

The Crazy Man
By Pamela Porter

Setting:

Souris, Saskatchewan End of April, 1965
Farm
Hague School

Characters:

“Me” - Emaline Bitterman (11 years old; grade 6)
Daddy
Mom - Clarice
Prince - their pet dog
Tommy Douglas (Premier of Saskatchewan at the time)
Miss Tollofsen AKA Sadie the Dragon Lady (grade 6 teacher)

Jot Notes:

- Her dad works the fields preparing the field for planting
- Emaline jumps on the tractor when she gets home from school
- Prince runs into a piece of farm machinery running after a hare
- Emaline jumps off the tractor to save Prince & gets her foot caught
- She doesn't think before she jumped - used her heart instead of her head.
- She wakes up in hospital
- The Dad reacts badly and shoots Prince because he blames him for Emaline getting hurt
- They don't tell Emaline the truth about Prince at first
- Her dad walked off the farm by foot
- The Premier got a law passed so people didn't have to pay to go to the hospital
- Emaline in hospital for one week
- Dad left before they could get seeds in the ground
- Miss Tollofsen, Emaline's grade 6 teacher, came to visit her in the hospital.
- Emaline thinks she's in trouble but her teacher brought her colouring books
- She gave the teacher a nickname, "Sadie the Dragon Lady"
- Teacher brought her flowers and cards from the kids at school
- Mom is doing her best on her own

Wednesday, Oct. 4/17

New characters:

Harry Record

Angus

- Emaline had surgery many times on her leg
- Her mom would drive her back and forth and she kept banging her leg on the car
- Every sound coming into her yard she hoped it was her dad
- Mom was looking for someone to seed their fields.
- Harry Record (neighbour) suggested they shouldn't grow wheat. "Wheat's not going to make any money."
- Harry called a person from the mental institution a "gorilla"
- Mom decided to grow flax and mustard
- Miss Tollofson visited
- Hard white cast and crutches (no more wheelchair)
- Angus - a guy from the 'mental' came to work the tractor (large man; orange hair)
- People would drive by their farm to see Angus
- Emaline was called Hopalong
- Emaline starts asking her mom when her dad is coming back
- Emaline started a list about Angus ("He's got a name. He's not a gorilla.")
- Angus likes Clarice's cooking
- Angus sleeps in the machinery shed

Discussion:

- Emaline's mom treats Angus almost not like a person; she feeds him and uses the same plate each time "keeps it separate". They don't know him so it's not unusual to treat a stranger differently.

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- Dad apparently works on the railroad (Jamie & Joey told her)
- Angus buried Prince's bones
- Angus talks in third person
- Dad never wanted to be a farmer (he wanted to be an engineer)
- Emaline doesn't want Angus to leave
- Angus planted a garden in his mental hospital room
- Miss Tollufson has a punch buggy

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Oct. 11/17

“In her class, she always said, every day is a fresh start.”

- Emaline visited Miss Tollufson’s house; they spent time in her garden; they had tea
- “Emaline is an artist.” Miss T says
- Former students visited while she was there
- We don’t know how long Angus went to school for
- Angus was accused of stealing something in the store
- The police officer (D’arcy Pettit) asked Emaline’s mom if she has had any trouble with Angus & she said no and that he was a very good worker
- Emaline got all A’s and B’s on her report card - she wished she could have shown her dad
- El Rancho is a hotel. At the end of chapter 2, Emaline wants to walk to El Rancho to see her dad.
- Canada’s new flag was adopted on February 15, 1965 by Dr. George Stanley
- Emaline was afraid of the parade in Alabama because the police were there to stop the people because they didn’t want to allow the people to speak their minds and it was actually peaceful protest.
- Angus was accused of stealing a coffee tin full of money. The police looked through all of his things but found nothing.
- They arrested and took Angus away even though they couldn’t prove he was guilty.
- They went to a fair where Emaline’s pictures (drawings of her dog Prince) were displayed. She won “Best Junior Exhibit” with a big ribbon.

Questions to think about:

1. Will Emaline’s dad be at El Rancho?
2. How will Emaline’s dad react to seeing her? Some students said her dad will tell her to go away.