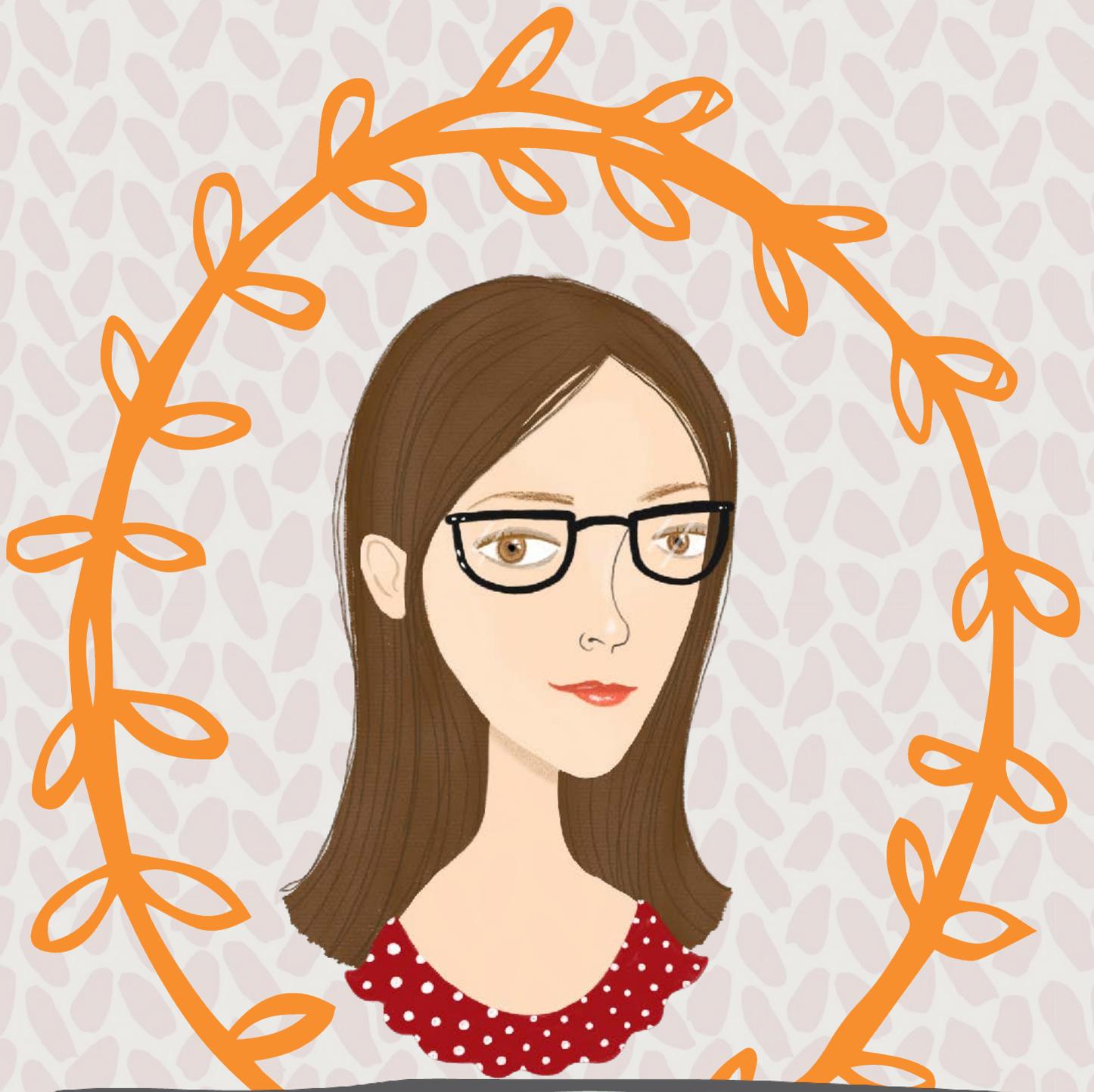


WITH LOVE FROM THE



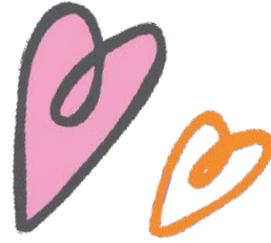
LAND





WELCOME

My name is Madeline Iske. I am the writer and editor of With Love From The Heartland. This magazine is all about life in the American Midwest. For farmers are more than people who give us food. They give us stability. Without farmers our economy would crumble; which brings to light how important farmers really are. I hope you not only enjoy this magazine, but learn from it as well. Happy reading!



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Dear Madam,

I have read your magazine about life in the country, and I must say that I have a few complaints. I live in New York City and have never heard of cow or goat food products. Don't you know that milk, cheese, and meat come from a supermarket? I am also puzzled by your corn and beans theory about them growing on a stalk or seed of a plant. Don't you know that they come from cans? I also happen to be a big animal lover, and I am outraged you keep "farm" animals cooped up in pens and paddocks. Cows should be set free in the wild, for I adamantly stand for animal rights. You also stated in your magazine, that you think beef comes from a cow. Beef comes from the deli! If your "theory" is true, I will never eat another hamburger again. Personally I think your magazine needs reworking, and I would be glad to send you all of my thoughts and suggestions on why you are wrong.

