

NORA -

FROM THE GOOD NEIGHBOURS OF CROOK FARM

BY ANDREA LOUISE WATSON

Nora is a brilliant light of pure love. She has very fine blonde wispy hair that is pulled into bunches that stick up at all angles. She has a cheeky cherub like face and one lazy eye, which means she wears a plaster over one side of her glasses. She is always smiling, but because of her appearance, the other kids pick on her. Nora is almost oblivious to any negativity. She is happy with who she is and doesn't even seem to hear the comments. She is brave and chatty and only see's the good in people.

In 1939 she is evacuated with the whole of her Middleborough primary school and taken to Pickering by steam train. On the journey she eats the whole of the welcome pack meant for her foster parents and the rocking of the train makes her throw up over the boy next to her. When they arrive at the village hall each child are allocated foster parents to look after them during the war. Nora and Charley are left with no one choosing them, mainly because of the smell. The local billet officer takes the children to a remote farm and forces the farmer and his wife to take the children in.

The billet officer leaves and the middle aged shell-shocked couple stare at their two new charges. A scruffy looking pair, smelling of sick and carrying all their belongings in pillowcases. Charley is softly crying and brave Nora, with a beaming smile decides to break the silence and be polite.

NORA

Hello Mrs. James. My name is Nora. Well Eleanor really, but my Dad calls me Nora. And my Nana calls me Nora, and my best friend Gertie calls me Nora and Charlie, who I met today, he calls me Nora too. We're not brother and sister, but don't worry, I'll look after him and cheer him up. (she smiles at Charlie)

The teacher calls me Eleanor, and it doesn't confuse me, as I know that both are my names, so you can call me either. My Mam calls me Little Angel, but I don't expect you to call me that. (she giggles)

What shall I call you? Mrs. James? Maud? Mama? Nanny? You don't have to decide right now. You can let me know in the morning. I won't be any trouble and I can help you around the house. I am learning to cook. So far I have only set the kitchen on fire once, so I'm quite good.

My Nana says I have to polite and tell you I like your house even if I don't.

(she scans the room and you can tell she doesn't like it)

I like your house... it's very ...dark. Dark is good. We have lots and lots of light in our house. Too much light. This is good. Dark is not scary. And I like your stuffed squirrel. (she really hates the squirrel) Your house has a unique smell. Doesn't it Charley?

I've never been evacuated before so I don't really know what I am meant to do. I live with my Mam and my Nana and sometimes my Dad. My Daddy is a musician in a big brass band and he tours the whole country and always brings me a present back. He is my most favourite person, after our cat Purdy, and I can't wait to see him again. Do you mind if he visits us. Mam said he has gone to serve King and country, whatever that means? So when he comes back maybe I can show him your farm?

Is that your dog in the yard? What's his name? I heard you call him idiot dog? I like that name. I can't wait to make friends with idiot dog.

It's ok Charlie don't cry, we are going to have such and adventure. Me, you and idiot dog.

Oh, we were given a welcome pack to give you. It's two packets of biscuits, carnation milk, and a tin of beef bully, a tin of peaches and two chocolate bars. I'm really, really sorry, but I got confused and thought it was our lunch so I have eaten it all.... except the beef bully. I couldn't open the tin. That's why I was a little bit sick over us both. Sorry Charlie. I can help wash our clothes and Charlie still has his welcome pack. And a little bit of sick in his hair. Please can we wash now? If that is ok with you. I'm a bit tired too

THE END

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