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Hit By A Farm: How I Learned To Stop Worrying And Love The Barn



Synopsis

Farms have fences. People have boundaries. Mine began crumbling the day I knelt behind a male sheep, reached between his legs, and squeezed his testicles. This took place one blustery November day when I joined other shepherd-wannabees for a class on the basics of raising sheep. I was there with my partner Melissa, the woman I'd lived with for twelve years, because we were going to start a farm. When self-confessed "urban bookworm" Catherine Friend's partner of twelve years decides she wants to fulfill her lifelong dream of owning a farm, Catherine agrees. What ensues is a crash course in both living off and with the land that ultimately allows Catherine to help fulfill Melissa's dreams while not losing sight of her own. Hit by a Farm is a hilarious recounting of Catherine and Melissa's trials of "getting back to the land." It is also a coming-of (middle)-age story of a woman trying to cross the divide between who she is and who she wants to be, and the story of a couple who say "goodbye city life" and learn more than they ever bargained for about love, land, and yes, sheep sex.

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Customer Reviews

Farming had never been children's book writer Friend's dream; her fantasies ran more along the lines of nurturing her writing career. But when her partner, Melissa, talks her into buying a farm--and reality hits in the form of 53 worn-out acres in Minnesota--she learns how to test a ram's testicles and select a flock of 50 ewe lambs by the scientific criteria of who had the cutest face and could be caught, and she is now in the sheep business. The couple soon adds a border collie, 2 pet goats, 150 chickens, 200 grapevines, an old pickup, and an even older tractor and begin to acquire the

skills needed to make a go of it. This honest look at collaboration and compromise, the pain and the joy of partnership, and the hands-on of farming will find a ready audience. Nancy BentCopyright
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"Farms have fences. People have boundaries. Mine began crumbling the day I knelt behind a male sheep, reached between his legs, and squeezed his testicles....Janet, the instructor of this course on raising sheep, had indicated it was my turn. 'Grab his testicles here, around the widest part.' Right, no problem. At that very moment all my friends were attending a writing conference. They were warm, clean, and not feeling up a ram with sixteen-inch testicles....Wincing, I reached between the ram's back legs with my thumb and forefinger. 'Don't pinch him,' Janet cried." Hit by a Farm is a hilarious recounting of Catherine's attempt to become a farmer; it is also a coming-of(middle)-age story of a woman trying to close the divide between who she wants to be, and who she really is. After helping Melissa fulfill her dream, Catherine eventually finds a way to recapture her own. By turns funny and moving, Hit by a Farm is a crash course in both living off and living with the land that will appeal to anyone hungering for a connection to rural life. Praise for Hit by a Farm: "A sweet and funny book in the classic Hardy Girls Go Farming genre, elegantly told, from the first two pages, which are particularly riveting for the male reader, through the astonishing revelation that chickens have belly-buttons and on to the end, which comes much too soon. It has dogs, sheep, a pickup truck, women's underwear, electric fences, the works."--Garrison Keillor "What a funny, touching delightful, human story! Catherine is not only a farmer; she is most certainly a writer too."--Marion Dane Bauer, Newbery Honor Book author "If you ever thought farming could be a fabulous back-to-basics adventure, if you ever wondered about the difference in raising, say, a sheep or a peacock, if you ever wanted an honest -- but jaundiced -- peek at farm living, read Catherine Friend's Hit by a Farm. You'll be hit by her candor and humor, and your thoughts about farming will never be the same."--Cindy Rogers, author, Word Magic for Writers, childhood farmer "Tractor mommas, this is the book for you!"--Rita Mae Brown "I simply could not put the book down. Catherine Friend is a luscious writer. She packs this memoir of two women starting a farm together in Southern Minnesota with hilarity, tenderness, grim reality and suspense. This memoir is, hands down, the best story I've read in ages."--Ellen Hart, author of 21 mystery novels, five-time winner of the Lambda Literary Award

Funny, funny FUNNY book! I've recommended it to a few other people and they thought it was hilarious, too. Just about everything in this book I can relate to, as I've experienced it all with my own

animals or very similar situations. The author has an easy to read and fun style of retelling her experiences of an unplanned and somewhat unwanted farm life. The stories make you laugh, make you cry, make you go awww, and have you crying with laughter. (My [non-farming] friend read the book in one day, because she enjoyed it so much and didn't want to put it down.) Fellow sheep farmers will enjoy the book because they can relate and will recall their own experiences (close encounters of the electric fence type, "The sheep are out!" situations, the annual lambing seasons, etc.) and non-farming city folks will enjoy it as they get a glimpse into the magical world of farm life.