Your enlightened reader,

*Waverley Coltmén*

Miss Coltmén,

Thank you for your letter. I have addressed your concerns, but I am sorry to say that I can not change the magazine. You may have never heard of farm animals before, but I assure you they exist. Many people may not know the importance of farming, but 87% of U.S. agriculture products are produced on family farms or ranches. Farming is a very important asset to our society because, sadly, food doesn't magically appear on our shelves. Even though most animals are kept in pens and paddocks, they are well cared for and comfortable. It is also my duty to inform you that there is no such thing as a wild cow. Cows have been domesticated for around ten thousand years. Furthermore cows could not survive in the wild if they were set free. Thank you for sharing your ideas and beliefs but unfortunately I cannot use them, as they are not factual or accurate. If you are still not convinced, perhaps a trip to the country would make an eyeopening excursion.

Sincerely,

*Madeline Iske*

Brightly colored leaves  
Fall to earth as a big red monster  
Harvests the luscious crop



HAIKU: HARVEST SEASON



## DETOUR, ANYONE?

“Come on Addie, we're going on a road trip!” My grandmother's voice echoed in the half empty house. With my parents away on vacation, I was spending the week with my grandmother.

“We're what?” I yelled from my room.

“We're going on a road trip! Come on, it will be fun.”

I hurriedly got dressed, lacing up a pair of white tennis shoes. I grabbed my phone and filled up a water bottle before jumping in the car with my grandmother.

“Where exactly are we going?” I asked as she slowly backed out of the driveway.

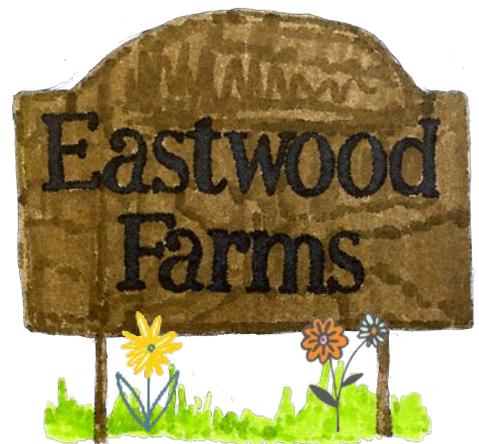
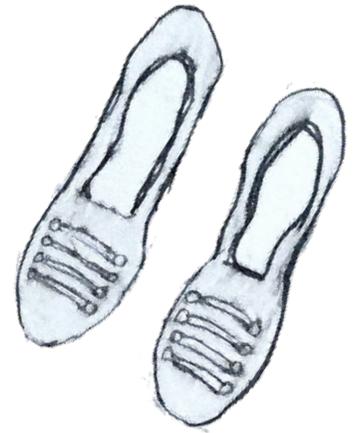
“We are going to a farm barn sale. I saw in the paper that a local farm is hosting it. I thought it would be interesting!” My grandmother turned the corner and we began driving down a long country road. As we turned, it started raining.

“Just keep a lookout for a road sign that says Eastwood Farms.”

I watched the scenery pass by, bored out of my mind. Rolling hills and meadows could be seen on either side of me as we kept on driving, the rain stopping as suddenly as it started.

“Oh look, there's the sign!” My grandmother exclaimed. “Uh Oh.”

FUN



I sat up straighter in the backseat. “Uh oh? What’s uh oh?”

“It looks like the road is washed out.” She said. I groaned. “But that’s ok. We can take a detour.” We turned onto a nearby dirt road. I cursed my grandmother’s optimism.

