

After an hour Brenda walked down to Patrick's office.

Michael and Thomas were holding on to her.

Eleanor walked behind her mother.

She saw how Michael and Thomas hurt for their grandma.

She thought, "God I can't my babies back here in this evil world by themselves. Shirley would be my age, but these two little ones would be too young. Show how to ask You to extend my life so I can see them grow up and have their children. Show me what to do please."

They walked into Patrick's office and Eleanor closed the door.

Patrick was laid across his desk sobbing.

Shirley, Bruce and Percy were patting him.

Brenda went to Patrick and laid her head on his back and cried.

Nadine, Jose, Dan, Monica and Mellissa were standing in the billiards room watching them.

Someone was knocking on the front door.

They all knew it was Sunday evening and no one was to be at the house.

Leon and the security man that was leaving that week to become a minister were riding back from patrolling the sides of the house.

They saw the buggy and they saw the woman running to the front and knocking on the door.

Leon and Marvin rode to the house.

They saw three children in the wagon.

They looked at the wagon.

Leon yelled at the woman, "Who are you?"

The three children in the wagon jumped.

The woman turned and looked back at Leon and Marvin and turned back around and knocked harder on the door.

Leon and Marvin pulled their rifles and clocked them.

Her children started screaming and falling down in the wagon.

She turned around with a frown on her face and yelled to her children to be quiet.

Leon yelled at her, "Get away from the door woman!"

She looked and saw both men had their rifles on her.

She stood on the porch and did not move.

Jose and all the staff walked to the door and the woman turned to rush inside.

Jose, Dan, Monica, Mellissa and Nadine were looking out the windows.

Dan said, "That's Max's wife Josephine. She is an idiot and think she is a tough cookie."

Jose said, "I don't care how tough she is, what is she doing here?"

Monica said, "What does she have in the wagon besides those bad kids?"

Everybody looked at Monica.

Jose walked to the door and opened it.

He, Nadine and Dan stepped out and closed the door.

Leon dismounted his horse and had his fist balled up walking to the woman.

The children in the wagon sat up to see what would happen.

Marvin kept his eyes on the children a troop member was killed by children because he thought they were harmless.

Monica, Mellissa and Peter stood in the windows and watched.

They saw Leon was angry.

Peter looked at Nadine who had her arms folded.

He did not know what that meant but he turned his eyes back to the woman.

He saw the wagon and stuff in the wagon and said, "Who is that?"

Mellissa said, "Max's wife."

Peter looked at her and said, "What does she have in the wagon?"

Monica said, "We don't know."

Peter said, "Why is she here?"

Monica said, "Peace offering. Probably returning some of the stolen goods."

Peter looked out the window and said, "If she knew the stuff was stolen she is a part of this."

Monica and Mellissa looked at Peter.

Peter mind drifted back when he was a thief. A very good one. For years he would move around and steal and steal and steal until one day a trap was set and he fell into the trap.

He was given twenty years in prison.

He served fifteen. He was let out because a large mob group was arrested and sent to that prison to wait for them to be executed.

The prison let out the non-violent prisoners who served seventy five percent of their time.

Peter had that week just made seventy percent of his time served and he was released out of prison.

Peter ran all the way down the road and the warden, captain and others were standing in the windows watching Peter as he ran and ran and ran.

The warden said, "I don't think we will see him again."

Peter kept moving until he got to the next state.

He was homeless but would do any work for a dime.

He kept working and saving his money.

He was beaten several times from the other homeless and street people to get his dimes he worked for.

Peter hid his dimes.

He crawled the next day to where he was staying in the woods.

People in the town saw Peter and knew he was homeless and worked for food and dimes.

They knew he had been beaten and left for dead over his money.

They watched him crawl to the woods.

The people stood to see what was going to happen to him.

A lady who was standing by and saw the sight took out her handkerchief and walked to every woman and man and asked for money for the man.

They crowd gave her some money.

She doubled tied the handkerchief and waked behind Peter into the woods.

A man followed her.

She saw Peter laying down and shaking.

She laid the handkerchief next to shaking Peter and ran.

She knocked down the man who followed her.

He stood and followed the woman.

The woman ran out the woods crying.

Some people ran to her.

She covered her mouth and cried.

Peter came to in a few days.

He felt the knot under his side.

He pulled the knot and saw it was a handkerchief.

Peter frowned because he did not remember he had a handkerchief.

He opened the handkerchief and saw the money.

He looked around and got his dimes he hid and crawled through the woods for several days until he reached the big city,

He saw a restaurant and he lived in the woods next to the restaurant.

He would always go after dark and fight the cats and dogs for the restaurant's leftovers.

The owner caught Peter one night and yelled at him for eating out the garbage.

Peter begged the owner not to run him away.

The owner looked around to figure out where Peter came from.

The owner said, "Where do you live?"

Peter did not want to tell.

The owner said, "I'll let you mop and bring out the garbage, and not to eat it, for a meal."

Peter agreed and he showed up everyday at the end of the evening meal and mopped the floors and took out the garbage.

The restaurant owner would always make Peter a clean plate of food that he would serve to his customers.

The owner needed help because his wife left him.

He asked Peter to help him until he got help.

Peter was there when the owner opened in the morning and until he closed in the evening.

Peter would wash the dishes and wash the tables and chairs and swept the floors and mopped the floors in the evening and take out the garbage.

The owner would cook the food.

Peter watched the owner cook the food.

He decided that is what he wanted to do become a cook.

Peter asked the owner where he learned to cook.

The owner said he was in the military and he was a cook. He told Peter there were cooking schools around and he could go to one of those.

Peter went into looking for one of the schools.

The receptionist told Peter to go and bathe and come back.

Peter was angry that he was told to go and bathe and come back.

He walked the city and found a bath house.

The owner looked at Peter and said, "Where are your clothes?"

Peter said, "I don't have anymore clothes."

The owner frowned at Peter and said, "What good it does to bath and put the same filthy clothes on."

The owner looked at Peter and said, "There is a supply store around the corner. They have marked down clothes and shoes. Go and buy new underwear, clothes and shoes and come back. Have long have you worn those clothes?"

Peter said, "About six months."

Everyone stopped and looked at Peter.

The owner said, "When you come back I'll help you."

The customers laughed as Peter walked out the door.

Peter knew he had to hurry and get back to the school and then to the restaurant. He told the owner he would be back for dinner.

Peter walked around the area and passed the supply place several times because he was angry and not looking.

He looked at the supply store.

He walked in.

Everyone covered their noses.

Peter looked at them.

The manager said, "May I help you."

Peter said, "The bath house owner sent me here."

The manager said, "I see why. What do you need?"

Peter looked at the people faces of disapproval.

He turned to stomp out the store.

The manager said, "You will keep being rejected if you don't want to change."

Peter stood in the doorway.

The people on the street covered their noses and passed Peter.

The manager looked at Peter up and down.

He walked in the store and got Peter two pairs of socks, two pairs of underwear, two shirts and a pair of jeans and a new pair of boots and belts.

He called Peter and said, "Sir come back in and look at these clothes."

Peter turned and looked back.

The manager kept working with other customers.

Peter walked in and looked at the new clothes.

Peter said, "I can't afford the boots."

The manager said, "You better. Because if I can look at your boots and know those are the boots they give you in prison, then everyone else will know and won't help you."

The clerk whispered to the manager.

The manager looked at the clerk then at Peter and said, "There is a shoe repair shop around the corner, when you are going back to the bath house. Stop and see if they have any boots for sale."

The manager held out his hand for Peter's money and Peter counted the money out the handkerchief. He never opened the handkerchief.

The manager counted the money and told Peter to put up his money because the winter will be coming and he had to get shelter. He told Peter the winter was bad there and he could not live in the woods.

Peter looked at the manager because he realized the city people knew he lived in the woods.

Peter was walking and fussing and passed the shoe repair shop and he went back and found a second pair of boots and bought them.

He went to the bath house and had a hot bath and hot shave.

He changed clothes and walked out and looked around.

He said, "Where are my clothes?"

The owner pointed out back and there was a fire and a stench.

Peter looked at the owner.

The owner said, "You need to bathe once a week and buy you another pair of clothes."

Peter walked out and went back to the school.

The receptionist looked at Peter and smiled and asked him how she could help him.

Peter said, "I was here two hours ago and asked to come to school to be a cook."

The receptionist looked at Peter up and down.

She gave Peter the paper to complete.

She sat and stared at Peter until he finished the paper and brought it back to her.

The man over the cooking school and went into his office.

Peter completed the paper and walked and gave it to the receptionist.

She continued to stare at Peter.

The man over the cooking school saw Peter gave the receptionist the paper.

She still sat and looked at Peter.

She was amazed at his appearance.

The man over the school was watching from his office and stood and went out and took the paper from the receptionist and looked at paper.

He said, "Peter?"

Peter looked and no one else was there.

Peter said, "Yes sir."

He thought about what the man at the supply store.

He tried to be pleasant.

The man offered Peter to come to his office.

He and Peter walked to his office and he closed the door.

The man over the cooking school rolled his eyes at the receptionist as he closed his door.

He looked over Peter's information and said, "A long way from home. How did that come about?"

Peter said, "What does that have to do with cooking?"

The man at Peter and said, "It has nothing to do with cooking. It has to do with your morals and whether want a convict around us."

Peter looked at Mr. Green in shock.

Peter said, "The boots gave it away?"

Mr. Green said, "Your nasty attitude. Like someone was trying to steal your beans and bread."

Peter sat for a minute and said, "Are you going to let me in this school?"

Mr. Green said, "Yes. As long as you pay."

Peter looked at Mr. Green and asked how much for the school.

Mr. Green said, "A hundred dollars."

Peter nearly ran out the door.

Peter said, "I don't have that type of money."

Mr. Greene said, "If you want this bad enough you will work for the money. LEGALLY."

Peter was offended and looked at Mr. Green.

Mr. Green looked at Peter and said, "School starts in three weeks. You have to be clean, with a bath and clean clothes everyday. No exceptions."

Peter stood and opened the door and walked out.

Peter walked back to the restaurant and did his work.

The owner looked at Peter and said, "Peter you look nice. That is the way you are suppose to look."

Peter said, "The people told me I lived in the woods and I need to find shelter for the winter. The city knows I live in the woods. The cooking school cost a hundred dollars and I need it in three weeks."

The restaurant owner said, "Peter my wife is back. I have been sleeping in the supply room here. You can stay in my supply room for the winter. We will close up in two months and spend the winter with her parents at their farm."

Peter watched Mr. Owens.

Mr. Owens said, "I don't like going there for six months but if that can keep me married I'll go. If you care to live here. You have to get coal for the winter and keep this place safe until I return. I'll tell the police I have you staying here. By the time we come back for the summer, you should be on your feet and move on. If you move on before I get back give tell the police and give them the key to this place."

Peter stood and stared at Mr. Owens.

Mr. Owens said, "Peter don't stare at me. Give me an answer."

Peter said, "Yes sir."

Mr. Owens said, "Yes what?"

Peter said, "Yes I'll stay here and I'll get coal for the winter."

Mr. Owens was angry about his wife's decision to stay with her parents on their farm to help them out.

Mr. Owens said, "Peter don't let no one in here and keep this place clean. You need you bed coverings. I suggest you go somewhere and find you work so you can pay for that school and buy coal and have bed coverings because the winter is cold here."

Mr. Owens looked at Peter very hard and walked out the restaurant and closed the door.

Peter ran out to the woods and got all of his dimes.

He counted the dimes.

He counted the money that was left in the handkerchief.

Peter fell to the floor on his knees.

He cried out and said, "fifteen dollars."

Peter wept for a long time.

He balled up on the floor and slept until the next day.



He got up and walked out the restaurant.

He met a few business owners to find work.

They told him they only needed him for a few weeks.

Peter worked hard for those few weeks.

He had enough money to part of the cost of the school.

Mr. Green allowed him to pay as he went to school.

Peter went back to the supply store and bought three shirts and two pairs of pants. He heard the men that work outside saying that the winter was going to be bad that year.

Peter would work in the morning on the docks.

