



Chapter Eight by Russ and Kay Hively

Thomas asked his mother what the name of the song was. She said it is called "The Star Spangled Banner." Violet's mother said she had only learned the first verse of the new song but she would try to learn the rest. Violet's mother cleared her throat and began to sing.

"O say, can you see, by the dawn's early light,

What so proudly we hail'd at the twilight's last gleaming?

Whose broad stripes and bright stars, thro' the perilous fight,

O'er the ramparts we watch'd, were so gallantly streaming?

And the rockets' red glare, the bombs bursting in air,

Gave proof thro' the night that our flag was still there.

O say, does that star-spangled banner yet wave

O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave?

When Mrs. Howard finished singing, everyone clapped, and Violet squealed with delight. Her mother's voice singing beautiful music created an experience that Violet would never forget. Even though Violet thought it was a wonderful song, she was a little confused about what all the words meant. She asked what the song was talking about. What was the star-spangled banner, Mr. Key wrote about?

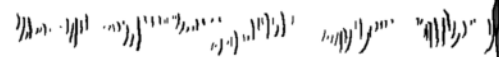
Her mother smiled at her and said it was the American flag. Mr. Key, who was on a British ship, had watched the flag flying over Fort McHenry. He knew as long as the flag flew the Americans had not given up. Violet asked her mother to sing the song again.

This time as she listened to the words of the song, she could see a flag flying over a fort in a great battle.

surround their farm, Molly ran up to the wagon and followed them to the house.

When the wagon stopped, everyone went to work. By the time supper was cooked, the wagon was unloaded and all the animals had been cared for. The family ate and spent the rest of the evening working in the house, which let Violet try out the new spinning wheel. As she stood at the wheel she sang the new song and thought about her Uncle Donald building the spinning wheel.

That night lying on her bed, Violet thought about all the things she had seen and heard today. First there was a trip into town with visits to the canal and the Great Falls. Second was all the news about the two big battles in New York and Maryland. Finally, she had learned a brand new song. Violet decided this had been the most fun day of her life.



Learn More

- "The Star-Spangled Banner" was originally written as a poem. What is a poem? Find an article in the newspaper and use it to write a poem.
- "The Star-Spangled Banner" became the United States of America's National Anthem. When did that happen? Who was President that year? What team won the World Series that year?
- Look back at the predictions you made beginning with Chapter 1 about this story. Were you right? Were there any clues that might have helped you in the story or in the art?

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