

Saving "Louise" by Jay C. Rehak

Even though Sally thought she was all that and a bag of chips and a large coke, I still looked up to her. Everyone thought she was conceited because of the attention she got, but I have to admit, she was smart. I was her little sister, Gail, and we were two of the fourteen pigs who lived on Mr. Louie Easton's farm.

We all called Mr. Easton "Louise," not because we were trying to make fun of him or anything. It was more because of something he said to us every morning before he fed us. You see, when Mr. Louie Easton was about to feed us, he'd always yell out, "Sewies!" We didn't know what it meant, but we decided we'd all yell back "Louise" because it kind of rhymed. After a while, it sort of sounded like a call and response song. You know, the kind of song that someone sings the first part, and everyone who's listening sings back the rest.

He'd yell, "Sewies!"
We'd squeal back, "Louise!"

I don't know if he ever realized we were calling him a girl's name or he might have laughed when we answered him. I think he just thought we were saying "Louie's" or "Lou E's." Maybe he figured we didn't know how to pronounce Easton.

Anyway, "Louise" was all right in my book, especially because he was never late with breakfast. Every morning when the sun first came up, with his eyes half closed, he'd come stumbling out to our pen with a big bag of feed, looking at his watch as if he couldn't believe morning had come so suddenly. For some reason, he would never give us our food until he first went over to Sally and patted her on the head. I think that's what caused our jealousy. It was if the rest of us didn't matter. We'd all stand around, looking at the sky, kind of bored and envious of the attention Sally got, until Louise yelled out "Sewies." Then the

thirteen of us who weren't getting any attention would bump our heads and crawl all over each other trying to get to the food. Sometimes Sally would be a little late getting to the food because she was busy being patted on the head by Louise. I felt a little sorry for Sally when that happened, but not a lot.

Then one day, just as the sun was about to come up, the ground began to shake like it had never shaken before. For about twenty seconds it felt like a big ball was rolling around underneath the pig pen, making the fence around us sway and buckle. Then, it stopped. We were all a bit shaken. After a few minutes, we looked around for Louise. He hadn't come out of his farmhouse. When we looked over, we noticed that its roof was all torn apart.

Sally was the first person to react. "Something might have happened to Louise when the ground shook." She said. "Let's all yell his name together." So we all yelled, "Louise!" We waited, but still he didn't come. We yelled again, "Louise!" Still no answer.

"We've got to go check on him" Sally said.

"You go, we'll wait here. He's your friend, after all" someone said.

"He's a friend to all of us." Sally replied.

"I'll go with you," I said.

"Anyone else?" Sally asked.

"Oh, all right." The rest of the group snorted.

So we all crawled over the broken fence and made our way into the farmhouse. All the while, we kept yelling, "Louise." But still there was no answer.

When we got inside, the place looked great. It looked just like our pig pen. Everything was everywhere. But there was no sign of Louise. We all kept yelling, "Louise" until I heard what I thought was a faint "Sewies!"

"Over here!" I squealed. All fourteen of us starting picking and poking at a big pile of rubbish that lay under a broken staircase.

We all had fun picking through it all, but Sally kept reminding us to work fast. We never stopped yelling "Louise". Every time we moved something, we could hear "Sewies" louder and more clearly.

After a few minutes, we had cleared off the pile. There, at the bottom, was Louise, the only part of him broken appeared to be his watch.

"Thank you!" he said in amazement. "All of you." And then he did something he'd never done before. He patted each of us on the head. The funny thing was, Sally wasn't the first and she wasn't the last. She was just one of Louise's favorite fourteen pigs.