



Chapter Three — by Russ and Kay Hively

It had been five weeks since the family had received a letter from Larry's father. Larry had watched his mother worry when a letter did not come. He and his mother never forgot that his father was fighting a war. And Larry knew that his father could be killed. So getting a letter was a really big deal.

Quickly Larry opened the envelope and read that his father was doing well and was very busy in the machine shop, working on the ship's equipment. Most of the letter was written to Larry's mother, but at the end was a note to Larry. The message said Larry's dad had made a new friend who was a big Cleveland Indians fan. Larry's father also said his new friend had a gift for Larry. He said the package would be in the next mailbag.

Larry could not imagine what could be in the package.

Larry asked why his father had not said who the new friend was. Mrs. Green explained that soldiers and sailors did not write anything in their letters that might help the enemy. Sometimes in a war, letters fell into the wrong hands. She said there was probably a reason the name was left out.

After eating some of the apricots, Larry went upstairs to get ready for Boy Scouts. He took his Scout book off the shelf and practiced the Scout pledge. After a little study, Larry put on his uniform. He liked his uniform and thought it made him look grown-up, like his dad. Then Larry went to the garage and got a pair of work gloves. The Scout troop had been collecting scrap metal to help with the war, and they would have to sort some of it tonight. Larry knew the metal would be used to make ships, tanks and jeeps for American soldiers and sailors. Some of the old metal was rough and sharp so Larry would need gloves to protect his hands.

The whole time he was getting ready for his meeting Larry wondered about what was in the package.

His dad always sent great presents.

The local Scout troop met in the church at the end of the street, so Larry walked to the meeting. During the meeting the boys sorted the scrap metal that had been collected. Then they practiced setting up tents. The Buffalo Patrol set up their tent the quickest, but it was a close race. Larry's patrol, the Wolf Patrol, came in second. He was pleased with second place. Last week they had come in fourth.

When the meeting ended the boys stood outside the church and talked about the ballgame they had played that day. They also talked about the camping trip they were going to take. As the boys talked, Larry started for home, still wondering what was in the package.

As Larry climbed the front porch steps, he could hear his mother laughing and he thought he could hear voices on the radio.

When Larry opened the front door, he saw that someone else was in the house. It was a man sitting in the rocking chair.

Larry's jaw dropped. He could not believe what he saw.



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Learning Extensions — Things to Think About and Do

- Larry's father worked in the ship's machine shop. What is a machine shop? Why would good math skills be important to someone in a machine shop?
- The Boy Scouts were recycling metal. Does your family recycle anything? List five things that can be recycled.

Next Week: Chapter Four — Uncle Chuck