

Farmer Brown



Bob had had a rough day. His computer had crapped out right in the middle of a Powerpoint presentation (which was suspect at best, anyway) and he'd subsequently lost the Guggenheimer account. Then his administrative assistant, Mandy, blaming it on another of her "visions," had ripped his brand-new blazer off of him and fed it into the shredder. The kapok in his sandwich had turned rancid, ruining his lunch, and Ed, his boss, had asked him to stay late to retune the company's dial tone. When he hadn't been able to make any progress on that task by eight o'clock, he'd just called it quits. To settle his nerves, he'd opted to take a leisurely drive into the countryside. But, just shy of the middle of nowhere, he'd gotten a flat tire. His spare, of course, was flat, too. He recalled passing an old farmhouse a couple of miles back, so he started to walk in that direction. And that's when the weather suddenly changed. Meatball-sized hail pelted him as he ran in shoes that were in no way designed for running. Twice he slipped and fell into the bramble patches that ran alongside the road. When at last he reached the farmhouse, he was drenched, lacerated and miserable. Bob pounded on the front door, and eventually it was opened by an old man, who ushered him into a house that was as withered as was the man. Bob explained his predicament and asked if he could use the phone. The man – who identified himself as Farmer Brown – said that the storm had knocked out the power and that the phone wasn't working. He said this unmindful of the flickering black and white image on the television in the corner of the parlor. But, he added (with, Bob thought later, an eerie glee), he was welcome to stay the night if he didn't mind sharing a room with his teenaged daughter. Bob readily agreed, and soon he was palavering with the beautiful and buxom Blanche Brown. The farmer retired and Blanche led Bob to her bedroom. She offered him some tea, which he drank as eagerly as he drank in her womanly assets. Blanche lay down on the bed and patted the space next to her. Licking his lips, he headed for her, but the room abruptly began to spin and then everything went black. When he awoke, he was lying next to Blanche, however Blanche had turned into a putrefied giant squid, the bed had turned into a laboratory table, and Farmer Brown, now sporting a bloodstained laboratory smock, had turned into the quintessential mad scientist. Boy, he'd sure be glad when *this* day was over!