

CUQVITA

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Chapter 1

Wilson is a farmer living a few miles north of Markstown. It is a small town in a county called Marks County. Wilson was born and raised on the farm by his farmer parents. He is a natural-born farmer. Farming was in his blood. He owns a medium-sized farm which he inherited from his parents. In every occupation, the important factors are skill and knowledge. He had both, most of which he learned from his parents. Children learn from their parents and develop their character. There is no argument that most good parents raise kids to be better citizens. His parents were good, hardworking people. They were respected in the community, and Wilson is keeping up that tradition. He was the third child of his parents and only son. His sisters got married a long time ago and moved away with their husbands. Their parents, Wilson, Sr., and Mary, passed away before Wilson's 40th birthday. He really misses them as every human being would who was raised by loving, caring parents.

They say behind every successful man there is a woman. Wilson and Doris have been married for 21 years, during which they were inseparable. They did everything together. They have this unending love and devotion for each other. Sometimes Wilson wondered what he would do without his wife. How lucky he is to have her beside him. She is his wife, companion, confidante – his strength.

He remembers the first time they met when they both were in Markstown High School. He loved sports of all kinds when he was in high school. Even now he doesn't miss many sports on TV, both at the local and national level. Wilson was one of the top athletes during his high school days. Most of the girls liked him, but he never initiated a relationship with any of them. One fateful day, he was hurrying into the school building because rain started falling. He did not have an umbrella or raincoat and didn't want to get wet. While he was running up the steps, a girl in front of him was slipping and falling. He caught her and saved her from hitting the concrete. They

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stood there for a few seconds in an embrace. Then they freed themselves and stood apart. Everybody cheered him. She thanked him from the bottom of her heart. Then she looked up straight into his eyes, and they both felt that something special. They stared at each other for a little while. He couldn't take his eyes off her face. She was a brunette with a beautiful smile. She had sparkling green eyes unlike any he had ever seen before. She was not the most glamorous girl, but she was certainly beautiful. He felt a sudden attraction to this girl. He didn't know why. It could be chemistry, magnetism, or something else that attracted him to her. He just had this strange feeling and knew he liked her. He wanted to see her again.

They introduced themselves to each other. Then it was time for class, and they went their separate ways. She too felt an attachment to him. They met the next day, exchanged a few words, and hugged each other. From then on they started seeing each other every day. Wilson was a year older than Doris. He graduated a year before her, and by that time, they were inseparable.

Wilson was a good student and did fairly well in his high school classes. Everybody knew him in school and in their town as one of the top athletes. He was tall like his dad and well built. He was on the high school football team. He played defense and was a linebacker, very well respected by opposing teams and his teammates.

Markstown High had the best football team ever. They demolished all their competitors' offence under the leadership of Wilson. In every game he was the MVP. Each and every person who watched him play football saw him as a successful future NFL player. Every coach and college and university recruiter wanted him on their team. Opportunities were knocking at his door every day even before he graduated from high school. All kinds of scholarships and freebees were waiting for him. Yet he could not make a decision. Some pleaded with his parents to send him to their college. His parents would only go along with their son's decision.

There were a few things bothering him when deciding to go on for higher studies. Most of the universities were far away in big cities. When he was in junior high he saw many seniors grab the best offer and move away. Those were their choices. He had his own life and own views and dreams for

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his future. He never liked city life. Once he went to spend summer holidays with one of his uncles in Chicago. He did not like what he saw there.

He lived all his life in wide-open country. The city was always crowded with strange people. Where he lived everybody knew everybody else. The air was so polluted in the cities, and the congestion was horrible. And the crimes happening every day in big cities was so sad.

Here in Markstown, he could drive from point A to point B without worrying about traffic backup or tolls, and parking was no problem. Above all, he didn't want to be away from his first love, his only love, his sweetheart Doris. Yes, he could take the scholarship and join any of the universities studying and playing, and even becoming a famous NFL player and make tons of money too. But he thought, is money everything in life? Can money buy everything? Can money buy true love and happiness? He didn't believe so. He always preferred the peaceful country life. Many a times he discussed it with Doris. She too was a farmer's daughter, and she too agreed with him that country life is peaceful. They could work on his parents' farm. A farmer's life is not always easy, but there wouldn't be any bosses around telling him what to do. It's all hard work and self-reliance. They may not become mega millionaires, but they would have plenty to live a happy life.