Just to clarify - I loved the story. It is funny, and sweet, and super entertaining. However, the Kindle version is very poorly done, considering what is charging for it. The chapters are not separated, so you cannot navigate within the book. There are a LOT of sentences that are not properly separated, so the next sentence comes right after the period, with no space. It is a shame, and distracts from the reading experience.

I happen to own a truck farm (vegetable) but not a ranch to raise sheep. It was a fun read. Even if you are not into farming or have any desire to get your hands and feet dirty or get soaked in rain. This was a very pleasant reading. Something you can wrap your hands and arm around it. You can laugh about their "failures" such as failed colored crayon... Something you want to read on a lazy Sunday afternoon with a cup of soothing iced tea in summer or hot cocoa by the fireplace in winter. Even the parts you wanted to cringe weren't a bad cringe. It was more of Oh oh... I hope it turns out well. I can only laugh and relate about the drag line and the tractor. I did find out about their lamas on her web site. So even if you are a city girl or forever cosmopolitan girl, you'll enjoy reading about their experience. There are things you will be able to relate.

This is probably not going to be a book that people who are dyed-in-the-wool city folks will be interested in. However, if you are a country person or a city person dreaming of a place in the country, you will probably enjoy this book. It is an account of two gals, one whose dream has always been to have a farm and the author who goes along halfheartedly to make her partner's dream come true. The author is actually a writer struggling to make a name for herself and although she doesn't say so, the money she brings in probably keeps the farming endeavor viable. The story is amusing at times and describes pretty accurately (speaking from experience) about the learning experiences of two naive women making a working farm from an acreage, raising sheep and other miscellaneous animals. It is also a story about a relationship of love and life as both partners mature.

and change through this farming experience. I think it is a great book for anybody who has dreams of leaving the hustle and bustles of the urban life for a "peaceful, quiet life of the country".

I am surprised that readers are calling this book hilarious. Even the author herself seemed to think that her story was in the humor category. But it is better than the usual trope about city folk who move to the country and find themselves the butt of every joke. This story seemed to me almost painfully honest, both about the travails of farming, and about the difficulties of sustaining a relationship. I liked the honesty. I liked that neither the city girls nor the country folks came across as buffoons. I have often had an idle dream of myself as a shepherd, maybe in retirement, and since learning to knit a few years ago, that dream has seemed even more appealing. But my fantasy did not involve a prolapsed sheep uterus that must be held up out of the mud for over an hour. Nor did it involve various methods of castrating baby rams. And it certainly didn't involve flystrike, with maggots embedded in the sheep's flesh! In fact, there was a lot of rather disturbing reality in this book, including the omnipresence of death on a farm. Friend quotes a fellow farmer who reminds her, Where there's livestock, there's deadstock. There is also the honesty about the relationship struggles of two women who love each other very much, but also differ very much about their goals in life. And about the mental health issues that each partner struggles with. So, no, not my idea of hilarious. But warm, human, honest, and touching. I liked it a lot.

Very enjoyable farm memoir! I really enjoyed the animal stories. Clear writing and easy to get lost in. Definitely recommend!

With a leap of faith, Catherinie and her partner drop out of a secure safe environment into the unknown world and challenge of being farmers. The devotion and excitement of her partner drags her kicking and screaming into a new life with no security, no promises of success and a foreign land with strangers all around them. It is only through risking one step at a time that they can discover their strengths and overcome their weaknesses. The humor is entwined throughout their experiences and the shared struggle only serves to strengthen their resolve and, as a by product, their relationship and understanding of each other. It is a little whinny but the humor tempers that. As a farmer's wife transported in from Boston, I can relate to their fresh perspective. It is a good read.

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