

Read the text below. For questions 22—26 choose the correct answer (A, B, C or D). Write your answers on the separate answer sheet.

FALSE ALARM

Story by Nisha Coker

We left the city and moved into an 1896 farmhouse, and after just a few weeks, we thought ourselves real country folk. After all, we mended fences and tended chickens, and our boys ran barefoot and played ball in the front yard. Even our dog, Sadie, wagged her stubby boxer tail joyfully each time I let her outside to run. Life felt easy, breezy and carefree.

The wiring and plumbing had been updated, but we still wanted to add our own touches to the house. One particular night, my husband changed the light fixture over our kitchen sink. I'd just started calling Sadie in for the night when Kevin hollered for me to check out his work. I stood in the doorway, admiring how pretty the Tiffany glass looked when lit up. My husband started gathering his tools. "Not too bad, huh?" he said, grinning. Then he joked, "And I didn't even burn the house down".

Just then a strong smell blew across the room. Our eldest son came into the kitchen and wrinkled his nose. "Ick! What's burning?" My husband and I exchanged a petrified look, then stared at the new light fixture. Kevin started back up the ladder while I gathered the boys. It seemed like the smell was everywhere and nowhere, growing strong, then fading away.

"It's not here. Maybe a wire came loose somewhere else". Kevin folded the ladder and headed to the foyer, with its rusty chandelier. I sent the boys in with him while I sniffed around for smoke. I tried to be calm, but I kept picturing our dream house in flames. I grabbed the steel box with our birth certificates and other important records. Our photos were close enough to the door to snatch on the way out. The boys' shoes were lined up by the front door. The boys! Of course, Kevin had them. The dog! Hadn't I been calling her before? "Sadie?" I yelled. "Sadie! Sadie girl!" Nothing.

I ran to the family room to check her favourite spot. There on the couch, a big round beige-colored ball was yelping and shaking. I approached and said softly, "Sadie?" She raised her head. Her face was swollen and her eyes were slits. Then it hit me: the burning, almost-electrical smell of fresh skunk spray. While washing Sadie, we shared a good

laugh. After all, our house was safe, we were safe, and we'd learned an important lesson in rural living: Get to know your neighbours, understand them and show them respect. Especially those little stinkers!

22 The Coker family _____.

- A regretted buying such an old house
- B kept their chickens in the front yard
- C quickly got used to living out of town
- D forbade the sons to go out without footwear

23 Which of the following had been repaired recently?

- | | |
|---------------------|---------------------|
| A electrical cables | C the kitchen sink |
| B house chandeliers | D the Tiffany glass |

24 What happened when the family felt the strong smell?

- A Mr. Coker started looking for the source of the smell.
- B Mrs. Coker took the elder boys out of the farmhouse.
- C Mrs. Coker collected some photographs and clothing.
- D Mr. Coker and the boys walked about in search of Sadie.

25 Which of the following is TRUE about Sadie?

- | | |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| A She was hiding in the yard. | C She was playing with a ball. |
| B She was suffering from pain. | D She was lying in the armchair. |

26 What is the main conclusion the Cokers made after the skunk incident?

- A They should visit their neighbours more often.
- B They should respect their neighbours' property.
- C They should learn more about their new environment.
- D They should be more careful to keep the family safe.