

Christmas is Coming



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Enviro-Stories

Enviro-Stories is an innovative literacy education program that inspires learning about natural resource and catchment management issues. Developed by Peekdesigns, this program provides students with an opportunity to publish their own stories that have been written for other kids to support learning about their local area.

www.envirostories.com.au

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Christmas is Coming

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"A present!" cried Dad. "Thank you mate!" He excitedly hung up the phone.

Mum eyed him. "Did we get it?"

Dad grinned showing all of his yellow teeth and suddenly broke into a dance.

"Christmas is coming!" they yelled together.

"What's coming?" Matthew asked. His golden hair gleamed in the morning light as he entered the sunlit room.

"Christmas!" said Dad. "We are getting a present!"

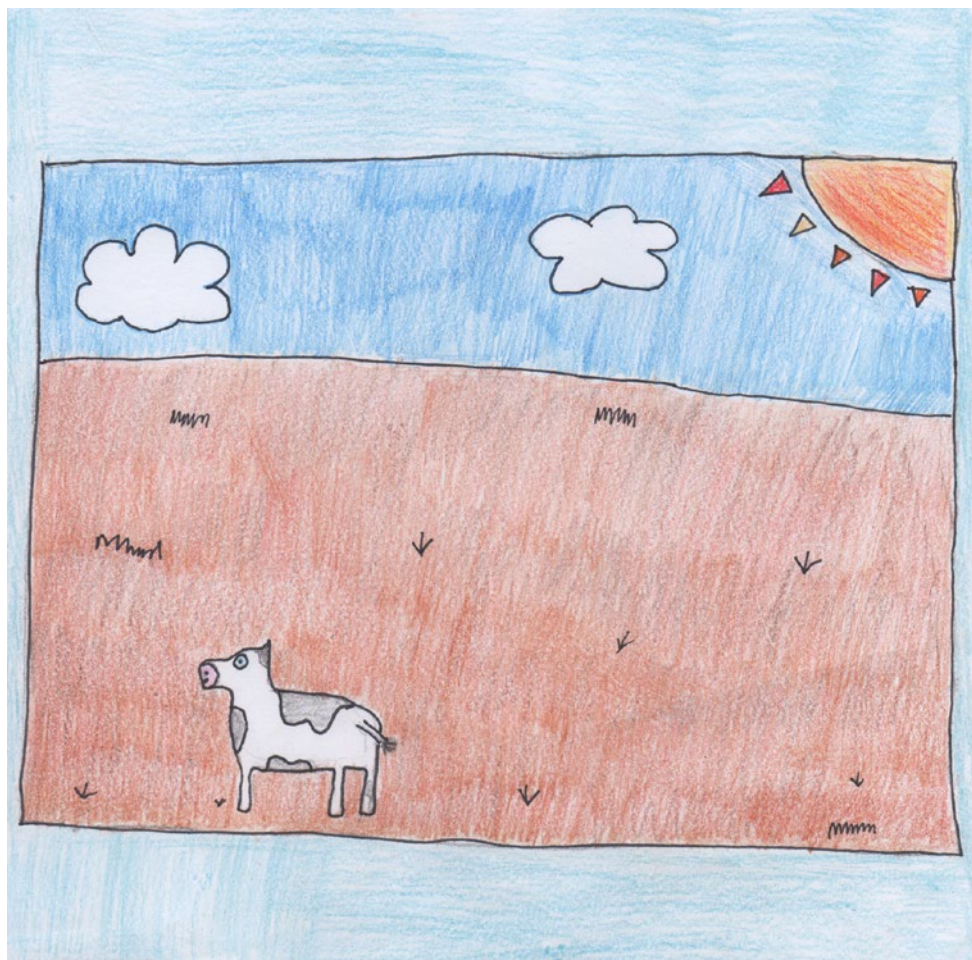
With that Matthew rushed out of the room with a look of total amazement on his small face. He pushed past the farmhouse cat George, who happened to be lying on a velvet, red rocking chair by the windowsill and into my room.



"Anna!" he yelled, shaking me excitedly.
"I heard Mum and Dad say Christmas is coming."

Being only six, I knew my little brother was prone to telling stories.





"Look," I said a little annoyed that he was wasting my time, "I have to go and feed the cattle with the little food we have."

