

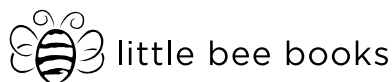
# Tales of SASHA

## The Big Secret

by Alexa Pearl  
illustrated by Paco Sordo

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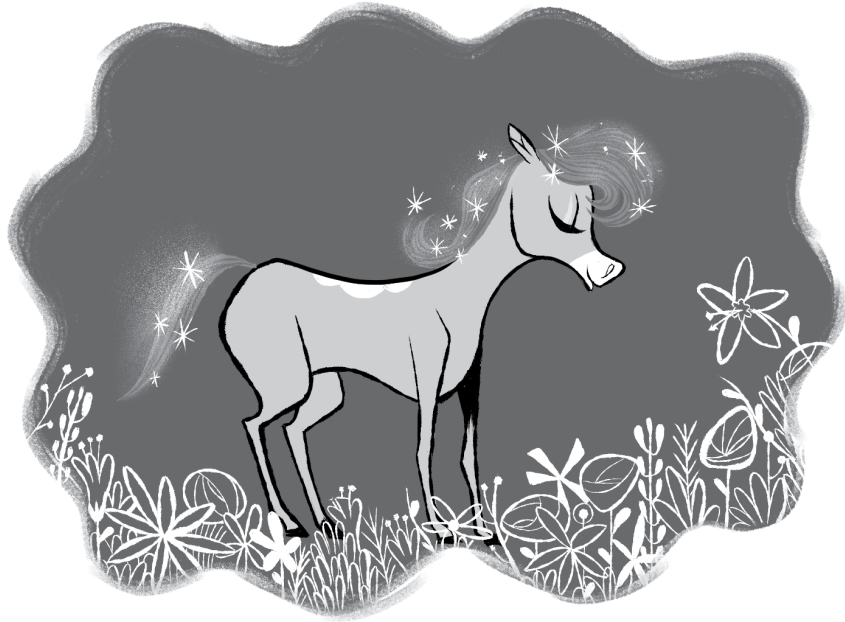
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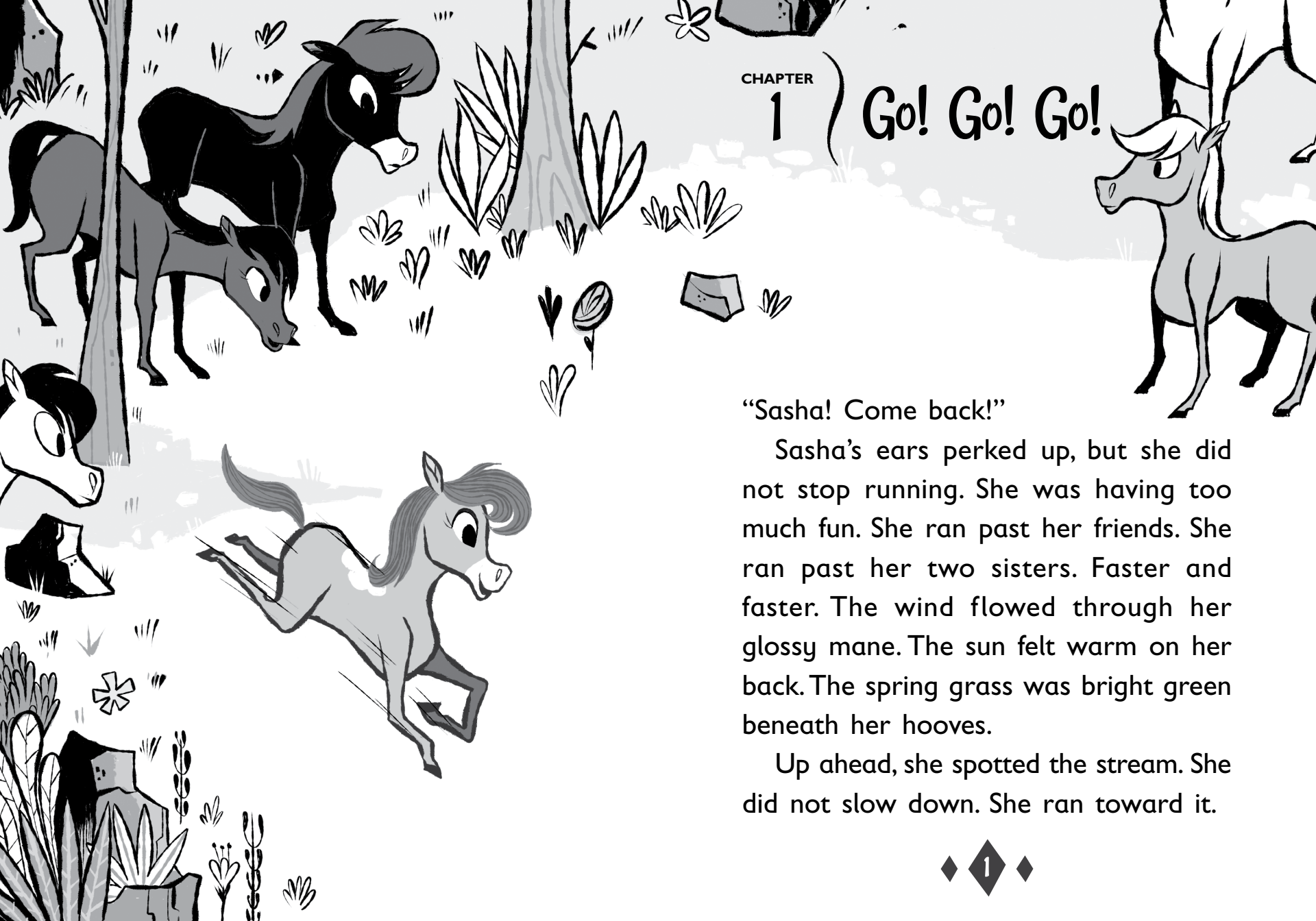
little bee books



