



The Adventures of **Mo**

Chapter 13

By Carol Patton

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The World's Best Apple Pie

“Mo, look at those people,” whispered Finchy. “Why are they dressed that way?”

Mo and Finchy were hiding in a large barn made of stone and wood. As they peered out the door, they overheard several women chatting.

Although it was a hot summer day, the women were wearing long skirts, aprons, long-sleeved blouses, and bonnets while carrying baskets filled with apples. One man approached them and started talking about his family. Mo and Finchy couldn't take their eyes off his strange hat.

“This place is very weird,” said Finchy. “I wonder where we are.”

All Mo could remember was that the delivery truck they were riding on traveled along Interstate 80 East for more than two days, veered off State Highway 67, and then headed toward a town named Eagle.

“This is going to be a very busy day,” said one woman. “I’ll bet we set a new attendance record.”

Mo and Finchy looked at each other, a bit confused. Why would so many people want to come here?

“Mo, I think we’re in the 1800s,” said Finchy, pointing to a group of people not far from where they were hiding.

Some were taking turns chopping wood while others were washing clothes using a washboard on top of a wooden barrel. Off in the distance, a big horse was plowing a field.

“We must have gone through some sort of time machine when we were sleeping,” said Finchy. “Think of all the things we know that they don’t. We’ll be famous.”

Finchy was too busy daydreaming to notice what the people were wearing – shorts, T-shirts, and flip-flops – or the cars in the nearby parking lot. Most of the license plates had the same words on them: America’s Dairyland.

One woman’s voice rose above the rest.

“Next time, listen to me,” she angrily said to the man walking next to her. “This place is less than an hour past Milwaukee. You drove too far south, all the way down to Elkhorn.”

This woman seems to know directions. Maybe she can tell Finchy and me how to get to Florida.

Suddenly, Mo and Finchy heard a voice behind them say, “Guten morgen.”

They turned around and saw a strange looking animal.

Mo and Finchy had never seen a pig. They stared at her pink snout, barrel-shaped body, and curly tail.

“That means good morning in German,” said the pig. “My name is Betsy.”

Mo and Finchy introduced themselves and learned that they were at an outdoor museum that imitates life in the 1800s.

Finchy rattled off a series of questions: “What kinds of birds lived back then? Did they look like me? Did they speak German? Did they eat worms, maybe wild worms?”

Finchy just kept asking question after question until Betsy interrupted, asking if they were hungry.

“My friends and I are going to make an apple pie,” she said. “Wanna help?”

Mo’s stomach was growling. He never tasted an apple pie but it sounded delicious.

The animals walked to the back of the farm and entered a small building. A big wood-burning oven was in the far right corner along with dozens of apples, big bags of sugar, flour, and cinnamon, and many cackling hens.

A very large hen named Buttercup walked toward Betsy.

“Molly, Edna, Charlotte, and I laid six eggs for you,” said Buttercup, pointing with her right claw to the eggs. Princess over there, well, she just didn’t feel like it.”

“Ever lay an egg?” shouted Princess. “Didn’t think so. It hurts. Well, maybe not, but it’s definitely uncomfortable. So why I should keep doing it?” She lifted her beak into the air and walked out.

“Don’t mind Princess,” said Buttercup. “She’s in a rather fowl mood. Edna laid an egg

yesterday that was a beautiful shade of purple. Princess is just jealous.”

After Betsy thanked them, the hens left, and the animals began making the pie. They grabbed the eggs with their mouths and dropped them into a giant baking pan. If they didn't crack open, they stomped on them. Even Finchy helped by lifting bags of flour, sugar, and cinnamon into the air, and then dumping them into the pan.

