

**On Being a Farm Wife
(and other hazards)**

Joyce Bupp



Dear Baby,

It's hard to know how to begin this letter, because I've never written one like it before. But a new year, 1995, is starting and with it, a whole new adventure for us—so this seems like a perfect time.

In one of her recent letters, your mother wrote that she and your daddy have begun writing in a special book their thoughts about you and your arrival next spring. She requested a little note from us to include in this journal about you, which they plan to give you when you become an adult.

First of all, Grandpa and I—and your Grandpa Skip and Grandma Maryann, too—are thrilled about you. After all, you will be the first grandchild for both

of us couples. Our one concern about your coming into the world is that you and your mom and dad live so far away from all of us that we won't get to share you nearly enough. Your mom does plan to bring you back for a long visit next summer and we're already looking forward to that. We do realize that you'll be a little young yet to go out to play with the cats and the calves.

Like most grandparents, we have lots of hopes and wishes for you and your future. Most of them you will appreciate most after you grow up and have your own children—this is the usual grownup, boring stuff.

First of all, we wish you a happy and safe childhood. That

doesn't mean having everything you want, where you want it, or when you want it. It begins with having two parents who love each other as much as they love you, and you already have that good start for your life. Because they love you, your mom and dad will sometimes make you very happy and sometimes make you very angry as they teach you to be a responsible person. We also wish you the love of learning and the thirst for books that your mom and dad both have, since reading is a very foundation skill for a successful life.

We wish you a sense of enthusiasm. We hope you will grow up with a curiosity that makes you eager to try new things, investigate new places and meet new people. It's a big, wonderful world out here, with so much to experience. But, we hope you'll find time to explore and enjoy the little things as well: birds and butterflies, flowers, walks in the woods, poking around in streams and finding shapes in clouds floating against a blue sky. And we wish that you keep that curiosity all through your life.

We wish you a sense of fairness, justice and the ability to look at all sides of a question before making up your mind. Most decisions you will face in your early years will have simple "Yes" or "No" answers, but as you grow older, there will be a lot of "Maybe's," "What If's?" and "Why not's?" And along with that, we wish you the ability to control the anger that all people have within them, and that you will learn to apply it wisely and only when truly necessary.

We wish you a sense of compassion for others. Only by helping others, in whatever direction your life works out, can you truly be happy within yourself.

We wish you a deep faith in God. Your parents will begin guiding you in that direction from the day you are born, but it will be within your own heart to decide how you act upon that. May you always be quick to turn to God with thanks and for help and guidance. If you dedicate your life to Him, whatever you do will be right.

And, for the immediate future, we wish you a safe and healthy arrival—when the time is ready. Spring is a wonderful time to be born, when all the rest of the world is also fresh, new and bursting with life.

We can hardly wait!
Love, Grandma and Grandpa
(to be)



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