I sighed and looked out the window at Winnie the Moo pawing at a patch of dead grass.



It has been three years since I had heard the sound of rain that reminded me of popcorn popping on the rusty, tin roof.

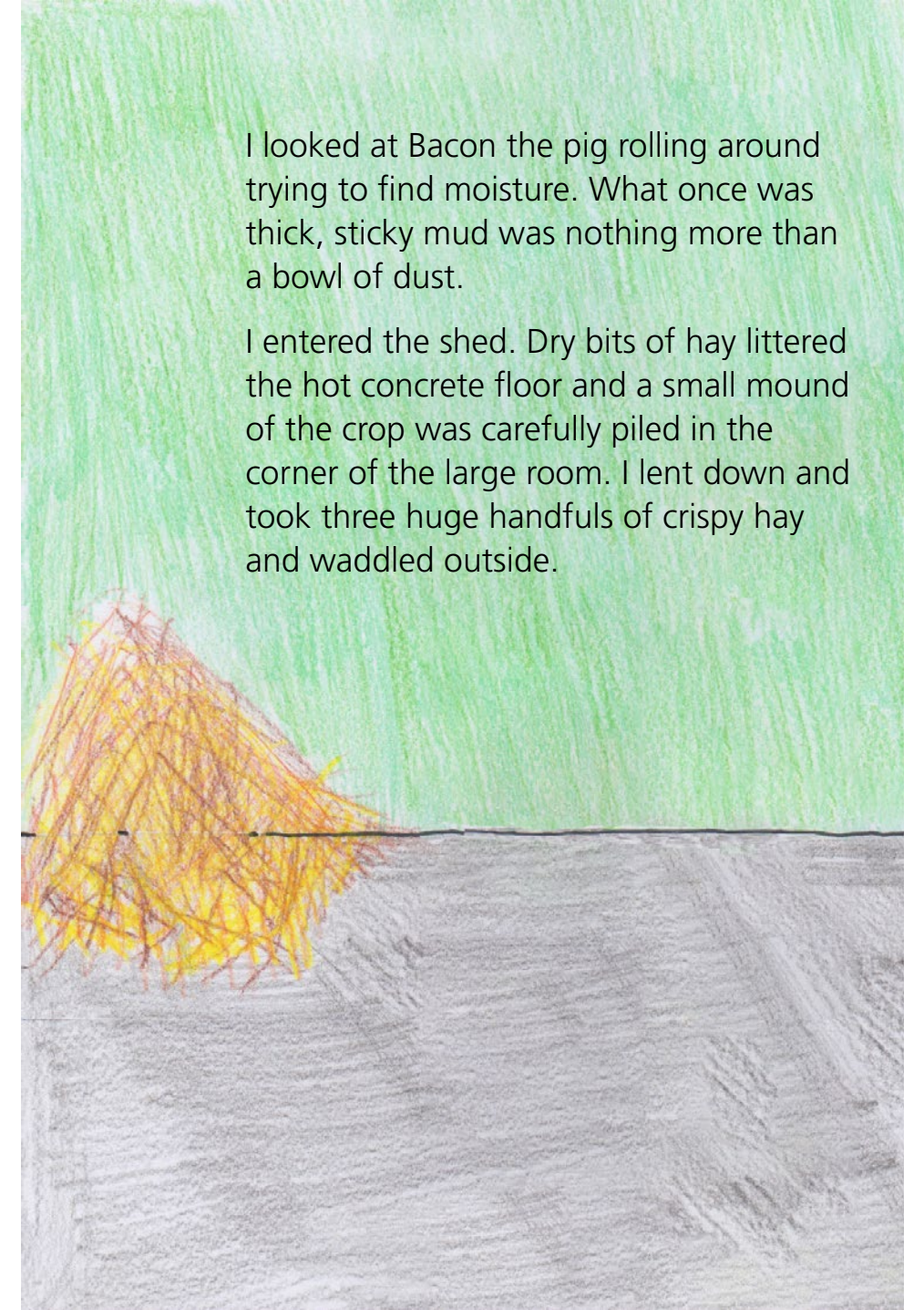
"But Mum and Dad said that..."

"But it's winter!" I cut in and stomped out of my room, pulled on my tattered gum boots and marched outside into the paddock.



I looked back at our farmhouse. It really wasn't that old, just weather-worn.

