



Sweet Land of Liberty

Deborah Hopkinson

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This inspiring story of little-known civil rights champion Oscar Chapman and his role in Marian Anderson's concert at the Lincoln Memorial reminds readers that one person can truly make a difference.

On Easter Sunday 1939, Marian Anderson performed at the foot of the Lincoln Memorial in front of a crowd of over 75,000 people. The person largely responsible for putting her there was a white man, Oscar Chapman, assistant secretary of the interior under President Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

When Chapman learned that Marian Anderson was not allowed to sing at Constitution Hall because of the color of her skin, he took it upon himself to do the impossible: find Marian Anderson an appropriate venue for a concert and make an important statement about equality and the rights of all Americans. With support from the highest levels of U.S. government, Chapman helped produce a landmark concert that - for at least one evening - bridged the color divide to bring a city and much of the nation together.

Author Deborah Hopkinson tells the inspirational story of Oscar Chapman, including his childhood exposure to racism that led to his lifelong commitment to ending bigotry. An author's note provides additional historical context. Illustrator Leonard Jenkins's remarkable illustrations recreate a bygone era and pay tribute to remarkable real-life people and a magical moment in modern history.

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