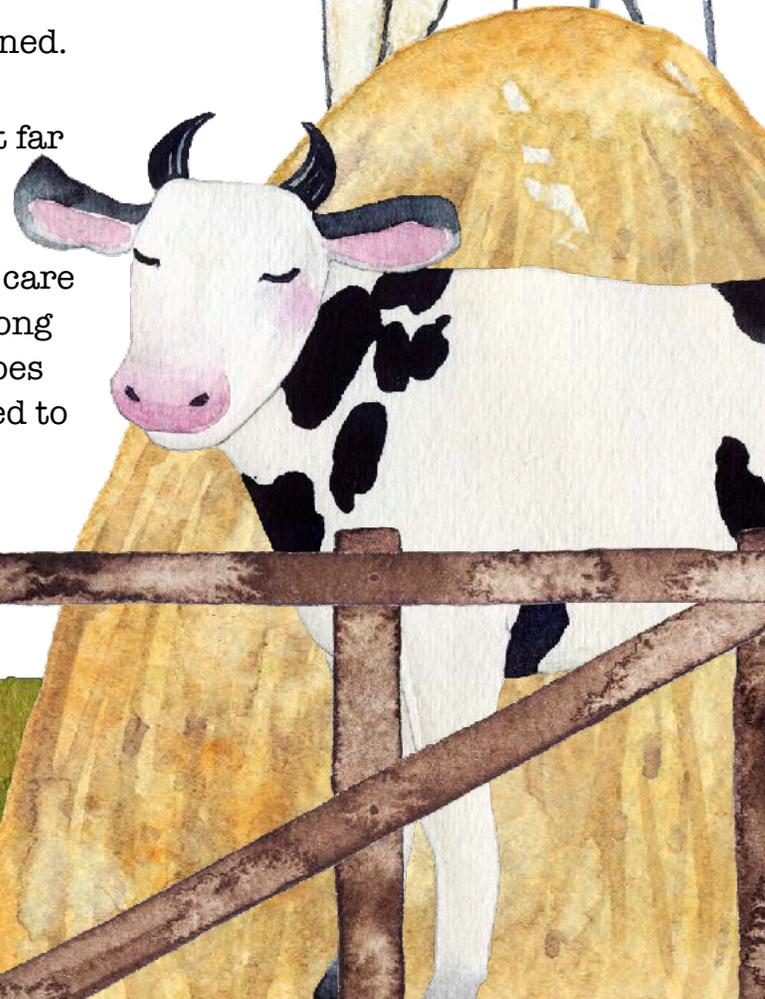
She followed the road, mud splashing from underneath the car’s tires, hopeful that we wouldn’t be late to the start of the sale. The road abruptly ended next to a pasture of cattle.

“Come on, we can walk on foot,” my grandmother said cheerfully, opening her car door.

“Nana? Can we just turn back?” I whined.

“Oh don’t worry, it’s probably not that far now!” She said enthusiastically.

We set off through the pasture, I took care not to step in any cow manure. I trudged along behind my grandmother, my poor white shoes now caked in mud, grumbling as I was forced to navigate my way through the tall grass.



We finally reached the opposite end of the pasture, climbing over the fence once more. My legs itched where the tall grass had touched them. We were now in a tree grove and had lost our direction.

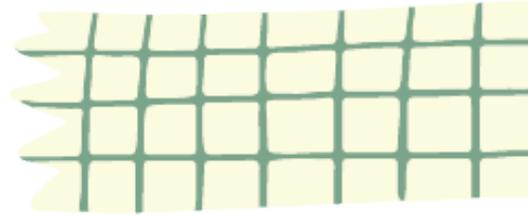
“Right,” my grandmother said. “I think it’s this way...Isn’t this such an adventure?!” A large dark cloud washed over the trees as the wind began to blow harder.

“Actually I think it’s trespassing.” I muttered, shivering slightly. Tiny droplets started to hit our heads as I spoke. Soon it was pouring.

My wet socks squished in my shoes as we worked our way through the trees.

“I can see the edge of the tree line from here. It’s not that much farther!” My grandmother said excitedly.

Soaking wet and fuming, I followed my grandmother towards the end of the tree line, praying there weren’t any animals around. The rain finally stopped as we stepped out of the trees.



My grandmother looked like a train wreck. Her clothes were clinging to her skin. Her makeup was smeared and running down her face. A broken twig hung from her tangled hair. I couldn't have looked much better.



We could see a barn and an old farmhouse ahead. Breathing a sigh of relief, we trudged up to the house, leaving muddy footprints on the porch, as we knocked on the door. It felt foreboding as I noticed the eerie quiet.

Imagine our dismay when the owner broke it to us that the barn sale was next week...



# POETRY



Thunder rolls,  
A cry through night.  
Lighting flashes,  
A frightening sight.  
Rain falls to earth,  
Harmonious sound.  
The country meadow,  
Where peace is found.



Dear Martha,

My name is Miranda Applebloom. I live in the suburbs, and have no idea what the country is like. What exactly do you do in the country? We are studying the rural, urban and suburban areas in social studies and I have to do a report on rural life. I must admit your magazine was helpful, but I need more information to write my report. I know what a farmer is, but what makes them so important? What is a farmer's life like? My little sister and I are kind of confused. She really likes your magazine too, and would have written to you, but she's only four and doesn't know how to write yet. I hope you respond as quickly as possible. My report is due Monday.

Your loyal reader,

*Miranda Applebloom*

ADVICE COLUMN

Dear Ms. Applebloom,

Thank you for your wonderful letter. To answer your questions, there is much that is done on farms. There are many different types of farms such as ranches, feedlots, orchards, plantations, dairy, and crop farms. A farmer's main job is to maintain the farm and to provide resources for the economy. Taking care of animals, harvesting crops, and growing food are examples of tasks a farmer could do. Each farm has a different purpose and not all farms grow food. They can also grow cotton or raise animals specifically for natural fibers, such as wool and silk. I encourage you to do more research if this topic really interests you. I hope your teacher likes your report.

