



Near the barn was an old apple tree. It was overgrown with wild grape vines but Papa never cut away the vines because they made a natural ladder to the highest apples. "Besides," he always joked, "I could never separate such close friends."

"Girls, we'll be picking apples soon," said Mama one day. "Maybe sooner than you think," said Papa. "I heard they got a foot of snow up north." "Oh, dear," fretted Mama, "winter so soon." "We'd better get the apples in tomorrow," said Papa. "And I'll make a big batch of apple butter," said Mama. "You girls should stay home from school to help sort apples."

"Hurray!" shouted Katrina and Josie.