Eleanor poured her another full glass of scotch.

She sat in the parlor and wondered about why this great evil was overcoming her family.

She thought about she and Bruce and she thought about how much she hated him.

All of her life he manipulated her to get her family’s money.

Eleanor thought she would not be surprised if he was not behind some of the this evil with her brothers.

She wondered where Patrick Jr and Christopher live.

She thought about nowhere they go the evil ones target Shirley because she is considered the weakest and the one that nobody will care if she is disposed of.

Eleanor thoughts took over.

The thought came about Joseph was good and he loved her with all of his heart.

She thought and chuckled that Joseph was as poor as Gary and Earle.

She could see Gary has increased in money and working hard all the time to make more money.

Earle married Margaret, both of them have no money, but momma and daddy used their money to help them and paid their bills for six months and left William and Wyonna there to help them. I know momma and daddy will support them.

Eleanor thought and sit up on the sofa.

She could hear her children laughing in Patrick’s office.

Eleanor stood and walked to Patrick’s office and looked at her children.

Shirley was back from her room and said, “The man of light appeared to her in a flash and all she know is that bad people are coming.”

Percy said, “We have to shoot.”

Michael said, “Yeah.”

Eleanor heard them and walked into the office and said, “Shirley until Margaret decide if they will return to America, why don’t you hire Margaret as your personal European buyer for your dress shop. They can have some income coming in.”

Shirley sat and thought and said, “I can do that. Margaret know fashion.”

Eleanor looked at the mess her children made and walked back to the parlor and sat down.

She thought Margaret and Earle’s live had improved so much. She thought about the new dresses she put in the trash, but Margaret did not have pride and asked for the dresses and sit and learned how to sew and embroider she has skills she can use.

Eleanor smiled at her gorgeous baby Earle.

A thought came to Eleanor that if Margaret and Earle were left n America they would have been destroyed and she and baby Earle would have died and Earle would be destroyed. They now have skills to make a living.

She thought about Steve’s family no goodness came out of him when he tried to kidnap Shirley and sell her to the evil criminal group like she was the least and would be ok to kill and get rid of her.

Eleanor cried.

She held her heart and bent over and cried out.

She wondered, if ever she treated Shirley as a throw away.

Eleanor found herself saying, “Thank you God.”

Eleanor would go to church with her grandma Shirley and Grandpa Percy, each Sunday they went to church.

They tried to teach Eleanor how to pray and call on the Name of JESUS.

Her mind was always on Bruce.

Her grandma and grandpa never said anything against Bruce.

They were cool towards him.

Eleanor thought how she disappointed her grandpa and especially her grandma, who took in her black momma in the midst of hell and fought to keep her safe.

How God blessed them.

Eleanor thought about her brothers trying to take over her momma and daddy’s house.

How they plotted to kill her children but God stopped it and they had the money to get them to a hospital and be healed.

Eleanor thought because of the good God put them on the earth to do for people. Her family is protected.

Eleanor thought,

She slid off the sofa onto her knees and said, “I don’t know You God. My parents, Patrick and Brenda, know You. My grandparents, Percy and Shirley, know You. My aunt Beverly and uncle Alfred say they know you. Gen and Ben know you.”

Eleanor begin to cry.

The pain of losing Joseph was so great. It was if it was the day she found out Joseph was leaving her.

She thought she would be with him a few months. She wanted to wash him and clean him wash his beddings and feed him. She did it for Shirley. She knew how to take care of Joseph.

A thought came to Eleanor, Joseph loved her so much he did not her to be a part of his death. He could not go in peace if he looked in her eyes and see the pain of his death in his only true love. He could not bear it.

She said, “He made my happy. Why did You take him from me. I hate Bruce. I never want him in my life nor my children. I believe Bruce and his family are thieves and I am at fault for letting all this evil against my children.”

Eleanor woke the next morning when she could hear the birds chirping outside.

Her head was on the sofa.

She never remembered being able to hear any sounds from outside.

Jose was walking through the house and stopped at the parlor and saw Eleanor on her knees and the nearly full glass of scotch.

Jose said, “You are alright you are on your knees.”

He walked away.