Sincerely,

*Dr. Martha Stewart*

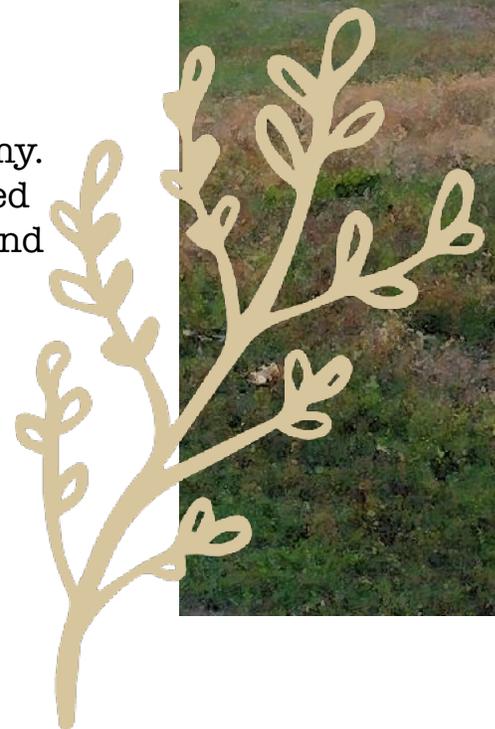
## INTERVIEW: THE LIFE OF A FARMER



Rick wiped away the sweat clinging to his forehead. His back ached from bailing hay bales in the blistering heat. He longed to be done with the painstaking task, but hours of hard work lay ahead of him. Tired, hungry, and aching, he continued to bale hay, as dust swirled in around him...

Rick was born on August 23, 1956. He grew up on an American crop farm in Omaha, Nebraska. Working on any farm is physically demanding. It takes strength, determination, and perseverance. Farming back then however was very different than farming today. Farmers labored in the fields with open cabbed tractors, breathing in the fumes and dust.

Animals were one of the easier jobs on the crop farm. Work was hard and tiresome. The advantage of working on a farm in the 1970s was that you could spend a lot more time with the family, performing chores together on the farm. A problem however was the slow economy. It affected many farmers throughout the United States. Many farmers made less profit and found it harder to secure money.





The major breakthrough that impacted farming between the 70s and today, was computer technology. This encompasses planters, combines, sprayers, and computer built-in appliances. These advances began to develop rapidly between 2000-2005. The impact of these technical advances is that rural living and city living are on more equal footing. Cell phones, cable, and other amenities that weren't always available to farmers are now accessible in rural areas today.

Farming is important because it provides food, connects multiple generations, and gives supplies to people. Depending on the day and weather, working can be difficult or simple. Farmers have to work from dawn until dusk. A farmer's schedule is reliant on the weather, and doesn't function like a normal 5 day work week.

Rick has been farming since the age of 16, and has been farming for 48 years. The most memorable thing about farming, in Ricks opinion, is that it is usually a family business, and you're surrounded by nature.

Though farming may be hard, Rick has always been passionate about it; and although it may be a difficult journey, it is the life of a farmer.

# HOW TO MAKE: CHERRY CRISP

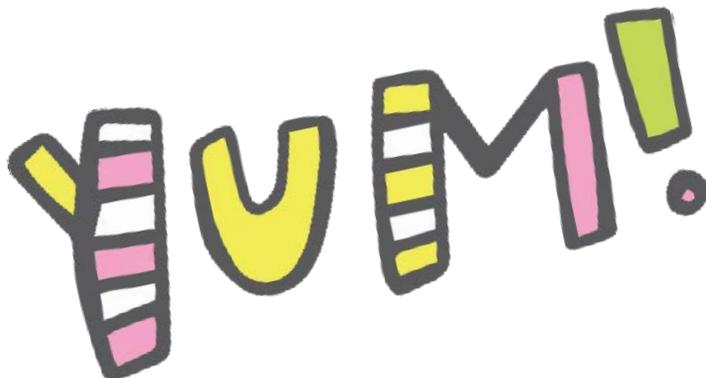
## CHERRY CRISP

Growing up, I loved to bake with my mother and grandmother. One of our favorite treats we ever made, was a cherry crisp. It is a fun and easy to make recipe. However, the best part about this recipe is that you can add, subtract, or substitute anything you like or dislike. Not a fan of nuts? Simple. You don't have to use them. Want to get more creative? Easy. Add a flare of flavor. The sky's the limit. So get out your apron, put on your oven mitts, and feel free to let your imagination run wild!

First, you need to gather your baking supplies.

