

Preview
On the farm with Harry - Book 2 - The Happy Farmer

a
“read a book to a kid”
book

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1. Wooden Eggs

“Mom! Mom!” Harry rushed into the mud room, his face a picture of delight and excitement. “Dad says you gotta come quick!”

Stormy, equally excited, was waiting anxiously, squirming, and yipping from the veranda, nose against the screen door.

“Be there in a minute!” came Mom’s answer.

After a few seconds of impatience, “You coming, Mom?” Harry yelled again, this time more plaintively.

“Is the house on fire, Harry?”

“No, but Dad . . .”

Mom came down the hallway, wearing a light blue floral dress and a bright yellow apron. “I said I’ll be right there, Harry! Now,” she continued, a big smile on her face, “I’m here. What is so urgent?”

Harry took her hand. “C’mon! I’ll show you!”

“Wait, Harry, I need to put my boots on.”

Before she could say another word, Harry stooped down on one knee and, smiling up at her, slipped one boot over her foot, then the other, and zipped them up for her.

“Why, thank you, Harry! Very thoughtful!”

“Dad said to help you whenever I could, cuz you can’t move as fast as you used to, and it hurts when you bend over.” His face was a mix of pride and concern. “Jeremy says you’re probably pregnant.



So, are you pregnant, Mom?”

“Tell you what. Tonight, we’ll discuss a few things, including my tummy. Now, let’s go see what Dad is so excited about.” She laughed and tussled Harry’s hair.

Dad was leaning against a corner of the chicken coop, watching many of the young chickens happily roaming through the garden. They were scratching and pecking through the freshly turned soil between rows of lettuce, cabbage, carrots, and beets.

“Oh, no!” Mom cried, “those chickens are in our garden. Won’t they eat the cabbage and lettuce?”

“No, Dear. It’s actually a good thing,” Dad replied. “I read an article that says that chickens will rid gardens of beetles, cabbage worms, slugs, caterpillars, and more.”

“Yeah, Mom. And Dad says we won’t leave them there all day, just long enough to eat the bugs. Then we’ll tell them to go home . . . huh, Dad?”

“That’s right, Harry, and it will be up to you and Stormy to make sure they go home. But that’s not what I wanted to show you. Come over here and look.”

Mom walked over to join Dad, who moved out of the way to reveal a small brown oval object in the grass.

“Is that an egg?” she asked.

Harry could no longer contain himself. “Yes, it is! Dad found it this morning. It’s really little, huh? He says the chickens are now called pullets. Right Dad?” Dad nodded, and Harry continued. “We’ll start finding these little eggs all over, huh? We’ll hafta teach the chickens to put their eggs into their nests.”

Mom picked up the small egg. "How are you going to do that, Harry?"

"I'm not sure. How are we going to do that, Dad?"

"I checked into that a month ago. The guy at the feedstore sold me a dozen wooden eggs to fool the pullets."

"Sounds interesting," Mom frowned. "Maybe we have to put the wooden ones into the nesting boxes?"

"Oh!" Harry said, excitedly. "I think I know. We get the chickens . . . I mean, pullets . . . into the chicken house. And then they walk around and see the wooden eggs and they say, oh, look! There's an egg in that nest. That would be a good place for me to put my egg, too." He looked up at Dad, then Mom, beaming with delight. "Am I right?" He tilted his head, and gave his mom one of his special raised-eyebrow 'looks'.

Mom laughed and hugged her son. "I think that's the idea, Harry." She turned to Dad, "The feedstore guy says it will work, huh?"

"Yes, that's what he says. I thought it was worth trying. I am surprised, though, we have eggs before June.

"Harry, let's you and I put these wooden eggs in the nests. After that, you and Stormy round up the pullets and put them back inside the coop. Make sure there's plenty of egg mash and water."

"Yes, Sir. C'mon, Stormy! Oh, Dad?"

"Yes, Harry?"

"How do the chickens put their eggs in the nests?"

“Good question, Harry. Chickens get a feeling inside, and God says, ‘Get ready, because you’re going to have an egg!’ So, the chicken says, ‘Okay,’ then she looks around and finds a good spot. She sits down and uses her muscles to push the egg out of a special hole in her bottom. We’re going to help her decide to sit in a nesting box, using one of the wooden eggs.”

“Ewww!” Harry scrunched up his face. “A hole in her bottom?”

“Yes, let’s call it a vent. Now, let’s get this job done so we can plant more vegetables today.”

* * * * *

REMEMBERING

1. What did Harry help Mom put on?
2. What are young, adult chickens called?
3. What did Dad find in the grass?
4. To fool the pullets into using the nesting boxes, what are they going to use?

