

FREEDOM'S CIRCUS



Chapter Six – by Kay Hively

Everyone in the family searched for Mamma's rugs. Gabe went to the woodshed to see if Prince had gotten out and carried them away. But the door was locked and Prince was asleep. The rugs were not to be found.

Mamma was very unhappy that her rugs had been taken. She muttered some Italian words under her breath. Something or someone was on the island. Poppa feared his family was in danger.

Again, Poppa told everyone to stay inside and keep the cottage door locked. No one, Poppa commanded, was to leave the house without him. He said they would all stay together and do their work until the mail boat arrived.



Author Kay Hively and Illustrator Billie Gofourth-Stewart are both of Neosho, Missouri. Produced in partnership with this newspaper and the Missouri Press Foundation. Copyright 2005.

Mamma told Sarah and Gabe to be on their best behavior until everything was back to normal on Lighthouse Island. Even Gabe understood and promised not to complain.

Poppa took down the ladder from the side of the lighthouse and put his paint and brushes away. Then he came through the house and went up the tower steps to clean the storm panes. As lighthouse keeper he had to clean the panes every day.

Since she could not go outside to play, Sarah followed her father up the steps. She liked being in the lantern room when Poppa cleaned. Sometimes he let her help with the inside panes, but most of the time Poppa did the cleaning. He was proud of his job and wanted to do it all himself.

As Poppa worked, Sarah talked, asked questions and watched for ships at sea. She asked once more about the immigrant ships and the Statue of Liberty. Poppa said that most Americans were immigrants. He said he had been born in America, but both his parents had come from England. Poppa said his parents were lucky when they came to America because they could speak the language.

Mamma spoke only Italian when she came on the ship. But the very day she landed in America, she started learning English. Now Mamma spoke English all the time, but she could still speak Italian if she wanted to. Sarah had heard her mother speak Italian. Sometimes, in a quiet voice, Mamma would speak an Italian phrase, especially if she was angry or disgusted – like this afternoon when she found her rugs were missing.

Because she was such a chatterbox, Sarah did most of the talking. Poppa was a good listener. He listened and cleaned while Sarah sat on the little bench, looked out at the ocean and talked. As Sarah was chatting away, she heard Poppa open the door out onto the gallery. Then she heard Poppa say, "Come on in."

Sarah turned to see who Poppa was talking to. But, before Sarah knew what was happening, the little monkey she had seen on the island came scampering around the lantern room. Then it jumped up and sat right down on the bench beside Sarah.

Learning Extensions – Things to Think About and Do

A. Learn the word "bilingual." In a short essay, explain how Mamma is bilingual. Ask someone to help you fix an Italian food at home, or visit an Italian restaurant and eat a food that you have never eaten before.

B. On a map of Europe, find Italy. What is it shaped like? Locate the capital of Italy. Make a list of other countries that border Italy?

Show Me Standards Met: CA:1; SS:5; SS:6; SS:7; G1:4; G1:9; G2:1; G2:5

Next Week: Chapter 7 – Meet Toni