

Dog paddling across the Bluegrass

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Chapter 2

"That's a problem alright," Dad said when I told him my mistake. "How could you buy purchase something without writing down the seller's name?"

"I have the address," I explained, convincing Dad it was legit. "Besides, he's an officer in the Marines."

"Going forward, when someone says their name, please pay attention."

"Yes sir. My excitement got the best of me." Since I'd entered the Hook the Biggest Bass fishing tournament at Kentucky Lake, I'd been focused on winning. I'd bought a boat, packed my Red Rover Rod 'n Reel, life jacket, first-aid kit, horn, fishing line and hooks, although I still needed bait.

"It says here bass like live worms and crawdads," Chloe said, reading from a library book she'd borrowed. She was excited about the tournament too.

"Where can we get crawdads and worms?" I asked.

"At the creek," Chloe answered.

Mom handed us an old pimento cheese container for the worms and an empty ice cream bucket for the crawdads.

"Thanks, Mom!"

"You're welcome," Mom replied. "Keep them in the containers. Be careful and wear your life jacket."

"But we aren't getting in water," I said.

"You'll be on the creek bank, which means you'll be on

the land BESIDE the water."

"Yes ma'am."

On the way, Chloe and I sang our favorite creek song. "Goin' up Cripple Creek, goin' on the run, Goin' up Cripple Creek..."

By the second verse we'd arrived. We heard frogs, crickets and saw a turtle swimming near the bank. "Let's play Row Your Boat," I suggested. We each found a stick to serve as our boat, then checked to see which way the stream was flowing. We put our boats upstream.

"That's the finish line," I pointed downstream to a bush that looked like it had corn dogs on it.

"Ready, set, go!" We released our boats, then ran downstream to watch them float.

"You won," Chloe announced. I pumped my paw in the air, feeling victorious.

"It was almost a tie," I encouraged. "Let's dig for bait."

"One hundred forty-two worms and 34 crawdads," Chloe announced after we'd dug a while. We gathered our containers and stick boats, and rushed home.

Hours later we were in the car, headed for Eastern KY to pick up our boat. The container of worms sat under Chloe and the crawdads sat under me.

"Are we there yet?" I asked.

"Not quite," Dad replied. "How about playing a game?"

"I Spy with my little eye something that starts with R!" I said.

"Rabbit," Chloe responded.

"Guess again," I replied.

"Raccoon."

"A river," I said, pointing out the window.

"That's not a river, Woody. That's a lake," Mom corrected.

"There's a difference?"

"Of course," Mom answered. "A river is a stream of water that flows through a channel. I think of a river in 3 parts: source, middle, mouth. The source is the beginning of the river. It's usually a stream or water running off the mountain. The middle part is the mature river.

It's deeper and usually wider. Then the river twists and turns as it flows toward the end, known as the mouth. The mouth is where the river empties into a bigger river, ocean, or lake."

"A lake," Dad continued, "is a big body of water surrounded by land. River water flows but lake water doesn't. Cave Run Lake - the lake you just saw - is man-made."

"How do you make a lake?" I asked.

"By damming up a river and creating a reservoir."

Rivers, lakes, reservoirs, oh my!

"I'm confused" I replied.

"About what, son?"

"Everything."

Dad smiled and explained. "When it rained heavily the Licking River - a river in this area - would flood. The Army Corp of Engineers built a wall - or a dam - to control the amount of water flowing. The wall collected the excess water and created a reservoir - or a lake. Thanks to the dam - or that wall that collects the excess water - folks have their own water supply, fish and wildlife have a home, and the possibility of flooding is reduced."

Our conversation reminded me I should check the crawdads. I grabbed the bucket and removed the top. SCREECH!!!

"Sorry," Dad said. "Squirrel ran across the road. Everyone ok?"

"Yes sir," we answered.

Unfortunately, 34 crawdads were scattered in the backseat. Chloe and I gathered them up hoping Mom wouldn't notice.

31, 32, 33. I held up one toe, signaling one was still missing.

"O! MacDonald had a farm." Chloe began, keeping Mom distracted. "E-I-E-I-O. And on that farm he had an ostrich, E-I-E-I-

"OH! OH! OH!" Mom screamed.

"It's only one O, Mom," I said.

Chloe pointed to Mom's hair.

"BINGO!" I pulled the crawdad from Mom's hair. "34!"

"DOGWOOD!!!"

"We're here," Dad announced.

I looked up and gasped. "Oh no!"



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