He would go to school most of the day.

He ate whatever was left over from their lesson.

He worked at night at the different restaurants in the city.

Peter paid for the coal for the winter.

He bought quilts and blankets for the winter and bought some more socks and another pair of used boots.

The receptionist at the cooking school asked Peter over and over where he lived.

Peter would not answer her.

Mr. Green heard the receptionist.

He waited until Peter went to class and he walked out his office and said Miss Winters please come into my office.

She looked at Mr. Green and walked to his office.

He closed the door and said, "I am terminating you."

She stared at Mr. Green.

She stood up and walked out.

He escorted her to her desk and she picked up her bag and wrap and walked out the school.

Mr. Green looked at the clerk and said, "You are the new receptionist. Don't let her back in this building."

Peter was leaving to go to his evening jobs.

Elizabeth looked at Peter and nodded towards Miss Winters' desk.

Peter looked at her desk.

He looked back at Elizabeth and walked out and went to his evening jobs.

He worked all week-end.

He felt someone was following him in the nighttime.

He ran around a corner and hid.

He saw Miss Winters and two men running to look and see where he went.

Peter stayed around the corner for a long time.

He stood and peeped and ran all the way to the restaurant.

He unlocked the door and ran inside just in time as Miss Winters and her two thugs ran and looked in the vacant building.

They looked in the windows and saw the building was boarded up.

The police rode by and Miss Winters and her two thugs acted like they were out for an evening.

The police were on their horses and waited for Miss Winters and her two thugs to leave.

Peter could not think what she was doing.

He knew it was no good.

Peter fell asleep with his clothes and boots on.

He laid still and felt the cold in the air.

He thought, "What am I to do about the coal outside and the smoke from the chimney in the winter. It is already cold. I need a coat."

Peter went to his morning job and left and went to the bath house and dropped his clothes at the washing lady.

He went to class and asked Mr. Green who was Miss Winters.

Mr. Green said, "I don't know she was here when I started working her six months ago."

Peter said, "She wanted to know where I stayed. She and two men followed me home after I left the restaurants."

Mr. Green looked at Peter and said, "I have no answer. You may need to talk to the police."

Peter was learning the basics of preparing food.

He paid for the month.

He was working hard. The life of stealing was creeping back to meet his needs.

Peter rejected it.

He wanted to get through the cooking school for Thanksgiving and Christmas.

Peter had enough money to pay for cooking school for November and he bought him a hat, scarf and pair of gloves until he was able to buy him a coat.

Peter worked hard for November and for Thanksgiving. He made enough to buy him a second hand coat and paid for the month of December. The owns always gave him a nice plate of food.

Peter was able to get through the holidays without Mis Winters.

He realized she wanted him to join their gang of thieves and hide their stolen goods at his place.

Miss Winter and a large number of thieves were arrested during the holidays and the it was in the newspapers.

Peter exhaled and said, "Thank You God."

Peter lived through the winter.

He used all the money he had to pay for the cooking school and he nearly froze from March to May.

Peter received his certificate for graduating from cooking school.

He left the city and caught a train and went to a smaller town and asked around for work.

The restaurant owners told him a rich family needed a cook.

Peter got a ride to the Stiths and Brenda hired him and he has been with them for five years.

Peter looked out the window at Josephine.

Jose said, "who are you and what do you want?"

Josephine turned and started walking hard towards Jose.

Jose put out his hand and said, "Stop and leave this property and never return."

Josephine said, "I won't leave until I speak to Patrick and Brenda."

Leon grabbed Josephine at her collar and pulled her off the porch.

Her children begin to holler and cry.

Leon threw Josephine in her wagon.

He put the refile to her head and he looked in her wagon and saw a lot of the stolen items.

He got on his horse and he made her follow him to town to the sheriff.

He and Marvin escorted with the refiles on her and her children.

The sheriff looked at Josephine.

The children ran into the jail and saw Max.

They ran to their daddy.

The sheriff did not care.

He started his paperwork on Josephine.

Leon and Marvin left and rode by the Stith's rest stop to check and see if everything was well.

They passed some freed men when they were escorting Josephine to the sheriff's office.

Nathan saw them coming and he went and greeted Leon and Marvin.

Marvin told Nathan he was leaving the next day going home to go and become a minister.

Nathan shook his hand and said he was glad to have known him.

Leon and Marvin rode back to the house.

Gary was leaving the house and saw Leon and Marvin and said, "George died today. The Stiths best friend on the trains. I have to go and tell the Olsens. If you see Louis tell him to start lighting the torches."

Leon said, "Alright."

As they rode into the backyard.

Marvin saw Rita and he looked at Leon.

Leon said, "You can try. Go ahead."

Marvin dismounted his horse and startled Rita, Jennifer, Lucy and Benjamin.

He said, "Pardon me I did not mean to startle you."

He looked at Rita and said, "Ma am can I speak to you?"

Benjamin said, "I have to take her home and she lives further than the rest of us. So make it quick."

Leon laughed.

Marvin took Rita by her hand and said, "Hey I am Marvin King. I was a soldier in the civil war and worked as a field here and ten a security man."

Rita looked puzzled and said, "Yes. I know."

Marvin said, "Your testimony about your life touch my life. I want to get to know you. I am leaving tomorrow to go to minister school. I want to know if I can write you and get to know you?"

Jennifer and Lucy started laughing.

Benjamin said, "Whoop ti do."

Rita looked at Marvin and said, "I guess."

She reached to Marvin for a piece of paper and pencil.

Marvin felt his shirt and realized he did not paper nor pen.

Benjamin write her here.

Jose will give her the letter.”

Lucy said, “We got to go Rita.”

Rita turned to walk away.

Marvin said, “What’s your name?”

Benjamin shook his head.

Rita looked at Marvin and said, “Rita Smith.”

He walked her to the carriage and helped her in.

Rita stared at Marvin as they pulled out the backyard.

Benjamin started speeding to make up time.

The women had a lively chat all the way home.

Leon looked at Marvin.

Marvin went into the kitchen to see what was there to eat.

Thomas had stewed chickens and rice with okra and tomatoes.

Marvin and Leon got bowls of the dish and enjoyed it.

Marvin saw Louis and told him Gary said start lighting the torches.

Louis went outside and started the lighting in the backyard and slowly made his way up to the front of the house.

Brenda and Patrick did not come to dinner that evening.

Eleanor and the children sat for dinner.

Gary came back from a devastated Gen and Ben.

He stopped and helped Louis light the torches.

They went back to the house.

Gary went to the remodeled supply shed.

Meredith was there talking to Denise who returned while Gary was away at the Olsens.

Gary was tired he went to his room and laid down.

He enjoyed Meredith and Denise’s company and conversation.

Gary got off the bed and went and told Meredith that George passed that day when they arrived in Philadelphia and that Patrick and Brenda and the Olsens were taking it pretty bad.

Meredith looked for a minute and said, “Thank you Gary.”

She and Denise continued to talk.

Gary eventually fell asleep and woke at six am the next morning.

He realized he slept in his clothes.

He walked out the re-modeled shed and started the hot water for the day.

She sat on the back porch and Marvin was leaving.

Gary walked to Marvin and shook his hand and told him best of luck.

Marvin grinned and said, "Take care of yourself Gary."

Patrick and Brenda were on their knees praying.

They heard talking.

Patrick stood and walked to the window and saw Marvin talking to Gary.

Patrick yelled out the window and said, "Marvin I want to see you before you leave. I'll be down."

Marvin looked up at Patrick and said, "Yes sir. I'll wait."

Leon was riding out the field and rode next to Marvin and they were talking.

Patrick put on a pair of slacks.

Brenda put on a robe and walked with Patrick to the back porch.

Patrick unlocked the backdoor and he walked out first followed by Brenda.

They spoke.

Patrick had an envelope in his hand.

Leon nodded.

Marvin turned and saw Patrick and Brenda.

Marvin dismounted his horse and walked to Patrick and Brenda on the back porch.

Gary stood and stepped off the porch.

Patrick said, "I'm going to miss you."

Brenda elbowed Patrick.

Marvin grinned.

Patrick said, "We are going to miss you. You were always respectful and watched over me and family."

He handed Marvin an envelope.

Marvin took the envelope and said, "Sir I'm not going to look inside."

Patrick and Brenda looked at Marvin.

Marvin looked at them and said, "Y'all going to make me look inside and whatever is in the envelope may change my mind about leaving."

Marvin opened the envelope and counted five one hundred dollars bills.

He instantly cried.

Marvin turned and looked at the horse and said, "I forgot to tell you I am taking that horse."

Patrick said, "I gave each of you a horse, but the thieves."

Marvin said, "I apologize for that."

Marvin held up the envelope and said, "This will help in my uncertainty. The only thing I am certain of is JESUS the Christ is the Son of GOD who has come in the flesh and poured out HIS holy blood to wash away my sins and redeem me."

Marvin reached and shook Patrick's hand and he leaned and kissed Brenda on her cheek and walked off the porch and nodded at Gary.

He mounted his horse and Leon rode with him a little distance and stood and watched Marvin ride.

Leon looked after Marvin and thought, "He has a three day ride. That's a long ride. I wonder what Patrick and Brenda gave him."

Leon sat on his horse and looked around and enjoyed the new day.

He thought, "It was seventeen of us. Who ran away from life and hid on this estate. One married and went home. One is leaving to become a minister for God and three in jail for stealing."

Leon shook his head and said, "They could have left. They betrayed this man and his family."

Leon turned and said, "Good morning boys."

They said, "Marvin gone?"

Leon was riding back in the yard and said, "Yeap he has a long ride in front of him. He will telegram us when he gets home."

Patrick and Brenda went back in the house and into their bedroom and prayed for Marvin's safe trip and for him to become a minister for GOD.

They stayed a little longer in their bedroom and bath and dressed.

They went to breakfast close to eight thirty am.

Everyone went to breakfast.

Eleanor had everyone scrambled eggs and bacon and biscuits.

After breakfast she went to her office and checked on the progress of the new railroad.

She answered mail and wrote letters.

She saw a letter from Joseph's mother.

She did not open the letter.

Lorraine came to work and Dan told her what happened.

Lorraine said, "They will probably leave on the train Wednesday to go to Philadelphia."

Meredith walked in the door and heard 'Philadelphia'.

Meredith said, "That's right. I'm still on payroll as Michael's nurse."

Lorraine rolled her eyes and went upstairs.

She helped Shirley a little and pulled together several outfits for Percy, Bruce, Thomas and Michael.

Shirley decided to wear the white dress she wore to Joseph's funeral and the earrings.

Lorraine looked at Shirley and walked out her room.

Shirley completed her packing.

Lorraine walked through the house and found Eleanor in her office.

Lorraine knocked on Eleanor's door.

Eleanor said, "Come in Lorraine."

Lorraine walked in and closed the door and said, "Good afternoon Eleanor."

Eleanor knew it had to be about Shirley.

Lorraine said, "What am I to do since Shirley is on her own now. The boys are going to the military academy. Brenda will be in town with Patrick. So this is it?"

Eleanor thought about what Dr. Greene told her and whether she should tell Lorraine.

She decided not to and besides she asked God for more time to live.

Eleanor said, "Lorraine I have not decided on whether the boys will go back to the military academy. Momma and daddy think they should go back. Shirley, I believe her head is on that army man. So she might not go anywhere. Momma and Daddy set you up with their businesses. Take care of those businesses to grow. You have spent half of your life here taking care of Shirley and I truly appreciate it. It is time for you to have fun and enjoy life. You can have a business empire and be richer than us if you put the time, love, care and patience in those businesses as you have my children."

Lorraine stood and looked into space.

Eleanor looked at Lorraine.

She said, "Are you coming to momma and daddy's ball?"

Lorraine said, "Yes. I heard about George and I packed the boys' clothes for a week."

Eleanor said, "I don't think I am taking them. If I don't take them that means you and Meredith have to be in the house until I get back. I sent a message to Stephanie I need her temporarily with Bruce and Percy. She agreed to work on a temporary basis."



Lorraine looked at Eleanor.