The cream coloured paint was peeling off like burnt skin and the blinds hung lopsided over the windows.



I looked at Bacon the pig rolling around trying to find moisture. What once was thick, sticky mud was nothing more than a bowl of dust.

I entered the shed. Dry bits of hay littered the hot concrete floor and a small mound of the crop was carefully piled in the corner of the large room. I lent down and took three huge handfuls of crispy hay and waddled outside.





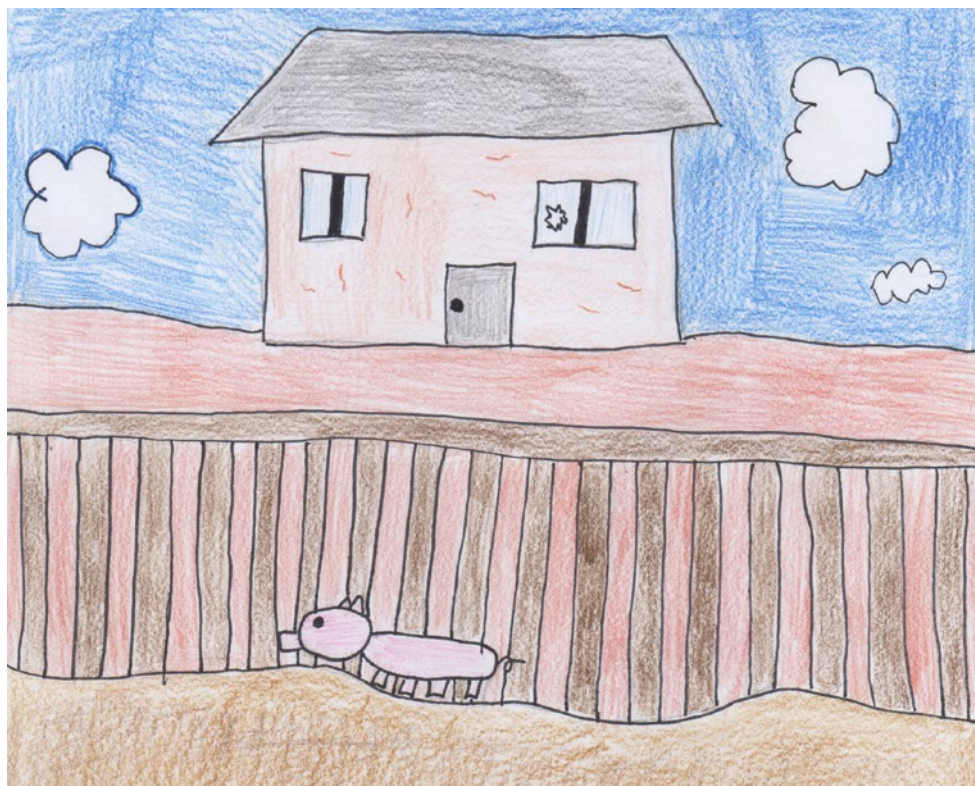
"MOO!" bellowed Winnie.

He knew it was feeding time. Winnie stretched out his long, bony neck and nuzzled me. The cows hadn't had a decent feed for years.

The next morning I skipped down the stairs and placed myself in the middle of my favourite armchair.

Mum walked over to me looking very happy for this time of the day. I wondered what was going on as she usually had to have a litre of coffee before she could function.





"Look, we have been told that..." she said with a big smile, "...soon some very kind farmers are sending down a present to help us. I thought you would be excited to know because it just might save the farm."

