

My Town

written by Leigh Anne Florence and illustrated by Chris Ware

Chapter 10

Seven Months Later

"Thanks for shopping with us, Ma'am," I said to the lady, handing her a bag with the items she'd purchased.

"Ten minutes until start time. We'd better get settled," Mom announced. We put our items in our wagon and made our way toward Main Street. Dad had chosen the perfect spot—a grassy hill on the campus of Centre College. Behind us was a banner that said, "Great American Brass Band Festival, 30th Anniversary, Danville, Kentucky."

"How are my favorite sales dogs?" Dad asked, making us laugh. We took a seat on the blanket and waited for the parade to begin. I noticed a young lady to my left sitting all alone.

"I'm Woody," I said, shaking her hand. "This is Chloe and our mom and dad. Want to join us for the parade?"

"Thanks! I'm Sarah," she responded. "This is my first time at the festival – and my first visit to Danville."

"You'll love the festival and the town!" I responded.

"Did you know Danville is called the "City of Firsts"? It was the first capital of Kentucky, was home to the first courthouse in Kentucky, and the first Kentucky Constitution was written and signed here," I

said, feeling proud of my town.

"Don't forget The Great American Brass Band Festival was named the country's most unique music festival," Chloe added. "Their goal is to preserve brass band music. They bring in the best brass musicians all over the world."

"They have a balloon race, a picnic, and even a church service for the entire town," I informed. "Oh, and you can buy things. Chloe and I have a booth at the corner. We're selling these buttons my sister made." I grabbed a button from our wagon and handed it to Sarah.

"You can have this," I informed.

"Thanks Woody," Sarah replied. "These are beautiful, Chloe!"

"Thank you," Chloe answered, blushing. "When we were at Mount Sterling Court Days this past fall, Woody traded his magic set for this art set for me. I spent all winter making these buttons so Woody and I could sell them at festivals all over the state."

"This is our first festival to sell them. And we've already made a profit!" I added. As we talked to Sarah, I noticed Mom and Dad smiling.

"How did you get this idea?" Sarah asked.

"It all started when Woody was listening to *Chester's Classic County Hour* and the daily trivia question came on," Chloe explained. "The question was 'In the song *My Town*, what is Uncle Bill doing at the courthouse when the sun goes down?'"

"I didn't know the answer," I added, "but I knew Chloe would. She loves Montgomery Gentry and that's her favorite song."

"Both Mr. Montgomery and Mr. Gentry are from Kentucky," Chloe interjected.

"Although Mr. Gentry passed away not too long ago." Chloe lowered her head as she spoke.

"Thanks to Chloe, I answered correctly, and we won the *My Town Prize Package*. It included food at different festivals across the state," I informed. "We'd never been to a

festival until then. Now our goal is to go to as many festivals as possible."

"That is such a great story," Sarah said once we finished explaining. For the first time since we handed her the button, Sarah looked at the words and read them out loud.

"I love my town.' Wow, this is so cool," she replied as she pinned it on her shirt. "Thank you, Woody and Chloe."

"You're welcome – and it's true," I replied. "I do love my town."

As Sarah thanked us, we heard motors rumble, indicating the parade was officially starting. Coming down the street was a shiny red tractor followed by the Army Band who was marching down the street playing *You're A Grand Old Flag*. Mom, Dad, Chloe and I picked up our American flags and waved them proudly.

Immediately, I thought about the line from Montgomery Gentry's song with the rusty tractor and Uncle Bill lowering the flag. To think that song had started the journey of traveling to festivals. I realized each person we met always talked about "My Town."

"My Town has the best festival."

"That's just one thing I love about My Town."

"You've got to visit My Town."

Although *My Town* is different for each of us, it really is the best town because it's the town we call home – and home was the best place to be.

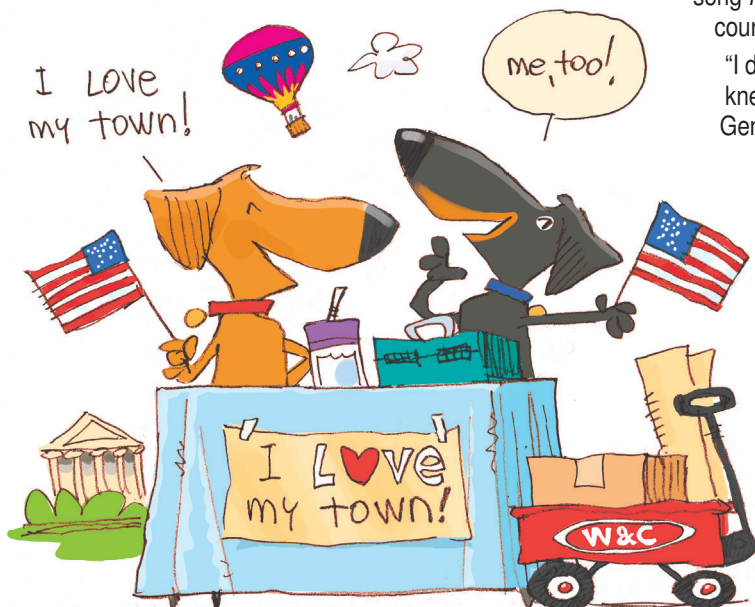
In the tradition of the Brass Band Festival Parade, everyone took to the street and joined the final band marching down Main Street.

"It was nice to meet you folks," Sarah said as we walked along.

"You too," we echoed.

"We'll be at our booth selling our buttons," I added, "but after that Chloe and I would love to show you around Our Town."

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