



A Familiar Face

Chapter Five - by Kay Hively

Opening the library book, Scotty began to read. The book had pictures of the little house in Lamar, Missouri, where President Truman was born. It looked very small, almost like a child's playhouse.

Eagerly, Scotty read and looked at the pictures. But after about an hour, he put his book away. He had promised to play ball with his friends.

Grabbing his ball glove, Scotty hurried outside. His father, who was weeding flowerbeds, waved to Scotty as he raced off to the park.

Most of the boys were already at the ball field. Everyone had brought gloves, and two boys had baseballs. But no one had brought a bat. Jimmy Powers, who lived near the park, offered to run home and get one. Scotty went home with Jimmy and soon they came running down the street. Jimmy carried a wooden bat and Scotty carried an aluminum one.

Jimmy always used a wooden bat when he played ball. Scotty and his friends couldn't understand why. Jimmy said it just felt better, and he liked the sound of the ball hitting the wooden bat.

Since Jimmy was the best batter in school it was hard for the other boys to argue. Everyone had tried the wooden bat, but it didn't help them hit the ball any better. But when Jimmy used the wooden bat, he could hit the ball farther than anyone else.

As soon as Scotty and Jimmy got the bats to the park, the play began. Each team played hard and everyone was having a good time. Scotty played far out in left field. He enjoyed playing out there. From left field, he could watch everyone on the bases and he could see everyone bat.

After five innings, the teams were tied at seven runs each. Then, as Scotty's team came up to bat, a jagged bolt of lightning raced through the sky. This was followed by a big rumble of thunder.

All the boys knew it was dangerous to play outside when there was thunder and lightning. It was time to go home.

Quickly, the boys had their equipment gathered up and were running out of the park. Scotty ran as fast as he could, but before he reached home rain began to fall. After losing his cap, he finally made it to the front porch, but he was dripping wet.

As Scotty sat down in the big swing to remove his tennis shoes, the front door opened. Mr. Brown came out of the house with a big towel and began rubbing Scotty's head.

Soon most of the water was gone so Scotty and his father went inside, leaving the wet tennis shoes on the porch to dry.

With a steady rain falling, outdoor play was impossible. But Scotty didn't mind. He was ready to get back to his library book and learn more about the President who looked like him.



Author Kay Hively and Illustrator Billie Goforth-Stewart are both of Neosho, Missouri. Truman photo by Harry Barth. Produced by the Missouri Press Foundation. Copyright 2007.

Things to Think About and Do

- When lightning flashed, the boys left the park. What creates lightning? What did Benjamin Franklin discover about lightning? Draw a picture of three things not to do when it's lightning.
- Do you have a favorite baseball team? What kind of bats does that team use? What is a Louisville Slugger? Where is it made? Are wooden bats allowed in the baseball leagues in your community?
- Make a list of all the different sports that are reported on in your newspaper. Use a ruler to measure the length of each story in inches. Create a chart comparing the total inches for each sport. Why is there more coverage of one sport over another?

Next Week: Chapter Six - Helping the needy

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