Eleanor said, "She is engaged to one of those soldiers. Yall should not have been fighting over all those different men. Lorraine that was a mess. I could not understand how yall were having the same men the same day."

Lorraine was leaning her back on the door and was opening the door with her hand she said, "You better tell that deranged Meredith she is not going to Philadelphia to Felipe because she has already packed."

Eleanor stood from her desk.

Lorraine walked out the door and Eleanor walked behind her.

They heard Meredith laughing and talking with Jose.

Lorraine went upstairs and went to her bedroom and slept.

Eleanor went into the kitchen and asked Meredith to walk with her.

She Meredith she planned on leaving the boys at home for this trip to Philadelphia.

Meredith stood for a minute and realized that Eleanor was saying she was to stay at the house with the boys.

Meredith walked out the house and went back to re-modeled supply shed.

Everyone looked at Meredith.

Eleanor looked around and walked into the kitchen and said, "The dinner yesterday was good. Any left?"

Thomas was so flattered and said, "No Mrs.-----Stith."

He caught himself.

Eleanor said, "I never want to be called that again."

Thomas did not know what to say because she and Brenda were very formal with the help.

Marvin was out of town and by night fall he would be out of state.

He did not stop to eat nor drink.

He wrote Rita a letter and left it with Gary to give to Jose.

Jose looked at the letter and put it with the workers business information and he would the letter to Rita on Wednesday when she returns to work.

Eleanor was leaving the kitchen when Patrick and Brenda walked through.

Thomas and Michael saw Patrick and Brenda from the back stairs, they ran down the stairs.

Eleanor said, "No Thomas and Michael, they want to be alone."

Thomas stood and looked at Eleanor.

Eleanor said, "Come and join me in the parlor."

Thomas said, "I rather be in the pool room."

Eleanor said, "Well come on."

Michael kept looking at the back door.

Eleanor stood and looked at Michael.

Thomas looked at Michael and walked to Eleanor.

Eleanor hugged Thomas and patted him.

Michael ran around them to the billiards room.

They played billiards until lunch.

Patrick and Brenda took a long walk around their property.

They walked hand in hand.

They stopped and looked at the trout.

Then the stables and the barn and re-modeled supply shed they did not enter because workers lived there.

They walked to the front of the house and sat on the bench that Tony, Debra and Barry claimed as theirs.

Patrick and Brenda sat out in their yard for a while.

Brenda said, "You have never seen my flower garden. I want you to see it."

Brenda stood and took Patrick's hand and pulled him up.

The sheriff was entering their property.

Patrick and Brenda stopped and looked at him.

Leon was in the back watching and rode to the front and said, "Good afternoon sheriff."

Sheriff said, "Good afternoon. Did you tell them what happened yesterday?"

Patrick and Brenda looked at Leon.

Leon said, "Not yet."

He turned to Patrick and Brenda and said, "Max's wife came here and demanded to see you and Mrs. Stith. I told her to leave and she refused. Jose told her to leave she said no. I put her in her wagon, that was full of some of the stuff stolen and rode her into town to the sheriff."

Patrick and Brenda looked at Leon with a question mark look on their faces.

Leon said, "They told me she came here Friday when we in town. No one came to the door and she left after thirty minutes."

Patrick looked at Leon and said, "What does she wants?"

Brenda was getting angry.

Brenda said, "I don't care. She does not have the right just coming to our house and demanding to see me like I am a slave."

The sheriff looked at Brenda and saw she was black.

He knew she was black he saw her many times.

He felt Brenda was angry because of the disrespect Josephine showed her.

The sheriff did not know what to say.

Leon did not answer Patrick but looked at the sheriff.

The sheriff looked at Leon and frowned with disapproval of Leon putting him on the spot.

Leon smirked at the sheriff.

Patrick and Brenda looked to the sheriff for an answer.

The sheriff said, "Max's wife came to the jail with his lawyer, Mr. Thompson on Friday to see Max. She was disrespectful to me and my deputies. I was about to put her in a jail cell. But I had two racist in the other two cells. I told her and Mr. Thompson to leave. I heard him tell her that if she knew about the stolen goods she could get twenty years. I believe that is why she came out here Friday. When your security brought her and her children to the jail on Sunday..."

Brenda did not blink about Max and Josephine's children because she saw them with chains around her naked black boys' bodies and chains on their hands and with tortured looks and physical pain. The boys would fall down and pass out in the blazing heat and the slave masters would drag them until their knees were skinned raw or their privates were skinned and bleeding. The whit slave masters would look at the boys' privates and grinned and laughed. Brenda made sure she went and got those boys that night. She carried them deep in the woods and she and George wrapped the boys up and gave them water. She went on the mission by herself and gave the three boys to George to get to the train while she hid the bodies of the three white slave masters. Two of the boys died and George buried them on the freedom side. The other one George took to New York and hide. The boy grew up and went to school and became a power lawyer for blacks. She did not give a damn about Max and Josephine's children.

The sheriff said, "I put her and her children in jail last night in the same cell with Max. She wants to return what she has and ask for you to pardon Max for him to be free."

Patrick and Brenda stared at the sheriff.

Leon smirked.

The sheriff looked at Patrick and Brenda looking at him.

Brenda said, "Did you go to their house and search it to see what else they are harboring?"

The sheriff looked at Brenda because he had not thought about that. Then he thought he should not have come out there in the first place just because he did not want to feed all of them.

Patrick looked at the sheriff and said, "Take Leon with you to go and search their house and yard. If nothing is there then I will go to their hearings, but if you find one thing I want the full prison term for both.

Patrick looked around and yelled at Gary and said, "Gary go and get a wagon and go to Max's house."

Patrick looked back at the sheriff and said, "We will see you when you return."

Leon turned his head and smirked.

The sheriff felt stupid.

He and his deputies had submitted applications to become federal agents he knew he better not blew this case.

Leon would every once in a while look over at the sheriff and smirked. Because the sheriff's decision was stupid.

The sheriff caught Leon looking at him and smirking.

Leon saw he was caught by the sheriff.

Leon said, "Why did you decide to approach the Stiths and not Max and Josephine's lawyer?"

The sheriff looked at Leon in his eyes and said, "They have children."

Leon said, "And?"

The sheriff said, "And what?"

Leon said, "Most criminals have children and they don't care more about their children than the children they stole from."

The sheriff said, "What would you have done? Why are you so mad about this? The Stiths have plenty."

Leon did not respond to the sheriff but stared at him.

The sheriff stared at Leon and said, "Oh I know! They stole under your nose. The Stiths left you to protect their property and land and you did not. You failed!"

Leon looked at the sheriff.

The sheriff looked at Leon and laughed all the way to Max's house.

The neighbors were peeping out windows and returning home from work.

Leon looked at a little boy sitting on his porch with a lollipop.

The sheriff said, "One of yours?"

Leon said, "Yeap."

Gary pulled up with a wagon.

The sheriff knocked on the door and twisted the handle and walked in.

Gary stared at the little boy and the lollipop and he said. "Hey Leon?"

Leon said, "I see him> Come inside."

Gary said, "Why?"

Leon said, "So we can search for any stolen goods."

Gary pointed and said, "You can start out here look."

Leon stepped back and looked.

The sheriff walked out and looked around and said, "Damn."

They placed the ginger ale from Ireland as edging around their yard.

When people wanted a ginger ale they would put a dime in the place of the bottle.

Gary went and pulled up the ginger ale and the dimes and put the ginger ale in the wagon.

Some children were walking ahead of their parents to pull the jars down for the suckers.

The sheriff ran out the house and yelled, "Stop!"

The sheriff and Leon heard talking and turned and saw three men walking from the back with trout on their rods.

The three men stopped.

Leon was mad and he spit.

The sheriff looked at Leon and said, "Something else you failed to keep safe."

Leon looked at the sheriff.

The sheriff walked to the couple and their two children and sad, "You can't have this stuff because it is stolen. I can put everyone in jail for paying for stolen goods.

The five year old boy stopped sucking his lollipop and ran into his house and looked out the window.

His mother pulled him out the window and closed her shutters.

The man and woman grabbed their children and ran down the street.

The three men dropped their fishing rods and buckets and tried to tip by the sheriff.

The sheriff was getting mad and he was getting hot.

He put his hand on his gun.

He yelled at the three men and said, "Stop! And Bryan you know I will shoot you."

The three men yelled, "Sherman we ain't done nothing but fish,"

Leon looked at the three men and he watched Gary go to the two shade trees at the end of the yard and pulled the lever and the jars came down.

Gary laughed and he laughed.

He was having a good time.

Several wagons pulled up.

One man jumped out and looked at Gary.

Gary turned and looked at the man.

The man said, "Is Josephine in the house?"

Gary said, "Why?"

The man was looking in Gary's wagon and said, "I see she is getting some more stuff. Does she have any more live chickens. I want two."

Leon looked at Sheriff and said, "Max was in jail by the Fourth."

The sheriff yelled and said, "Peter!"

Peter did not turn around but jumped and ran from Gary to his wagon.

Gary ducked and was looking around his wagon.

The sheriff ran fast and cut across the yard and stood in the road with his gun drawn on Peter.

Leon saw the sheriff knew some of these people, but he was very hard on them.

The sheriff yelled, "Dad get your ass out the wagon."

Leon turned and ran to the edge of the yard to watch the sheriff.

Peter pulled the wagon up to the sheriff.

The horse tried to lick the sheriff.

The sheriff moved away from the horse.

Peter got out the wagon.

The man and woman in the next wagon pulled up and did not try to out run the sheriff.

Gary looked at Leon and said, "Did he say dad?"

Leon nodded his head for yes.

The sheriff walked to the wagon and the nervous woman was looking at sheriff.

The sheriff said, "Pearlie Mae have you bought anything form Max and Josephine?"

She shook her head violently for no.

The sheriff walked over to the next wagon and asked the man and woman did they buy anything from Max and Josephine.

The man and woman said, "No."

The sheriff said, "Why did you stop here?"

The man said, "We heard she got some trout in and we were stopping to get a few."

Leon looked at the sheriff.

The sheriff turned and looked in the stern faces of Leon and Gary.

The sheriff stepped in the yard and called the three men to him.

They picked up their fishing rods and the buckets with the trout.

Leon and Gary looked at the three men with the trout.

Gary said, "Where are they going with the fish?"

The sheriff stood tall and frowned and said, "Take the trout back and put it back or go to jail today for receiving stolen goods."

The three men turned to take the fish back and rolled their eyes at Gary.

No one said anything.

The three men returned from the back with empty buckets.

The sheriff said, "Let me see those buckets and you better not have padded any fish on your body."

The three men turned and walked back to the back.

Leon was getting annoyed because he felt the sheriff was family with these thieves that is the reason why he was playing with them.

The three men emerged again from the back.

The sheriff held out his hand and patted them down.

The sheriff turned and said, "All of you come to the jail tomorrow write a statement of how you knew about these items, who told you about the goods, who you talked here at this house and how the price was settled on. You can write it tonight and have the clerk notarize it and drop it off at the jail tomorrow. Dad if you don't I will come and put you in jail. Like before."

Peter pulled off and said, "Good damn son you are."

Pearl was sitting in the wagon in fear. Her eyes were bucked wide and her mouth open.

She was thinking, "How did I get myself in a thief ring?"

Peter pulled in front Pearl's house.

He got out the wagon to help her out.

Pearl jumped out the wagon and grabbed her bags in the back of the wagon and ran to her door.

Peter stood at the wagon and watched her as she unlocked her door and ran in the house.

Peter yelled, "I'll be by at nine to take you to the jail. And get paid."

Pearl ran back to the door and screamed, "If you had not stop by that trash house with your greedy ass we would not need to make a trip back in town to the jail. I am going to pay you for the trip today and not tomorrow."

Peter said, "I'll tell the sheriff you did not want to come and give a statement."

Pearl said, "I will tell your son for over a week you've been stopping and getting no paying for stuff from that fool Josephine. So when you go to jail I will demand your wagon and horses because you caused me harm."

Peter looked at Pearl and said, "I'll be back at nine in the morning."

Pearl yelled, "That's right."

