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Opening extract from
The Rats of Meadowsweet Farm

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This book has dyslexia friendly features





Chapter 1

Muck

Farmer Green had grey hair and a red face. The clothes he wore were always brown. This was in part because they had started out brown, and in part because they were covered in cow muck and pig muck. Now and again they were spotted with white, which was chicken muck.



Farmer Green only ever had a bath when there was an "H" in the month. But, to be fair, he often took several baths in March to make up for the rest of the year.

It was lucky that Mrs Green had been kicked on the nose by a cow when she was young, so she had no sense of smell.



Farmer Green's dogs thought his smell was lovely – a mix of sweaty body and filthy clothes and the beautiful rich smell of the dung-heap.

The dung-heap was at the very heart of Meadowsweet Farm. It stood in the middle of the farmyard, it looked like a huge plum cake and, my word, was it fruity!





Farmer Green put all the dung from the cow shed and the pig sty and the chicken house onto the dung-heap, and every other sort of stuff that would rot down and turn into lovely rich manure.

He flung addled eggs upon it, and dead chicks too, and rotten apples, and all kinds of household waste like tea leaves and bacon rinds and fish skins and potato peelings and, in hot weather, milk gone sour and stock gone bad.



And when Mrs Green killed a chicken or Farmer Green shot a rabbit, onto the dung-heap went feathers and skins and guts.

Dark brown liquid oozed from the base of the heap, and little wisps of steam rose from its top as the great cake cooked.