### INGREDIENTS:

- 1 (2 quart) baking dish
- 1 (21 ounce) can cherry pie filling
- 1/2 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/2 cup rolled oats
- 2/3 cup brown sugar
- 3/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 3/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 1/4 cup chopped pecans (optional)
- 1/3 cup melted butter



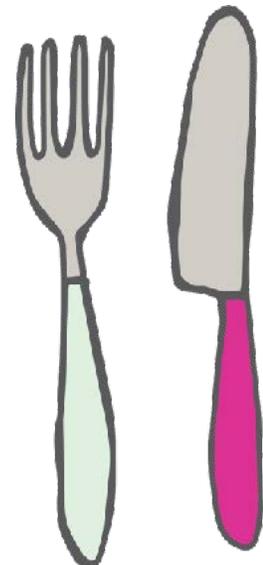


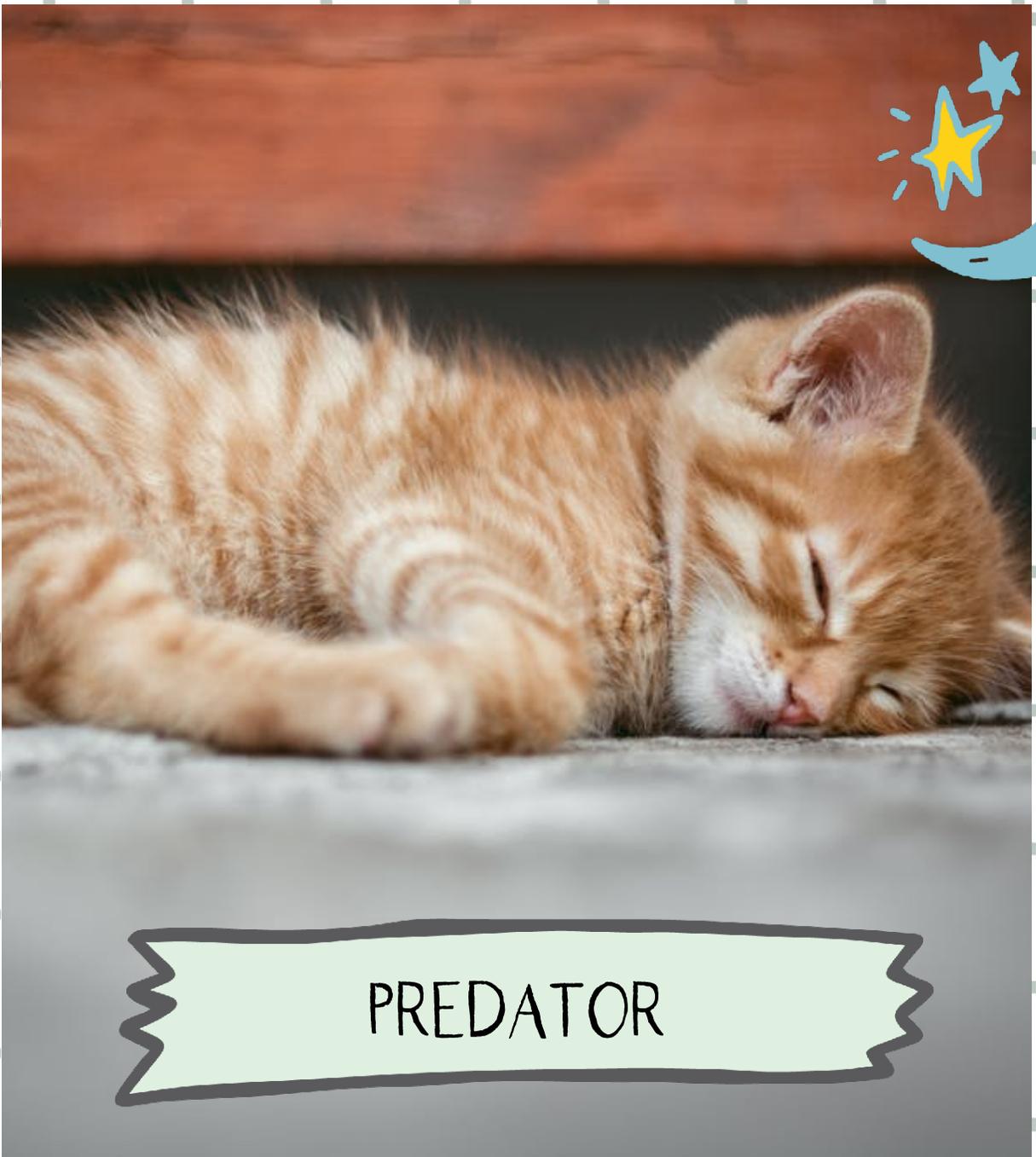
## DIRECTIONS:

- Now that you have all your ingredients prepared, preheat your oven to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C.)
- Lightly grease your baking dish before pouring your pie filling into the pan. (You can use any kind of pie filling you want.)
- Then, in a medium bowl, mix together flour, oats, sugar, cinnamon, and nutmeg.
- Melt the butter from 30-60 seconds on a small plate. Mix in the melted butter.
- Spread your mixture over the pie filling. (I suggest sprinkling so it doesn't clump together in one spot.)
- You can sprinkle chopped pecans or any other ingredient you desire on top of your crisp.
- Finally, bake in the preheated oven for 30 minutes, or until golden brown. Allow for it to cool for at least 15 minutes before serving.