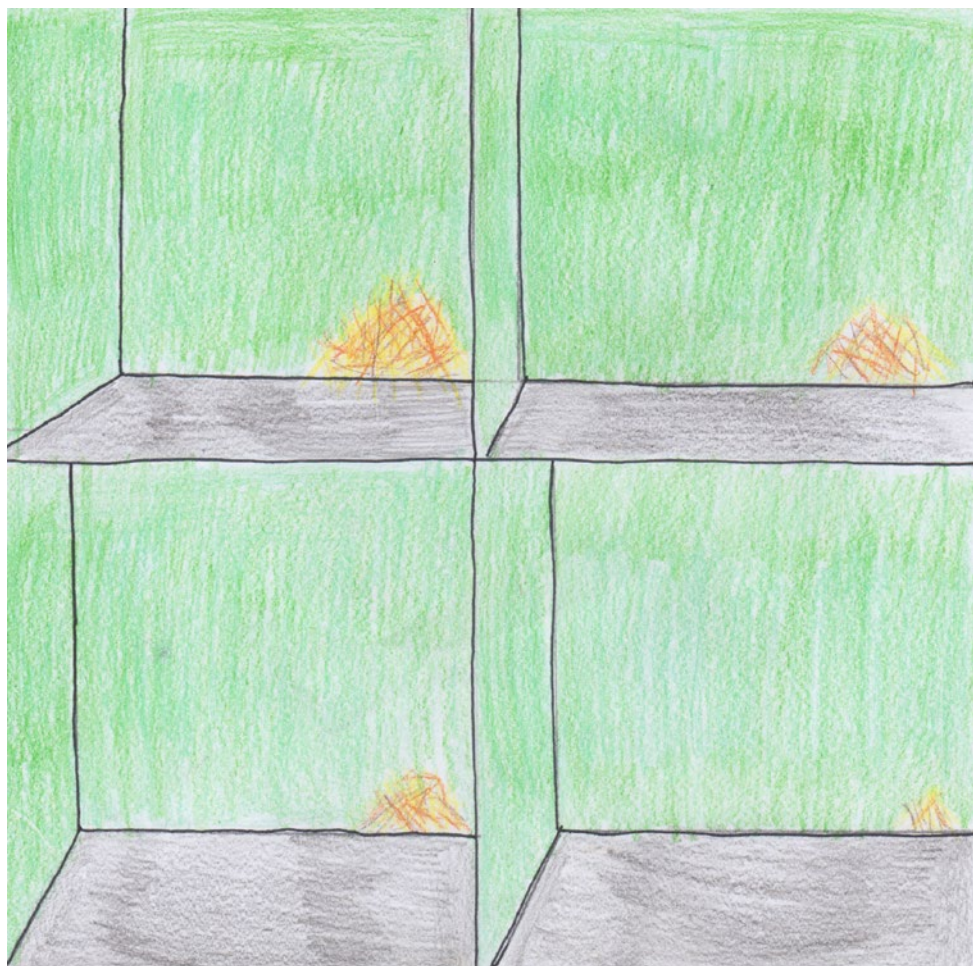
Once again I marched outside to feed the waiting Winnie.

