Chester rode to the command center.

He wrote up the two soldiers that were in their tents.

He pulled their records.

He saw the two would end their career in thirty days. He thought his wrote would not damage their record.

Chester schedule a disciplinary meeting with them in three days at the command post.

He pulled Skip orders to see why he had those five soldiers posted at Brianna’s house.

Chester pulled together different reports and saw the stolen coal and blankets were hid at Brianna’s house and Skip left the soldiers there in case the thieves returned.

Chester did not see any reports after that about the wagons and when the goods were delivered.

He told Foster to do his job and get the information and put it in one folder under one report with the names of all soldiers involved.

Chester was angry but he tried to control his temper.

The word had circulated through the five troops that Skip wanted Chester to succeed him as the head commander over the headquarters.

The soldiers who had invested years in the military wanted to stay and get their pension and the ones ready to retire wanted to make sure they got their retirement and those who joined for paycheck need to be looking for other income.

Chester heard some soldiers talking and he overheard the rumor.

He smirked to himself and thought, “Who can follow Skip?”

Chester never heard that rumor before.

He never thought about Skip leaving either by death or retirement.

When Chester and Tony talked about the navy or the military they searched everything and settled on the military because of the reputations of Skip and his Jake was recorded in journals and newspapers. They told their mother and father at their graduation dinner.

Naomi looked at a teary eye Craig as his sons decided not to follow him into the navy but to follow legends into battle in the military.

Tony and Chester knew it hurt their father but they made up their minds.

Chester said, “Dad we know our decision hurts you, but Bishop is also in the military. And I nor Tony want to be on water for months at a time. We barely swim…”

Craig was sitting hurt and had his fork lifted up from his apple pie at o take a bite.

Tony watched his dad’s hurt but he did care enough to change his minds. He and Chester had always dream of being in the gunfights and be heroes.

Naomi watched her sons break their father’s heart.

Chester had a fork of apple and leaned over the plate to put it in his mouth and said, “We leave tomorrow.”

Naomi stared at Chester.

Tony sat and watched his parents.

Chester was gobbling his apple pie in case he had to run.

Tony reached for his mother’s hand and she took his hand and they danced for a good amount of time.

Chester sat sideways to watch his mother and brother dance and to keep an eye on his father.

Craig sat and stared at Chester.

Chester reached his hand for a dance to his father.

His father just stared at him.

Tony and Naomi looed with shock.

Craig stood up and Chester stood to run.

Tony stopped dancing with Naomi to see if he had to run.

Colleen, Tony and Chester’s classmate was invited to their dinner party by Craig and Naomi and her mother’s sister Cyndi.

Colleen wanted to dance with Tony.

Cyndi her aunt who made the pies for the dinner, kept nudging Colleen to step to Tony.

Craig reached his hand to Chester.

Chester did not know whether hiss father was trying to trick him to hit and clip him like was his custom or if his starch navy father wanted to have fun and dance.

Naomi did not know what to think.

Tony was appalled.

He looked around at the barn full of guess.

Everyone was waiting Chester like to take center stage, took his father’s hand and bowed.

His father courtesy and Chester led his father to the dance floor.

The neighbors and guess begin to laugh and shout.

Collen was on the way to the dance floor to go to Tony.

She stopped and held her hand to my mouth.

Then saw it was a joke.

Naomi went to Craig and Tony joined them and they had a family’s dance.

The other families gathered on the barn floor and danced.

Colleen was walking off the dance floor and Tony saw her.

Naomi nodded to Tony.

Colleen was about to step to her aunt Cyndi when a hand caught her hand and pulled her around.

It was Tony her idol.

Colleen looked back at her aunt and screamed.

Her uncle was getting another piece of apple pie.

He turned around and smiled and watched his niece dance with a tall, blond, green eyes and handsome young man.

Her aunt and uncle grinned.

Tony pulled Colleen to him and she has been there for fifteen years.

Everyone fell asleep on the barn floor.

Tony was asleep on a bale of hay and Colleen was seated on the floor with her head on Tony’s leg.

Craig and Naomi were seated on a bale of hay holding each other.

Chester was not far from Tony and was laying on the floor with his head next to Tony’s head.

Neighbors were asleep on the floor and against the walls.

