



# MILES & THE MONARCHS

By Carolyn Mueller | Illustrated by Philip Goudeau

## CHAPTER ONE

Miles tied his shoelaces and skipped out the front door of his family's brick home. The sun was shining. Today was going to be a good day.

BEEP! BEEP! BEEP!

A rusty blue truck pulled up in front of the house. Miles' dad was at the wheel.

"Ready?" his dad asked him.

"Sure am!" Miles answered, swinging the door open and sliding in next to his father.

The truck belonged to Miles' uncle. His dad had borrowed it for a special trip. Miles and his dad were driving all the way to Philadelphia to see the Kansas City Monarchs baseball team play in the 1942 Negro League World Series!

Miles could hardly wait. Miles loved baseball and often played in the sandlot with his friends. Sometimes he pretended to be Joe DiMaggio or maybe Ted Williams.

Miles adjusted his tie as his father put the truck in gear. He and his dad had dressed in their Sunday best (even on a Tuesday!). It was a crisp September day. The pair pulled out onto the road for their trip.

"You know, my dad and I used to take trips like this when I was your age," Miles' dad told him. "To see the games in the Negro Leagues. It was incredible. I saw all the stars."

Miles cradled his worn, leather baseball glove against his chest, trying to imagine his father as a little boy, going to a baseball game with Grandpa. It was hard to picture.

"We loved seeing the games," Miles' dad said. "But he showed me other things on that trip too."

"Like what, Dad?" Miles asked.

"You'll see, Miles," his dad said.

Miles nodded, sticking his head out the window to enjoy the bright, fall day. The truck bumped along a dirt road with farm fields passing on either side.

"How come we're not taking the highway?" Miles asked. "Isn't that faster?"

"We've got plenty of time, Miles," his dad said. "This is the best way."

Miles figured his dad knew what to do—his dad seemed to know everything—so he just sat back and relaxed, enjoying the drive.

"You're going to love seeing the Monarchs," Miles'

dad told him. "It's a different kind of feeling, watching their games."

Miles was born in Washington D.C. and had lived there his whole life. And he'd always loved baseball, especially the town's major league team, the Washington Nationals. But Miles never felt welcome at the Nationals games. Miles and his dad had to sit in a separate section, and they had to use different restrooms and drinking fountains. Miles tried to imagine stands full of fans cheering for baseball players that looked like him. He turned to his dad.

"Dad?" he asked. "How did the Negro League even start?"

**Newspaper Connection:** Read stories in your local newspaper about baseball games and create a comic strip depicting a parent and child at one of those games.

