



Lady in White



Chapter Eight – by Kay and Russ Hively

The three people Sandy saw standing at the front of the school room were Mrs. Smyth, Dr. Worten and Miss Lamb, the lady in white. Sandy's heart sank. All she could imagine was that she was getting a new teacher.

Sandy quietly hung her shawl on a coat hook. Then she set her dinner bucket on the bench below her shawl and took her seat. The schoolroom was quiet. Normally, all of the children would be talking and making noise, but not today. Everyone was silent and on the edge of their seats. They all seemed to know that something big was about to happen.

When the school bell rang, Mrs. Smyth picked up her attendance book and sat down at her desk. As her teacher took the roll, Sandy looked at Judy. Like everyone else, Judy looked puzzled.

Mrs. Smyth explained that for the next few weeks they would have a special teacher for part of each day. She said the teacher's name was Miss Lamb. Then she said that Dr. Worten would explain what Miss Lamb was going to teach.

Sandy was relieved to know she was not going to have a new teacher. Miss Lamb would only be helping Mrs. Smyth. But Sandy wondered why Dr. Worten was going to explain what Miss Lamb was going to teach.

Dr. Worten told the children that he had sent for a "Visiting Nurse." He explained that a Visiting Nurse would come to help a community during epidemics (like smallpox) or to teach people about health and hygiene. He said there was too much sickness in their town because of poor sanitary conditions. Dr. Worten explained that keeping people from getting sick was much easier than making them well.

Sandy had never heard of a Visiting Nurse before, but everything now made sense. Miss Lamb would be working with Mrs. Smyth and Dr. Worten. That was why she had been seen with both of them since she came to town on Friday.

Dr. Worten told the students that Miss Lamb would be teaching them how to take care of their health. He said Miss Lamb would also be working with him and the adults in the community to improve sanitary conditions. He asked the children to welcome and listen to her.

For the next hour, Miss Lamb talked to the children about the importance of keeping things clean. She explained that people get sick when they eat or come into contact with dirty water or other unclean things.

When Miss Lamb finished and was ready to leave for the day, Sandy realized something. She understood how bad it was to have dirty streets, and why people like Rev. Butler were always coughing and sick. She was very glad Miss Lamb had come to town. Now maybe things would be better for everyone.

The more Sandy thought about Miss Lamb, the more she thought it would be wonderful to help sick people. Maybe, Sandy thought, when she grew up she would become a Visiting Nurse and help save lives by keeping people healthy.

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Things to Think About and Do

- Miss Lamb was a nurse. What kind of education or experience do you have to have to become a nurse?
- What are some things you do to keep yourself healthy? Make a list of things you do every day to keep yourself from getting sick.
- In your newspaper, locate stories and ads that relate to health. Explain how they benefit your community.

STANDARDS: G4:8; H/PE:3; G4:3; H/PE:2