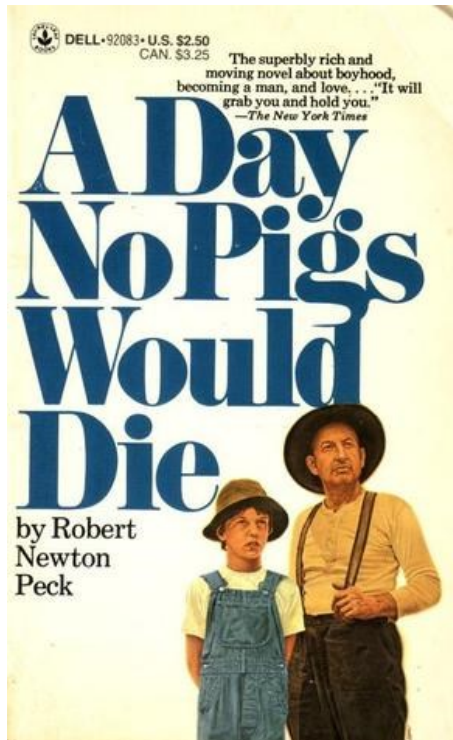


# A DAY NO PIGS WOULD DIE



*Juvenile*

**By Robert Newton Peck**

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## **Book Summary:**

A farm boy learns about life through the life and death of the animals on his farm.

## **Summary of Concerns:**

This book contains mild profanity and violence involving animal cruelty.

**2** / 5

**Teen Guidance**  
BookLooks Review Rating

Page	Content
4	<p>When I saw her, I knew she was in bad trouble. It was the big Holstein cow, one of many, that belonged to our near neighbor, Mr. Tanner.</p> <p>...Her big body was pumping up and down, trying to have her calf. She'd fell down and there was blood on her foreleg, and her mouth was all thick and foamy with yellow-green spit.</p> <p>..."Calf," I said to him, "you stay up your ma's hind-side and you're about to choke. So you might as well choke getting yourself born."</p> <p>Whatever old Apron decided that I was doing to her back yonder, she didn't take kindly to it.</p> <p>...Her calf bawled once more, making a weaker noise than before. But all old Apron did was heave in that one place.</p> <p>"You old bitch," I yelled at her, grabbing a dead blackberry cane that was as long as a bullwhip and big around as a broom handle, "you move that big black smelly ass, you hear?"</p> <p>I never hit anybody, boy or beast, as I hit that cow. I beat her so hard I was crying. Where I held the big cane, the thorns were chewing up my hands real bad. But it only got me madder.</p> <p>I kicked her. And stoned her. I kicked her again one last time, so hard in the udder that I thought I heard her grunt. Both her hind quarters sort of hunkered down in the brush. Then she started forward, my trousers went tight, I heard a rip and a calf bawl. And a big hunk of hot stinking stuff went all over me. Some of it was calf, some of it wasn't.</p>
96	<p>Just before she pushed me through the GENTS door, she whispered a word of warning about the place.</p> <p>"Don't speak to a soul inside there, you hear? Places like that are full of perverts."</p> <p>There wasn't much to do inside except take a leak, which I did. I looked around to see if I could spot me a pervert.</p>
113	<p>"I got an idea she'll make a good weasel dog," Ira said.</p> <p>"We'll see," said Papa.</p> <p>He picked the sack off its peg. Inside, the weasel was hissing and spitting. He couldn't see a dog and she couldn't see him. But they knew. They sure knew of each other.</p> <p>"I'll get a barrel," I said. Handing the bitch to Ira, I ran up to the cellar where there was a good size apple barrel that was empty and waiting for tis year's orchard. It had a wooden lid on it which made it perfect for what we wanted it for. I set the barrel on its side. Holding the lid under one arm, I rolled the barrel down to where the men were waiting. Ira was holding his terrier, and Papa had the neck of the burlap bag tight in his hand. I stood the barrel up on its end, mouth open, and holding the lid ready.</p> <p>"In you go, Hussy," Ira said, placing his little bitch inside the barrel. "You give him what for."</p> <p>She sure was shaking, that dog. It made the whole barrel sort of tremble. Papa came forward with the sack.</p> <p>"Is your lid ready?" he said to me.</p> <p>"All set."</p>

