



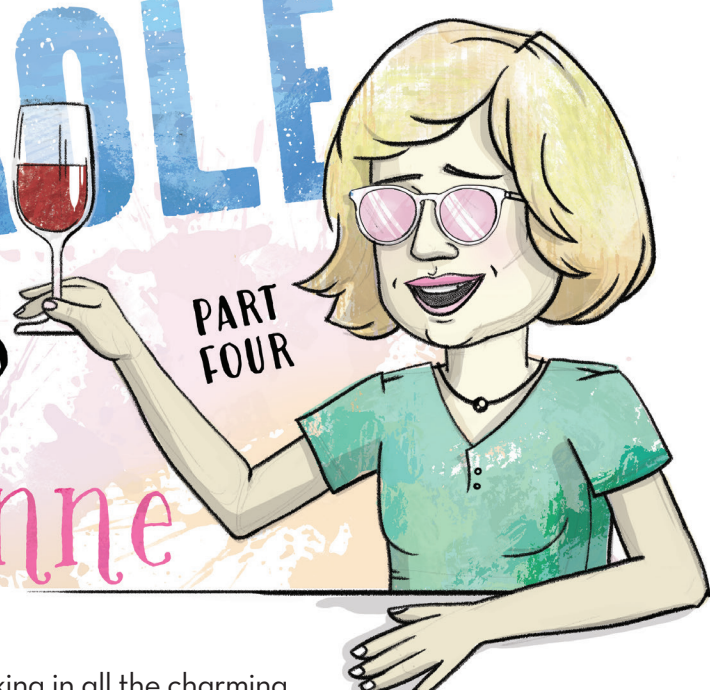
CASSEROLE

Conversations

WITH

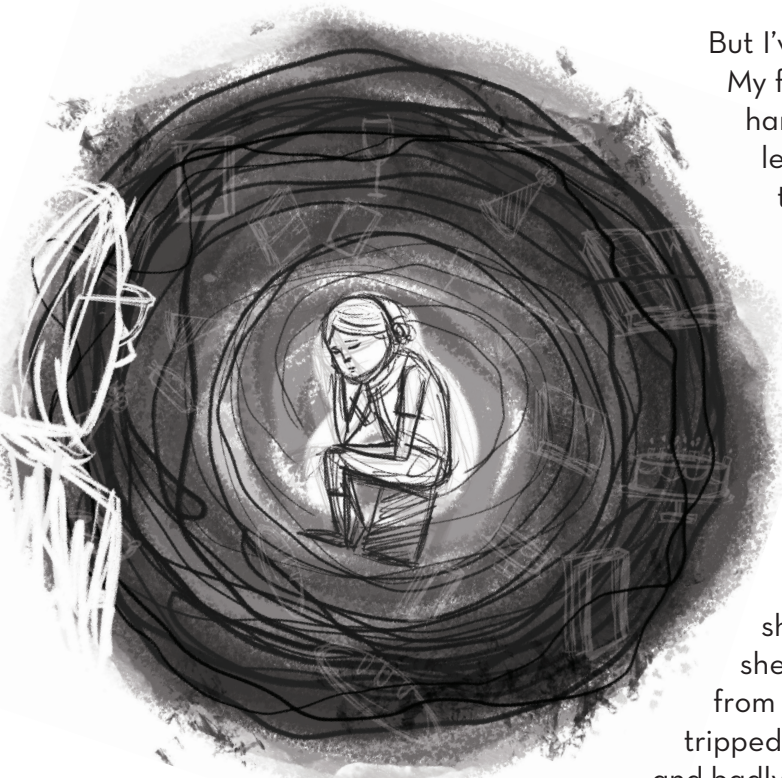
Anne

PART FOUR



I KNOW I'VE BEEN A BIT QUIET, but I've been soaking in all the charming personalities and insightful stories shared at this welcoming table. This has been such a wonderful conclusion to an eventful day! Just this afternoon I pulled up, having some expectations but otherwise not sure WHAT to expect. I'm pleased to report my highest expectations have been met and, in some cases, exceeded!

As you know, my name is *Anne*. I was named after my mother, Annabelle. At first my dad asked, "Why don't we just name her exactly after you, 'Annabelle'?" But my mom, an avid reader, smiled, "No no, 'Anne with an e'", in reference to her favorite book, *Anne of Green Gables*. She always tells me I remind her of the book's heroine. Curious, opinionated, imaginative, and if you get me going...Quite dramatic.



But I've felt less like this quirky, spontaneous character of late. My family suffered the loss of our precious father. It has hit us hard, and mom is struggling to see where the next chapter leads. Dad was the one to get my introverted mother out the door. She loves attending events, participating in book clubs, baking to share with friends, but without her wingman, **SHE HAS BECOME ISOLATED.**

I can still feel the suffocating anxiety as the phone rang and rang...and rang - a dull, throb in my ear. My mom had been living on her own for about 5 months, in my childhood home, 3 states over from where I now live with my husband and children. As I gripped the phone, I just knew something was wrong. After 4 hours of no answer, I dismissed the possibility that she had gone grocery shopping, forgotten her cell and would return my call when she got home. I dialed my younger brother, who lives an hour from mom. He left work immediately and drove over. She had tripped climbing the stairs to her bedroom, twisting her ankle, and badly bruising her arms and hip.

TALK ABOUT A WAKEUP CALL. My siblings and I had known my mom wasn't doing well but when she fell, we realized her actual life had been put in jeopardy during this period of isolation. She had fallen and no one was there for her. A wave of guilt and fear swept over me. Why had I not done something sooner? Why had I allowed my mother to soothe concerned phone calls with her nurturing croon, "Oh sweetheart, don't fret! I'm just fine" and not take the action that I see now was imperative?



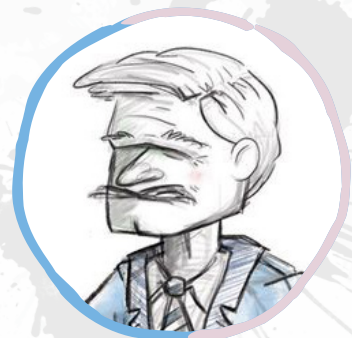
So that's why I'm sitting here with you all; Enjoying, quite honestly, the best casserole I have ever tasted! Before my mom moves down here to be closer to my family and I (easy access to grandkids was a HUGE selling point), I was appointed to tour possible communities for my mother to join.

**WHERE BOOK CLUBS ARE BOUNDLESS,
BAKING IS AN ARTFORM**
& happy greetings of friends, old & new,
dance across her threshold daily.

Amelia!

Our chance encounter during my community tour, I'm realizing now, was a thoughtfully orchestrated rendezvous! Grace, the Lifestyle Advisor, who I'm sure you all know and love, introduced me to Amelia as we walked through the clubhouse! Amelia was kind to invite me for dinner with you all and has also gifted me this lovely volume of *Anne of Green Gables*. I assume Grace told you about my mom's favorite book!

Visiting this community has given me hope that I can actually be the daughter again, not the anxious shell of myself I've been for the past few months. Here I know mom will be safe; surrounded by friendly folks like yourselves and supported by the caring professionals here at the community, like Grace! I can get back to being "Anne with an e", the curious and adventurous daughter, enjoying life with my mom.



**PART 5 OF
CASSEROLE
CONVERSATIONS**
with Steve
Coming Soon!