The barn doors opened.

Several figures walked in the barn and stood.

Tony’s sleep was disturbed by the light that was flooding the barn, he raised his head to see where the light was coming from.

Craig cracked his eyes and he pushed Naomi off him as one of the figures was walking toward him.

Craig looked and said, “Bishop.”

Naomi smiled.

Bishop and Craig embraced.

Tony woke Chester, who had red hair and green eyes.

The neighbors and guess begin to stir and saw the men in uniform.

They realized Tony and Chester would be leaving to go to the military.

Bishop their favorite uncle had come to take them to training at headquarters.

The other two young men were Calvin and Danny.

The neighbors cooked a hearty breakfast.

Craig and Bishop and Naomi sat at the same table.

Craig was chewing and looking at Bishop.

Naomi was looking at Bishop.

Bishop had his mouth opened to eat some grits, he saw them looking at him and said, “Craig. Naomi.”

Naomi looked at Craig and said, “Craig is not happy our boys are following you into the military and not the navy.”

Craig was still chewing and said nothing.

Bishop said, “That’s it?”

Craig and Naomi laughed at Bishop.

Chester, Tony, Calvin and Danny sat together and ate breakfast together.

Bishop stood and embraced Naomi and Craig said, “You can take that one.”

Naomi hit at Craig.

Bishop walked over to the table of left over food.

He had a taste of the apple pie and wanted more of the apple pie.

Bishop was teasing and trying to find out if any more apple pie was hidden somewhere.

He said, “Whoever made that apple pie I would marry if they are not married.

Several women stepped forward.

Marcus laughed, but he reached and got the last piece of apple pie and looked at Bishop.

Bishop was thinking, “How could I miss that piece?”

He said to Marcus, “You won’t share with a military man?”

Marcus was putting a bite in his mouth and shook his head for no and said, “Uh.Uh.”

Cyndi hit Marcus and turned to the gray eye Bishop and said, “Dear sir, the next time you are in town I will bake an apple pie for you.”

Everybody said, “Whoa.”

Bishop looked at the people and bowed to Cyndi and said, “Ma am I await for such a wonderful delight.”

Marcus was finishing the last bite of the apple pie and dropped his fork into the plate.

Bishop looked at Marcus.

Craig walked up and put his hand on Bishop’s shoulder and said to Cyndi, “My brother. Good blood line.”

Craig walked Bishop outside the barn.

He looked back in the barn and whispered to Bishop, “Cyndi is a teacher.”

Bishop looked at Craig who winked his eye at Bishop.

Craig, “She teaches at the school with Naomi. She bakes cakes too.”

Craig nodded his head at Bishop.

Calvin and Danny were outside the barn.

Tony and Chester went in the house and got their bags.

Craig looked at his boys and said, “You would not have changed your minds, because your bags were already packed.”

Tony walked to Colleen and said,”I’ll stay in touch with you.” He pinched her chin and walked away and bumped into his mother.

Colleen giggled.

Naomi looked at Tony and he kissed her on the forehead. He embraced his father.

Chester hugged his mother and he waltz with Craig to the wagon.

Everyone hollered.

Bishop grinned and waved.

Chester sat up with Bishop and Calvin, Danny and Tony sat in the back of the wagon.

Colleen was very happy that a boy like Tony would be interested in a simple unattractive girl as herself.

Marcus laughed, but he got the last piece of apple pie.

Bishop said, “You won’t share with a military man.

Marcus was putting a bite in his mouth and said, “Uh.UH.”

Cyndi hit Marcus and turned to the gray eye Bishop and said, “Dear sir, the next time you are in town I will make an apple pie for you.”

Everybody said, “Whoa.”

Bishop pulled the horses and the wagon from the barn.

He winked at Cyndi.

Marcus winked back at Bishop.

Bishop said, “Smart ass.”

Chester laughed and said, “Who?”

Bishop began to tell the four graduates what to expect and what not to expect.

He told them he maybe one of their trainers, but the military had been called to put out a lot of fires.

He told them the temporary new head of headquarters believe in education.

Bishop said, “If you make it training and through your two year enlistment period, immediately sign up for college. The new temporary head of headquarters will help get you the money to go to college. His oldest son will be joining you. He goes to college and during the summer will be training at the camp.”