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CHAPTER

1

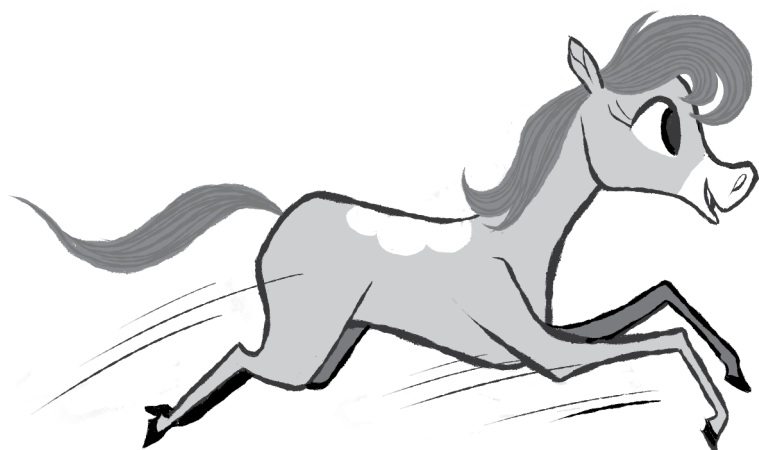
Go! Go! Go!

“Sasha! Come back!”

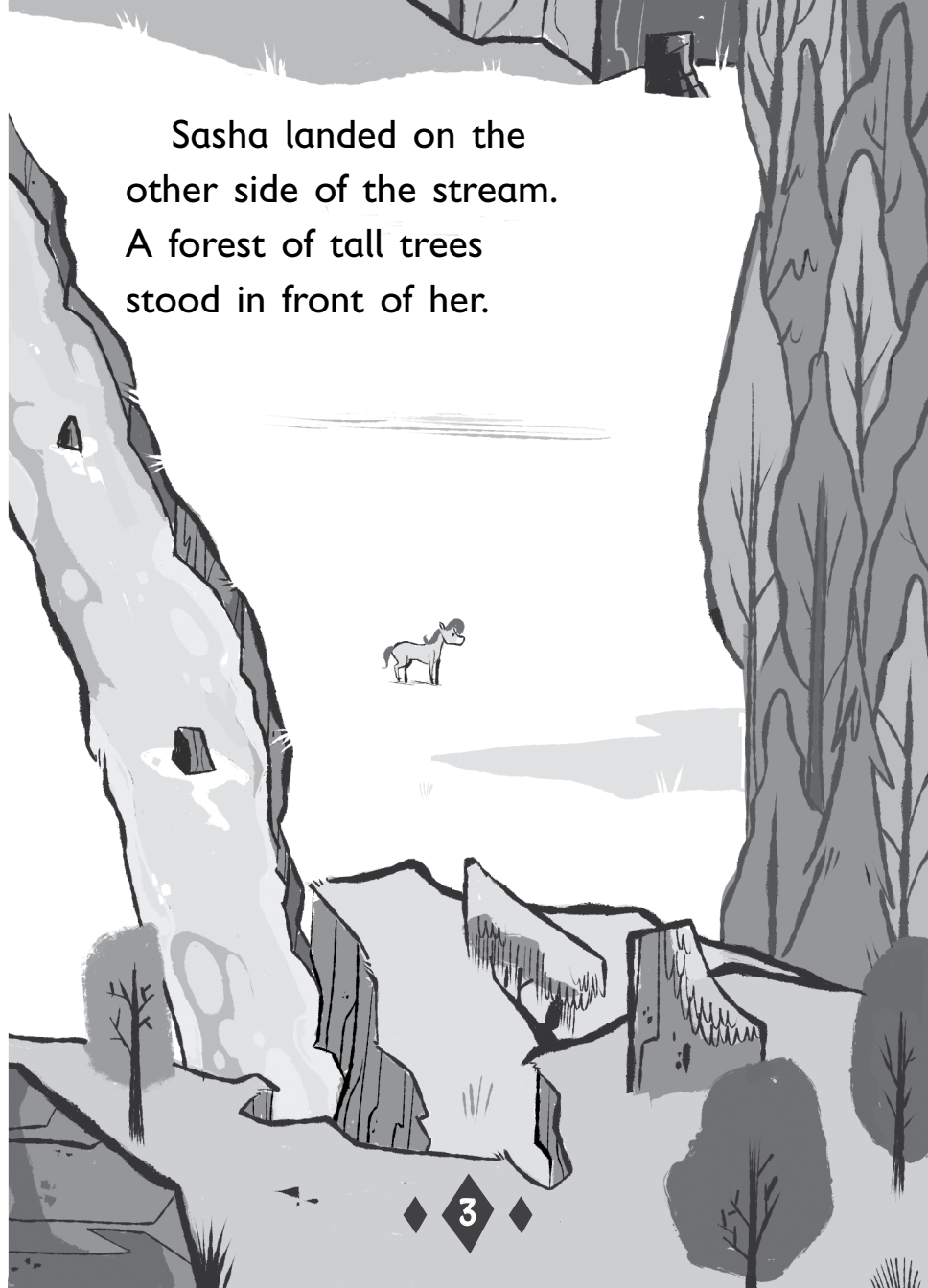
Sasha’s ears perked up, but she did not stop running. She was having too much fun. She ran past her friends. She ran past her two sisters. Faster and faster. The wind flowed through her glossy mane. The sun felt warm on her back. The spring grass was bright green beneath her hooves.

Up ahead, she spotted the stream. She did not slow down. She ran toward it.

One . . . two . . . three! Sasha counted to herself. Then she leaped into the air. Her body felt so light it was like she was floating in the clouds. *This is the best feeling EVER!* she thought.