Peter was walking back to his side of the wagon.

Pearl smirked and said, "You old bastard."

The sheriff passed by Leon and Gary who was looking at him with disapproval eyes.

The sheriff walked around the back of the house.

Leon did not want to go but knew he had to.

The sheriff looked and saw a large tub filled with trout.

Leon walked and saw a chicken coop and counted thirty two chickens.

Leon said, "The exact number of chickens we did not account for."

He looked at the sheriff.

Leon walked over to the large tub structure they had the trout in.

He exhaled.

Leon said, "One of the Stith's grandson order one hundred and fifty trout last week to replenish his grand daddy trout pond after Max had stolen all the fish and left three fish."

Leon looked over in the structure.

The sheriff looked at Leon.



Gary was standing at the beginning of the back yard so he could watch his wagon and what the sheriff and Leon were doing in the back yard.

Gary yelled and said, "Get away from my wagon."

He ran to his wagon.

The sheriff and Leon walked from the back yard and stood and saw the woman stared at Gary.

Gary said, "You get away from here!"

The sheriff looked at Leon and said, "Veronica what are you doing?"

Leon rolled his eyes at the Sheriff and looked back to the woman.

The stunned woman walked to the sheriff and said, "I came to buy linens."

Leon smirked.

The sheriff looked at Leon.

He thought, "This is bad. It looks so bad. I maybe put in jail. I want that federal agent job so I can leave this town."

The sheriff said, "Who told you there were linens here to be bought?"

The woman said, "Josephine."

The sheriff said, "You saw the linens?"

The woman said, "Yes."

The sheriff said, "Show me."

The sheriff, the woman and Leon walked in the house.

Linen lined the walls in the living room.

The woman walked over to the linens she wanted and pointed and said, "This is the linens I want and told Josephine not to sell until I get her the money."

Leon walked over and looked at the linens and said, "First a am my name is Leon."

He looked at the sheriff who rolled his eyes at Leon.

Leon cut his eyes at the sheriff and said, "Do you know the sheriff here?"

The woman had a puzzle look on her face and said, "Yes."

Leon said, "He's your boyfriend?"

The woman said, "Certainty not. He is my brother."

Leon said, "How much were going to pay for this linen?"

The woman looked at the sheriff.

The sheriff said, "Tell him."

The women said, "Five dollars."

Leon was shocked and lean his stunned head forward in shock.

Peter was in the kitchen looking for his favorite set of steel bowls.

He stood in the middle of the floor and looked around.

Everyone looked at Peter as if he was crazy.

Nadine walked over to him and said, "Peter what are you doing? What are you looking for?"

Peter said, "My steel mixing bowls. I don't see the steel mixing bowls nor the steel cake baing pans, I bake Meredith's wedding cake in."

Everyone looked at the three dish washers.

The three dish washers hitched their shoulders for they did not know.

Stephen was to polish the silver ware.

He rambled all through the house and he walked into the kitchen.

He stood and looked baffled.

Jose was sitting and peeped around Thomas at a baffled Stephen, who did not like any of them.

Thomas looked at Stephen, who cussed them all out a few days before.

Thomas said, "Stephen what do you want?"

Stephen looked at Thomas and walked into the kitchen and started looking in a ll the cabinets.

Rhoda walked from the billiard room and walked in the hallway and was looking around.

Jose turned and looked at Rhoda and he looked at his schedule.

Jose said, "Rhoda you are suppose to be polishing the silver serving ware."

Rhoda looked at Jose and firmly said, "I know that is my duty. But I don't have any."

Louis was walking to the kitchen from the formal dining.

He said, "Rhoda I don't see any platters or punch bowls."

Thomas looked at Louis and said, "What are you doing Louis?"

Louis said, "I went and emptied the last tub and saw Rhoda wondering through like she was lost."

Rhoda said, "Look, I was not lost you little f\*\*."

Jose turned and looked at rough Rhoda.

Rhoda has been mad for five years since her fiancé left her for a man. She has been bitter.

Jose tried not to laugh, because Rhoda was ready to jump on Louis.

Thomas was shocked at Rhoda because she always spoke and minded her business.

Louis stood and looked at Rhoda, he was calling her aloof and retarded.

Thomas looked at Louis, because he did not want the other workers to be mad with them.

Monica said, "Yall this is serious. Who has been in this house? The Fourth celebration nearly all of us who were here were outside. But a handful who was in here gambling."

Everyone looked at Jose.

Jose was rolling his eyes at Monica, because she was very religious and did not believe in gambling, smoking and drinking."

Eleanor walked in the kitchen.

Everyone looked at Eleanor.

Eleanor knew something big was up and she did not want to be a part of it. She had the problems of what to do with the children, Stephanie and Lorraine, Meredith, Michael who thinks he is Meredith's guardian, to see about George's funeral and get their clothes together and count the money they had in the safes in the house.

Eleanor stood in the kitchen and looked at all the workers.

She looked at Thomas and said, "Thomas a light lunch of sandwiches and salad and lemonade. Dinner of trout and the French fries, you make the children like."

Thomas could not talk he looked at Eleanor.

Eleanor raised her eyebrow and looked at Thomas.

Thomas swallowed and stuttered, "Yes."

Eleanor looked at them and Jose who was looking straight.

She walked out the kitchen.

She wanted to know especially when the pompous Thomas was stunned and could not speak.

Stephen said, "Somebody better them."

Eleanor heard Stephen and ran to Patrick's office because she knew it had to be bad.

She went to Patrick's office to escape the bad news.

She looked at the work on Patrick's desk and the telegrams that came in.

She read the second telegram about George, it was the undertaker George had chosen.

The telegram said George was very detail and gave specifics.

He gave details about his funeral along with the suit, flowers, casket, burial plot and repass.

George wanted his funeral on Friday so they would enjoy each other's' company and leave on Sunday after church service to go home.

He arranged for his repass to be at the docks. Ellen and Captain Moss arranged the repass George requested.

Eleanor smiled and said, "George watched everything."

Everyone needs Brenda to sign off on all the papers.

Genevia and Ben rode to the house.

They were getting out the buggy.

Patrick turned to see who was in the yard.

He saw Gen and Ben and he yelled and waved for them to come to the garden.

Eleanor looked out the window and saw her parents and then Gen and Ben walking to them in Brenda's garden.

Gen and Brenda ran to each other and held onto each other and cried.

Patrick and ben greeted each other and shook hands.

Eleanor stood at Patrick's desk and thought about these brave and courageous people whom God put into her life.

She placed the telegram in a folder and walked out of Patrick's office.

She saw Jose, Thomas and Stephen Rhoda running through the house searching for something.

Eleanor said, "It has to be big for all of them to be panicking."

Nadine was on Eleanor's and Brenda's bad side.

Nadine and Monica walked through the formal dining room and brought lunch.

Eleanor looked at them and walked out the front door.

Monica said, "Nadine she is mad with you and Ruth."

Nadine said, "I know. I just don't know."

Monica said, "You don't know what?"

Nadine was helping Monica fluff the tablecloth and put it on the table she paused and said, "I don't know how to come out of ..."

Monica said, "You better apologize to them before their ball. Eleanor already said, she will fire everyone who want attend. They took out all the fancy stuff so we would not feel out of place. And you and Peter still won't come."

Nadine said, "Me and Peter had a big fight about that Friday and we did not speak the whole week-end."

Monica said, "Nadine."

Nadine kept fluffing the tablecloth.

Nadine and Monica looked out the window and saw Genevia and Ben.

They watched as Gen and Brenda hugged each other and cried.

Nadine said do we need to set a place for them?"

Monica looked at Nadine and said, "You can go and ask or just go and get two more place settings."

Nadine mumbled and said, "I'll go and get two more place settings."

Monica said, "Tell Thomas to go out there and get the trout."

Eleanor walked to them in the garden and looked at Gen and her mother.

She greeted Ben and handed Patrick the folder.

Patrick looked at Eleanor.

She said, "It's important."

Patrick looked at Eleanor with a look that nothing is important but George.

Patrick read the telegram. He stared at the telegram.

Eleanor patted Patrick on his back and held him by his neck.

Gen and Brenda looked.

Monica walked out the door and towards the garden and said, "Lunch is served."

When Patrick looked up at Monica he saw Percy, Bruce, Thomas, and Michael in the window watching them with concern.

Brenda and Gen looked at the window and saw the children watching them.

Gen turned her head and blew her nose.

They all walked to the house.

Monica stood and let them go ahead of her Patrick looked at Monica.

Monica watched them and prayed for them because she knew George was involved in the freeing of the slaves with them.

She entered the house after them.

She walked in the house.

Percy and Bruce held onto Patrick and sat him in his chair and Thomas and Michael hugged Brenda and took her to her chair.

Eleanor directed Gen and Ben to chairs.

Gen sat next to Shirley. Ben sat next to Thomas.

They sat and was eating lunch.

Jose was very sly and walked in the family's dining room and acting like he was looking for something.

Patrick and Eleanor watched Jose.

Thomas beckon for Jose.

Jose and Nadine walked out in the hall.

Monica stood by the door to listen.

Thomas was upset and said, "No trout."

Jose started laughing.

Nadine was not laughing.

Monica frowned up.

Eleanor watched Monica.

Patrick said, "Monica tell them to come here."

Monica stepped out the family dining room and said, "Patrick said to come to him."

Jose could not stop laughing.

Thomas, Nadine and Monica walked in the family dining room.

Lorraine saw Jose laughing.

She wanted to know what he was laughing about and ran down the stairs to him.

Jose was still laughing and stood and walked in the family dining room.

Lorraine was grinning and ran in the family dining room behind Jose.

Eleanor looked at Jose and then Lorraine when she ran into the family dining room.

Patrick squinted his eyes and looked at a nervous, Thomas who was looking at the wall.

He looked at Nadine who was looking at Gen's back and Monica who was staring at Patrick.

Patrick looked at laughing Jose and the grinning Lorraine.

He knew Lorraine did not know what was going on but was being noisy.

Patrick picked up his napkin and wiped his hands.

Eleanor was scared and looked at the hysterical Jose.

Patrick looked at Eleanor and said, "Eleanor do you know what this is about?"

Percy and Bruce looked at Eleanor.

Eleanor turned her head to look at Patrick and caught Brenda looking at her.

She said, "No sir. I just saw them searching the house."

Percy whispered to Bruce.

Brenda watched Percy and Bruce.

Patrick said, "Jose."

Jose could not stop laughing.

Gen turned her chair slightly so she could see Jose.

Gen said, "Jose's giggle box is running over."

Eleanor looked at Gen from the corner of her eyes.

Gen said, "What Eleanor?"

Then Brenda realized something was wrong.

Lorraine realized something was wrong. For Jose.

Nadine walked to the door and Peter said, "There is no silver ware in the storage area.

Lorraine heard Peter was shocked and she knew she had not taken any home.

Lorraine turned to walk out the family dining room.

Patrick said, "No Lorraine don't leave out with your nose self."

Patrick said, "Nadine who is that out there?"

Nadine said, "Peter."

Peter stepped into the family dining room and said, "Yes sir."

Patrick said, "What is going on?"

Peter said, "Of what I know?"

Patrick sat up in his chair and said, "Of what you know."

Eleanor looked at Patrick.

Brenda frowned and looked at Eleanor and thought, "What is this?"

Peter said, "I was looking for my steel bowls to bake and could not find them. I could not find the cake pans I used to bake Meredith's wedding cake."

Gen leaned forward and waved her handkerchief at Peter and said, "Cake was very good."

Ben smiled at Gen.

Ben said, "Patrick we are going to excuse ourselves."

Gen said, "No we are not."

She continued to sit and did not move.

Brenda looked at Gen.

Patrick said, "Peter go on."

Peter said, "Then Stephen could not find the silverware to polish."

Gen sat up/

Brenda threw her napkin onto her plate.

Patrick said, "Brenda wait. Peter."

Peter said, "Rhoda was to polish the silver punch bowls and serve ware."

Brenda fell into her chair.

Patrick looked at Brenda.

