

DOOMSDAY CORN A
GRIM FAIRY TALE Written
under the guise of a
children's story But
primarily written for
adults

by Alberta Jane Heim

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A GRIM FAIRY TALE

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Doomsday Corn

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Inspired by: Floyd Sellers

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**To be read aloud
to family and friends**

***Dedicated to my grand-triplets:
Katie, Chloe and Jack Heim
And all their little friends around the world***

Doomsday Corn

There once was a farmer who planted many, many corn seeds in many, many perfectly straight rows. For as far as you could see, there were identical corn plants in row after row in his fields.

There once was a farmer who planted many, many soybean seeds in many, many straight rows. For as far as you could see, there were identical soybean plants in row after row in his fields. When you plant one type of plant on many, many acres, this is called “monocropping” or “monoculture.”

There once was a farmer who saw insects coming to feast on all the rows and rows of identical corn and soybean plants. He quickly sprayed all his acres of corn and soybeans with man-made poisonous chemicals. These chemicals killed ALL the insects, including honey bees and pretty Monarch butterflies, too.

There once was a farmer who harvested all his monocropped fields of corn and soybeans. Without any insects to attack his corn and soybeans, the farmer had a very good crop, and did very well. He could buy bigger and bigger tractors with the money he made from his crop.

Other farmers saw what was happening and they, too, planted acres and acres of only one crop — either all corn or all soybeans. Soon there were miles and miles of monocropped fields.

The government wanted to help the farmers. The government made an edict that if you were a farmer and grew only corn or soybean plants you would receive cash payments for growing acres and acres of them. And you would be paid cash if your crops should fall below the acceptable price because of too much rain or too little rain or too much wind or oversupply. More and more farmers gave up their cows, pigs and chickens and their wheat, oat and barley fields to grow only acres and acres of corn or soybeans.

Then the seed companies developed a different kind of seed that could not be saved from each season's corn or soybean crop. The farmers had to buy new seed every year from the seed companies.

Soon some of the insects who were sprayed with poisons learned how to live through the poisonings, and they multiplied. Soon some of the weeds who were sprayed with herbicide poisons learned how to live through the poisonings, and they spread. Then the chemical companies made even more deadly poisons to spray on the vast monocultured lands of our country.

The farmers who planted only corn and soybeans realized they were paying a lot of money for these poisons, so they needed to make more money to pay for all the poisons they were using. The farmers were also paying a lot of money for corn seeds and soybean seeds every year. Quickly the farmers started to plant rows and rows of corn and soybeans even closer together. Now there were rows and rows of corn, and rows and rows of soybeans over many acres, all crowded even closer together.

The corn plants started to develop a fungus, so the chemical companies rushed to develop another poison to kill the fungus. The soybean plants started to develop a blight so the chemical companies rushed to develop another poison to kill the blight. Pretty soon the chemicals had to be dumped out of planes flying over the rows and rows, and acres and acres of corn and soybeans. And the poisons filled the air all over the fields of grain, into the streams, and across roads and highways as people drove their cars on a nice summer day. The poisons traveled on the winds to every part of our world, even the North and South Poles.

Our entire planet became poisoned by the monoculture system of agriculture.

Mother Earth, who is the very soil we stand on, play on, dig in;
Mother Earth, who is the very air we breathe, laugh in, talk in;
Mother Earth, who is the very streams, rivers, ponds and oceans we

swim in, fish in, and float on....Mother Earth became sick. And that, dear children, was a very bad thing.

One day, dear children, the bad insects the chemical companies were trying to kill on the farmer's fields were NOT killed. The insects had changed once again. They had adapted to the killing sprays and they lived and multiplied many times over. The weeds were not killed by the poisons, either. They became "Super Weeds." The experts all said that this would never happen, but it did happen.

This was the very day the fungi were not killed by all the poisons the farmers sprayed on their corn. This was the very day the blight was not killed by all the poisons the farmers sprayed on their soybeans. The blight spread, and together with the bad insects, weeds and the fungi, all combined into a force that overpowered all the poisons sprayed on our food crops. And this was a very, very bad day for all of us.

For every corn plant and every soybean plant died. One right after the other, they wilted, shriveled up and died. Acres and acres of monocropped grains — one by one the plants died. There was nothing for the farmer to harvest. There was nothing for the people to eat. This huge loss of our corn and soybean grains led to a famine. A famine is an extreme scarcity of food; a great shortage.

Small farmers and gardeners who saved their old-fashioned seeds were able to grow their crops on their diversified acreages, but they did not have enough to feed many, many people who had come to depend on the huge amounts of grains produced in row after row of monocropped fields. And some people — especially some groups called "Amish" and "Mennonites" and "Mormons", also put enough food away (by canning and freezing) to last them for a year, and they were able to make it though the famine.

Sadly, all the peoples of the world had become dependent on only a few crops grown by very large monocropped farms using poisonous sprays on their crops produced in factories by very powerful chemical corporations. Because we did not think ahead and see what the ultimate result of growing the same crop on thousands of acres would do; because we did not think ahead and see what spraying poisons on thousands of acres would do; because we did not think ahead to see what would happen if farmers could not save their own seed each year; because we did not look ahead and see these things, we lost thousands of people to famine. To hunger.

It is up to you, my little ones, to look ahead and see this. It is up to you, my little ones, to learn how to plant “old fashioned” seeds called “open-pollinated” or “heritage” seeds on your soil on your small farms or around your house, or in containers in your apartment. It is up to you to plant seeds you can save from year to year.

It is up to you, my little ones, to find ways to encourage good insects (called “beneficial” insects) to multiply, and eat those other insects who want to eat your grains and vegetables and fruits. It is up to you to plant “insectaries” as a special home for the good insects.

Insectaries are small areas around your garden or field, planted with bushes and other plants that attract good insects like bees, butterflies and hummingbirds to your garden or your farm field.

It's up to you, my little ones, to learn how to live with the rhythms of the seasons; with Mother Nature.

It is up to you, my little ones, to eat from your own gardens — in season. It is up to you to visit farmer's markets and buy your food

from small farmers in your local area. It is up to you to preserve your harvest.

It is up to you, my little ones, to teach other people how to do this, too, and explain to them why it is so important.

It is up to you, Katie, Chloe and Jack, and all your little friends, to save the world. Ask Mother Earth to show you how.

The End

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* * * Order it, read it aloud, pass it on.

Author Jane Heim owns Willow Creek Organic Farm near Paw Paw, Illinois. An organic activist for over 40 years, Heim created and developed Oregon Tilth's Organic Education Center in partnership with the City of Lake Oswego, Oregon. In 2011, Heim partnered with Anita and Brian Poeppel of Broad Branch Farm to create Spray Drift Education Network (see spraydriftillinois.com), and is presently a member of the Governing Board of Illinois Organic Growers Association.

Heim's previous books and articles include: *The Directory of Working Women*; *What To Do When the Stock Market Falls*; *Car Living: How to Make It a Successful, Sane, Safe Experience (A. Jane Archer)*; *Car Living Your Way* and *A Little Green Amongst the Browns*.

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