## FINAL THOUGHTS:

I personally love baking, but my favorite part is doing it with the people I love. It's a fun activity that you, and your favorite people, can enjoy. I certainly had fun with this project, and I hope you had fun with it too!





PREDATOR

Hiding, sleeping, there you dream,  
A clever cat planning it's scheme,  
You're a tiny, rodent killing machine.



## NO PLACE LIKE HOME

There is only one thing you need to know about Anna Myers; she does not want to move to the country. End of story.

Well, apparently it wasn't the end of the story, because somehow she found herself in a big red truck, en route to the middle of nowhere. She sat pouting in the backseat, as her grandpa turned down the stereo.

"Cheer up," he said. "We'll be there in a few minutes." "That's why I'm pouting," she retorted. Anna refused to be in a good mood today.

"Are we almost there, Ralph?" Anna's grandmother asked.

"Yes, I believe we are." Ralph said, sounding very pleased with himself.

Her grandparents' cheerful attitude took all the fun out of being miserable. The truck rolled to a stop in front of an old, shabby farmhouse. Anna and her grandparents stepped out of the truck, the gravel crunching beneath their feet.

Anna stood gazing at the house, her brow furrowed. Budding trees and shrubs sprouted up everywhere. "You don't expect us to live here do you?" she inquired, a hint of panic in her voice.

Her grandmother glanced down at her before looking back at the farmhouse.

"Yes, it's perfect," Anna's grandmother said in a wistful tone. Anna rolled her eyes. She suspected she wasn't going to see eye-to-eye with her grandmother on this.

"That," she said, "is a matter of opinion."

She turned dramatically, her dark brown hair whipping behind her.





Anna's suspicions were soon confirmed. She, hated it here. On inspecting the house, she had stumbled across many cracks and crevices along the walls.

'Uh, this place must have mice,' she thought.

While she was sleeping, a mouse had climbed the bed rail, skittered across the sheets, and squatted on her chest, nibbling on crumbs.

She woke up, saw the mouse, and ran shrieking into her grandparents bedroom, "I hate it here, I hate it here, I HATE it here!"

If that wasn't bad enough, one Tuesday, when she was doing laundry in the basement, the air conditioning unit went out. It was 95 degrees outside. The summer heat had already set in.

"I'm calling a technician!" Her grandmother shouted from upstairs. "I'm calling a taxi," Anna muttered under her breath, stomping up the stairs past her grandmother.

Three weeks after they moved in, Anna received more shocking news.

"Our neighbors are coming over for dinner tonight, so make sure you're on your best behavior." Anna, who had been immersed in her book, "Real Estate for Young Beginners," looked up startled.



“We have neighbors?” Anna asked her grandmother, with a puzzled expression on her face. “I thought the point of this place was to get as far away from human habitation as possible.”

“You know, it’s always a thrill, these little talks we have, Anna.” Her grandmother said sarcastically.

“Yes, yes they are.” Anna agreed. “It always starts the same. A grandmother trying desperately to get her granddaughter to behave; knowing all the time, that she is failing miserably.”

“Yes, and it always ends the same,” her grandmother imitated. “With her snarky granddaughter doing the dishes.”



Later that night, Anna’s grandfather came home to shower before their guests arrived. “Do they have to come?” Anna whined.

“Yes,” her grandmother said sternly. “Honestly Anna I don’t see what the fuss is about. They seem to be very nice people. Your grandfather met them the other day when he was in town. Jake Pennyworth. He has a son about your age.” Anna scoffed. Her grandmother ignored her and continued.

“The boy’s grandmother came over yesterday when you were in your room, being miserable. Very nice lady. She said that she and her husband live with their son, and that they would have come over sooner, but planting season was very busy. So, I invited them over for dinner.”

Anna looked at her grandmother with amazement. “And they actually accepted?”

At exactly six o'clock, the doorbell rang. Anna's grandfather walked to the door and opened it. A few words were exchanged, none of which Anna heard, before her grandfather finally lead the guests into the living room.

The first person she saw was a middle-aged man with sandy brown hair. His green eyes smiled down at Anna from his rough suntanned face.

"This is my granddaughter, Anna." Ralph said. "Anna," he turned to her. "This is Jake Pennyworth," he pointed to the middle-aged man.

"Very nice to meet you," Jake said. "This is my mother and father, Rose and Jerry; and this is my son, Owen." He first pointed to an elderly couple around the same age as her grandparents, and then to a boy, a little bit taller than herself.

He was the spitting image of his dad, but his eyes were hazel, instead of green. "Hi." He stuck out his hand and Anna shook it quickly before letting go.

After what felt like hours, dinner was finally served on the table. The adults talked about jobs, people, politics, and other boring grown up subjects.

Finally, it came time for their guests to leave. They all watched as the Pennyworth's truck pulled out of the driveway.

"I think that went well," Anna's grandmother said. "We should have them over again."