Sasha landed on the other side of the stream. A forest of tall trees stood in front of her.



“Sasha! Come back!”

Her mom’s voice stopped her. Sasha knew that tone. That tone meant her mom was upset, and Sasha knew why. The horses in their valley all had the same rule: Never go beyond the big trees.



Now she was standing in front of the big trees. She had never run this far before.

*What is beyond the trees?* she wondered.

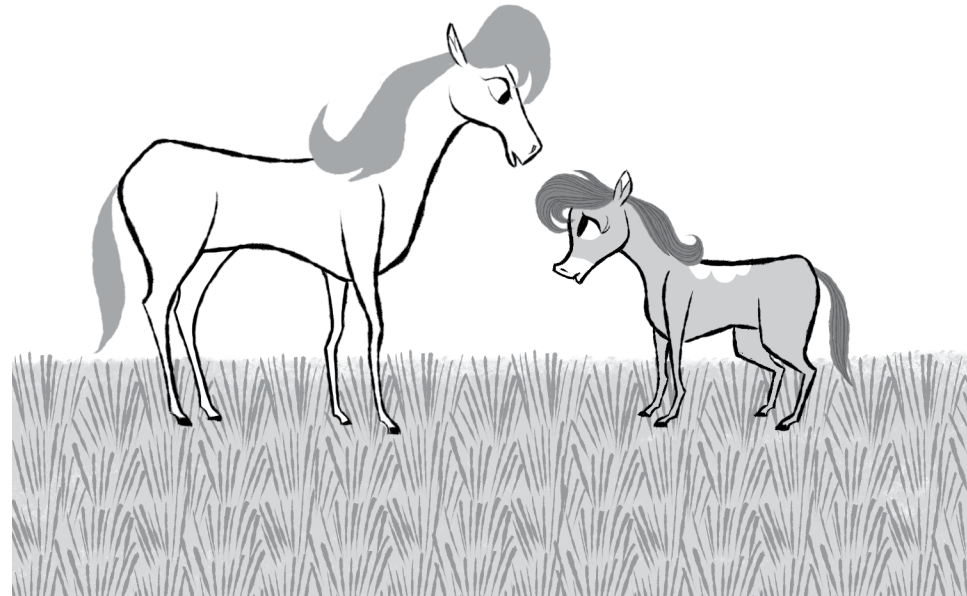
No one in Verdant Valley knew. Not Mom. Not Dad. Not her teacher. Not her sisters.

