

MARLIE MARCH

POET: THE LYRIC CREEK FARM SERIES BOOK 3

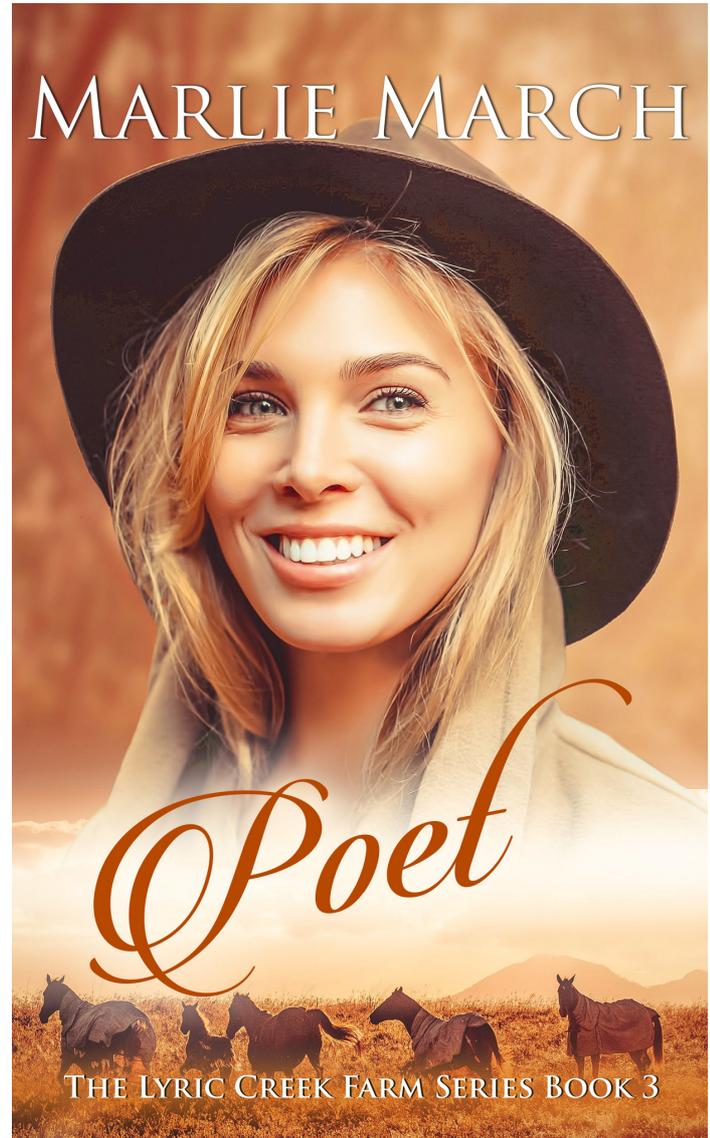
THE STORY BEHIND THE STORY

Poet Blake's story is set on the Lyric Creek Farm near the fictional town of Lyric in the Victorian high country about two hours drive north of Melbourne, Australia. I thoroughly enjoyed writing this novel for so many reasons, not the least of which was being able to explore the subject of animal-assisted therapy.

For many years I worked in Residential Aged Dementia Specific Care where animals were introduced to the Elders to reduce their episodes of anxiety. I have also seen the benefits of animal therapy for younger people in the disability sector to assist in developing their sense of self-worth, and their ability to trust.

Service dogs are not just invaluable for the blind but also for returned servicemen, refugees, and anyone else who lives with post-traumatic stress disorder.

To witness any type of animal-assisted therapy, which develops positive human-animal relationships, is truly remarkable.



THE COBBERDOG

"These puppies are bred specifically to be service dogs because of their gentle and intuitive nature. They're a cross between a labrador and a poodle..."

She interrupted, "You brought me to see labradoodle puppies?"

Archer smiled. "No, I brought you to see cobberdogs.

Labradoodles became so popular that unregistered breeders mixed them with other breeds. They produced cute dogs, but without the right temperament for use in therapy. Cobberdogs were created from the original labradoodle ancestry with strict breeding stipulations, and they have proven to be better service dogs than the labrador."

POET & ARCHER'S COTTAGE

"Both the kitchen and bathroom were functional but would need to be renovated eventually. There were three reasonably big bedrooms and a large lounge room. Archer stopped by the mantle and ran his hands over the stacked stone that made up the fireplace. "I think Poet will like this." "I think she'll love it," Banjo said with a wry smile."



"After the shearing was completed, Poet and Archer arranged for a working bee at their cottage. The women looked after the children and did some gardening while the men painted the weatherboards. Their home was finally ready for the wedding they wanted to have on the rear veranda with the farmland as the backdrop. They set the date for just prior to Christmas because the farmstay would be closed until the new year."



FARMING DIVERSITY & SUCCESSION PLANNING

Drought, fire, and flood, together with climate change and high-interest rates have in the past brought many farming families to their knees, some even losing their land altogether. Succession planning is essential to prevent disharmony and to protect the family legacy, but many of the previous generations refuse to relinquish any control to plan for, not only their own future but also the futures of their children and grandchildren. Sad but true.

Throughout the three books of The Lyric Creek Farm Series, I have explored the themes of farming diversity and succession planning. In books 1 & 2 we see the three siblings establish a farmstay alongside their traditional wool and wheat farming with both businesses being run under the umbrella of their family Trust. In book 3 we see the difficulties they encounter in running their businesses. Most farmers work seven days per week whether they hire people to work for them or not and they are just as susceptible to burnout as their city counterparts.

Living in regional Australia might seem ideal for many but it does have its drawbacks.

Medical assistance is often more than an hour's drive away and specialised medical treatment might require travelling by air to a major city hospital. People living in rural and remote areas of Australia have much further distances to travel for medical attention.

In the past, mental health services were not easily accessible. To be brutally honest, we have lost far too many farmers to suicide. In a post-covid world, our government now sees the need for easily accessible mental health services and with technology making it possible for people to receive counselling in their own homes, we can only hope that people will reach out when they need help.



The Wedding

Poet's wedding dress:

"Poet appeared wearing a long white sheath gown with lace balloon sleeves that showed off her bare shoulders. Her blonde hair hung loose, and she wore a straw boater hat in keeping with the rustic theme."



The Ring

Archer cleared his throat. "Sorry if I'm interrupting, but I haven't given you your present from me." He got down on one knee and opened the velvet-covered box, revealing the ring he'd chosen for her. "Will you marry me, Poet?"

The ring was the same as the one she'd seen on the iPad - A four-claw twist platinum setting with a princess cut one-carat diamond sitting high above the mount. Poet held out her shaky left hand. "Yes, I'll marry you."



Well, that's it for this 'story behind the story.' I hope you enjoyed visiting Poet's world.

Poet, Lawson, Banjo, and Johnno's children will have their own stories written in: Lyric Creek - The next generation series.

I love hearing from readers, so please leave a review and subscribe to my website.

Much love, Marlie March.