Shirley said, “I’m alright.”

Jose was thinking, “I hope she leaves that scotch. I’ll check when I come back.”

Jose walked to Patrick’s office and saw Percy sitting up going through the mail.

Bruce had fallen asleep on a stack of mail.

Thomas and Michael were curled up on the sofa.

Shirley was sitting with her back against the wall.

Eleanor walked to the office and stood and peeped over Jose’s shoulder at her children.

Eleanor looked at Percy.

Percy looked at her and Jose.

Eleanor smiled at Percy said, “Good morning momma and Jose.”

Jose said, “Good morning.”

Jose looked around the room and walked away.

Eleanor walked in the office and leaned down and gave Percy a big kiss on his head.

Percy was reading a letter.

Eleanor said, “What is that letter?”

Percy said, “A letter from Bruce to us, his children.”

Eleanor was looking at her other children with her hand on the back of Percy’s head.

She looked at Percy.

Percy said, “Momma do you hate dad?”

Eleanor said, “Yes.”

He looked at Eleanor.

Percy waved the letter in his hand and said, “Read what he say.”

Eleanor was looking in Percy’s eyes and said, “Percy I love you. I don’t want to ever see nor hear anything from your thieving father. Joseph was my husband. He was my true love. He made me happy.”

Percy said, “I love you. I love Joseph. I told him I would be with him to the end. I was there with you when they closed his casket and lowered his body into that hole. I believe God did not allow you to marry Joseph because he wanted you and Bruce to be together for us your children.”

Eleanor sat next to Percy and held his head in her hands.

Percy said, “I don’t know what daddy did to you.”

Percy waved the letter, “But he says he is sorry.”

Bruce woke and was looking at Percy sitting next to Eleanor.

Eleanor said, “Percy I will always hate your father.”

Bruce turned his head and went back to sleep.

Shirley was waking and stretching.

She saw Eleanor sitting next to Percy talking about Bruce.

She did not say anything.

Shirley thought about her friend who died at the hospital. They wanted to date but Dr. Ralph and Dr. Greene told them they were young and work on getting better. But they knew her was going to die. Hs death crushed her and she did not know what to do. She had no mother, because she fled from Bruce and moved to Europe and left her alone, only Michael was with her. Michel loved her when she yelled at him everyday and abused him until he would cry. Dr. Woodson walked in one day when Michael ran out the hospital and was lost. Dr. Woodson ran behind Michael and caught him and they sat and Dr. Woodson held Michael as he cried for Eleanor. Lorraine was on her way to the hospital to check on Shirley she saw Dr. Woodson holding a little boy. All Lorraine thought was that Shirley was dead. Lorraine thought she had two dates and drunk a lot that day. She turned and rode to Dr. Woodson and Michael. Her heart broke when Dr. Woodson told her of Shirley’s abuse of Michael and how he took it from her because he loved her. Dr. Woodson said he was going to put Shirley out of the hospital. Bruce was going to the hospital and he saw Lorraine and Michael. He saw Michael was uncontrollable crying. Bruce started crying for the pain he saw Michael in. He rode over to them. He tried to hold Michael, but Michael rejected him and said, “I want momma.”

Bruce went to the hospital and closed Shirley’s door. Dr. Woodson said they had a shouting match for over an hour.

Lorraine had taken Michael home and got him two lamb chops and he did not want them, bit cried himself to sleep. Michael stayed away from Shirley a month.

Shirley asked Lorraine about Michael everyday.

Michael started playing sports at his school.

Robert would take care of Michael.

Lorraine was at the hospital all day taking care of Shirley.

Shirley was jealous when her friend died. She said his pain was over.

He made Shirley grin everyday through the horrible pain she was in.

He told Shirley he missed Michael and to apologize to him and don’t treat him bad anymore because he loved her and they had no one else. And that Michael made him feel good.

She was glad that Michael allowed her to apologize to him so he could visit her friend before he died. That her friend had some happy time before he died.

Shirley turned her head and cried silently.

Eleanor watched Shirley and thought, “That silent cry means something is bitter in her soul.”

Eleanor looked at Michael and said, “God I hope she did not do something against my baby.”