Bishop said, “The temporary head of headquarters was common but he married a pure blue blood and now he is of one of the richest families in this country…”

The boys said, “Whoa.”

Bishop said,” To get noticed by him is for your college entrance papers to be put before his face. He has an excellent memory.”

Chester said, “I don’t want to go to school. I am finished with school.”

Danny said, “Me too. I want to be a military man.”

Bishop said, “I know. That’s the way I feel. But when you have a chance to grow. Grow. This man’s wife just died. And he has two sons, that will joining their father if he is made permanent. He has done some great work since he has been there for these two months.”

Danny said, “Has he raised the pay?”

Bishop looked back at Danny and said, “You do this job with honor and pride. Yes he has gone to the governor requested for the pay to be increased and for the retirement to be increase. We have to wait and see.”

Bishop rode up to the door and told the boys to come with him.

The soldiers were standing with a very mean look.

The laughing and joking Danny swallowed hard and looked back at Bishop.

The four boys became scared.

Bishop stood and watched the boys being processed.

A soldier walked to Bishop and handed him some papers.

Bishop looked over the papers.

He took them to the dorms they were assigned to.

He said, “They kept you four together. You have to get up at daybreak. They are very serious and give you no second chances because a second chance could be someone life.”

He looked at the four boys and said, “Good night.”

Chester ran to the window at the end of the dorm room.

He chose the bed next to the window.

Tony did not like to be next to the window and chose the bed next to Chester.

Danny chose the bed closest to the door.

Calvin was glad that only four more recruits could fit in there.

He chose the bed on the wall across from Danny.

Calvin went to sleep.

Danny was up late playing cards.

Tony started whining about his mother and father.

Chester got in the bed and raised up and looked at Danny and Calvin who were watching Tony and said, “If you don’ t shut your butt up and get in the bed. Uncle Bishop stood in there to keep us together. He said we have to be up at daybreak. I want to get through this training. Dad did it. Uncle Bishop did. You do it. I don’t want to fight you and they put both of us out.”

Tony jumped on Chester.

Calvin and Danny tried to break them up but couldn’t.

Chester and Tony finally stop fighting as the staff was standing and watching them.

Bishop was standing behind the staff who was bringing four recruits to the room.

Bishop was so embarrassed.

When Tony and Chester finished fighting the staff turned and looked at Bishop.

The four recruits were told to get them a bed.

The four recruits looked at the staff.

The staff was so outdone they did not know what to do.

The process was to kick them out the military.

The staff knew Bishop was an honorable man.

He told the staff they were twins and they have fought every since they were born.

The staff took the case to the temporary head of headquarters.

The staff told Bishop the temporary head of headquarters laughed and said he would override the order of termination and said, “We have Esau and Jacob. Watch them to keep them from killing each other or me”.

Everyone laughed.

The temporary head of headquarters started coming to their training.

He would show the trainers what he wanted them to do.

Bishop taught the class how to swim and how to survey an attack in the water or if they had to his in water.

Tony was not learning that part of how to survive that in the water.

Bishop worked relentless with Tony.

Chester, Danny and Calvin were waiting for Tony.

Chester wanted to go and eat and then to bed.

Tony had to pass that part of the water attack to graduate.

No one knew Skip and Arnold were in the way watching them.

Skip was saying to Arnold, “How can we enhance this part of the curriculum to better learn this part?”

Arnold said, “We see the problem of what he is not able to grasp, but how to train him to overcome this I don’t know.”

At that moment Chester stood and start cursing Tony.

Bishop turned and saw Skip, Arnold, Rueben, Stephens and Wallace who was just sitting down.

Bishop said, “Chester sit and be quiet.”

Tony was frustrated and started cursing Chester.

Chester dived in the water and he and Tony started fighting.

Bishop only saw the heads stand up and look.

He swam to Tony and Chester to stop them from fighting.

He could not stop them.

They had gone under the water.

The heads ran down to the lake to pulled Chester and Tony out of the water.

Calvin stood up to see where they were.

Danny was laughing.

The heads looked at Danny like he was crazy.

Arnold was pulling off his coat and his boots to jump in the lake and pulled them out.

