sure to give her some good scratches. I switched back to the lead to make sure she was not confused. I took her back to the stall where I groomed her and gave her a small handful of alfalfa pellets for the day of good work.

Day 13: Canela has so much potential! I took her back into the arena and made sure to give her a good groom beforehand. We went over all of our previous exercises and even walked outside a little! I made sure to work on her turns, stops, and starts. She is so amazing to work with because she really does want to follow me! She actually seems to enjoy the attention. I also brought in a trust exercise this time. I simply took a pool noodle, which is an unknown object to a horse, and I then touched her with the noodle, gently stroking it on her shoulder. She first raised her head, but she relaxed quickly when I reassured her with my voice. She is really coming along. We wrapped up the session with a walk around the arena field. Despite the slight grass distraction, she did great. (*Cont. on Page 6*)

The Horse Abuse That has to Change

When does training, riding, and handling cross the line to abusive? Breaking a horse is a term that makes us cringe, and the horse's spirit and health can be damaged.

Canela came to HPS at 21 years old with a scary report from the owner. She had only two owners since she was five years old and for 17 years hated both of them. She would run away from either of them in the field, and if cornered, Canela would double-barrel out with force. In the misconception of desensitizing Canela, they would slap her hard enough to cause bruising.

Grace asked if she could work with Canela, and how should she start? Grace is a kind and gentle young person. Seeing Canela following Grace in from the field to her stall with no halter or lead line brought tears to my eyes. Her spirit is being repaired.

Desensitizing a horse is done very gently, often with one finger. Slowly over time, you should be able to touch every part of the horse, even putting a finger in the ears and nose and touching the private parts.

Never slap or hit a horse with a hard pat and only scratch gently or rub gently.

I have never understood why it takes science to reveal the suffering of horses in terms of stress, pain, and psychologically damaged. I don't know why people can't see the damage they are doing to their horses. One of my many goals is to teach each person, which helps with the horses, to be sensitive to the personality and feelings of each horse. It doesn't take a scientist to tell you when a horse is upset.

There are some trainers that approach training incorrectly, and it will have harmful consequences. One of our jobs is to fix what those trainers and owners have done to these poor prey animals. Abusive management can cause a long list of issues depending on the horses' personalities. Most people don't realize that shut up in a stall with solid walls is not okay. Horses need to socialize, and poor feeding practices can also border on abuse, cause a horse to become aggressive and high-strung if only fed mostly grain and little hay. Overworking the horse during workouts doesn't solve any behavior issues.

There are many types of abuse that anyone could see, on the horses that have come to us, whip marks, and nerve damage on the lips from cruel bits or mishandling, and a cut tongue. Some horses will be afraid of the bit being put in their month. An ill-fitting saddle can leave large white marks from open sores near the wither area, and atrophied withers from a saddle that was too small. We have even seen spur marks on the side of horses. We have seen the nose with an indented area, damage to the face from a halter that was too tight, and left on for an extended amount of time. We have had to use a bolt cutter to remove an embedded halter from the horse's face. When a horse's face is too sensitive to touch, it usually means the horse has been hit repeatedly in the head or use of a twitch on the nose's of the horse, and the use of a rope halter. It took Red Sky months to accept and enjoy having her face rubbed. Then some owners don't even realize how they are damaging the horse by their actions.



Natchez's withers are atrophied from an ill-fitting saddle. The large area of white hair was caused by a saddle that was too small. It is like this on both sides of his body.

Shinook: It was a lovely morning, until Shinook coliced. He spent most of the day in pain and was treated for colic twice. He had a hard impaction that just didn't want to move. Christina, Jared and I decided to try one last thing late in the day. Jared hooked up the truck and trailer and took Shinook for a ride. When Shinook was loaded on the trailer, he let out high, loud whinnies, which brought many of the herd to the front of barn one with others coming.