Another thing was his parents were getting old and they might soon be looking for help to run the farm business. His parents decided that the farm was going to be his property one day. So why not start working there sooner than later? He let his parents know what his future plan was. His parents always supported his decisions because he was a good kid. Now he was grown up and entering adulthood. Although many friends and neighbors told him what all he perhaps could achieve if he left—the fame, the fortune, the glamour—he told them all those things could not buy true love and happiness. That was it. He saw his future in Markstown as a farmer and a damn good one. Doris, the love of his life, agreed. She did not want anything other than a happy life together forever. Hers was a true love because true love is not demanding. True love is sacrificial. True love is understanding each other's heart. True love is unselfish. True love is respect for each other. That's what they had, true love for each other. So they came to one decision to live together in Markstown for the rest of their lives in everlasting love.

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It was summertime, and Wilson started working on the farm with his dad regularly. Nowadays, he had plenty of time to hang out with his girl every day.

Summer can be good or bad for a farmer because of good and bad weather. Too much rain or too little rain will damage the crops and hurt his pocket. Average rainfall will be the blessing. That year was not so bad. There was enough grass for the animals. So no need to buy extra feed for the cattle. In an economical sense, that's a good year.

The days kept on passing. Summer was gone and autumn came. Now Doris was back in school. They had less time to be together. All that would change when she graduated. Then they could be together each and every day. Both were waiting for that day. Wilson had something special for her on that day. He wanted to sweep her off her feet. He wanted to surprise her by proposing to her the same day she graduated. The cold lazy days of winter came and went. Now it was the end of spring. He bought a diamond ring and never told anybody. Nobody could know about it because it was a surprise for his love. Finally the graduation day came.

After the ceremonies they went to celebrate. Everybody was having a good time. Then somebody said, "Your attention, please," and all the people in the room turned their head toward the direction where the voice came from. What they saw was Wilson on his knee in front of Doris proposing to her. Overwhelmed by joy, she screamed, cried, and laughed, and then she said yes. The audience applauded, cheered, and wished them well. They were the happiest couple on earth at that time. No doubt about it. Her sparkling eyes which roped his heart the first time he saw her lit up with joy. They embraced and kissed each other. "I love you," each murmured to the other. It was a very happy day for them. It was a very important day for them. It was the first step to start a beautiful journey together from here to eternity. It really was a great day for that beautiful couple.

Soon after they made the decision to be together forever Doris moved in with Wilson. The togetherness gave them intimacy, and the love between the two became even stronger. Almost a year passed when they thought of taking their relationship to the next level. Doris and Wilson wanted to make it official. They decided to get married. Their decision made many people

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happy, especially their parents. Wilson's parents were the happiest because they loved Doris like their own daughter.

One beautiful morning they got married in the church in front of a large congregation. Among the crowd were their friends, relatives, neighbors, and well-wishers. That's how Doris Smith and Wilson Weatherford became husband and wife.

Doris was the oldest child of her parents, while Wilson was the third and last of his parents. Both families were happy and proud of that union of two wonderful young hearts. Markstown and Marks County could be proud of them because they were model citizens. They were living in modern times, but the evils of the present never influenced them. It may be because of their parents who were honest, loving, caring, and hardworking people. Wilson's parents were thankful to the Lord for giving them such an adorable daughter-in-law. So down-to-earth and respectful she was to them. She always cared for them like her own parents.

From day one, Doris was very much active in the day-to-day chores of the house and farm. Most parents see the future of the family beyond their present existence in the world when their children get married. Becoming a grandparent is one of the dreams most parents have. In that case, the Weatherfords were no different. They too were looking forward to enjoying the days of grandparenthood.

The very next day the newlyweds traveled to the southern shores for a honeymoon. Beautiful weather let them enjoy the beaches to the maximum. They spent about 2 weeks enjoying nature and themselves. It gave them plenty of time to talk about their future. From now on they would have to take their life very seriously. One of their most serious decisions was to become parents. Any responsible people with common sense cannot deny that. Doris wanted to have two children. It did not matter to her whether they were boys or girls. She would be happy with whatever the good Lord gives.

"You are the mother, and you will always be the decision maker in that regard," Wilson told Doris.