*I hate not knowing things,* Sasha thought. *Someday I will go there. Someday I will find out.*

Sasha splashed back through the stream. She trotted to her family.

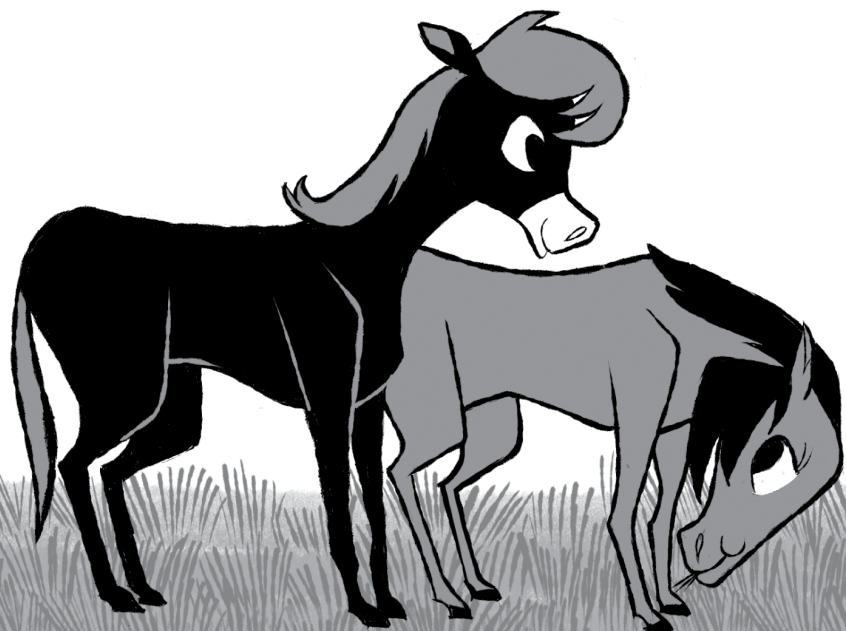
Her mom frowned. “I warned you not to run too far, Sasha,” she said.

“I’m sorry,” said Sasha.





Zara was jet-black with a chestnut brown mane and tail. Poppy was chestnut brown with a jet-black mane and tail. Their dad called them the “flip-flop sisters.” Everyone could see that they belonged together.



And then there was Sasha. She was pale gray—except for a small white patch on her back. Her tail and mane were gray too. *Borrrring!* thought Sasha.



Mom nuzzled her with her nose. Sasha nuzzled back. Sasha's mom never stayed angry with her.

"Was someone chasing you?" asked her sister Zara. Zara was the oldest sister in their family. Poppy was in the middle, and Sasha was the youngest.

Sasha laughed. "No. Why?"

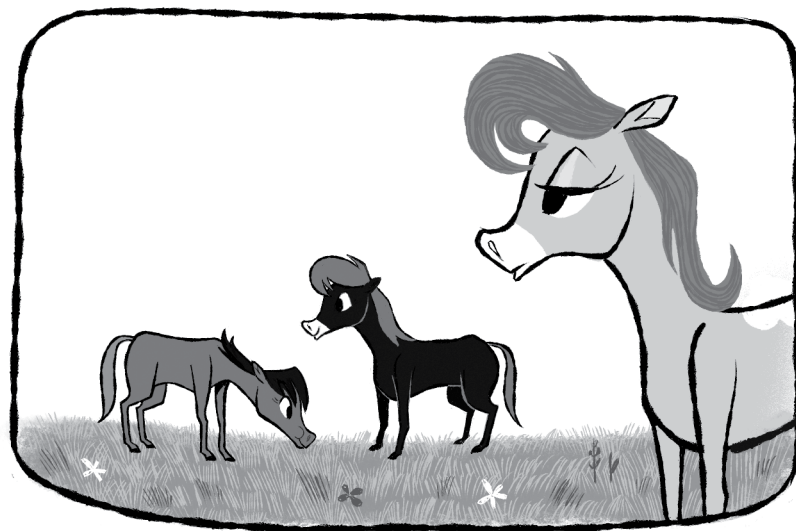
"You were running so fast," said Zara.

