Opening

1 / 7

Well, hello, everyone. I'm Abe, Odette's grandfather. Her father is sitting right there, and he asked me to speak because he says I have the stories and he has the tissues. We made a fair trade.

Part 2

2 / 7

I'm eighty-one, so I remember a lot. I remember the summer Odette turned nine and announced that she was going to drive my tractor. I said no. She said she'd already read the manual. I said there was no manual. She said, 'Then I'll write one.'

Part 3

3 / 7

She wrote it that afternoon on lined paper. Eleven rules. Rule one was 'Grandpa sits next to me.' Rule two was 'Nobody yells.' Rule eleven was 'If a goose is in the way, wait for the goose.' I have followed that manual ever since, in life and on the farm. It is the best set of rules I own.

Part 4

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So we climbed up, she sat on my lap, and we drove one slow lap around the field at the speed of a thoughtful snail. I kept both hands near the wheel. She kept both hands on it. She did not hit one fence post. The goose, I'll add, was very patient.

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Part 5 5 / 7

Kit, you've met the manual. Odette gave you a copy, I'm told, on your second date. It has an updated rule twelve, in her handwriting: 'Kit sits next to me.' I read it with my glasses off and my eyes shut, and I'm happy to report I could still see it.

Part 6 6 / 7

Here is my advice, and I have been married fifty-seven years, so I'm allowed to give it. Write your rules down together. Keep them short. Make one of them about the goose. And when the day is slow, remember that slow is how you see the whole field.

Closing 7 / 7

Odette, my granddaughter, you were the best driver I ever rode with, and I would sit next to you anywhere. Everyone, please get up slowly, like I do, and lift your glasses to Odette and Kit. To the goose, and to every wait that is worth it.