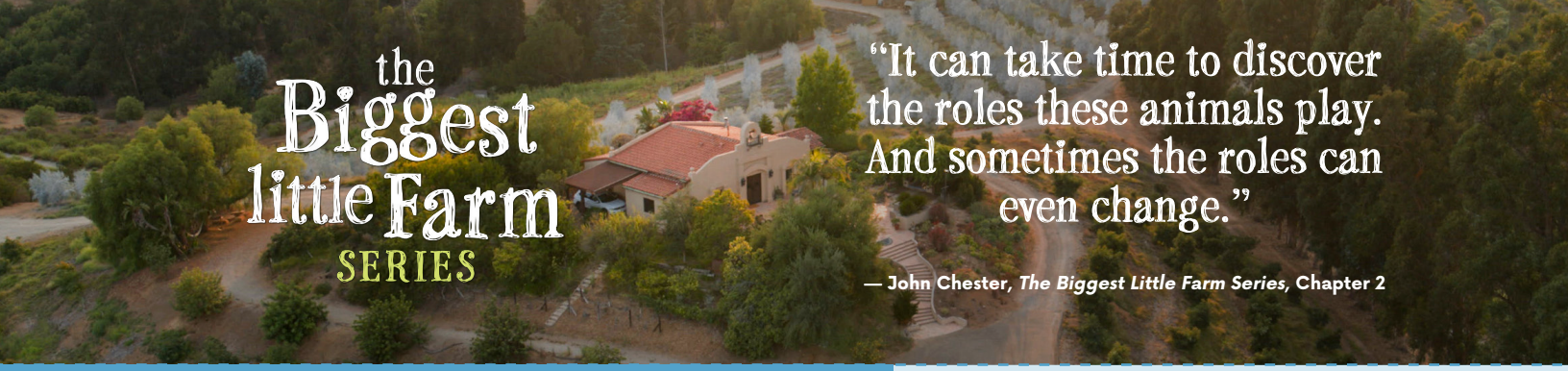


CHAPTER TWO: "When to Give Up"

As Emma, the farm's legendary breeding pig, delivers a smaller litter, John and Molly confront painful evidence that her most productive years are behind her and must decide what role remains for an aging animal they love. Meanwhile, the farm's web of interdependence unfolds through two young guardian puppies learning humility from the sheep and a mysterious returning egret named Georgie, who reveals herself as an unexpected ally in the farm's endless battle for balance.

CHAPTER THEMES

- Changing roles of the farm's animals
- The value of small creatures
- Humility and mentorship

DISCUSSION SPARKS

"If she [Emma] can't raise piglets, I don't know what role is left for her."

How do we define a living thing's purpose? Is worth tied only to productivity?

"It's not just the big creatures we count on to move this farm forward, and some of them would be easy to miss."

Who or what gets overlooked in the systems we depend on? Why do small contributions go unnoticed?

"Humility– that's what unlocks the instinct of their future protector."

Why might humility make the guardian dogs better protectors of the sheep?

ACTIVITY

How do filmmakers make you care about a pig, an egret, a coyote, or a chicken? Discuss:

1. **What techniques are filmmakers using to connect you with an animal? For example, rewatch a short clip about Emma. Tally the techniques noticed below.**
   - **NAMING:** Emma, Georgie, Buster (not "the pig" or "the egret")
   - **ANTHROPOMORPHISM:** Narration assigning feelings and intentions to animals
   - **SOUND & MUSIC:** Notice the soaring music at emotional moments
   - **EDITING:** Close-up on faces, moments of affection, withholding information
2. **Connection reflection: Which technique emotionally connected you with the animals the most?**

CLASSROOM CONNECTIONS

- **Science:** Gr. 3-5 and 6-8: Decomposers and soil health. NGSS - 5-LS2-1. MS-LS2-4.
- **ELA:** Gr. 7-10: Track the parallel story lines of Emma and the puppies' training, and analyze how they both build toward a common theme of changing roles. Common Core - RL.7.2, RL.8.2, RL.9-10.2.
- **SEL:** Gr. 6-10: Social Awareness: empathy for aging animals, recognizing overlooked contributors | Responsible Decision Making: deciding Emma's future, second chances for puppies
- **Media Literacy:** Gr. 8-10: Common Core - RL.8.6, RL.9-10.6