Bishop kept going down and back up.

Rueben pulled off his boots and his coat to go in the pond.

When Rueben and Arnold were about to jump in the water.

Bishop pulled the two out the lake.

Tony and Chester were still fighting as they laid on the ground.

Arnold stood and watched them fighting.

Chester jumped on Tony’s back and tried to break his neck.

Tony gave a backwards kick to Chester and rolled over on him and fought himself free.

They stood up and was about to knuckle fight.

Danny continued to laugh.

The heads looked at him.

Arnold and Rueben stood on the side and watched the twins fight.

Bishop went and dried off and put his uniform on.

He knew that was the end of his career and the end of the boy’s career, he thought, “They better go to college and become what I don’t know. I wondered if that school teacher is still free?”

Bishop saw Arnold when he looked at Skip.

Skip looked at Arnold who was the master of the water program.

Bishop did not know what the looks meant between Arnold and Skip, but he was not going to leave his bad ass nephews there with them.

He sat next to Danny and Calvin.

Bishop looked at Danny as he continued to laugh.

Calvin just watched.

Bishop noticed how observant Calvin was.

Bishop looked over at the heads and his boss was there and he did not see Harold walk up.

He was thinking, “My sister has moved into mom and dad place with her three children. I can’t bunk with them. I sure ain’t moving in with those two. I will go to college and buy a small house. No I can’t buy a small place because I like that school teacher. I will not make anyone poor.”

That night Bishop went to a prayer service held by a new recruit named Pearson.

Bishop was so afraid of him being put on the poverty line.

He got out of his bed and on his knees and said, “God I need to get to know you. Please.”

When Chester and Tony finally stopped fighting they had to sit and rest for a few minutes.

Tony and Chester put their clothes on and talked like nothing was wrong.

The heads said nothing.

Danny and now Calvin began to laughed.

The four got up and went to dinner.

Bishop took a deep breath and looked over at the heads of the different departments.

Arnold and Rueben were seated and putting on their boots and their coats.

Noone said anything.

Bishop could not sleep.

He got up and dressed and went to the telegram office and sent a telegram to Craig and said, “The twins fought in front of the heads of several departments. I guess all of us will be coming home.”

The soldier who sent the telegram looked at a distraught Bishop.

The temporary head of headquarters started the telegram office to be opened twenty four hours a day.

Bishop went to the dinning hall for a cup of coffee and he sat down at a table and stared in space.

He heard low talking and did not think about it.

He looked up and saw the six heads seated and talking and they were looking at him.

Bishop nodded his head and turned his head back and stared in space he thought, “It is late at night. What are they all doing here?”

Arnold walked over and sat next to a distraught Bishop.

Bishop looked at Arnold and said, “Sir?”

Arnold said, “we want to talk to you come over.”

Arnold stood up.

Bishop looked up at Arnold and knew he was not leaving in the middle of the night and he might as well get it over.

He stood and followed Arnold over to the table with the heads.

Skip said, “I am temporary head of headquarters Skip Costner.”

Bishop took a deep breath.

Skip said, “You are not going to be fired nor your nephews.”

Bishop looked at Skip.

Skip laughed.

Arnold said, “We were watching your class today because we saw that many of the recruits could not grasp the element of underwater combat and how to survive a water attack. Your nephews showed us how to teach that part more effectively.”

Skip said, “Thank God they fought and we saw it. That might save soldiers’ lives. Get with Harold later today and re-work the curriculum. Good job.”

Skip and all the heads stood up and walked out the dining hall.

Bishop thought, “Did God do this?”

Tony and Chester were sleep.

Bishop stopped by the dorm and looked in on the four and went and laid in bed and slept for three hours before the bugle blew.

Bishop slept and had peace.

He saw the recruit the next morning and sat and had breakfast.

Bishop met with Harold later that morning and worked with him all day on the curriculum.

Harold and Bishop gave the new curriculum to Arnold.

Arnold looked over the new curriculum and approved it.

Bishop said, “Sir did Tony and Chester pass that course.”

Arnold laughed and said, “Yes they passed, if not we won’t have this.”

Arnold pushed the new curriculum to Bishop.

Arnold said, “The temporary head of headquarters started a program that a bonus is given for new ideas that work. I will put in for you to get a bonus.”

