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A TOWING PATH TALE

CHAPTER ONE

Who owns this horse?

I was six years old and as I was leading Nellie our horse along the towpath one day and passing a field full of buttercups, I saw the most beautiful white horse, a mare, completely white from the tip of its ears to the tip of its tail. She was whiter than snow, whiter than soap suds and whiter than my mam's apron. I stopped and leaned on the gate and gazed at her. She was the loveliest creature I'd ever seen. I talked to her and she nuzzled me searching my pockets for something tasty, but she was unlucky. I thought to myself next time we pass here I will bring something for her. Instead I snatched up a handful of grass and offered it. She looked me in the eye and I swear she was laughing as if to say, 'Grass, I can have that any day,' but she gently took it out of my open palm. I told her she was beautiful, a treasure and that I would be back. She gave a snort, tossed her head, turned and trotted away.

I'd forgotten all about Nellie who had slowly plodded on by herself until I heard my dad shouting for me and I ran to catch up. Was my dad cross!