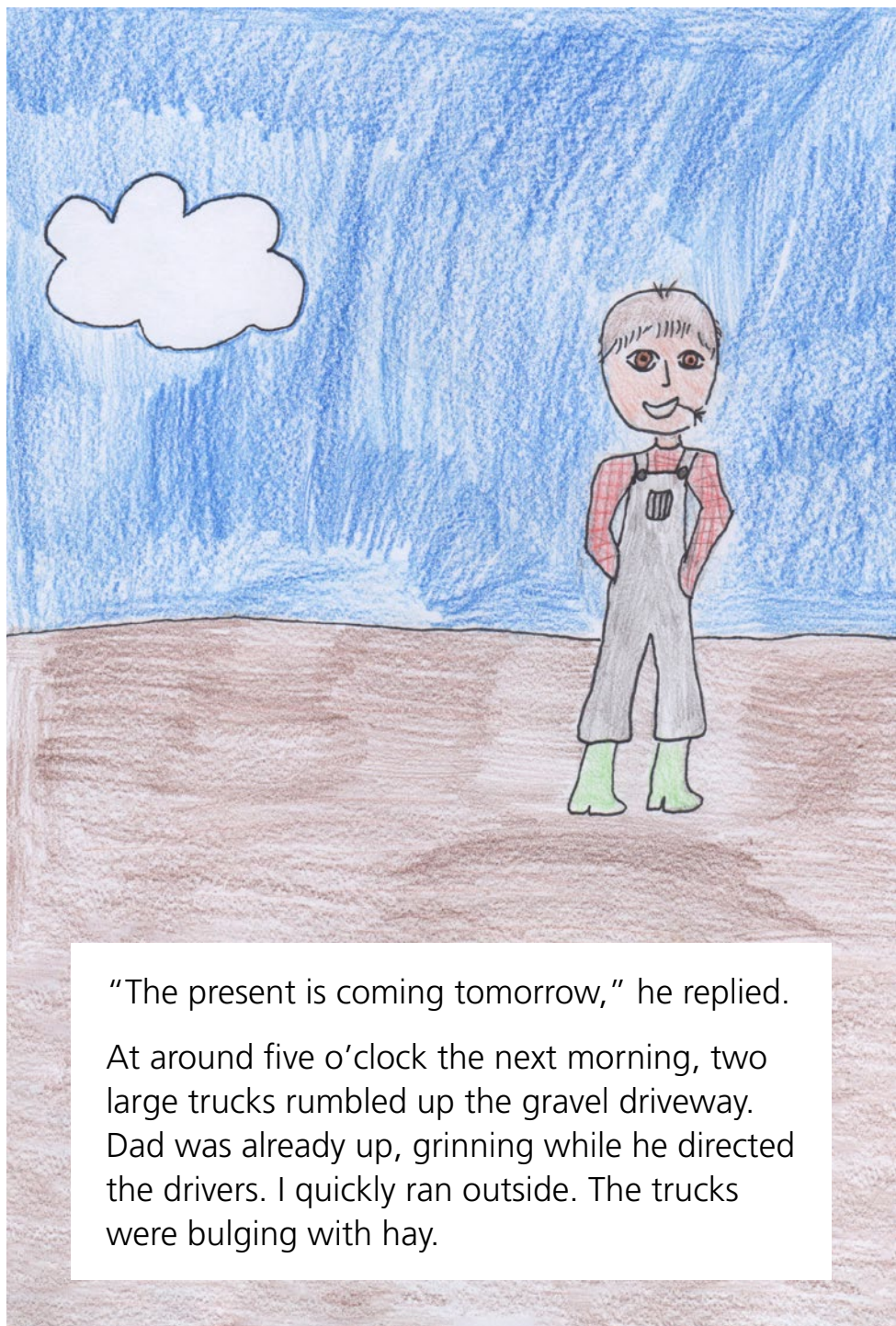
"Christmas is coming. I promise you," I whispered into Winnie's ear. Bacon snorted disapprovingly. "I know Christmas makes you nervous," I soothed looking at the skinny pig, "but you have nothing to fear."

Days passed, then weeks and the little mound of hay in the shed grew smaller and smaller.

One morning Dad entered the shed in his sweat-stained, red shirt and baggy overalls. His leathery skin was stretched into a tight smile.

"Dad, why are you so happy?" I asked.