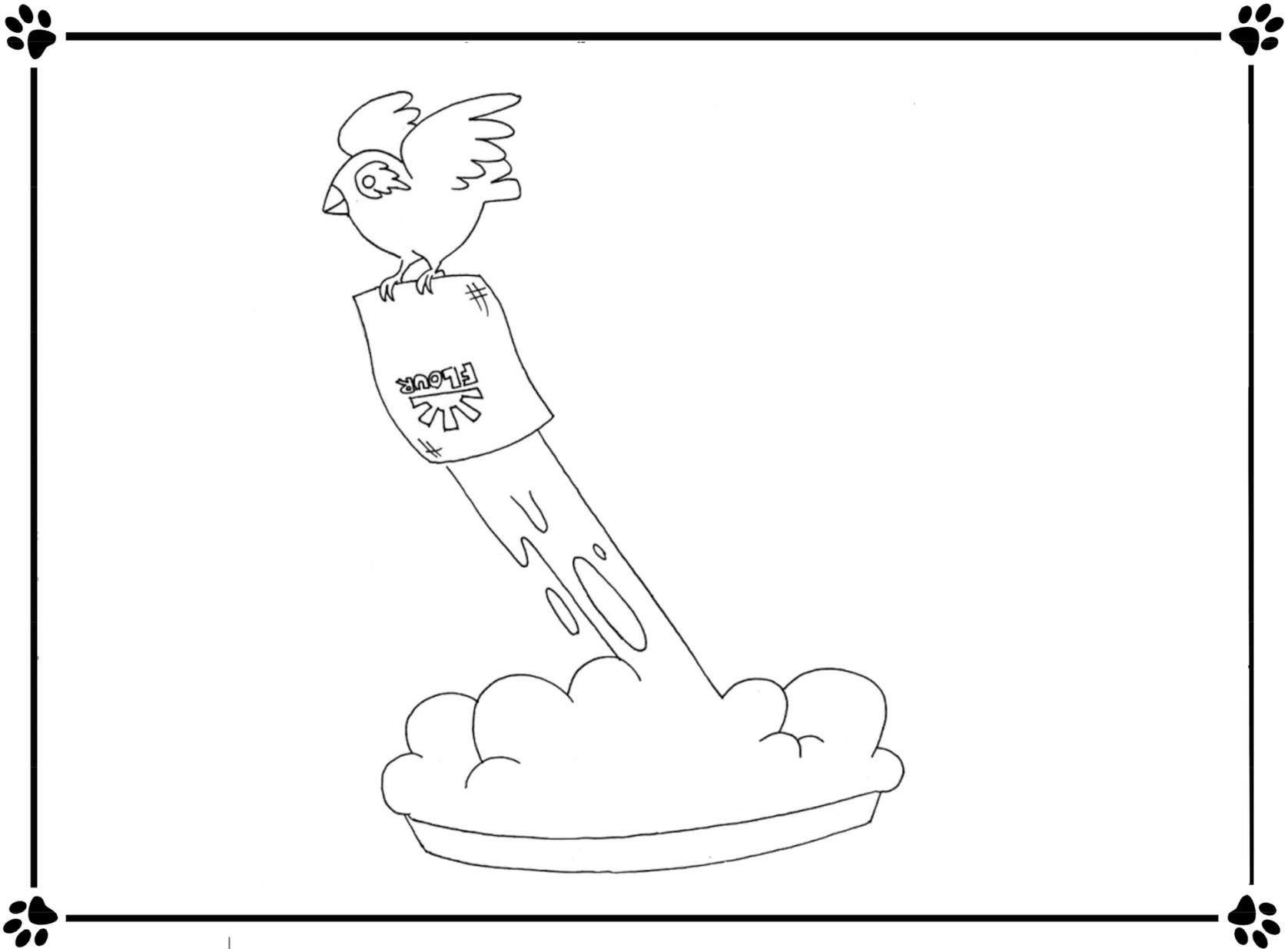
Everyone mixed the ingredients by walking around in circles inside the pan. They did it so many times that Mo started to get dizzy.

“That's the secret to flaky dough,” said Betsy. “It must be thoroughly mixed.”

The animals smoothed the dough by rolling around on top of it. No one seemed to mind if there were a few strands of hair or fur here or there.

Next came the apples. They bit them into small chunks and dropped them into the pan. Then they each held a section of dough with their teeth and folded it over the apples.

Betsy stepped back to admire the pie. “Masterpiece, simply a masterpiece,” she said.



“Our pie is ready to bake.”

While the pie was in the oven, Betsy explained to Mo and Finchy how people prepared food in the 1800s.