She held onto Percy while he finished reading Bruce’s letter.

She wondered what this great evil that was coming against them.

Eleanor thought they were good people and parent that does not count, but her parents were Christians and that should cover her and her children.

She placed her head on Percy’s head and thought I love my children. What would I give to keep them alive and safe.

Then Eleanor’s heart pierced her.

She said, “Daddy.”  
She sit still and said, “Are You saying that You are going to take my daddy from us and we have to stand by ourselves. That I have to come to You for help. But please keep my daddy and mommy here. I can’t do this living by myself. They have always been here with me. What about these little ones. I don’t know how to pray to You and what to say to You. But keep my mommy and daddy here and let them help us to grow. I can’t bear the thought of them not being with me. But I hate Bruce. I do not want him in my life anymore. Help me. What is this evil that is coming against us? Let it pass us if not let us destroy it forever. Let it not hurt anyone else nor destroy anyone. Help me. Please. I want my mommy and daddy.”

Jose passed by the office and went to the parlor and saw the nearly full glass of scotch was gone.

Jose squinted his eyes and said, “Damn. Nadine”

Nadine was in the kitchen washing the glass as Jose was walking in the kitchen.

Nadine was grinning she was happy and turned her head slightly as Jose passed looking at her.

She grinned and thought, “I beat you. Now.”

A telegram was coming through.

Eleanor waited until it stopped.

Percy jumped up and got the telegram he read it and then reached it to Eleanor.

He sat next to Eleanor.

She held his shoulder and said, “Who told you to read it.”

Percy laughed.

She said, “Dr. Woodson, Dr. Felipe, Dr. Charles and his wife and Dr. Greene, Debra and their son will be leaving tomorrow to get here by Sunday. “

Eleanor said, “What is their baby’s name?”

Bruce turned his head and said, “Barry is their baby. Are we going to have name tags?”

Eleanor hit at Bruce and said, “Silly.”

Patrick and Brenda were standing in the office door.

Patrick said, “Good morning.”

Bruce jetted off the floor and went and hugged Patrick and Brenda.

Percy was not moving from his mother’s care and love, he said, “Good morning grandpa and grandma.”

Eleanor said, “Momma and daddy where are they going to stay?”

Patrick said, “You weren’t here but they stayed here for Gen and Ben’s wedding.”

Brenda said, “I want them all to stay here.”

Bruce said, “I like Barry.”

Percy said, “He’s fun.”

Eleanor said, “We have enough staff for this?”

Patrick and Brenda stared at Eleanor.

Percy looked at Eleanor.

Another telegram was coming in.

Percy jumped and ran and got the telegram and read it and gave it to Eleanor.

Eleanor watched Patrick’s reaction to Percy taking over his office.

Percy sat next to Eleanor and she looked at Percy and waved the telegram and said, “What is this?”

He whispered in her ear.

Eleanor said, “When?”

Percy pointed at the paper.

Eleanor looked back at Percy and said, “Today.”

Percy grinned.

Patrick and Brenda were watching Shirley.

Jose walked back to Patrick’s office with a bag for the trash.

Brenda said, “Jose. We are going to have house guests for Meredith’s wedding. How many Eleanor.”

Eleanor counted and said, “Seven.”

Jose said, “Seven people or seven bedrooms?”

Brenda said, “A bedroom for Dr. Woodson, Meredith and Felipe, Dr. Charles and his blind wife…”

Percy grinned and pretended he bumped his head.

Eleanor was shocked at Percy and said, “Percy.”

She turned and said, “Why can’t Felipe stay with Meredith.”

Patrick said, “Are you drunk. Meredith stay in a room. Selfish.”

Brenda said, “Shut up Eleanor.”

Jose frowned up at Eleanor.

Brenda said, Dr. Greene and Debra and their son Barry. That’s four bedrooms.”

Jose said, “That’s so exciting for Meredith. You know how many people meet here and married and started their families and business. How many people you helped to get started in life. I am happy and honored to be a part of this tradition of love and marriage.”

Brenda was brought to tears.

Jose said, “Let me get this trash up and I am going to have to ask Meredith if her family is going to come and when.”

