

“Feed me, feed me.” The sounds are in my head, however, I know that those words are emitting from the new sewing machine sitting in its cover behind the chair and in the corner of the room.

It is hungry for thread. Thread of any color will do. “Feed Me,” says the machine. I really didn’t want to purchase this sewing machine. It was just the thing to do the other day when I took my one and only machine in for a check-up. Something my children do with their children. An annual checkup is needed for the first five years of life. This machine is 15 years old. It is a teenager. And just like a teen it is hungry all the time. I feed it every day. The thread that it goes through would reach around the world three times.

“You have a real antique there” says the sales clerk when I relinquish my hold on my treasure. “You need an upgrade. You need something that can sew from the “needle-down position”, she states. “This doesn’t have computer insides.” She now shakes her head and looks at me as if I have starved all the children in China by not eating my carrots, or by not keeping with times and going the way of the Jones’. “Everyone has a computer sewing machine,” she tells me. (I can hear my dad whispering in my ear: “If everyone jumped off the bridge would you follow them?”) “It depends,” I would answer.

And depend it did. I thought and I thought as I said “so long” to my antique as it was walked to the back room for a CHECKUP.

“Let’s go look at a new machine,” croons the clerk. Before I realize it I am sitting in front of a cute little number putting pressure on its foot to show me the know-how. “Can hardly hear the motor,” the clerk putting on her own pressure. And this one has a slide on table and a seam guide and 4,386 stitches. It is made to create.”

“I think that don’t need that many stitches,” I tell her. “Use only the ones you like,” she says. “It IS made to create.” The pressure increases as she says, “But wait! This model has more, more stitches, more motor power and more options.” It is only \$500 more.

The owner of the shop approaches. She smiles and nods and shows her teeth. They take a grip tighter than the salesclerk’s pressure. “I can’t let you go out the door without you knowing about this model,” she says. Her eyes sparkle. She sees the fish bite. “This motor allows you to sew through canvas. It has all the stitches you need (and then a million more) and I can allow it to leave for under \$500 more than this model.” She inches me toward the trophy and lifts it, places it on the table, then threads it. It eats the same thread that I have oodles of at home. It’s cute and it’s less than the cost of our first home. “Buy this one,” says my husband. “It sews through canvas.”

I take it home that evening. However, I could not allow them to keep my antique. I would get her back in time for an outing at the retreat. When we return the new sewing machine still taunts: “Feed Me, Feed Me.”

Someday I will throw a spool of thread her way, however, not right now. It’s my time to eat. I am hungry.

Lana Russ

