

SPIN, SPUTTERS AND SPOUT

CHAPTER SIX by Kay Hively

Mr. Stark decided the family should stay in the cabin where the two little walls stood. Jacob found large pieces of wood and dragged them to the cabin for places to sit. He also found dry twigs and leaves to start a fire.

By stacking the big fireplace stones together, Jacob's father made a fire pit. Striking two stones together, he created a spark and set fire to the twigs. Then he added bigger twigs to keep the fire going.

Soon the fire was big enough to keep everyone warm. Then Mr. Stark said he would walk to Little Prairie to get clothes, blankets and food.

Jacob's mother began to cry because her husband had no shoes to wear on the frozen ground. She also was afraid he would be swallowed up or crushed by a falling tree.

Mr. Stark hugged his wife. It was only two miles to town, he said. He would be back soon. He told Jacob to keep the fire going and to take his mother and sister to the top of the hill if the river started rising.

Like Jacob, Mr. Stark wore only his night shirt and his long underwear. But he did have the money pouch hanging around his neck.

While his father was gone, Jacob tended the fire. He fed branches and sticks into the flames to keep them going. Only once did another tremor come. Jacob moved close to his mother and sister during the shake.

Waiting for his father to come back, Jacob stared out into the gloom. A gray fog covered the world as far as they could see.

Suddenly Jacob began to feel hungry. He hoped his father would bring food. He knew his mother and Mary were hungry, too. If only they still had their gun, he and his father could hunt and bring home something to eat.

It wasn't long before Jacob heard his father's voice calling to him through the haze. Jacob returned the call, eager to see his father.

Like a ghost, his father suddenly appeared out of the fog. When he saw his father, Jacob's heart sank. His father still had no shoes or clothes and his feet were bleeding. He carried no food. The only thing he had was a big piece of canvas.

Mr. Stark said that Little Prairie had almost completely vanished. Many of the houses were washed into the river and all the people had run away. There was nothing to buy or even pick up off the ground.

We are all alone here, Jacob's father said.

Jacob and his father used the canvas to make a roof over the two little cabin walls. Jacob did not know what would happen next.



CLASSROOM EXTENSIONS

Things to Think About and Do -

- Jacob's father made a fire without matches. Do you know how to make a fire using only pieces of stone? The family had no food to cook, why did they need a fire?
- Mr. Stark walked to Little Prairie. How far did he walk? Do you think you could walk that far? How long would it take you to walk that far? Draw a map. Put Little Prairie, the Mississippi River and the cabin site on your map.

**NEXT WEEK: CHAPTER SEVEN
- PATCHES COMES BACK**

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