Before having children they must have jobs. Wilson only liked country living, and Doris wanted to live in a peaceful atmosphere. What place was more peaceful than the countryside? So the final decision was to live and

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work on the farm as his parents wished. It was time to give them some relief agreed the newlyweds. Somebody has got to take charge and run that farm when the parents retire. When they finally flew back home they were a determined couple to face the future together for better or worse. They knew it was possible, with commitment, love, devotion, trust, and hard work, to build a better future.

About a year after the marriage, Doris and Wilson had their first child. It was a boy. He looked like his dad but had green eyes like his mother. They named him Mark, perhaps because of their love and allegiance to Marks County and the town. The birth of Mark brought great joy to the family. It was hard to tell who were the happiest, the parents or grandparents. Mark was a healthy and happy baby. When he was around 2 years old, Doris gave birth to his sister. Doris named her newborn daughter Margie in memory of her beloved grandmother who passed away some time ago. Margie was a beautiful blonde with her dad's brown eyes. Her birth brought even more happiness to the family. The parents and grandparents took great care of the two babies and bestowed lots of love on them. After the birth of their children, Doris and Wilson spent more and more time working on the farm while the grandparents began spending more time with the kids.

The children grew up normally because they were born into a normal, loving, caring family. It is a fact that normal families raise children to be good citizens. Every child needs not only nutritious foods when growing up, but at the same time, lots of guidance in the right direction and a safe, peaceful atmosphere too. Those children were fortunate to be born in that family to grow up under the guidance of good parents and grandparents. It must be the reason the two children grew up like good seeds in rich soil.

Mark and Margie were good students, but Mark was better than Margie in their respective grades. While Mark participated in sports, he was not a top athlete like his dad. His sister Margie played basketball on their high school team.

The years passed rapidly, and the children grew in front of their parents' eyes. Yesterday's kids are today's adults they say. Unlike Wilson, his son wanted to go on for higher studies after passing high school with good grades. Margie was not as good as Mark, but she too wanted to continue her

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studies. Doris and Wilson were a little sad to be away from the children, but their children's future was more important to them. So the parents decided to give all the support they could for their success.

By that time the grandparents passed away. It was the saddest time for the family. Every human being, every creature, and every living thing created by God will die one day. It is a reality of life on this earth. Humans and even animals grieve for their departed dear ones. But life must go on. Wilson knew the hard realities of life. Live the life we have with dignity and make the best out of it. Enjoy life as long as we can without hurting others. That is what Wilson believed.

His dad was happy to leave the farm to his son before his death. Wilson had proven that he was good in the farming business, even better than his own dad. He had the ability, skills, and vision for the future. It is natural that every good parent will be happy to see their child be successful. That is why they were happy in their later years. There was no need for Wilson to be told what his responsibilities were because he grew up learning them from his parents. The most important blessing he got from the Lord was Doris, his beloved wife. Together, they were the hardest-working couple in that county. Only occasionally would they hire a couple of extra hands to help them with the farm labor. All other work they did together.

Chapter 2

Wilson was an early bird. He was the first to wake up every morning in that house. The first thing he craves in the morning is coffee. So he makes some to drink and take with him to the farm while making his early-morning rounds. Yes, that's right. Every morning he jumps in his pickup truck and makes his rounds to see that everything is all right at the farm. Sometimes there could be a broken fence, dead cattle, or even animals destroying crops. Most of the time the length of his day's work depended on what he saw in the morning. Usually he gets back home within an hour or so. Then he and his wife have breakfast together. Their kids may join them if they are home and up early. After breakfast, the husband and wife go to work on the farm till lunchtime. After lunch, they are back at the farm again. They get back home early or late, depending on the time needed to complete the work they started in the morning.

This was the daily routine of the husband-wife team almost every day of the week. Certainly they could be considered one of the hardest-working couples in the country. People like them deserve to be appreciated for the fine foods they bring to the market.

Like every other morning, Wilson got in his pickup with his two dogs. Soon, he was on his way to the farm. He looked around while driving. Everything looked all right until he got near the barn. Then he saw the door partially opened. How could it be, he thought, because he remembered closing the doors the previous day.

Wilson decided to take a look. So he steered the truck toward the barn and stopped in front of it. He then got out, looked around, and didn't see anything wrong with the door. Slowly he entered the barn through the door, followed by the dogs. The dogs began barking as soon as they entered the barn. He looked up over the haystacks and saw a girl sitting on the top. She was a very strange-looking girl. He had never before seen a girl with features like hers. Certainly she was not from any of the neighborhoods nearby.