The next morning, Anna woke to the sound of her alarm clock. She shut it off and went downstairs to breakfast. Her grandma was in the kitchen frying eggs.

“Your grandfather went out to work already,” Anna’s grandmother told her. “Have a seat. Breakfast will be ready in a minute.”

Anna sat down. The morning newspaper was still on the table. Her grandmother set a plate of fried eggs and bacon in front of her. She said a hurried thank you before diving into the delicious food.

Her grandmother sat down opposite her with a cup of coffee. “I know it will take a while for you to get adjusted here, but you’ll love it.”

Anna nodded slowly, wondering how she could ever get used to the country.

“Owen’s grandmother is coming over today.” Her grandmother said. “So we can talk, and so you and Owen can get to know each other.”

“Sure,” Anna said with a shrug. “Why not?”

“That’s the spirit! I’m going to tackle the attic today, help me clear the table.”

Anna helped her grandmother put the dishes into the sink before retreating to her room. She still hadn’t finished unpacking. Not because she had a lot of stuff, but because she still had hope they might move back to the city.

At eleven thirty the doorbell rang while Anna was listening to music in bed. Anna could hear her grandmother walking down the creaky stairs to open the door. She sighed and rolled out of the bed.



Owen and his grandmother were standing in the kitchen talking to her grandmother. Once Anna's grandma noticed she was there, she called out to her.

"Anna, why don't you go outside with Owen. Some fresh air might do you some good."

Anna politely said hello to Rose and showed Owen to the back door. They walked out onto the porch. There was an awkward silence between them until Owen said, "It seems like you don't like the country."

"That's because I don't. It's so different from the city." Anna said sadly as she gazed around at the open space.

"Different isn't always bad," Owen countered. "If you give it a chance, I know you'll love it."

"You sound just like my grandmother" Anna sighed.

"Let me show you all the fun you can have in the country; and if you still don't like it, I'll let it go. Deal?"

Anna looked at Owen's determined face. "Fine, but I highly doubt I'll change my opinion."

Owen went back into the house to ask his grandmother if they could go to his house. He came out again smiling. "We can go!"

She followed him through the wooded path between their houses. It was an old farmhouse similar to her own. He led her past it to a big barn and paddock.

Two horses were standing in the paddock, their tails swishing back and forth.

She squealed with delight. Owen grinned back at her, knowing she would be pleased.

He picked up a handful of corn, and walked up to the fence. He gestured for her to follow him. She walked up behind him cautiously.

He poured a little of the corn into her hand, and told her to hold it out above the fence.

The horses slowly meandered over to them. They bent their heads and began to eat the corn out of Anna and Owen's hands. It tickled and she giggled.

"Pet him," Owen encouraged her. "He really likes it."

Anna reached out her hand, stroked the giant creature in front of her, and smiled to herself.



Anna closed the door behind her with a thud. Her grandmother sat in the living room watching the news.

"Hi honey. How was your day?"

"It was good." Anna said. "I'm starving." She walked into the kitchen and started to make herself a sandwich.

Her day was better than good, it had been amazing. Owen introduced her to all of the animals on his farm. His family had cows, chickens, barn cats, and even a farm dog.

They hiked through the woods at the back of his property, talking and trying to guess the different animal tracks. He taught her how to groom the horses, and even let her sit on one.

He showed her the tunnels and forts he built in the hay lofts, and all of the barn games he invented.

# BEST FRIENDS

She hated to admit it, but his argument was pretty convincing. He asked her before she left if she still didn't like living in the country. She didn't answer him but she could have sworn she saw a triumphant smile on his face.

"Did you enjoy spending time with Owen?" Anna's grandmother asked.

"Ya," Anna said. "He's alright."



Over the next few months, Anna and Owen became best friends. They saw each other almost every day. They played, talked, and schemed.

Anna's grandfather taught her how to drive a golf cart, Jake Pennyworth taught her how to ride a horse, Owen's grandmother taught her how to grow a garden, and Anna's grandmother taught her how to cook and bake.

She and Owen played hide and seek, mostly in the cornfields which had ripened to a bright green.

As it grew colder, everyone knew that harvest season was upon them. Her grandfather was gone early in the morning, and returned late at night. Anna was homeschooling, which was an adjustment.

She saw less of Owen because of school, but they still got together and went on hikes between their farms every now and then.

She barely got to see her grandfather anymore. He was busy almost all day. Her favorite part of the day now, was when she could ride in the combine with him. They would have long conversations and her grandpa would even let her drive for a bit.