Page	Content
	<p>"Soon's I drop him from the sack, you lid that barrel and keep it lidded, hear?"</p> <p>"Yes, Papa."</p> <p>Without more ado, Papa just emptied the sack. He poured the weasel right down inside the barrel on top of the dog. I slammed the lid into place. I could hardly hold it on, and Ira came over to keep the barrel upright. Papa, too.</p> <p>We heard a lot of scratching and chasing and biting inside the dark of that barrel. The dog was bigger, but the weasel sure had the darkness on his side. To be honest, I thought a fight between a dog and a weasel was going to be a real excitement. But I hated every second of it. The whole thing seemed senseless to me and I was mad at myself for standing there to hold down the barrel lid. I even felt the shame of being a part of it.</p> <p>...Papa nodded to me, and I slipped the lid a crack, just enough to let some light in so we could look down inside. Then we heard the dog cry. It was a whine that I will always remember, the kind of sound that you hear but never want to hear again.</p> <p>Ira pulled the lid of the barrel away and looked inside. The weasel was dead. Torn apart into small pieces of fur, bones, and bloody meat. There was blood all over the inside of that barrel, from top to bottom. The dog was alive, but not much more. One of her ears was about tore off and she was wet with blood. She just danced her little feet, splattering the pool of blood in the bottom of the barrel. And making that sound in her throat that almost begged someone to end her misery.</p> <p>...One of her front paws was chewed up so bad, it wasn't even a paw anymore. All the bones in that foot must have been split to pieces. It was nothing but a raw stump.</p> <p>"Kill her," I said.</p> <p>"What?" said Ira, his hand bleeding into the cuff of his shirt.</p> <p>"She's dying," I said. "And if you got any mercy at all in you, Ira Long, you'll do her in. Right now. She killed the weasel. Isn't that what you wanted to have her do, with all its sport? She's crazy with hurt. And if you don't kill her, I will."</p>
133	<p>Butting hard into Pinky's front shoulder with his snout, he half turned her about. Quick as silver, he jumped to her rear, pinning her up against the fence. Up on his back legs, he came down hard upon her, his forelegs up on her shoulders. His privates were alert and ready to breed her, and as she tried to move out from under him, he moved with her. His back legs strained forward to capture her, and his entire back and body was thrusting again and again. Pinky was squealing from his weight and the hurt of his forcing himself to her.</p> <p>...So he had his way with her. All the time he was breeding into her, she squealed like her throat had been cut.</p> <p>...Her rump was bruised and there was blood running down her hind leg.</p>
143	<p>Standing up, I moved away from Pinky as Papa went to her head. She just stood there in the fresh snow, looking at my feet. I saw Papa get a grip on the crowbar, and raise it high over his head. It was then I closed my eyes, and my mouth opened like I wanted to scream for her. I waited. I waited to hear the noise that I finally heard.</p> <p>It was a strong crushing noise that you only hear when an iron stunner bashes in a</p>

Page	Content
	<p>pig's skull. I hated Papa that moment. I hated him for killing her, and hated him for every pig he ever killed in his lifetime...for hundred and hundreds of butchered hogs.</p> <p>"Hurry," he said.</p> <p>I opened my eyes and went to her. She was down in the snow. Moving, breathing, but down. I helped roll her over on her back, standing astride her and holding her two forelegs straight up in the air. With his left hand Papa pushed her chin down so that the top of her snout touched the ground. His right hand held the blunt knife with the curved blade. He struck her throat deep and way back, moving the knife back through the neck toward himself, cutting the main neck artery. Her blood gushed bubbled out in heaving floods. Some of it went on my boots. I wanted to run, and cry and scream. But I just stood there, helping to hold her kicking.</p> <p>It was all so quiet, like Christmas morning. As Papa continued to draw the pork, I held the feet firm and up. The blood was still pumping out of her, and the ground beneath our feet was spotted with hot pig blood steaming on the cold snow. Between my ankles I could feel her body quiver to death. I had to look away. So as Papa worked on her, I held fast, staring at the old corn cratch that had once been Pinky's home.</p> <p>Papa worked quiet and quick. The guts got drawed out and were there on the cold ground in a hot misty mass.</p>

Profanity	Count
Ass	1
Bitch	1