Percy pushed his chair over to Brenda and gave her some glass of water.

Ben turned around and looked at Peter.

Patrick said, "What else. Don't stop tell me everything you know."

Peter looked at Thomas and Monica who were looking out the windows.

Peter said, "Thomas went to get trout for dinner."

Percy stopped attending to Brenda and turned and looked at Peter.

Eleanor looked at the slim Percy and was wondering what was going through his mind.

Bruce looked at Eleanor then Percy and back to Eleanor.

Peter said, "NO trout."

Percy said, "No trout. I ordered the trout and we put the trout in the pond."

Patrick was getting mad.

He said, "Peter!"

Peter said, "We searched the house and the storage area there were thirty of us and there was no linens and there were and no cases of the silver ware."

Gen mouth dropped opened.

Shirley sat up and yelled, "Eleanor!"

Everyone looked at Shirley.

Shirley was sitting with her arms folded.



Gen turned around and hit at Shirley and said, "Why are you yelling for your momma and she is sitting right there?"

Shirley stared at Gen and looked at Eleanor.

Eleanor said, "Shirley why are you yelling like you have an emergency."

Shirley leaned over the table and said, "I do."

She started crying.

She said, "These people have stolen my inheritance from grandma and grandpa. I want my inheritance."

Gen said, "Selfish child." She turned around to look at Peter.

Michael touch Eleanor's arm and looked back at Patrick and said, "She's the only one who gets an inheritance?"

Patrick said, "No."

Eleanor said, "Shirley stop all that screaming and crying. Your grandma and grandpa have something for you that your great grandparents left for you and they are the keepers of it."

Shirley was crying and wiping her eyes with her napkin and said, "Where is it? I want it. Now."

Gen turned and looked at Shirley and said, "Shut up Shirley. With your selfish self. Your grandma is hurting and you are sitting here hollering about platters and punch bowls."

Shirley looked at Gen and then Ben and said, "You are excused."

Ben did not address Shirley.

Eleanor calmly, "Shirley I have never seen it. It can be anything. It can be a poem or a letter."

Shirley hollered, "A piece of paper!"

Lorraine ran over to Shirley and pulled her chair from underneath the table and said, "Come on Shirley."

Shirley stood and Lorraine rushed her out the family dining room.

Lorraine took Shirley to the sitting room.

They sat.

Lorraine said, "Shirley why are you hollering and screaming over your grandma and grandpa things someone stole. You are not trying to comfort them. They are the ones who work for all of things so they can enjoy and if they want to can pass them on to you."

Shirley laid on Lorraine's lap and said, "It seems that somebody is always stealing from me."

Patrick and Eleanor could hear Shirley.

Michael leaned around Eleanor and said, "Thomas who Shirley said is always stealing from her?"

Thomas peeped around Eleanor to Michael and said, "I didn't hear."

Patrick knew what Shirley was talking about.

He threw his napkin in his plate and leaned over and kissed Brenda on her forehead.

Patrick said, "Eleanor come on."

Eleanor said, "Where?"

Michael said, "To see who been stealing from Shirley."

Patrick tapped Eleanor on her shoulder and said, "Come on."

Thomas was getting out his chair.

Michael said, "Come on mamma."

Patrick said, "No sons sit and let us resolve this thing with Shirley."

Brenda said, "Patrick!"

Patrick said, "Brenda!"

Brenda said, "Patrick we got too much going on."

Eleanor said, "Take Thomas and Michael. I'm threw."

Gen said, "Selfish thing."

Ben looked at Gen and said, "Gen stopped."

Gen said, "You don't tell me to stop fussing a very good friend is dead and only have my best friend my sister left. And you gonna sit here and tell me to shut up."

Ben said, "I did not tell you to shut up."

Gen stared at Ben.

Patrick said, "Don't fight."

Bruce said, "Yes. Don't fight because mamma and Shirley will be fighting soon."

Percy said, "What about them stealing our new trout grandpa?"

Ben turned and looked at Peter.

Because Thomas and Monica were still looking out the windows.

He said, "Peter. That's right?"

Peter said, "Yes."

Ben looked at Gen who was ready to fight him and said, "When did you use those pans and bowls? And the cake was spectacular."

Ben looked at Gen.

Gen stared at Ben.

Eleanor was scared and looked at Brenda.

Brenda was upset and crying over her silver.

Patrick was standing behind Eleanor.

Peter said, "I put everything up that night before I left."

Ben said, "You did not use any of it on the fourth? When were the people arrested?"

Peter said, "That fourth morning."

Patrick said, "Ben?"

Ben turned around and said, "To rule out another party."

Patrick looked at a distraught Brenda and said, "Jose are you ok?"

Jose looked at Patrick and said, "I'm ok. I was just in shock."

Patrick said, "A man I worked with years ago name Louie would laugh when the situation was bad. I need you and five more to go in Brenda's desk and go through the inventory folders and go through and match up everything from the books."

Jose said, "Sir, ten workers."

Patrick said, "Fine. We will be leaving tomorrow for Mr. George's funeral and will be back next Wednesday. Do you all think you can stop people from stealing our stuff while we are gone?"

Jose looked at Patrick.

Patrick said, "Jose that was a real question."

Jose said, "Yes."

Then he remembered the crack in the wall in the washer room.

Patrick said, "What?"

Jose said, "There is a crack in the wall in the washer room."

Patrick said, "What kind of crack?"

Jose said, "Sir I don't know. I saw it on the Fourth when I took laundry down and forgot about it until now."

Patrick said, "Show in a few minutes. But first get the inventory folders or books and select ten workers to help go through and check the inventory. Get our bags and carriages and horses ready to leave here at ten am. The train will be a little late pulling in and pulling out."

Brenda said, "We need to tell Mag. Telegram the train and have Thomas tell her so she can be ready to join us. And we did not tell mayor and the governor!"

Patrick said, "Calm down Brenda you need to go and take a nap."

Eleanor looked at Brenda and saw she was upset.

Patrick looked at Gen and Gen stared at Patrick.

Patrick said, "Percy, when you all were away for those two years you kept in communication with Shirley and Michael. We need to send some telegrams now. You think you can?"

Percy said, "Yes sir."

Eleanor looked at Percy and Bruce.

Patrick said, "Send one to train number 103 to stop in the town this evening in about two hours and send the message to Mag of George's death and we will leave here in the morning and get to here Thursday evening if she wants to go. Send the same message to the mayor and both governors. Their telegram information is on my desk in a folder."

Bruce said, "Wait Percy I am going with you."

Eleanor looked at her strong Bruce and smiled at him.

Bruce looked at Eleanor and said, "Momma are we going tomorrow?"

Eleanor said, "No. Stephanie will be here to help you and Percy. Lorraine will help Thomas and Meredith will help Michael."

Michael said, "Is Shirley going to be here?"

Eleanor was thinking and all the workers yelled, "Take her."

Eleanor jumped and looked at Monica and Nadine.

Thomas said, "Take us and leave us here."

Eleanor said, "I'll take Shirley."

Patrick said, "Wait now who will be here to represent us in court. It sure can't be Jose."

Brenda said, "Where is Leon?"

Patrick said, "Brenda, Leon went and Gary went with the sheriff to Max's house to search it."

Peter said, "I can go to court with the list of what is missing. She had the nerves to bring a few things to offer for her husband not going to jail. I bet when they search their house they have set up a store."

Nadine said, "Peter. Peter. The judge makes sense of all of this. You just tell the judge the Stiths want all their stuff back and the fullest of the sentence on them. Let all of that come out in trial. By that time Patrick and Brenda and Eleanor would be back."

Patrick said, "Lock up my house. Gen and Ben we'll see you in the morning."

Gen looked at Brenda and said, "Can we have one of the blankets to drape on George in the casket."

Patrick looked at the workers.

Brenda stood and said, "Gen that is a great idea. Come on to the storage area and picked out one."

Peter turned his head.

Eleanor was getting sick and tried to eat a piece of lettuce.

Patrick looked at Eleanor and said, "What's wrong?"

Eleanor said, "Ginger Ale."

Patrick looked at Monica.

Monica said, "I'll go and get one."

Gen and Ben stood to go with Brenda.

Patrick said, "Percy go now. Don't disappoint me."

Percy and Bruce jumped from the table and ran to Patrick's office and sent the telegrams.

Jose ran to Brenda's study and got the inventory books and handed them to Nadine.

Patrick was walking to the washer room. He saw Lorraine and Shirley in the sitting room and did not care about them.

He did not want to know if the blankets were the storage area. There was a blanket for each member. So the specified number should be left.

Jose caught up with Patrick as he was walking out the kitchen.

Louis was walking in the kitchen to see Thomas.

Jose said, "Louis do you know where Max lived?"

Louis said, "Thomas showed me. Take a wagon and go there Leon and Gary should be there."

Louis said, "Jose I am off."

Jose rolled his eyes at Louis.

Patrick stopped to hear.

Louis walked back out the door.

Thomas walked into the kitchen and told two of the dis washers to help Nadine.

Thomas was talking to himself and was walking outside and said, "What am I to cook for dinner."

Patrick and Jose heard Thomas walking outside.

Louis had a wagon and was pulling out the backyard.

Thomas yelled, "Louis where are you going?"

Louis stopped and said, "Jose told me to go to Max's house?"

Thomas said, "See if they got the trout and bring me about ten."

Louis was looking at Thomas as if he was crazy.

Patrick turned around and was about to tell Thomas forget it and to cook whatever was in the house.

Patrick saw Louis pull out the yard looking at Thomas as if he was crazy.

Thomas took out a cigarette and lit it and walked away from the house shaking his head.

Patrick wondered about Thomas.

Monica walked pass Patrick and walked out towards the trout pond.

Three of the security men were sitting in the kitchen and listening.

Patrick turned and walked to Jose.

He and Jose looked at the crack.

No one could tell if they did not come to the wall.

Patrick looked around and took hanger and plied open the crack.

He and Jose looked and saw the guns Patrick bought for the house.

Jose said, "Weren't these guns out after they were arrested?"

Patrick said, "I am thinking. I know they were out at Meredith's wedding. I don't remember after that."

Brenda and Gen went screaming through the house running to the washer room.

Ben and Eleanor jumped up to run to the storage area.

Thomas and Michael ran behind Eleanor and Ben,

Lorraine jumped and ran behind Ben and Eleanor.

Shirley was walking behind.

Percy and Bruce ran pass Shirley and looked at her.

The three security men jumped and ran behind the screaming Gen and Brenda.

Patrick said, "Don't tell me they stole the lave blankets?"

Jose looked at a screaming Brenda.

Patrick grabbed Brenda and held her to him.

Jose just stood.

The three security men looked around and saw the hole in the wall and saw the guns.

One of the security men said, "There has to be another way for the guns to be have been put in here because they would have to have torn the wall down and re-done."

The other security man looked at a crying Brenda and Gen and said, "What's wrong?"

Ben, Eleanor, Thomas and Michael ran in the washer room.

Patrick said, "They stole the one a kind slaves conductor blanket and one of them died yesterday and they wanted to bury him with his blanket."

One of the security men was standing back listening and saw Lorraine and Percy and Bruce run in and Shirley walk in.

Jose said, "One of yall need to go and get Leon from Max's house."

The other security man said, "I'll go. I went with then on the Fourth."

Ben tried to hug and console Gen.

Gen twisted and walked out the washer room and went out the front door and sat in the buggy.

Everyone looked at Ben.

Ben was embarrassed.

Ben looked at Brenda and said, "I am sorry Bren."

He walked upstairs and out the front door and got in the buggy and looked at a steaming Gen who turned and looked sideways out of the buggy.

They arrived home.

Gen waited to Ben came over and helped her out the buggy.

Ben was thinking, "She wants me to come and help her out the buggy."

Brenda was upset and Patrick had not seen her that upset ever.

Shirley walked to Brenda and put her head on Brenda's back and said, "I'm sorry grandma."

Monica was walking back in the house as the security man was leaving.

Monica walked to the formal dining and continued to inventory everything.

The security rode out the yard.

He rode fast to Max's house.

He caught Louis.