"Running makes me tired and sweaty," said Poppy.



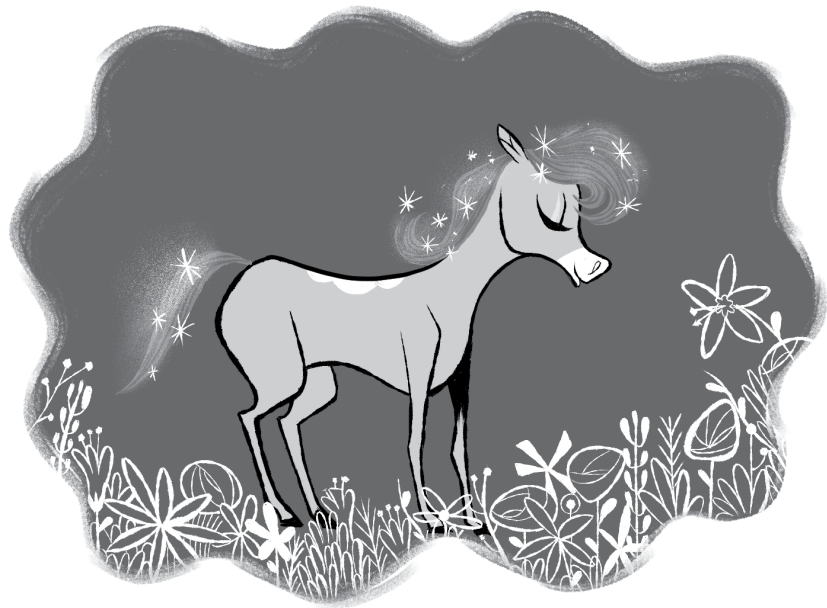
*Running makes me super-happy,* Sasha thought.

She had once tried to tell her sisters about how great she felt when she ran. They did not understand. They liked to spend their days eating grass and talking. Sasha thought that was boring.



Zara and Poppy were so different from Sasha. They looked different too.

Whenever she ran, Sasha pretended that she was shiny silver. She pretended that her mane glittered. She even pretended that rainbow sparkles exploded from her tail.



Sasha wished she looked as sparkly as she felt. She wished she could be a “flip-flop sister” too.

“I’m putting flowers in Zara’s mane,” said Poppy.

“Do you want flowers in yours?” asked Zara.

“Yes!” said Sasha. “We can *all* wear pretty flowers.”

Poppy tucked a flower into Sasha’s mane, but it fell out. Poppy put in another flower, but that one fell out too.



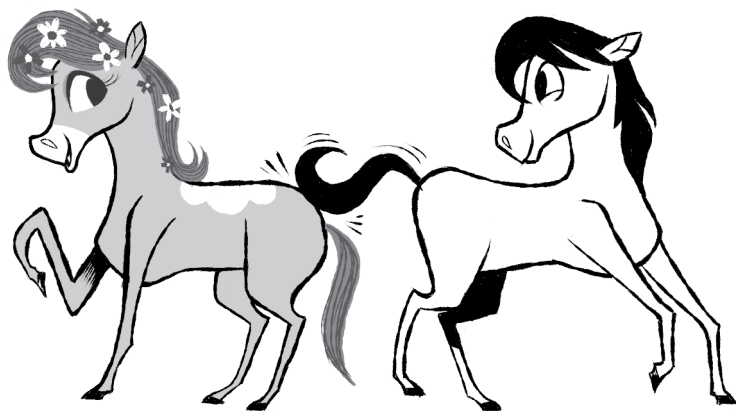
“Sasha!” cried Poppy. “Stay still. The flowers are falling.”



*I stink at staying still*, thought Sasha, but she tried to be like her sisters. She tried not to move. Then her hooves did a little dance. Her body wanted to go, go, go!

Wyatt trotted over. Wyatt was Sasha's better-than-best friend. He swatted her with his tail.

"Tag! You're it!" cried Wyatt.



Sasha was off! She chased after Wyatt. All the flowers fell out, but Sasha did not care.

Wyatt was fast, but Sasha was faster!