Percy yelled, “No.”

Jose was bending over and turned and looked at Percy.

Percy told him about Meredith.

Jose looked at Patrick.

Patrick said, “That’s the truth. I heard her along with Lorraine, Dan, Nadine, Gary and most of the workers.”

Jose could not stand up but turned and continued to pick up the trash.

He said, “You would never know.”

Jose picked up all the trash and looked at Shirley.

He said, “Shirley are you sitting on any trash?”

Shirley said, “Only in my heart.”

Jose walked out the office.

Patrick was looking over his office was half cleared.

Eleanor said, “Shirley we are beginning anew today. We are going to be a better family and that is built on us being better people.”

Shirley was still looking at the wall.

Michael woke and looked at Shirley.

Thomas was still sleep and his hair was hanging off the sofa.

Jose was passing back by.

Eleanor said, “Jose.”

Jose stopped and said, “What?”

Eleanor said, “Dr. Charles wife is blind. Maybe we should put them in four of the bedrooms down here. Especially with her and Barry.”

He looked at Brenda and said, “Momma did I overstep my position?”

Brenda said, “No I accept that decision Eleanor.”

Eleanor said, “That will be an additional eight people here should we do buffet breakfast and lunch and served dinners?”

Jose said, “Yes.”

Jose turned and looked at Patrick and Brenda with shame.

Percy said, “Breakfast with a lot of bacon.”

Jose said, “They are doctors and don’t eat a lot of meat. You forgot I had to cook for them when I was in Philadelphia.”

Jose looked at Patrick and Brenda and said, “You will have more doctors in your house than in the entire town. Everybody is going to be jealous.”

Brenda laughed.

Brenda said, ”Jose assigned four maids to this area for the next week. Double check the liquor. We won’t have any at the celebration. Make sure we have four carriages and drivers for our guests for next week.”

Eleanor said, “I forgot about their getting around.”

Brenda laughed and said, “Jose make sure Robert picks up the food for the fourth at the rest stop.”

She looked around and said, “Patrick?”

Patrick said, “No.”

Brenda said, “Eleanor?”

Eleanor said, “I am thinking. Shirley and I will help Meredith.”

Shirley said, “Who told you to volunteer me for anything?”

Jose looked at Shirley.

Jose said, “You said something is sitting on your heart you need to get that devil out of you.”

Michael said, “Momma!!”

He ran over to Eleanor and grabbed her.

He ran over Thomas.

Bruce looked at Michael.

Percy was bent on his feet he looked at Eleanor.

Eleanor said, “Michael!!Michael!!My God Michael!!!”

Michael would not turn Eleanor’s neck loose.

Brenda and Patrick stepped into the office.

Thomas woke and looked at Michael.

Eleanor was holding Michael tight.

Jose stood and look and he look at Shirley.

Patrick saw Jose looking at Shirley.

He said, Jose do you know what is wrong with Michael?”

Jose nodded towards Shirley and said, “What Shirley did to Michael in Philadelphia. The doctors were going to put her out the hospital for how she was treating Michael so evil. They had with Shirley and be would be homeless again. They were going to close the hospital down because she treated Michael evil everyday and abused him all the time.”

Everyone looked at Shirley who was still looking at the wall.

Eleanor said, “God what am I to do about my screaming child?”

Jose said, “Ask Lorraine. The doctors will be here next week ask them. I have never seen such abuse in my life. You don’t want him to be like Meredith. Get it out of him now.”

Eleanor looked at Shirley.

Brenda looked at Shirley then Eleanor.

Brenda was saying, GOD don’t let Eleanor jump on Shirley. What is this evil?”

Eleanor pulled Michael’s hands form him covering his eyes.

Eleanor said, “Michael I love you.”

Michael yelled, “You were not there!!”

The staff heard Michael screaming.

Lorraine and Meredith ran down the hall.

They ran into Patrick’s office and saw Eleanor holding a screaming Michael.

Jose looked at Lorraine and Meredith and said, “Michael had an episode and I told them about Shirley abusing him.”

Patrick said, “What the hell you mean an episode. This happened all the time?”

Lorraine said, “Yes.”

