

SPIN, SPUTTERS AND POUT

CHAPTER THREE by Kay Hively

Jacob took Patches to bed with him again that night. All night long, the little dog tossed and turned and whimpered. Jacob could hardly sleep. He thought about putting Patches outside in the middle of the night, but he didn't. He was afraid something bad might happen to his dog.

The next day Jacob and his little sister, Mary, rode in the wagon with their parents to Little Prairie. A migrant preacher had come to town and was holding a church service. After church, Jacob met some boys who said a school would be starting soon. Jacob had never been to school. He hoped he could go if one opened.

Back home again after church, Jacob and Patches went down to the river to play. Patches was Jacob's playmate since there were no neighbors nearby.

Patches liked to fetch sticks, even in the cold river water.

Jacob always waved to the boats going up and down the river. His father said there would be steamboats on the river someday. Jacob had heard about steamboats, but he had never seen one. Maybe one day he would use a steamboat to visit all the towns on the river, Jacob thought.

In late afternoon, Jacob and Patches climbed the big hill back to the cabin. Jacob's father was splitting wood. With just one swing of his big axe, Mr. Stark could split a log in two pieces. Jacob picked up the small pieces and stacked them by the back door. It was getting colder so the fireplace would need extra wood.

After they had split and stacked a cord of firewood, Jacob and his father went inside to eat supper. When the dishes were put away, Jacob's mother read a story from the Bible. Jacob liked to hear his

mother read. The only book the family had was the Bible, but his mother could find wonderful stories in it. The story she read that night was about Jonah who was swallowed by a big fish.

Jacob tried to imagine Jonah sitting on a tooth in the mouth of the fish.

After the story, Jacob and Patches climbed up the ladder to bed. As he lay under his covers, Jacob wondered what it would be like to be swallowed by a fish. He was glad to have his little bed in the loft where it was nice and dry and there were no big fish to swallow him up.

Before he fell asleep, Jacob heard his father go outside to put Janie and Butch in the little barn. Mr. Stark took good care of his horses. He protected them from wild animals and from horse thieves who came up and down the river stealing whatever they could find.

In no time at all, Jacob was sound asleep, dreaming about a big fish.



Author Kay Hively and Illustrator Billie Gofourth-Stewart are both of Neosho, Missouri. Produced in partnership with this newspaper and the Missouri Press Foundation with support from Verizon Foundation. Copyright 2002.

CLASSROOM EXTENSIONS

Things to Think About and Do –

- Jacob and his family went to Little Prairie in a wagon. Draw a picture of Janie and Butch pulling the wagon.
- Jacob and his father split and stacked a “cord” of firewood. What is a cord? What are the measurements of a cord of firewood? What is a “rick” of wood? How many ricks are in a cord?

**NEXT WEEK: CHAPTER FOUR
– THE DEVIL COMES TO VISIT**