

JIM

THE WONDER DOG



CHAPTER SIX

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At the Ruff Hotel in Marshall, my father Jim continued to demonstrate his abilities through daily performances.

“Jim, show us a married man.”

“Jim, show us a blonde woman.”

“Show us the man who plays the tuba.”

Jim obediently followed each and every command.

Visitors tried to challenge him.

“Jim, show us a boy wearing g-l-a-s-s-e-s,” they said, spelling the word. Jim trotted right up to a little boy wearing wire-rimmed spectacles.

On one occasion, a spectator wrote a command on a piece of paper. *Show us a man with red hair.*

Calm and certain, Jim placed his paw directly on a red-headed man in the room.

Everyone was amazed! As Jim’s fame spread, Sam and his loyal companion traveled across the region. After a performance at the Kemmerer Hotel in Wyoming, a newspaper reporter covering Jim’s story referred to him as “Jim the Wonder Dog, and the name stuck.”

Of course, Sam and Jim were often met with doubt, both during their



travels and while at home. No one believed that a regular Llewelin Setter like my father could actually know what he knew. But time and time again doubters were proven wrong once they actually saw what Jim was capable of.

One such doubter, a dentist named Dr. W.M. Bickford, did not believe one word he’d heard about Jim. So he marched himself right over to the Ruff Hotel to see Jim do what Dr. Bickford called, “his stuff.”

“What would you like him to do?” Sam asked.

Dr. Bickford took one look around the room.

“Show me the man with the Shriner’s pin on,” the dentist said.

Of course, my father walked right on over to the correct man and placed his paw on his leg.

Didn’t I tell you Missouri was the *Show*

Me State? That day, Dr. Bickford became a believer.

“He’s incredible,” he told Sam.

But of course Sam already knew that!

Everyone agreed that Jim was an amazing dog. But no one, not even Sam himself, could figure out how Jim actually did “his stuff!”

Sam took Jim to the University of Missouri to be observed by veterinarians and scientists. Dr. A.J. Durant, the university’s head veterinarian at the time, did a thorough examination and found nothing abnormal about my father. As far as the doctor could tell, Jim was just a regular dog! Then Jim gave a demonstration. He was asked questions in Italian and French, languages even Sam didn’t know. Of course, Jim got them right every time! The professors at the University of Missouri declared that Jim was the smartest dog they’d ever seen.

Jim was beyond smart. In fact, his abilities seemed to be more like magic. No other time was this closer to the truth than when Jim began predicting the future.

Just before the 1936 World Series, Sam placed Jim in front of two pieces of paper with words on them. One

read “New York Yankees,” the other “New York Giants.”

“Now Jim,” Sam said. “Tell me which team is going to win the World Series.”

Jim placed his paw on the Yankees. And what do you know? The New York Yankees won that series four games to two.

Jim picked Franklin D. Roosevelt to win the 1936 presidential election. He always chose the winning race horse, including predicting the winner of seven consecutive Kentucky Derbys, and he helped expectant mothers determine whether their babies were boys or girls.

Sam, despite his dog’s growing fame, continued to be a good, honest man and owner. Even when Hollywood came calling, Sam didn’t accept any movie deals offered to him and his famous setter. He believed that Jim’s powers were something extraordinary, something no one could really, truly understand, and he refused to profit on them in any way.

PAPER TRAINING

Jim predicted winners of sporting events. Newspapers are a great place to read about sports. Look in the Sports section of your newspaper. Find synonyms for “win” and “lose.”

Learning Standards: I can read historical fiction and make text-to-text and text-to-world connections.

