



Lena Garza

ACCIDENTAL DETECTIVE

FOUND GLORY

PJ GRAY



CHAPTER 1

BROKEN SILENCE

It was almost quiet enough in the Apple Glen Public Library to hear a pin drop. One woman typed on her laptop, creating a gentle rhythm with the click-clack of the keys. A clerk pushed a book cart down an aisle. Occasionally, the cart's wheels let out a high-pitched squeak.

Thump!

A sudden loud sound made the clerk jump. He turned to see a large book on the floor behind him. No one was nearby. "How did that happen?" he whispered to himself.

The clerk picked up the old, heavy book

and put it back on the shelf. Then he went back to his cart and wheeled it to the next row.

As he walked away, the book inched toward the edge of the shelf again.



CHAPTER 2

FOUNDER FIGHT

Luna Garza yawned as she spread peanut butter on a slice of toast. The small television in the kitchen was tuned to the local news. Her dad sat at the table sipping coffee.

Having her dad home made Luna happy. He was often traveling for his job. But a big project had been delayed. This meant he would be home for at least the next month. It was good timing because Luna's mom had just left on a last-minute business trip. Like Luna, Mrs. Garza was always up for a new adventure.

In fact, a new adventure was what Luna's

parents had been looking for when they moved to Ohio over a year ago. They bought a big, old two-story house in a small town called Apple Glen. The house reflected the town itself in many ways. Both had once been grand, but they had fallen on hard times. Still, the Garzas saw potential. While Luna's dad traveled for work, Mrs. Garza set out to restore the house to its former glory. This led her to start a business. Now she was restoring furniture and antiques for other people. Her latest job had taken her to New York. She was hired to spend several weeks helping to renovate an old church.

As Luna sat down at the table, Mr. Garza's phone rang. He spoke to the caller for a few minutes while Luna ate her toast. Luna had an idea of what the call was about. Her dad had agreed to help organize Apple Glen's first Founder's Day celebration. Mrs. Garza had talked him into it before she left. She said it

would give him something to do during his time at home.

“That sounds good,” Mr. Garza said finally. “Let’s discuss this later. See you at the meeting.”

After he finished, Luna turned up the TV. A news reporter was interviewing a woman from Dayton, Ohio. Her name was Sue Neal. “I represent the descendants of Wendell Brent,” she said. “We are asking the city to reconsider its planned Founder’s Day celebration. Apple Glen was not founded by Herman James. Wendell Brent lived here first.”

Mr. Garza stared at the television. “Who is that?” he asked.

“I don’t know,” Luna said. “But she doesn’t sound happy about Founder’s Day.”

The reporter turned to another woman. Mr. Garza shook his head. “Oh no. It’s Margo Hopp. I can’t seem to escape her.”

Mrs. Hopp smiled at the camera. “I’m

president of the Apple Glen Women's Club. We are organizing the Founder's Day events. In addition, I'm a proud descendant of our city's founder, Herman James."

Mr. Garza made a face.

"What's wrong, Dad?" Luna asked.

"Nothing. She is just a rather difficult person."

"Interesting," Luna said. "I think she's Kimmy Hopp's mom."

"You know her daughter?"

"Yes. Kimmy is in my class. We aren't friends though. She makes fun of Amber and me for getting good grades. All she does is put people down. Her family has a lot of money. They live in a big house in the Cherry Heights neighborhood."

Margo Hopp went on in a serious tone. "Mrs. Neal is making false claims. Where is her proof? She is just trying to ruin our first Founder's Day. I think she's jealous."

“Knock, knock!” a voice called.

The kitchen door opened. Their next-door neighbor, Ann Watson, came in. She was holding a baking dish.

“Here’s a pecan pie,” Ann said. “I know it’s Luna’s favorite.”

“Thanks, Ann!” Luna grinned.

“Good morning,” Mr. Garza said. “Want some coffee?”

“Yes, please!” Ann turned to Luna. “How’s your mom?”

“She’s good. We talk every night before bed. Yesterday she told me all about stained glass repair.”

Ann glanced at the television. “Is that Margo?”

Luna nodded. “She said she’s a descendant of Herman James.”

Ann laughed. “Oh, really? Maybe that’s true. But she didn’t grow up here. She told me so.”

On the screen, Mrs. Hopp moved the reporter's microphone closer to her face. "Herman James founded this town. It was just him—and no one else. There are historical records to prove it."