Louis was lost and did not know which way to go.

The security man pointed.

The security man sped to Max's house.

Louis speed behind him.

The security man jumped off his horse and Leon looked out and saw his security man.

Leon ran out the house.

His security man said, "Someone put the guns yall bought in the wall."

Leon looked at saw Garry with the wagon.

Leon said, "I'm going to the house make sure you put as much as you can in those two wagons. I'll send some more wagons."

The sheriff knew something bad was up.

Leon walked back to the house and saw Veronica still in the house looking at the linens.

Leon said, "Ma am please come out the house and touched nothing."

Louis walked up and said, "Is there some trout here?"

Leon said, "Around the back."

Louis said, "How they steal this stuff from under yall nose."

The sheriff started laughing and looked at Leon.

Leon turned his head and said, Gary can you put anything else in your wagon?"

Gary said, "A few."

Leon said, "Take all the silver."

He looked at Louis who was returning with a bucket of trout.

They were staring at Louis.

Louis said, "Dinner."

The sheriff looked at Louis and said, "How many fish do you have?"

Louis looked at the bucket and said, "Twelve."

The sheriff said, "How did you catch them that quick?"

Louis said, "The fish was already in the bucket and the bucket was laying on inside of that tub."

The sheriff was shocked.

Leon looked at the sheriff's face.

Leon started laughing.

Veronica walked out the house with the linens and put the five dollars in his pocket.

The sheriff snatched the linens out of Veronica hands.

Gary was passing them out the house with the silverware.

He stopped and the sheriff put the linens on top of the silver ware.



He reached in his pocket and pulled out the five dollars and handed it back to his sister.

Veronica said, "I want my linens."

The sheriff said, "Veronica all of this stuff is stolen. If you touch it you can go to prison for twenty years. Do you see how these people are watching you."

Veronica looked at Gary and said, "He got stuff."

Louis looked at Veronica and said, "I thought Rhoda was dumb as hell."

Veronica said, "You just call ne dumb?"

She turned to walk in the house.

The sheriff pulled out his handcuffs.

Leon looked at Veronica and despised her.

Gary walked pass them and the new security man and went to his wagon and left.

Leon walked to his horse and rode back to the house.

The new security man walked in the house and shook his head in unbelief.

The sheriff said, "Veronica I will not tell you again to leave. I don't care where you go. These people hate you. They think you are a thief like Max and Josephine."

Veronica said, "I don't care what they think."

The sheriff grabbed her by her arm and pulled Veronica off the porch.

He took her to the street and said, "Leave."

The security man looked around the house.

He saw some wooden chests and opened the chest and saw the silver.

He heard Gary in the other room and said, "Hey. Take this first."

Louis walked to the door and said, "My name is Louis not hey."

The security man was on his knees in front of the wooden chests and slowly looked up at Louis.

Louis swallowed.

The security man said, "They are missing the blankets for the slaves."

Louis stopped walking and stopped was thinking and turned and walked back to the linens and found the remainder of the conductors' blankets.

The security man stood and looked at Louis.

Louis sat and counted the blankets over.

Louis stood and carried the blankets to the wagons.

The security was looking around for the most valuable items.

He picked up one of the silverware chests and carried it to the wagon.

The security man came back to the house and looked at Louis standing in the middle floor.

He picked up another silverware chest and carried it to the wagon.

He came back to the house and said, "Get a chest and take it to the wagon."

The security man stooped and picked up another chest.

He looked at Louis and said, "If you don't pick up a chest and bring the other two to the wagon I will shoot you when I return."

The sheriff walked in the house and he had double checked the back yard and the sides of the house.

The sheriff looked at the security man and said, "What is that?"

The security man kept walking and said, "Silverware."

The sheriff walked into the house and looked at Louis.

He looked back and saw the security man pulling his gun out.

Louis saw the security man and bent down and started pushing the wooden chest out the house.

The sheriff and the security man went through each room and pulled up the floor boards.

Leon and Gary sent three wagons to Max's house.

Louis looked and ran out the door and pointed to the chest of flatware.

Ben and Steven picked up the wooden chest and put it in Louis' wagon.

Louis said, "It's another wooden chest in the house."

Ben and Steven went into the house and got the last wooden chest.

Louis looked and saw several wooden chests.

He opened the chest and thought, "This is the formal dining room silverware."

Louis asked Ben and Steven to help him put the several wooden chests in his wagon.

The security and the sheriff went to each room and then they lifted up a floor board and looked down in the floor and saw a small room.

They pulled up the floor board.

Ben, Steven and John returned from loading Louis wagon.

Louis walked back in the house with John they stood and watched the security man and sheriff.

The sheriff and the security man stepped down in the room and walked around the room.

John said, "It gotta have an escaped. My grandpa had one of those rooms for tornados."

The sheriff continued to walk around and then the security man hit on the wall and they saw light.

They crawled put onto the back porch.

The sheriff was getting mad.

John turned and said, "Louis I got to get back and light the torches for you tonight. Help me load my wagon."

Louis said, "I got to get this stuff back and have someone to help unload the wagon."

Louis nearly ran out the door.

The security man and the sheriff were walking around the house and saw Louis running to the wagon.

They heard the three men in the house laughing.

The security man said, "Yall loading you wagons?"

Ben, Steven and John laughed and started picking up the linens and loaded two of the wagons.

John and Ben left to go back to the house. And unload their wagons.

Steven walked through the house and the sheriff and the security man walked in the house and saw Steven standing in the middle of the bedroom floor.

The security man said, "What are you doing?"

Steven pointed and said, "What are you going to do about that?"

Steven walked in the other bedroom with the secret room and looked around.

He walked back to the dining and kitchen room and looked around and checked the cabinets and left the cabinets opened.

Steven piled everything in his wagon.

The sheriff said, "How in the hell they knew where all of this stuff and was and get it out the house under your noses? And what is it that man pointed?"

Steven walked back in the house to give it a once over.

The security man looked at Steven and said, "What were you telling us that we would be leaving here?"

Steven pointed at the mattress and the picture.

The sheriff had been at that small house all afternoon. He was tired and had to have the diner make seven plates for the prisoners.

The security man looked at the picture and turned to the Steven and said, "What about this portrait?"

Steven said, "I have seen this portrait in the Stiths storage room. I was helping Lorraine and Meredith. I asked them who it was they said, it was Eleanor and her three brothers."

The sheriff said, "So they had all of this stolen."

The security man said, "Why was this portrait in the storage area?"

Steven said, "Meredith said, Patrick and Brenda hate their sons and took the picture of them down forever."

The sheriff said, "Take the portrait back with you. What else were you pointing at?"

Steven exhaled as if he was saying the sheriff was dumb.

Steven said, "The mattress."

The sheriff looked at Steven and said, "Why?"

Steven walked out the room and looked through the kitchen.

The sheriff yelled and said, "I said take this portrait back with you."

Steven walked back and took down the portrait and walked out the house.

The sheriff pulled out his knife and cut the mattress.

He said, "Damn."

The security man looked at the mattress then he looked at the sheriff.

The sheriff went to the other mattress it was the same thing.

He went to the second mattress and the same thing.

He ran out the door and yelled for Steven to stop.

Steven saw the sheriff and nearly kept on going.

The security man knew he was trying to get back so he could gamble in the barn.

Steven stopped the wagon and backed up and sat in the wagon.

The sheriff and the security man ran in the house and got the mattresses and closed the door and put the mattresses at the very top of the wagon.

Steven said, "I'm off duty."

The sheriff and the security man jumped on their horses and rode behind Steven.

Steven was riding fast. He made it to the house in twenty five.

Patrick and Brenda were standing on the back porch.

Fifty workers were counting and hauling the inventory into the storage area.

Nadine and Jose were counting everything.

Brenda was so happy to see her silverware come.

Percy and Bruce were in Patrick's office monitoring the mail and telegrams.

They received the telegram back that Mag would catch the train on its' way back on Thursday morning with Josiah and Natalie. She should have a report by then.

The mayor and his wife said, "Sorry for the lost of your friend but can't attend but will check on your businesses in town.

The two governors said could not attend but send their regards.

Percy handed Patrick an envelope with Robert and Bethany's name on it.

Patrick looked at the envelope and read it.

Patrick had his arm around Brenda's shoulders.

She was holding onto his arms.

Leon was still trying to figure out how they put the guns in the wall.

Thomas and Michael were watching Leon.

Eleanor told them to stay out of the way.

Leon told the other security man, "They were trying to make sure there was no guns in the house for self defense. They are playing on attacking."

Thomas and Michael looked at each other in fear.

The other security man said, "Yeah we know that but when and what is our strategy."

Brenda was so happy when she saw her silverware.

Rhoda helped Gary bring in the punch bowls and platters.

Stephen helped bring in the silverware he was to polish.

Peter saw his bowls and cake plates.

He ran out the house to the wagon and got his cook ware.

He ran back into the house.

Eleanor got Michael's jars of suckers and her bottles of ginger ales.

She, Lorraine and Meredith took the suckers and ales into the storage area.

Louis pulled up and he rushed and gave Brenda the slaves blankets.

Patrick kissed Brenda on her head.

Gary rushed to the wagon and met Thomas at the backdoor and gave him the buckey with the fish.

Thomas went in the kitchen and prepared dinner.

Louis said, "Fellows cone and help."

Gary pulled his wagon to the stables and took care of the horses and got the carriages ready for the next day's trip to town.

Gary had three carriages ready.

He started heating the water for the next day.

He was happy they would be gone for a week.

He could sleep late and do extra work in town and take it to the bank.

Gary like taking his money to the bank.

Jose left and went into town to go to the bank.

He finished at the bank and was thinking, "This not bad. It is an easy job but for now. I see why they were always at work. In a year I have enough money to buy me a house and furnish it and buy a carriage and wagon and about six horses."

Jose heard a yelled, "Hey."

He looked up and realized he was passing the Stith's Rest stop. He had to pay them for the next two weeks.

Jose turned around and rode back to Nathan.

Jose got his pouch and walked in and told them what was happening at the house.

Nathan said, "Who is in the that is the traitor?"

Jose said, "I have to pay you for this week and next week, because they will be gone until next week or the week after."

Jose had them to sign the receipt of their pay.

Nathan said, "This is nothing but the mob and they will continue until they break Patrick and Brenda's spirit. Eleanor will take her children and every penny and leave."

Stanley stood and walked over to the table and signed for his pay and said, "That is always the purpose of evil. I have a child coming into this world. I want to make it as peaceful as I can. I will talk to Alice and come and stay at the house until they get back."

Jose said, "You already got paid for next week."

Jose laughed.

They looked at Jose.

Jose said, "This is a bunch of s\*\*t. I believe Patrick and Brenda have a n idea but no proof. I want to drink. I know I can't and that is torment. I'll tell Patrick you want to stay at the house. Just be at the train station close to eleven am."

Jose stood up and stretched his back.

Jose said, "Nathan can you Robert and Joe handled any problems here? And Denise you may need to stay here for the next week. Come and get what you need and stay here."

Denise said, "Ok."

Jose said, "If you are able to stay at the house, you may need to be inside in the suites section."

Stanley said, "I'll think about."

Jose said. "Hopefully I'll see you in two weeks."

Denise said, "Let me ride back with you."

Jose said, "I don't have a buggy."

They looked at Jose.

Jose said, "On my horse. Come on I have to pay as many workers as possible."

Denise ran and got her bag and ran to Jose's horse. He helped her jump on and he speed to the house.

He made the trip in forty minutes.

He dropped Denise off at her re-modelled supply shed.

Gary was standing and looking when Jose tied his horse and threw the money bag over his shoulders.

Jose pointed his finger at Gary and moved it for no.no and no.

Gary looked at Jose and saw Meredith running out the house.

Jose stopped and looked at her.

Gary said, "What is it?"

Meredith said, "Leon said, for everyone to leave the house. I did not unpack. Gary can you put my bags in a carriage for tomorrow."

Jose rushed in the house.

He looked for the Jessie and his sons he paid for the week and the week ahead.

He paid the workers in the barn.

The livestock worker and his sons.

