

Good Morning, Mr. President

Chapter Eight - by Kay Hively

Mrs. Potter suggested that Peggy come to visit every weekday morning. They would sit on the porch and Mrs. Potter would read out loud all the stories about presidents.

Peggy was happy with this idea. She suggested they start that very day. So Mrs. Potter began reading about Abraham Lincoln. Peggy sat in the big wicker chair listening to Mrs. Potter and watching the Keystone Boys on the mountain.

For 10 days, Peggy listened as Mrs. Potter read. At the same time, she watched as the Keystone Boys created a great monument. Abraham Lincoln was coming to life right out of the book and, at the same time, right out of the mountain.

Peggy learned what a great man Mr. Lincoln was. She learned how badly Abraham Lincoln wanted to learn to read. Her favorite story was about him borrowing books to read by firelight. She also liked knowing he lived in a log cabin, just like she was doing this summer.



When the book about President Lincoln was finished, Mrs. Potter began reading about Thomas Jefferson. As Mrs. Potter's beautiful voice told the story of Mr. Jefferson, Peggy studied his giant face on the mountain. She thought President Jefferson looked very intelligent.

As the days of the Jefferson book passed, Peggy learned about the things Mr. Jefferson invented. But the best part of his story was how he wrote the Declaration of Independence. Mrs. Potter said freedom should be cherished by every American.

The third book was about Theodore Roosevelt. At first Peggy had a difficult time looking at the mountain. President Roosevelt was not there yet. Peggy knew where he was going to be, but she had to look at a picture in Mrs. Potter's book to see what he looked like.

Peggy immediately liked Mr. Roosevelt. He was like her father. She hoped some day she could come back to Mount Rushmore and see him up there with the other great Presidents.

By the time Mrs. Potter got to a book on George Washington, summer was coming to an end. Peggy's mother had started talking about going back to Nebraska and putting the children in school. Peggy was glad that Mr. Washington was the last book. After saying "Good morning, Mr. President," every day, she had come to love his face on the mountain.

Mrs. Potter read about what a brave soldier General Washington was and how he had defeated the British Army. But the most exciting thing was when Mr. Washington became the first President of the United States. Peggy thought it was sad that Mr. Washington never got to live in the White House like all the other presidents.

When it was time for the Jansen family to move back to Nebraska, Mr. Lincoln's head was almost finished. Peggy had hoped they could stay until it was dedicated, but school would not wait on Mike and Peggy. And she was going to miss Mrs. Potter.

When Peggy went to bed for the last time in South Dakota, she could hardly keep from crying. The next morning she looked out her window for the last time and, in a very sad voice, said, "Good-bye, Mr. President. Good-bye."

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Classroom Extensions

Things to Think About and Do -

- A. Which President was the "Father of His Country?" Why was he called this?
- B. Do you think Peggy ever got to see Mr. Roosevelt on the mountain? Write a poem about Mount Rushmore and the four Presidents.