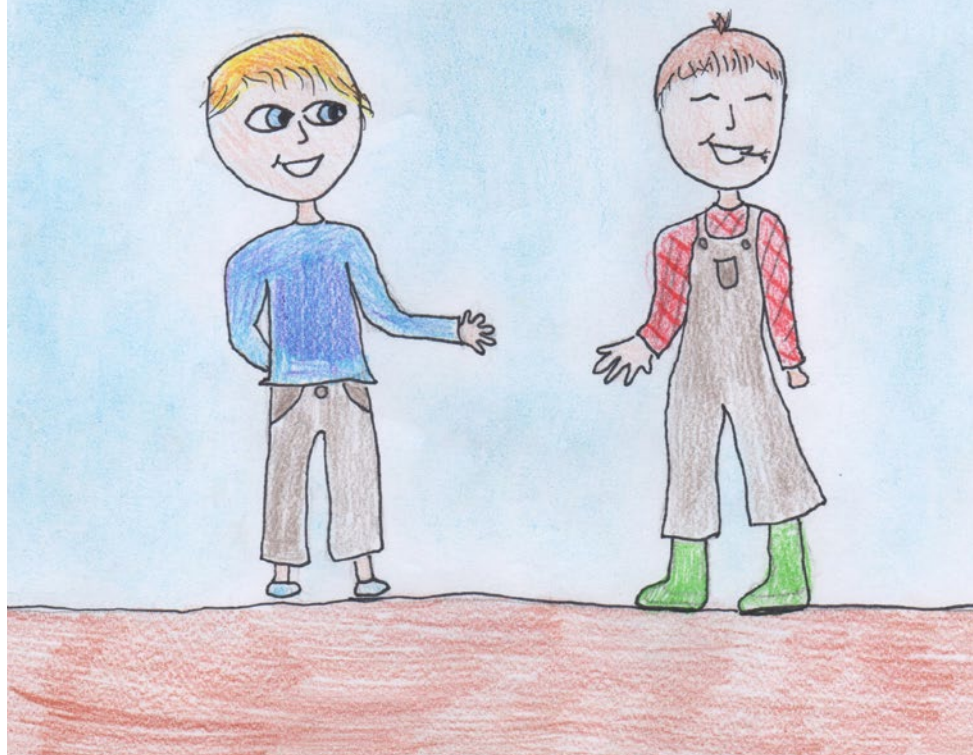


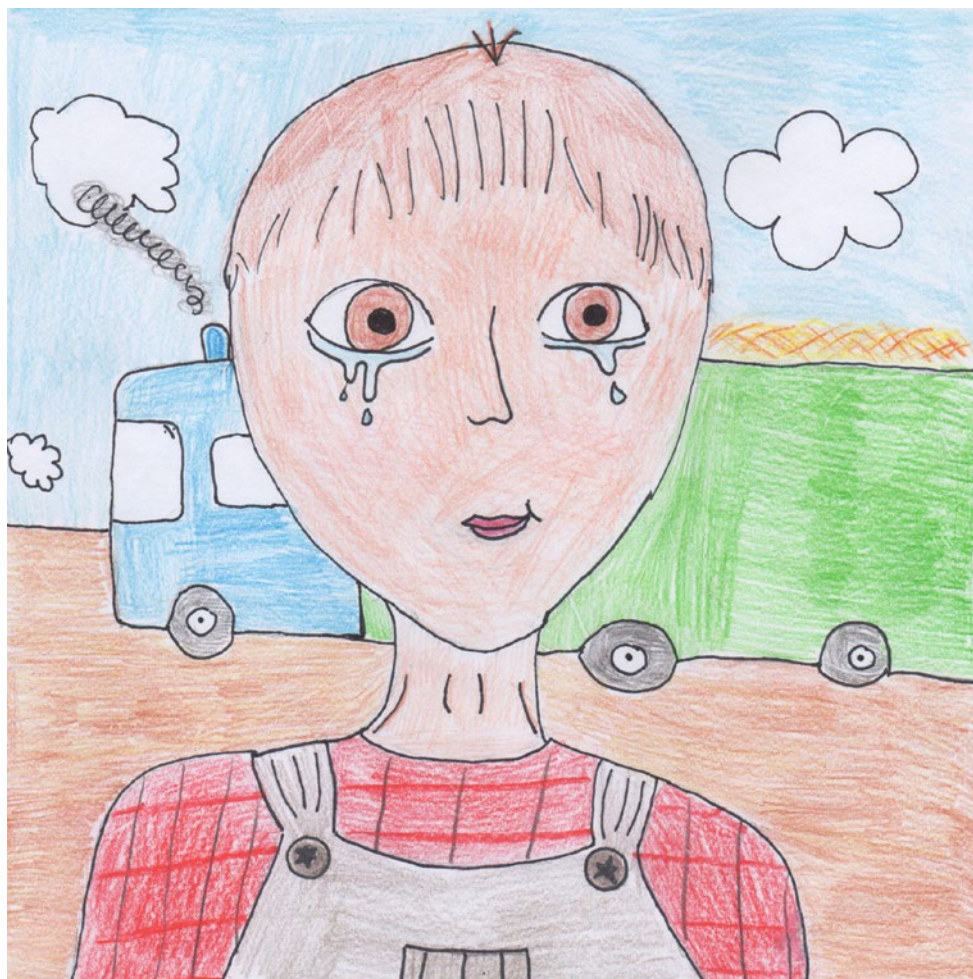
"The present is coming tomorrow," he replied.

At around five o'clock the next morning, two large trucks rumbled up the gravel driveway. Dad was already up, grinning while he directed the drivers. I quickly ran outside. The trucks were bulging with hay.

"Where did this come from?" I chirped.

"When we heard that you desperately needed it, the people down south thought we should show some community spirit," said Frank the driver. "We have a convoy of trucks bringing hay for you and your neighbours. It's enough to get you through for a bit. Hopefully by then, it will have rained!"





"It's just..." said Dad wiping tears from his brown eyes. "It's just beautiful how our farming community pulls together in tough times."

He thanked the drivers for their present. "We feel like all our Christmas' have come at once because this will help save our farm."



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