The window washers and the grounds men.

He paid the security men.

Patrick walked in and said, "Jose who has not been paid?"

Jose said, "Only twenty workers that will be working the week-end."

Patrick said, "I'm paying all of you until I get back. You don't report to work for but the ones that take of the horses and live stock. Once you feed and take care of them you can leave. Gary, Steven and Louis

you still light the torches every evening. Me and the family will be gone to a dear friend's funeral. Thank you all for bringing our stuff back. We got about ninety per cent back. Nadine will come with the final tally. Thank You."

Leon and Brenda were watching the workers for any type of movement to see who the traitor or traitors were.

Bruce walked in the washer room and looked at the crack.

Bruce backed up and looked at the ceiling.

Leon and the two security men looked at Bruce, like he was crazy.

Eleanor was a little embarrassed.

Bruce ran out the washer room and Eleanor looked at him.

They were sitting in the washer room and Eleanor told Michael they had recovered three more jars of his suckers.

Michael said, "I want to take Dr. Ralph a jar of lollipops that is not open."

They heard a noise in the wall.

Leon and his security jumped.

Bruce ran downstairs and said, "Did you hear that?"

Leon said, "What you do?"

Bruce said, "They dropped the guns from the hot water room. I dropped the ball from the hot water room. There is a space I saw behind the sink. Only a small person can fit in there."

Eleanor clapped and kissed Bruce.

Thomas looked at Bruce.

The security man looked at Bruce and Thomas and said, "That's a problem."

Leon said, "Who was in this house on the Fourth that was small enough to fit in the space and to know where that room was and how to get rid of the guns?"

The other security man that was at Max's house said, "We need those guns."

Leon looked at Eleanor and said, "We need those guns, we have to tear up this wall but whoever is the inside traitor, we don't want them to know. Send the workers home and for them to come back next week."

Eleanor said, "What about the children?"

Leon said, "You must take them with you."

Eleanor sat and then it hit her whoever this was is determined to kill her children.

Percy and Bruce looked at Eleanor.



Eleanor looked in the eyes of Percy and Bruce.

She said, "Be quiet and tell no one you all are going. We don't know who is after us."

Eleanor was sitting and thinking and said, "I came in the house and took a hot bath and went to bed after I washed Thomas and Michael and put their nightshirts on. I know there were workers sitting in the worker area playing cards. I have to think if I heard or seen anything."

Leon said, "I need an axe."

Eleanor said, "I'll send you a telegram if I think of anything."

Steven had to go to town and dropped off the mattresses and them come back to the house.

They had completed unloading Steven wagon.

He was paid, he said, "You know what I am going to visit mom and day for a week."

John said, "I'm going to visit Auntie Kat and grandpa, He is up in age."

Steven said, "When are you leaving?"

John said, "I'm not tired I am going to put things in a bag now and leave and sleep on the way."

Steven said, "I'll have Jose cover for me. I'll leave with you."

Steven walked to Jose and said, "Jose I am taking off and go and see mom and dad."

Jose leaned back in the chair and said, "Why tell me?"

Steven said, "You cover my duties until I come back."

Steven looked at Jose and walked out the house and went to the stables and pack a bag and feed his horse and left with John.

Ben feed the horses and gave them water for the day and went to his bed and went to slept since, Steven and John were gone for a week.

Lorraine was about to hang the children clothes up.

She put their clothes in the bags.

Gary and Louis put all the bags in the carriages that night.

Lorraine was leaving to go home.

Because she had to return the first thing in the morning.

Eleanor sent Stephanie a telegram at the hospital they were going to Philadelphia and she could come to help with Percy and Bruce, but she had to meet them at ten am at the train station.

After everyone was out the house.

Leon closed the door and cover the wall with a blanket and hit it several times and knocked it it a loose and they got the twenty guns out the wall and the ammunition.

Brenda walked through the house and saw the portrait of her children.

She said, "Jose where did this come from?"

Jose said, "I did not see that portrait last week with you. That was a picture they brought back from Max's house."

Leon and the two security men walked from the washer room.

They looked at the portrait of Patrick and Brenda's four children.

Brenda said, "So my children are behind these attacks on me."

Leon said, "It looks like it."

Brenda said, "Jose put this in the storage area."

Brenda said, "So they were stealing all the valuables out the house. They plan on burning my house down."

Leon thought, "Damn I am missing all these clues."

Jose returned.

Leon said, "We have enough men to cover the outside of the house, but we have none for the inside and property near the house."

Jose said, "I'm here. And Stanley said, if he able to stay for the week he'll be at the train station in the morning."

Louis said, "I can shoot. I can stay inside the house."

Louis looked at Thomas.

Thomas kept frying the trout and French fries.

Patrick walked in the kitchen and said, Robert and Bethany said they will come to our anniversary ball."

Brenda said, "This started out as a terrible day."

Jose said, "We have to talk to the workers who are left. I know Gary can shoot and he is in the re-modeled supply shed. Denise will be at the Stith's rest stop. Ben is in the stables by himself. I don't know about him."

Leon said, "He can shoot. He used to be our commander and made us swear not to say anything. I'll go to him and talk to him. I think we need five more men in the house."

Louis looked at Thomas.

Patrick walked over and looked at the trout and grinned.

Leon said, "Jose the workers should be here at eight in the morning?"

Jose said, "Yes."

Leon said, "No one should be in the house but you Jose and Louis and maybe Stanley."

Jose said, "Ben is a commander and had me cussing him out?"

He sit and thought.

He said, "I wish I could find some more former soldiers?"

Louis looked at Thomas.

Jose said, "Louis go to the bedroom over the kitchen. You can see the whole backyard from that bedroom. I will stay in my room and I can cover the back porch, the kitchen, formal dining room."

The three dish washers were laughing and coming in from the stables.

Leon said, "Where are you three coming from?"

They looked at Leon.

One said, "From talking to Ben."

Leon said, "How do you know Ben?"

Leon said, "I will ask him but are you former soldiers?"

The three men said, "Yes."

Leon said, "You want to earn some money?"

The former soldiers said, "What?"

Leon said, "Stay in the house and defend it against a real attack."

One said, "We are off next week."

Leon looked at Jose.

Jose waved his hand.

Patrick and Brenda were walking through the formal dining room and kissing when Peter and Thomas was bring the dinner cart through.

Peter looked at Patrick and Brenda and thought, "He did not know about he and Nadine. We have a week to work on it."

Patrick and Brenda walked into the family dining room.

Patrick said, "We are eating Percy's trout this evening."

Everyone clapped.

Patrick said, "We all are going to Philadelphia for a week. We get up and leave out the back and be quiet."

They had a pleasant dinner.

They enjoyed the fried trout.

Brenda prefer baked foods, but she had nothing to complain about.

Thomas said, "Percy thank you for the trout. You knew grandpa loved his trout and you gave it back to him."

Bruce stared at Thomas.

Eleanor looked at Bruce.

Thomas leaned on Eleanor's arm and purred and rubbed his head on Eleanor's chest.

Patrick watched Thomas and Bruce and snickered.

Eleanor was not watching their toying with each other.

Patrick thought, "That Thomas is a mess he is a thinker. He thinks about the person their emotions and desires and he go after them that way. Bruce is gonna get him."

Patrick looked over at Brenda.

She looked up from her fried trout.

She and Patrick looked at each other and kissed.

Thomas grinned.

Michael grinned.

Eleanor looked at her two babies and remembered what they said on the ship they like to their grandma and grandpa have fun and they wanted to marry women they could have fun with.

Eleanor loved them more and her parents more that they had genuine love after all of these years together.

Brenda put her head on Patrick's shoulder and said, "I did not know how I was going to get through this day. GOD knew this day would come. All of our lives HE built us up in HIM to withstand it. HE had more grace and HIS righteousness to cover us this day. HE taught us over the years to trust HIM. In our trust of HIM, HE brought us through all of it. That trust in HIM built us up for this day. We had traitors in our midst. Our sons and their families stole all important things so they can burn this house down..."

Bruce jumped in his chair and nearly went into hysterics.

Patrick and Brenda lift their heads and looked at Bruce.

They thought they had to get a doctor.

Eleanor jumped up and said, "Bruce!!!!"

Thomas became scared.

Michael bucked his eyes. He was scared and grabbed Eleanor's arm.

Monica stared at Bruce.

Bruce calmed down.

Eleanor said, "Monica give him a sip of water."

Monica was already walking to the table with another glass of water.

Bruce swallowed the water.

Patrick and Brenda were afraid.

Eleanor walked to Bruce.

Shirley was sitting not saying anything. Because she knew they were waiting for her.

Eleanor held Bruce's hand and patted his head.

Eleanor said, "Bruce what is wrong?"

Bruce waited a few minutes.

He looked at Patrick and Brenda and turned sideways and motioned to Eleanor.

Eleanor's heart started to hurt.

She leaned her head down.

Monica and Alicia looked at Bruce.

He looked back at Patrick and Brenda and continued to whisper to Eleanor.

Eleanor looked over at Patrick and Brenda.

Percy was leaning over so he could hear.

Percy sat up in his chair and started looking at Patrick and Brenda.

Monica told Alicia, "That one is more spiritual than all of them."

Patrick heard Monica and looked at her.

She looked at Patrick and watched Bruce.

Bruce finished whispering to Eleanor.

Eleanor kissed Bruce on his cheek and hugged him for a long time.

Bruce hugged Eleanor and laid his head on her chest.

Patrick looked at Thomas.

Thomas did not show any angry but concern.

Michael had his head down peeping over the table and looking into Bruce's face.

Shirley started eating her mashed potatoes with a drop of sour cream. She liked her fish.

Thomas baked a small fish and served it to Shirley.

Eleanor was watching Shirley during dinner.

Shirley was too scared to say anything.

When Eleanor walked back to her chair.

Bruce looked at Patrick and he picked up a French fry and dipped it in a special sauce that Thomas made.

Patrick and Brenda looked at Bruce.

Percy sat and stared at Patrick and Brenda.

Bruce started to eat his French fry and silently cried.

Eleanor looked at Bruce her strong one.

Shirley looked and thought, "I better get what I can because I don't know what is going on."

Shirley said, "Grandma and grandpa did you invite Mr. Lance and Mrs. Hilary to our. I mean to your anniversary ball?"

Brenda looked at Shirley and said, "Your momma sent out the invitations."

Bruce stood and walked out the family dining room and Monica walked to the door and saw Bruce running up the stairs crying.

Eleanor slowly stood and was walking to the door and said, "Shirley yes I did."

Eleanor walked out the door.

Shirley said, "Grandma and grandpa do you think people are not coming because they don't have a ball dress?"

Brenda said, "I don't know Shirley. Why"

Shirley was eating her fish and said, "I was thinking, they could come to my dress shop and buy a ball gown."

Percy put his elbow on the table and rested his head in his hand.

He turned his head from Shirley and exhaled.

Brenda smiled at Percy.

Patrick looked at Percy.

Patrick said, "Percy what is wrong?"

Percy nodded his head back at Shirley.

Brenda giggled.

Thomas looked at Shirley.

Shirley was eating a flake of fish.

She had impeccable table manners.

Patrick and Brenda watched Shirley all the time at meals.

Brenda would have pretend meals with Shirley when she was an ill little girl to play with her and teach her table manners. Because she could not come to the table for meals.

Shirley looked up from her plate and saw Percy's head was turned from her.

Shirley looked around the table and saw Thomas staring at her.

She saw Michael had turned his head and was sucking on a lollipop.

She looked into the loving eyes of her beloved grandparents and said, "How can I let your friends have a ball gown to wear to..."

Shirley paused because she was about to say "our ball."

Patrick and Brenda smiled because Shirley caught her little selfish self.

She continued, "... your anniversary ball?"

Brenda smiled and said, "Shirley what thoughtfulness."

Percy still had his head turned from Shirley and said, "Huh!"

Patrick looked at Percy and said, "What Percy?"

Percy said, "Shirley is still thinking about herself and her friends becoming to your ball and how she can make money."

Brenda and Patrick knew Shirley was trying to sell ball gowns, but she did not have any in inventory.