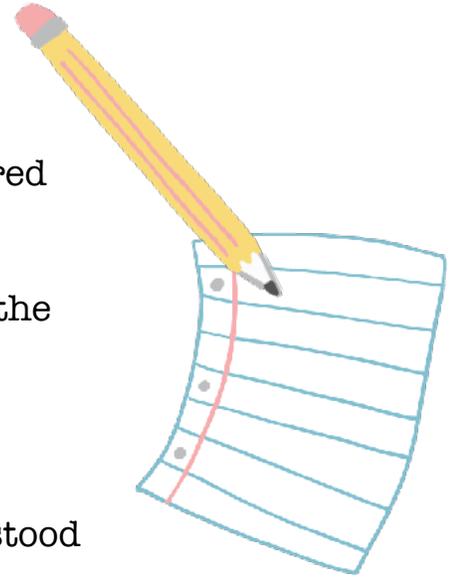


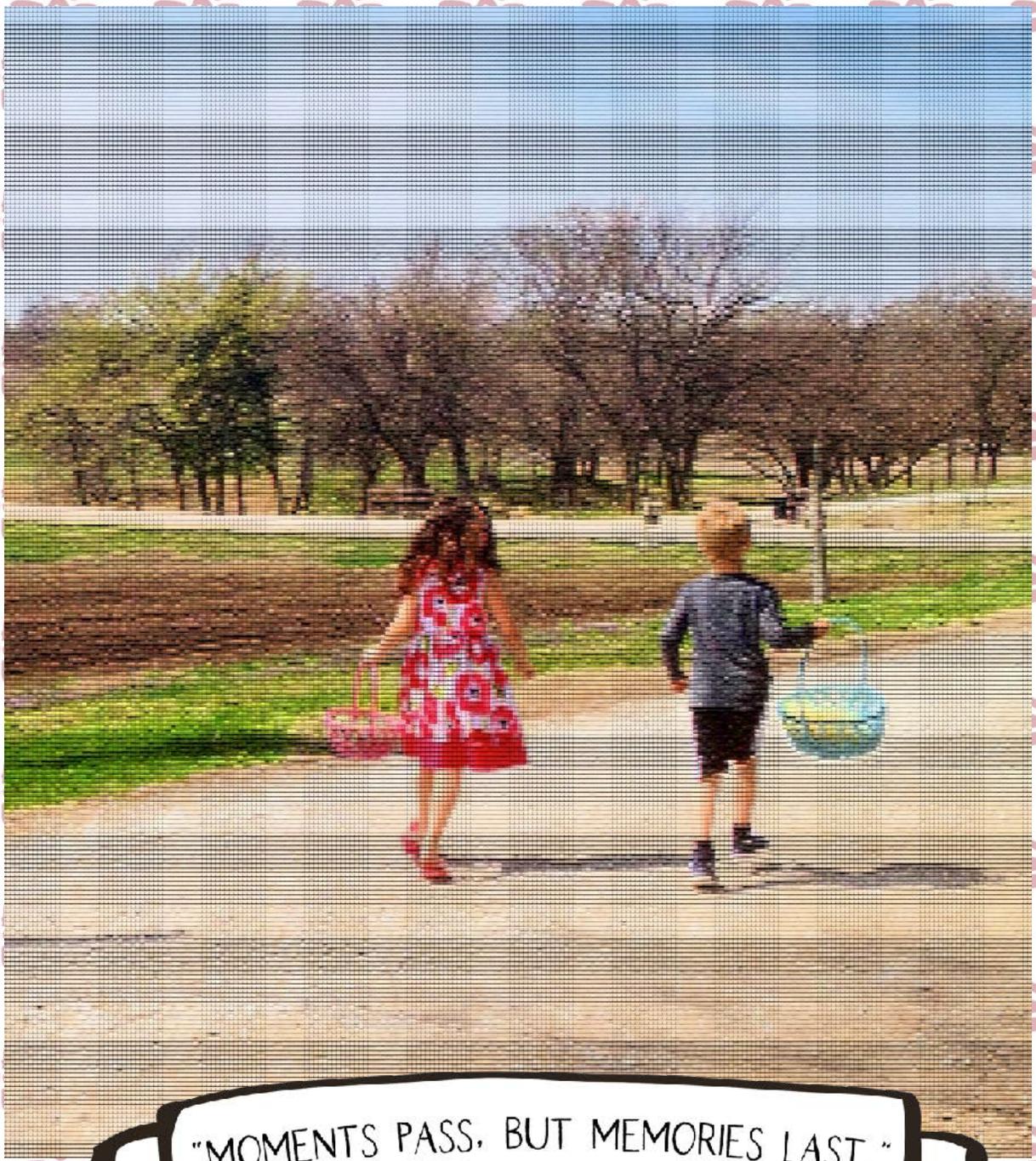
She loved autumn. She sat on her porch as she did homework. Watching as the leaves turned from green to red and orange.

Too soon, winter was around the corner. She sat on the porch with a blanket wrapped tightly around her. She watched a truck pull into their driveway. Rose and Owen stepped out.

Owen saw her on the porch and ran over to her. He stood there, reading her expression. “So...” A goofy grin spread across his face. “You still don’t like the country?”

Anna smiled at her friend. She couldn’t help but feel happy, sitting on the porch of their quiet little farmhouse, located in the middle of nowhere...





"MOMENTS PASS, BUT MEMORIES LAST."