Bishop was shocked and said, “Sir…Thank You.”

Chester, Tony, Calvin and Danny had rifle training for the next two days.

Bishop went back to the telegram office and told the soldier to send another telegram all was well.

Bishop went and wrote a letter to Cyndi and sent it to Naomi to give it to her.

Naomi received the letter and was so excited and took the letter to school and found Naomi and gave her the letter.

Naomi began to giggle and laughter.

She wrote Bishop back and sent her address.

Bishop used his bonus money to send Cyndi a letter each week.

He sent Cyndi a letter and invited her to attend the twins graduating ceremony and his first time as an instructor.

Bishop sent her money to buy a new dress and shoes and hat.

He started saving his pay, each week.

He was going to be entertaining Craig, Naomi, Cyndi and, Marcus.

He found several nice places for them to eat in the capitol.

Although most of the training was in the capitol, they had to go away to train in the water and train how to ride the horses.

The ceremony would be at the capitol.

Skip took interest in those four boys.

Bishop met Craig and told him where to park.

He looked great in his uniform.

Bishop helped Cyndi out the wagon and she looked very nice in her new dress and new shoes.

She told Bishop, “I know hats are proper, but I don’t like them.”

Craig and Marcus noticed how Naomi watched Cyndi with jealous eyes.

Marcus said, “Now, Now Naomi, you married a great man…”

Craig bowed.

Bishop and Cyndi did not know what was going on.

Bishop escorted them to the outdoor ceremony area.

He showed them to their seats.

Craig had on his navy uniforms.

People were smiling and talking to him about his uniform.

Bishop notice how Naomi turned her back to Cyndi.

Marcus noticed and cut his eyes at Bishop.

Craig noticed Bishop saw something he turned and looked at Naomi.

Craig winked his eye at Bishop.

Bishop went to the instructor’s section.

All he heads were on the platform.

Bishop kept watching Naomi.

Craig motioned to Bishop to enjoy the program.

Craig’s mother died when he was a teenager and his father had Bishop by a freed slave woman.

Cyndi was a freed woman. Her family was never slaves.

Marcus worked at the school as a janitor and he married a white woman and they have five children.

Bishop was very sensitive about the color issue that’s why he joined the military and he found the atmosphere less racist.

Bishop turned his attention to the program and enjoyed it with the rest of the instructors.

Finally the graduates stood and marched across the stage and received their diplomas and awards.

Chester had more awards than anyone.

Next was Danny.

After him Tony and last of that foursome Calvin.

Craig stomped his feet and begin to cry and swell up with pride that his boys got the type of awards they received.

Naomi knew the awards had to be important for Craig to be crying.

Those four was the top four out of their class of one hundred.

Craig caught Naomi snarling at Cyndi and he hit her leg.

Naomi was shocked that Craig caught her.

Marcus saw Naomi and Craig’s response and he did not say anything.

After the very prestigious ceremony, the soldiers were given their assignments.

The instructors were given their assignments and they had to report immediately.

The twins spent time with their classmates and their parents.

Bishop packed and loaded his horse for a three day journey.

He did not like that part of the state he was being assigned to because of the racism and a lynching of a black soldier two years go.

He changed clothes and met them at a very nice restaurant.

While they were waiting for Craig and family.

Bishop saw Danny was by himself and walked over to him and said, “Where’s your family?”

Danny said, “I am an orphaned because I am mixed and I don’t have a family. Just me. I wanted to celebrate.”

Cyndi and Marcus heard Danny.

Bishop pointe to their table.

They ordered food and waited for a long time for Craig.

Bishop asked Danny where he was going.

Danny took out his paper and he was going to the same post Bishop was going.

Bishop said, “Thank You God, that this boy won’t be by himself.”

Bishop said, “We have to go.”

He reached Cyndi some money and said, “When I get settled I will write you and let you know how to contact me. Keep our business to yourself.”

Craig and family walked in as Bishop made that statement.

Craig hear him and Chester heard him.

Chester saw Danny and said, “Where are you going?”

Danny told him the same city that Bishop was going. Chester said, he was going there to.

He grabbed a piece of Cyndi’s fried chicken and kissed her cheek.