Patrick and Brenda looked at Percy.

Brenda said, "My, Percy is that what Shirley is doing?"

Monica was listening because she wanted to go to the Patrick and Brenda's anniversary ball but did not have a ball gown.

Patrick was smiling at Percy as he ate his fried trout.

Percy said, "Yes."

Patrick said, "Percy eat your trout you got for me. Try the butter sauce Thomas made it is really good."

Thomas sat and looked at Shirley. He felt sorry for her because she was sick and could never run and play with them or ride horses.

Thomas felt Shirley had missed playing and it made her mean.

Michael did not care he had his head turned and looking at Patrick.

He finished a lollipop and the lollipop had a piece of chewing gum in it.

Michael did not know it had chewing gum.

He jumped and hollered.

Patrick and Brenda looked at him to see what was wrong.

Thomas slowly turned from Shirley to Michael.

Percy looked from his fried trout and French fries to Michael.

Percy said, "I want a lollipop."

Patrick and Brenda looked at Michael.

Alicia and Monica were looking at Michael.

Thomas looked at Michael and grinned and said, "Whoa."

Patrick and Brenda continued to eat and stared at Michael because he hollered over a piece of candy.

Alicia snickered.

Monica was listening to see what Shirley was going to do.

Eleanor was walking back in the family dining room when she heard Michael holler in excitement.

Eleanor looked and said, "Michael I heard you down the hall. What excited you?"

Brenda thought, "Eleanor knows her children. I wish I would have known my evil sons. Maybe I could have stopped them from being evil."

Michael said, "How's Bruce?"

Eleanor said, "Bruce is fine and don't try to change the subject Mr. Michael."

Thomas laughed and said, "You are caught Michael."

Percy said, "Yeah Michael."

Eleanor said, "Monica can you re-heat my trout it is really good. I told Bruce I would eat and come back to him."

Monica reached and picked up Eleanor's plate and walked to the kitchen.

Eleanor said, "Michael?"

Michael turned to Eleanor and was chewing his gum.

Eleanor looked.

Percy said, "Momma?"

Eleanor looked at Percy.

Thomas laughed and said, "Momma!"

Patrick and Brenda were watching them and Shirley.



Eleanor looked back at Michael and rubbed his hair.

Brenda smiled, because Michael's hair was pretty. It was half curly and half straight. So was Thomas. The women loved it."

Patrick was thinking, "God girls are going to be running over Eleanor to get to all her boys."

Patrick looked at Eleanor and said, "She needs peace."

Shirley said, "Momma..."

Percy and Thomas looked at Shirley.

Thomas said, "Shirley don't tell momma. Let her guess."

Eleanor looked at Thomas and kissed his cheek.

Monica returned to the family dining room with the re-heated trout.

Eleanor said grace again.

She looked at Michael and said, "Gum. Give it to me."

Eleanor held out her hand.

Michael spit the gum in Eleanor's hand.

He put his elbow on the table and leaned his head in his hand.

He huffed out his mouth.

Thomas laughed.

Percy laughed.

Percy said, "Momma you knew?"

Eleanor said, "I was trying to let Michael chew the sweet out."

Michael primped his mouth and looked at Eleanor.

Eleanor said, "This trout is really good. What is that brown you have daddy?"

Patrick said, "It's a brown butter sauce. Try some, if any is left."

Eleanor looked and saw the sauces for the children and saw a little brown sauce and poured it on her fish."

She said, "Oh this is good."

Eleanor looked at Michael and bumped into him and kissed his forehead.

Michael laughed.

Thomas laughed.

Eleanor looked at Percy and said, "Percy."

Percy was looking at Patrick.

He turned and met Eleanor's eyes.

She looked at him with true love.

Percy felt her love. He wanted to feel his mother's love again.

She had been so busy with Shirley, then Joseph and Michael and Thomas. Now with the thieves.

Eleanor said, "I am so happy how you have grown. You did not say anything, but you saw your grandpa's fish was stolen and you researched and found him some trout at the end of the season and had it delivered. You showed love, concern and was thoughtful of someone else. I am so proud of you."

Percy smiled and held his head down.

Patrick winked his eye at Percy.

Percy was so happy.

Brenda smiled at Percy.

Percy looked at Eleanor and when Eleanor turned her head.

Percy stuck his tongue at Shirley.

Patrick said, "Percy."

Eleanor looked up and said, "What?"

Shirley said, "Momma I want to buy ball gowns and sell them for grandma and grandpa's anniversary ball. But the people may not be able to pay for them..."

Eleanor was looking at Shirley and listening.

Monica said, "God show them how to do it."

Shirley said, "...How can we help them?"

Michael looked at Shirley and said, "Take it out their pay like you do at the hospital with Dr. Greene."

Monica looked at Michael and then Alicia.

Patrick was watching Monica.

Shirley was thinking.

Eleanor said, "Shirley how would you get ball gowns in two weeks and what type of finance system you are talking about and it could take these workers up to a year to pay for the ball gowns?"

Shirley said, "I thought about that. I thought we can have a ball once a year to raise money to keep the hospital open and working. They can wear the ball gowns again."

Eleanor said, "I don't know Shirley. It's a lot for two weeks."

Patrick was watching Monica and said, "Monica."

Monica looked at Patrick and walked to the table and was looking to see what was needed.

Patrick said, "If you get a ball gown from Shirley would you let her take out the payments from your pay before you are paid each week?"

Shirley looked up at Monica.

Monica said, "Yes sir."

Patrick said, "What about you Alicia?"

Alicia was surprised Patrick knew her name.

She said, "I don't know about a ball gown, but I have seen some of the clothes they are wearing I would like a dress or two and I would not mind if it came out of my pay or I pick what I like and pay on it until I can get it out."

Shirley said, "Only if there is a time. Because if it is a spring dress you need to pay for it by the first of March."

Eleanor turned her head and was thinking and said, "Shirley that is a lot of bookkeeping."

Shirley sat and folded her arms and was thinking.

Thomas leaned over and was talking to Michael.

Thomas said, "Try Shirley. I want the workers to come to grandma and grandpa's anniversary ball."

Michael said, "Me too. I want the ball to be full of people having fun with grandma and grandpa."

Shirley did not say anything.

Monica and Alicia went back to working.

Eleanor said nothing she looked at Shirley and said, "It is your money. Jose did not get a chance to pay your shop workers and my shop workers, so when we go into town tomorrow, we have to pay them for this week and next week. I looked at the receipts Jose has them in order."

Shirley tried to turn and said, "Monica."

Monica walked to Shirley and looked at her.

Shirley said, "I just don't want to be stuck with a bunch of ball gowns. Who is here that you can ask that want to go to the Stiths' anniversary ball and don't have a gown. What is their size and color they want. I will not buy the extremely expensive ones so they can be able to pay them. If they are able to get a loan or have an account at the banks they can full pay for the dress."

Monica smiled.

Shirley slightly turned to Alicia and said, "Alicia you are not coming to the ball?"

Alicia said, "I plan on coming to the ball."

Shirley said, "Don't you need a ball gown?"

Alicia said, "Me and five other workers have been making our ball gowns. We get together every weekend and work all day."

Eleanor said, "How is that coming?"

Alicia said, "We don't know how the ball gowns will look, We should finish this week end. But we got to know each other. We cook while we are working on our dresses."

Thomas said, "Do you have fun?"

Alicia said, "Yes." She giggle.

Shirley went to the sitting room and was reading.

Eleanor went to Bruce and sat with him while he read.

Percy walked into Bruce and they all talked.

Michael and Thomas played in the hall outside Bruce's room.

Patrick went to his office.

Brenda went to her office.

Monica and Alicia cleaned the family dining room.

Alicia said, "What you think they are going to do?"

Monica said, "Not they. Shirley. I don't know. She is the one that hold onto every dime."

Michael got up and ran downstairs to the storage area.

Thomas followed him.

Michael found a large jar of suckers that were not opened.

Thomas helped him walk through to the kitchen.

They were about to go outside.

Leon was in the workers kitchen talking to the security men.

Leon saw Thomas and Michael and said, "What are you two doing?"

Michael said to put this jar of suckers in the carriage.

Leon said, "Come back I 'll take them outside."

Michael and Thomas were struggling with the jar.

They placed the jar in the middle of the floor by the back door.

Leon continued his meeting with the security men.

The three dish washers said, "We prefer to be outside."

Leon said, "Two of you in the flower garden. I need to find some type of cover for the third one."

The one dish washer said, "I can hide and cover the front of the house."

Leon said, "There is a bench towards the front door. And the garden has two rain barrels. We can move them near the front porch to give you some coverings. I still want people in the house in case they try to burn the house down."

Everyone looked at Leon.

Shirley closed her book and was leaving out the sitting room.

Monica found Shirley and said, "Miss Shirley is a list from the workers here."

Shirley said, "Tell I will see."

Shirley saw Nadine's name on the list.

Patrick and Brenda finished the business they were working on.

They put everything in their separate safes.

Patrick and Brenda went to their bedroom.

Patrick took out a large amount of cash.

He stared at Brenda's jewelry that he recently over the past two years that he should have bought over the thirty five years of marriage.

Brenda saw Patrick and said, "Patrick leave everything in the safe. GOD will protect it."

Patrick and Brenda washed and put on their nightgowns.

They prayed.

Brenda was on her knees and said, "LORD GOD Almighty thank YOU. YOU took a terrible day and turned it into an evening of praise and worship. YOU knew where our things were. YOU kept them and returned them to us. Keep our house and destroy the threat and please bring this evil to an end. I thank You that even though we had to face the evil of this day, YOU were FAITHFUL. YOU were with us and YOU helped us. Whatever our enemy is planning, YOU said, for us to draw near to you and YOU will draw near to us and resist the devil and he will flee. Help us to draw near to you. LORD GOD Almighty in JESUS' name."

Patrick said, "Amen."

Patrick and Brenda got in the bed and had peaceful rest and sleep.

Gen and Ben were packed.

They had a quiet evening.

They went to sleep in peace.

Meredith was asleep.

Denise was asleep.

Gary was awake thinking about Denise. He had a nap earlier and was not sleepy.

The security men were at their posts.

Jose was walking to and for in his room he wanted some sherry.

He knew he could not drink, because he would get drunk.

Nadine and Peter talked most of the night.

Peter was sitting on the floor with his back to the bed and Nadine was lying in the bed sitting up on her right elbow.

Thomas was sick of them talking all night.

Louis was in the re-modeled barn with the other worker that had a shot gun by his bedroom door.

Louis was laying on his side and was wondering why Thomas did not volunteer to help. He was going to be paid. He knew Thomas was a marksman.

Lorraine packed her a bag and was making the nurses at hospital bath items.

She thought, "I am good at this. I have been saving every dime. I have a nice savings for retirement. When I get back I'll go and check on my farm."

She finished and wrapped everything in pretty bags and went to bed.

Monica was on her knees praying and eventually went to bed.

Alicia was trying to thread a needle and embellish some buttons.

Eleanor walked to her office and put all papers, drawings, maps, everything in her safe.

She went upstairs and put all of her and Shirley's jewel in her safe.

No one where Eleanor's safe was.

Eleanor counted a large amount of cash and put it in her bag.

She looked around and saw her bags were gone.

She waked and checked on Shirley.

Eleanor knocked on Shirley's door.

Shirley did not say anything.

Eleanor said, "Shirley I was just going to say good night."

Shirley said, "Good night."

Eleanor smirked, "Heifer."

Eleanor walked to her four boys' rooms.

She saw they were sleep.

Eleanor went to her bedroom and walked out onto her patio and looked out over the backyard.

She sat and thought about what time her daddy put into building this house for him and Brenda.

Eleanor became tickle when she thought about how Bruce was so scared and afraid the house would be burned down. Bruce love the house and told all the other children they had to move and he was going to live in that house. He would allow Shirley to live in one of the suites downstairs.

Eleanor enjoyed the night's cool air.

She became sleepy and stood and walked in her bedroom and left her patio door cracked and went to bed

She laid facing the patio door so she can get some fresh air and to see the stairs.