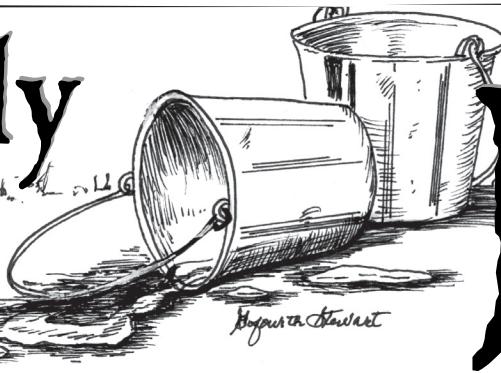


Everybody Loves



Jack

Chapter Five – by Russ and Kay Hively

Adam breathed easier when Papa said that two ruffed grouse were in the chicken coop when he opened the new door this morning. Adam had never heard of grouse in a chicken coop. Grouse were wild birds that lived in the forest. He remembered hearing and seeing a grouse once when he was in the woods with his father. He had never heard such a sound before. Papa said grouse stand on a log and beat their wings to make a drumming noise.

Papa said the two grouse were tied up inside the chicken coop with leather string. He said if the strings hadn't been around their legs, the birds would have flown away when the door opened. Adam looked at Anna and saw her eyes get really big. Anna had to ask what a grouse was. Mama said it was a wild bird that people could eat, like the chickens. She said Anna should not be afraid of the two new birds in the chicken coop.

Again, Papa asked if the children had heard anything last night. They both said no.

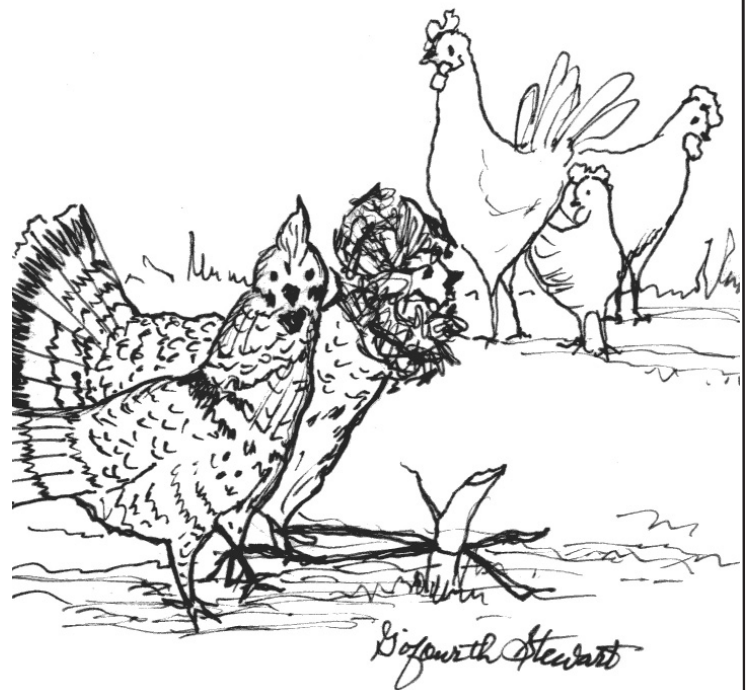
Adam's mind began to whirl at all the mysteries. First a chicken is missing. Then an injured dog and a medicine bag are discovered. Now there are two strange birds in the chicken coop with strings tied to their legs. What was going to happen next? Adam thought about these things as he ate breakfast. He wondered what all this meant. He looked around the table at Papa, Mama and Anna. They looked like they were all wondering the same thing.

After breakfast, Adam went outside to do his chores. Mama said Jack could go along with him. The dog followed along at a distance, lying down when Adam stayed in one place for a while. As he moved from spot to spot, Adam walked slowly so the dog could keep up with him. Sometimes Adam would stop to pet and talk to Jack.

When Adam looked inside the chicken coop, he saw the two grouse walking around with the chickens. They still had strings tied to their legs. Adam threw a scoop of grain into the coop. All the chickens and the grouse began eating together. Adam wondered what baked grouse would taste like.

The last chore Adam did every morning was get water. Taking the two tin pails, he told Jack to stay in the yard. As he started down the path to the creek, Adam listened carefully and looked around just like he had done the day before. He was a little scared being alone in the woods. He wished he had someone along to keep him company.

Adam stayed alert, but he did not see or hear anything while he walked along the dark path. But, as he neared the creek, Adam saw something lying on a big rock by the creek bank. Adam stood very still waiting for the strange object to move.



Author Kay Hively and Illustrator Billie Gofourth-Stewart are both of Neosho, Missouri. Russ Hively lives in Newtonia, Missouri. Copyright 2005, Missouri Press Foundation.

Things to Think About and Do

- What is a ruffed grouse? What parts of America do they live in? What kind of habitat do they live in? Make a list of other animals that live in that kind of habitat.
- In the story Adam went to the creek. List the names of some other bodies of water on the earth. Arrange your list from largest to smallest.

Next Week: Chapter Six – Another mystery