

Black Thunder

Chapter Three – by Kay Hively

After a long week, Saturday morning finally came. Joey was out of bed before anyone called him. He bounced into the kitchen where his mother was putting strips of bacon in a skillet. His father was coming through the back door with a bucket of water.

Joey had gotten up early because he was eager to go to town. After breakfast he helped with all the chores so his family could get started sooner. Mr. Cooper asked why he was in such a hurry. Joey would only say that he had something special to do in town. Mr. Cooper wondered if Joey was going to meet a girlfriend at the movies.

As soon as Mr. Cooper's truck wheels stopped at the curb on the town square, Joey bailed out and raced off down the street. His parents stared after him with puzzled looks on their faces. They didn't even have time to ask where their 11-year-old son was going.

The Cooper family and most of the other farm families always came to town on Saturday.

Usually the women shopped and visited with each other. The men looked at each other's cars and talked about baseball and the weather. Some of the kids played ball in the park. If they had a nickel or a dime, many of the farm kids would go see the movie matinee. On Saturdays, the Ritz always showed what Mr. Cooper called "shoot'em-up-Westerns."

But on this day Joey did not go to the movie. He didn't go down to the city park to watch the bigger boys play baseball.

Running two blocks down the main street, Joey made a left turn onto a side street. Half way down the block, he stopped in front of a small stone building. Three marble steps led up to the front door. Above the doorway were the words "Carnegie Library."

Slowly Joey climbed the steps, opened the heavy front door, and stepped inside. This was the first time he had been in the public

library. As he stood by the door staring at the beautiful room with high ceilings, he heard a woman's voice ask if she could help him.

Joey turned to see a gray-haired lady sitting behind a shiny mahogany desk. The lady was smiling. Joey stepped up to the desk and asked if she had any books about airplanes.

The lady rose out of her chair and motioned for him to follow. She led him to the back of the big room where the shelves were not so tall. Then she stopped and pulled three books off a shelf and handed them to Joey.

On top of the little stack of books was one with a P-40 airplane on the front cover. It looked just like the airplane in the picture that Tommy had sent.

The lady then led Joey to a small table and pulled out a chair for him. He slid into the seat, placed the books on the table, and opened the one with the P-40 on the cover.



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Classroom Extensions

Things to Think About and Do –

A. Use a dictionary to find these words: skillet, matinee, country, marble and mahogany. Learn the definitions of these words and learn how to spell them.

B. Joey went to the Carnegie Library. Have you ever seen a Carnegie Library? Write a short essay on Andrew Carnegie and tell why many libraries were named for him.

Next Week: Chapter Four – Flying Tigers