

# Fun in a Farming Village

## Sneaking Out at Night to Play Hide-and-Seek

Victoria Ciobanu

When I was little, I did not have many opportunities to play games. I grew up in a village in Moldova, and we had a large farm. It was the job of my sister, brother, and me to take care of it. Daily chores included cleaning, plowing, planting, and selling vegetables at the market. It was a hard life, and we did not have much time to play. However, once in a while, after all the chores were finished, we would sneak out into the night to explore the land and play games with our friends.

One of my favorite games was hide-and-seek. We would split into two teams. One team would hide in the village, and the other team would try to find those that were hiding. Before we started playing, we had to decide on the rules. The village was quite large—it could take half an hour to walk from one side to the other—so defining where we could hide was important. We had a “five-foot rule,” which meant that we could only enter the first five feet of a neighbor’s yard. These rules made it easier to find the ones that were hiding.

One night, I remember all of us hiding in a pile of corn stalks. We could barely breathe! Yet, no one found us that time. We won!



Frequently, we had problems with our clothes. This was a poor farming village, where children wore hand-me-downs that didn’t always fit well. I remember some kids wore shoes that were too big, and they would fall off as they were running. They would usually stay barefoot after that



*A Molodvan village. Photo from <365bookworm.wordpress.com/2017/05/25/the-good-life-elsewhere-moldova>.*

happened. We also had to be dressed to jump the neighbors’ fences!

I found hiding in our neighbors’ yards to be the most exciting and challenging. We did not want to wake up the village, so we would try to make as little noise as possible. But sometimes, our laughter and shouting erupted. Then we would all go quiet and try not to laugh. The next morning, we would hear villagers talking about a “robber” that was sneaking around town. One woman got tired of our noise, and she ran out of her house with an axe to scare us off!

Although the vast majority of the time we had to work on the farm, there were moments like these that I remember fondly. Life was very difficult growing up in the village but having my brother and sister and all our friends, made it much easier.

*Victoria Ciobanu is an ESL student at Adult Learner Services in Lebanon, NH. She was born in Moldova, received her high school diploma in Romania, as well as her Bachelor’s and Master’s degrees in geography and marketing. She came to the U.S. in 2017, and she is now the owner of a small housecleaning business.*