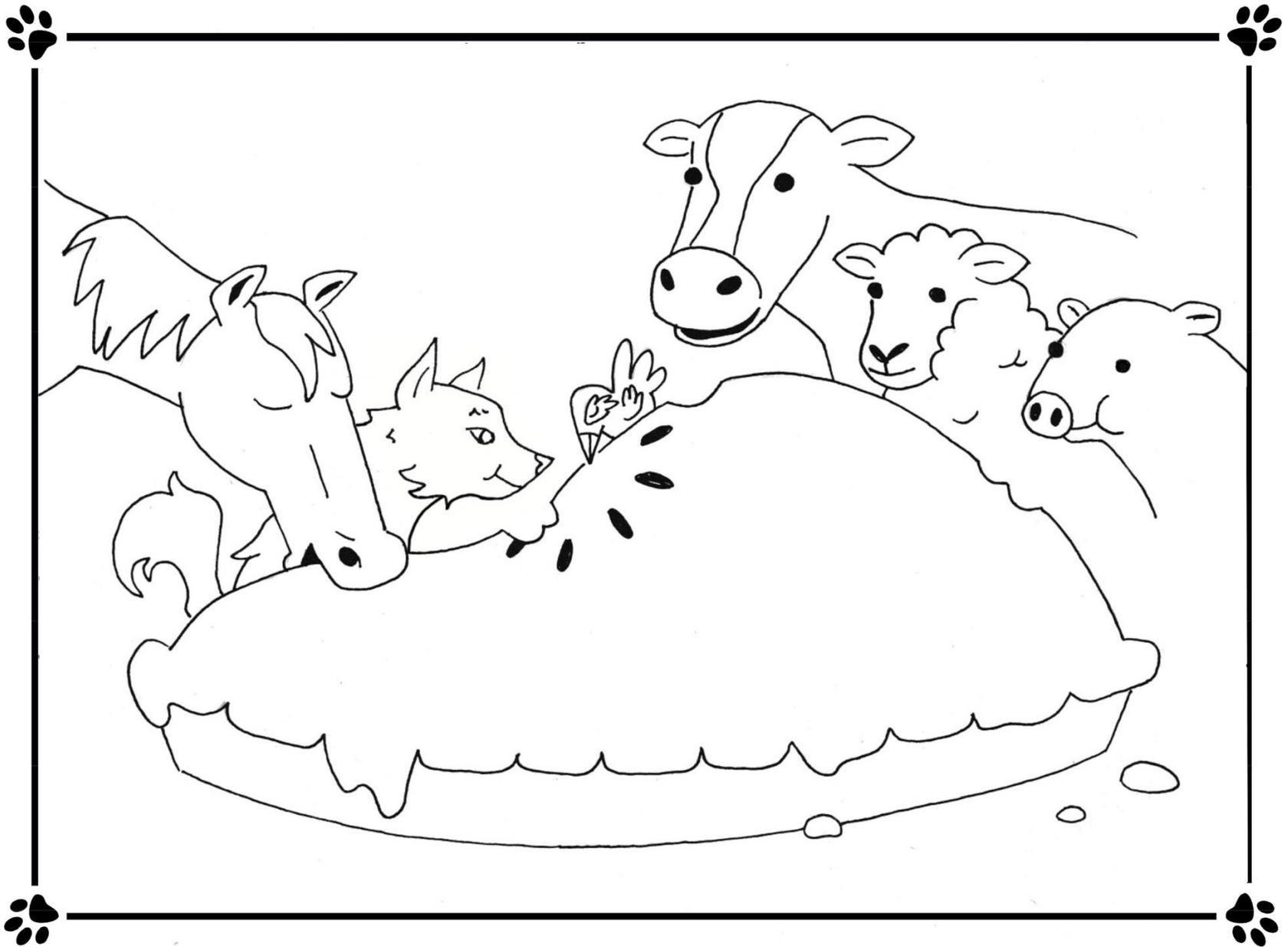
“They didn’t have any stoves or refrigerators,” she said. “Not even microwaves. There was no electricity, no supermarkets, not even fast food restaurants. In those days, most food was smoked, salted, or dried.”

Betsy opened a bottle of wine from her private collection and poured it into bowls for everyone.

“Back then, they thought chocolate was medicine,” she added. “They believed it would calm people down and prevent stomachaches.”

By now, everyone could smell the pie’s delicious aroma, including Daisy, a cow, and Ed, a horse, who joined them. Earlier that morning, they had dragged the bags of flour, sugar, and cinnamon into the building.

The pie was barely pulled out of the oven when Finchy grabbed the first bite. None of the animals stopped eating until the entire pie was finished. Then it was nap time.



When they woke up, it was time for Mo and Finchy to leave. Betsy gave them a goodbye gift – a few slices of cheese. Mo had never eaten cheese or seen such a beautiful shade of orange.

“Everyone in the world knows we make the best cheese,” said Betsy.

After saying good-bye, Mo and Finchy slowly headed back to the delivery truck. Mo’s stomach was so stuffed with apple pie that it almost touched the ground.

When they reached the top of the truck, Mo laid on his back and stared at the sky, deep in thought. Finchy began nibbling on some cheese.

“Ya know, it’s pretty amazing what happened back there,” said Mo.

“What’s so amazing about stuffing our faces?” asked Finchy.

“A pig, sheep, cow, dog, bird, horse, and hens made an apple pie,” continued Mo.

“Maybe the most enormous, the most delicious apple pie in the whole world. If everyone worked together like that, just think of all the wonderful things that could be accomplished.”