Bishop handed Craig the money for the dinner.

Tony was going to the big city with Skip and Arnold.

Bishop said, “Watch them and learn everything you can. You are special and they selected you because of something they saw in you.”

Bishop embraced Tony and Craig.

He tried to kiss Naomi, as he usually does and she slightly turned her head.

Marcus and Craig saw her.

Chester wondered why his mother did that.

The three rushed out.

Chester and Danny shook Tony’s hand and ran out the restaurant with Bishop.

Bishop was a little upset because he did not want Cyndi to mis-treated.

Cyndi wrote to Chester she was having problems with the school and the school board and she did not know how the problems started.

Bishop did not know at first, but he saw Naomi’s attitude and he knew how Cyndi’s problems started.

They ate dinner.

Marcus and Cyndi sat and waited for Craig and Naomi to finish their meal.

Tony did not understand his mother’s attitude.

He kissed her and hugged his father.

He kissed Cyndi on her cheek and shook Marcus’ hand.

When Tony walked out the restaurant he saw Skip Tony and Calvin riding passed the restaurant.

He ran to his horse and caught up with them.

Skip and Arnold looked back to see who was riding with them.

Tony was glad to see Calvin and rode with him behind the heads.

He wondered about Chester.

But he thought,” Chester got a great draw with Bishop and Danny.”

They were not home for Christmas nor New Years.

It was the first Christmas the twins were not together.

It was very hard for Tony and Chester.

Skip was away from Bruce and Andrew.

Shirley died that year and he did not know how they were doing.

That was the reason he made Brue to go to college, so he would not be away for the first Christmas without Shirley. And Skip never knew where he was to be.

Skip and Shirley had discussed Christmas and they bought the boys Christmas presents and hid them in the house.

Skip carried Shirley down the beautiful staircase, and he sat her in a chair and she pointed to where to hide the gifts.

They enjoyed that day together.

Skip picked her up and they danced in the grand foyer.

The servants watched and cried.

The servants saw Shirley drop her head on Skip.

The servants came and told Skip that Shirley’s bed was ready.

Skip sat and watched Shirley all that day.

Michael and his wife arrived later that evening.

The servants showed them to the bedroom they made for Shirley.

Bruce and Andrew were in the parlor.

Michael and Eugenia walked in the house and first thing was the beautiful staircase.

Then they saw the boys crying in the parlor.

They hugged the boys and walked behind the servants to Shirley.

They saw Skip crying and leaning over to Shirley.

Michael and Shirley were very close, he wanted to run.

They did not have children.

Skip saw them and spoke.

He turned to Shirley and said, “Baby Michael and Eugenia are here.”

Shirley opened her eyes and looked into Skip’s eyes.

She tried to move her hand and said, “Michael?”

Michael rushed to Shirley and held her hand and kissed it.

Shirley smiled and said, “Let my Bruce and Andrew spend Christmas with you and Eugenia. Tell her I will miss her.”

Eugenia started crying.

Skip frowned up.

Bruce and Andrew had walked to the door.

Michael said, “Shirley Eugenia is here. She is standing in the door.”

Shirley said, “I can’t see. Excuse me please.”

Eugenia started jumping up and down in the doorway.

Andrew and Bruce rushed to their mother and said, “Mother.”

Shirley looked in the direction of their voices and tried to reach their hands.

The servants walked in.

A servant pushed Eugenia to the bed.

Eugenia said, “Shirley baby I will miss you too.”

Michael stood and walked to Eugenia.

Bruce and Andrew rushed and sat next to their mother and held her hand.

Shirley said, “I feel your love. I will take your love with me on journey. I am not afraid. I pray to GOD HE will keep you three and love one another and let no one separate you. Skip I love you for eternity.”

Shirley closed her eyes.

Skip kissed her on her lips and he just rocked.

All of her brothers and their wives rushed to her.

Everyone cried for a long time.

A servant went and had the undertaker to come later.

The headquarters allowed Skip to be home until the training was over.

Skip was about to quit but he did not want to be home.

He nearly neglected Andrew.

But when Betsy came into their lives, it recreated that strong relationship those two had.

Skip knew Shirley was well pleased with him spending time with Andrew and Bruce.