

CHAPTER ELEVEN
HENRY IS SICK



Meanwhile me and Annie and Mama gather and shell the dry corn into a barrel and bring in the rest of beans and squash from around the corn. Mama save some of the corn fodder for our cow to eat, so the calf she birth will be fat and healthy.

Before we start to prize the tobacco into the hogshead, Neighbor Mooney comes riding up and there sit Henry in front of him with his head rest on Neighbor Mooney's chest. "I fear I bring you an ailing young one," he say and Mama come 'round the house and reach up for Henry. Neighbor Mooney say that Master Smythe say Henry cough and cough and cough day and night and that he fear Henry doesn't have the chest to stand life as a sweep.

Mama carry Henry in and put him on her bedstead and cover him with a quilt although it is warm. She make him some hyssop tea and some linseed tea from

our flax.

In the evening, Mama and Papa sit in front of the house. I hear Mama say, "Mayhap I should let Abby go in and apprentice to that milliner woman. She is a good worker but Annie get older, better at everything. Abby need a chance and we might be better off with one less growing mouth to feed since Henry is here for the winter."

Papa say, "When we roll the hogshead of tobacco to the Falls warehouse we bound to see a wheat farmer driving into Alexandria to send her along. Or maybe it will be time for the October Market Fair and I'll take her all the way."

I was happy to hear them say this. Annie, Richard and Shaddy play in back with squeals and I sit on the bedstead with Henry and pat his hand. I say, "I miss you, Henry," and he smile a little smile. I want to know what happen in Alexandria but I know he too tired and weak so I just sit and pat until the rest of the family come in and Mama say Henry is going to sleep in the bedstead with them and Papa say "You make a namby-pamby out of this boy." But Henry stay in the bedstead. Shaddy climb up with us. I hear Henry cough all night but I sleep because I work hard all day. In the morning Papa say, "Henry can sleep in the loft," but Mama say, "Richard, you can sleep outside; it isn't cold," and Henry sleep in the bedstead again that night.

CHAPTER TWELVE
ABIGAIL'S MOVE

Papa want Annie and me to hurry and make the hands of tobacco. Annie's hands fly so fast I hardly see them. I am stronger but not as good at takin' out the vein. Richard works on it some while watching his fire in the barn. His hands are big and 'tis hard for him to pull the vein.

Neighbor Mooney comes over and he and Papa set up Neighbor Mooney's tobacco prize. We even have to use his hogshead and he help Papa do the work. Papa said he would help Neighbor Mooney with his wheat and give him a little tobacco.

We make hands and the men prize and prize, pushing down with the prize. Papa said, "In '71, after the big flood, they found bales of tob still dry on the inside 'cause it was pack so."

When Annie and I get ahead of the men and there are plenty of hands for them we turn to knitting. I teach her and she knit the cap and I knit the mittens for Mama and Mama not know.

Finally the day comes to roll the hogshead. Papa borrow Neighbor Mooney's axle for General Braddock to pull. I pack a little bundle and put in the start on Annie's round gown to work on it in the city and one mitten I finish for Mama and the ball of yarn. I make two balls and leave one for Annie. She can knit good now and will make Mama's cap. I take a tin cup and the piece of shawl that Mama gave me a while back. Mama give me one of her aprons, nice and clean; she have three. Papa has make me some moccasins from the deer he shot in May. Not so good but better than nothin'. I hug Henry first and pat him on the back, "I wish you stay here," Henry say softly in my ear. Then I hug Mama and Annie and Shaddy and start over to the tobacco field to follow along.

Richard come with Papa and Neighbor Mooney to help keep the hogshead rollin'. It get stuck because the wheat wagons came on the tobacco road and make it hard to roll. Papa say, "Dang wheat farmers!"

And Neighbor Mooney say, "Watch how you talk about us!" but he chuckle and struggle to roll the hogshead and pull General Braddock while Papa and Richard straighten the hogshead.

The hogshead get stuck so many times that 'tis almost dark. Papa find a place to pull over in