

Ode to Joy



Chapter Seven – by Kay Hively

Alice was happy to be in her own bed that night. After she had been lost in the desert where it was cold and lonely, she snuggled under the warm covers, still hugging Susan's doll. Her parents were happy to have her home, but they told her that she must never again go anywhere by herself. Alice was sorry she had worried her parents. She vowed never to go out alone.

The next morning, Alice had breakfast with her parents. Then the family had their own little Sunday School lesson. Mother told Alice that after their Sunday dinner, they would all go to Grandmother Helen's and return Susan's doll.

So, with Pa in the lead, the family walked over the trails to Grandmother's hogan. Everyone was happy to see them. Thomas invited Pa to sit with him in the yard to talk.

Grandmother asked if Alice would like to work on the loom. Alice said she would love to try. Soon she was seated beside Grandmother. The old woman began slowly weaving the colorful threads together. After a few minutes, she let Alice try weaving. It was not very easy, but Alice worked hard to make her part of the blanket as nice as she could.

The more Alice worked with the thread, the better she became. Even Susan smiled to see what a good job Alice was doing on the blanket.

All afternoon, Grandmother, Mrs. Palmer and the two girls sat in front of the loom, talking and making the bright red blanket. Susan could already weave very nicely, and Alice worked hard to learn. Grandmother promised to help Alice learn to be a good weaver.

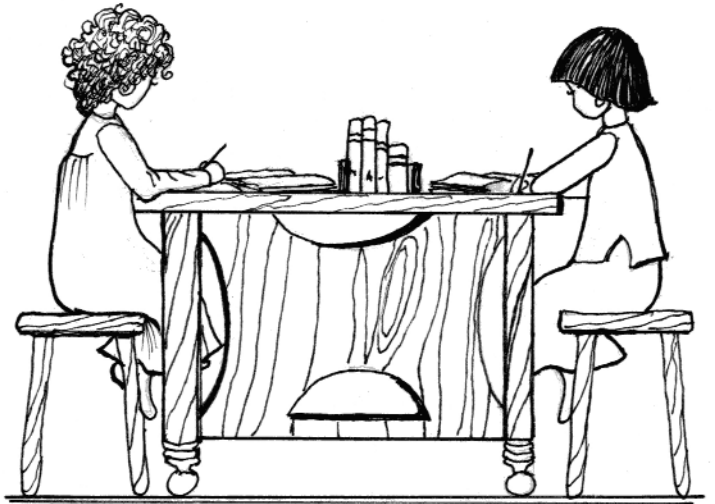
When the sun began to go down, Pa said it was time to go home. Before they left, Mother asked Susan if she would like to attend school at the trading post. She said it would be nice for Alice to have a schoolmate. And, Mother said, they would have piano lessons.

Grandmother said it would be a good thing for Susan to go to school. When Thomas agreed that Susan could take lessons with Alice, the two girls squealed with delight. Because Susan had never been to school, Alice promised to help her learn to read and write and do arithmetic.

The next morning when Thomas came to work, Susan came with him. Mother had a place for Susan to work. She also had school supplies for Susan to use. While Alice worked on her

arithmetic problems, Mother began teaching Susan the English alphabet.

The morning went quickly. Susan was very smart and learned very fast. Then after lunch, Mother started piano lessons for Susan. Alice watched as Susan took her first music lessons. Then Susan watched while Alice practiced her own lessons. Both girls were having a wonderful time and they were learning many things. Both girls loved school.



Author Kay Hively and Illustrator Billie Gofurth-Stewart are both of Neosho, Missouri.
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Things to Think About and Do

- Alice wanted to help Susan learn. Have you ever helped someone with their lessons? Have you ever read a story to a small child? Get with a friend and have fun reading to each other or teaching each other something new.
- Alice is learning something from the Navajo culture and Susan is learning something from white man's culture. Think of ways you could learn about another culture. What skill or talent do you have that you might teach someone.

STANDARDS: G1:9; G1:10; G4:3; G4:8; CA:1; CA:7; SS:6;

Next Week: Chapter Eight – Two Special Gifts