If this didn't work, we would have to call the veterinarian back for a third visit to start IV fluids. Shinook passed the worst hard stool pile on his ride, and I think this was the plug that was making him so uncomfortable and painful. I was happy to check on him overnight, and he passed a semi-hard pile, an average amount pile, and a large loose pile. Problem over!



Barn Swallows & Tree Swallows: Both types of Swallows arrived at the same time here at the sanctuary. We watch for the Swallows arrival for the last few years. There were eight Barn Swallows, and a couple of dozen Tree Swallows. Most of the time we will only see the Tree Swallows going in and out of the woods by the pond.

This year the barn Swallows are nesting in both barn one and barn two. The young birds often come back to where they were born.



The easiest way to spot the difference is there tail. The large V-shaped tail belongs to the Barn Swallow.



The Tree Swallow's tail is not as prominent. We are delighted to have them help get rid of the flies.

The Herd: I wish each of you could come and visit. Meeting the herd and seeing how happy and content the horses are living a more natural horse life with folks who love and care for them. It is imperative to expect each horse with their fallacies until the horse has time to realize, life is now good, people are gentle, food never runs out, and no one is demanding anything of them or hurting them. So many of them are frightened that bad things will happen to them. So they will lash out by threatening to bite or kick or run away. And little by little they will start to relax and then look for positive attention.

Natchez: Natchez is healing fine from running into a stall latch. It is down to about 1/3 of the original size. There has been no infection. The wounds that can't be sewn closed, always take longer to heal.



"To be free is not merely to cast off one's chains, but to live in a way that respects and enhances the freedom of others." ~Nelson Mandela~

The chains on the rescued horses have been cast off. You have done this great gift!

We must never allow chains to be put on us!

In loving memory of our daughter. Kristen Hinds. By Mark and Barbara Hinds

In memory of my wife, Alice Bischoff, on Mothers' Day. I can't think of anything more appropriate considering her life-long love of horses. By Robert Bischoff

In honor of Dr. Barbara White. By Henry H. Buck, Jr.

In honor of Joanie Benson. By Dr Barbara White

In honor of the Rev. Harvey Blume. By Karen Feezor

In honor of all of your wonderful volunteers and supporters! By Tacy Smith

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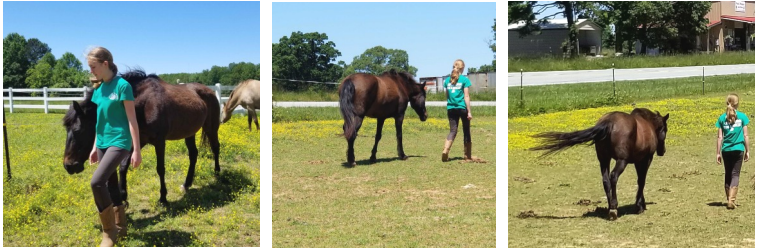
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My New Friend *(Cont. from Page 2)*

Day 14: After so much arena time, I wanted to spend time with Canela in the field. I enjoy experiencing their everyday firsthand, so I let her plan the day! When I first approached her, she walked up to me! After some hello scratches, I began to pick grass with her. I would walk a short distance to find a decent grass patch, and she would creep in right beside me. After 10-minutes, I decided to take a break from picking grass and simply just sit with her. I walked over to a nearby log and looked the opposite direction of Canela to get adjusted. When I looked back, I saw Canela's head quickly drop to the ground, and she started to nibble on grass as if she wasn't doing anything. Although her act was quite convincing, I noticed that she was nearly 5 feet closer than she was before! I could now reach out my hand and



touch her on the muzzle. I started to laugh, and when I did, she lifted her head and walked even closer. We continued this for about five minutes. I sat and watched as she grazed inches away from me! I then proceeded to pick grass with her and then said my goodbyes. I am so happy to know Canela the way I do and have a friendship with her.

Grace is doing a super job of building trust and a bond with Canela. It won't take long and Grace will have her happily under saddle. Canela leaves her best horse friend to be with Grace.