

The Journey

Connie Meyer

William tightly gripped his ticket as he boarded the ship. Nervously he looked at it one more time before he handed it to a sailor waiting on board. It read, "...*van Nederland to America, April 27, 1838.*" Then he joined his parents and two younger sisters who were waiting near the ship's railing. Now together, silently and thoughtfully, they watched the Dutch port disappear as they began their voyage. It was their last view of their homeland.

"Come, let us find our compartments," Papa said finally.

"Nay, I am not well," countered Mama. William observed his mother then and was surprised to see her so pale. But then, he thought he was not feeling so well himself. His sisters didn't look any better.

"Ya, de sea is not so calm as we would like it today," said Papa in an understanding manner. William wondered if his father was getting seasick too, but he was still able to find some crates for them to rest upon.

William thought about how hard it had been to leave their grandpa behind. There had been many other tearful good-byes as well. He even had to leave his best friend, Peter, behind. He sighed and looked around. The ship had been built for cargo, not comfort. This would not be an easy journey, and as his stomach became even more unsettled he mumbled to himself, "—not easy at all."

Papa glanced over at him then and nodded. "Ya, William," he said, "it is not easy, but we go to a land where we may worship God freely—and in truth. It's a good land too, a land where crops and cattle flourish. Surely God is good to us. It is hard to go, but not so hard when we remember where we're going."

"It is like going to heaven," added Mama then, "de way is not easy, but it is worth the journey. Ya, we must remember where we are going." ❖

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