Patrick looked at Shirley.

Eleanor said, “Michael I am sorry I was not with you. You wanted to go with Shirley so she would not be alone. I did not want you to go.”

Michael sit up in Eleanor’s lap and yelled at her and said, “But you left me.”

Eleanor cried to Michael, “I’m sorry Michael. I was wrong.”

Michael said, “You were scared of daddy.”

Eleanor never admitted it to anybody.

She grabbed Michael and held him close to her and said, “Yes Michael I was scared of your daddy.”

Patrick looked at Lorraine and said, “Did you know this?”

Lorraine, Meredith and Jose turned to run.

Patrick caught Jose by his collar.

The other workers stood and watched.

Brenda kneeled down and held Eleanor and Michael.

Patrick looked at Jose.

Jose saw the betrayal look in Patrick’s eyes.

Jose said, “Brenda.”

Brenda looked up and said, “Patrick. We don’t need that. Jose why didn’t you tell us?”

Jose said, Bruce said he would fire us. We wanted to be a fence for the children.”

Brenda turned to Eleanor and said, “Eleanor was after you had Shirley?”

Eleanor was so ashamed and would not look up at Brenda.

Nadine told Ruth and Vivienne, “You’ll were right.”

Brenda jumped from the floor and yelled at them and pointed to Eleanor and said, “You knew and did not say anything?”

Jose said, “Brenda you stop. Most of us knew. That’s why we took Eleanor’s abuse. She was passing that abuse onto us. But the only time is that day she and Ruth fought.”

Jose snickered.

Brenda looked at Jose.

Jose said, “Brenda and Patrick I apologize we did not tell you. We felt we could help by being here and watching over them.”

Brenda looked into Jose’s eyes and still had her hand pointed toward Eleanor and Michael.

Thomas said, “Grandma, Joseph knew. Momma did not tell Joseph but he figured it out. Don’t be mad with Jose and the workers. They did what they thought were best.”

Brenda said, “Thomas how you know that?”

Percy said, “Yeah how you know that?”

Thomas looked at Percy and said, “The day I went riding and got lost and stayed all day.”

Bruce said, “Yeah.”

Thomas said, “I was up in my room with the window cracked open and Momma and Joseph were outside. Momma was stomping and crying and Joseph was holding momma like she is holding Michael. Joseph said, he could she was abused. He said, it was mental abuse. They stood outside for a long time and Joseph held momma all night.”

Brenda said, “Joseph is who I wanted to be my son-in-law.”

Patrick turned to walk out his office.

Brenda quickly grabbed Patrick and yelled, “We are Christians. You are not going to let that heathen send your soul to hell. I will not let you. We have to help Michael and Shirley.”

Bruce yelled, “Shirley!!”

Brenda pushed Bruce’s head and walked to Shirley and sat on the floor next to her.

Patrick was standing in the hallway.

Nadine, Ruth and Vivienne and some other workers looked at Patrick.

He exhaled and walked into the office and sat on the floor next to Shirley.

Brenda and Patrick sat next to Shirley.

Patrick sat to block Shirley for staring at the wall.

Shirley eyes were filled with tears.

She looked in Brenda’s eyes and saw love.

She leaned her head on Brenda.

Brenda held her.

Patrick took Shirley’s hands and clasped them in his hand.

Shirley saw they were not angry with he but disappointed. Thomas was sitting on the sofa watching his grandpa, grandma and Shirley.

Michael and Eleanor were screaming and hollering.

Harriet, Monica, Louis, Gary, Dan and Thomas walked back to the kitchen.

Jose said, “Monica, Vivienne, Harriet and Mellissa. I am assigning you to attend to the guests that will be here Sunday for a week. Come. I am showing you the rooms they will be in.”

He looked back at Eleanor, Michael, Patrick, Brenda and Shirley.

He closed the door.

Jose said, “And they want to know why we drink all the time.”

Jose said, “You select which guests. Dr. Woodson.”

Harriett said, “He’s a Christian man. I want him.”

Jose said, “Brenda and Patrick like their privacy. So let us use these two bedrooms at the end.”

Monica said, “The last one for the newlyweds.”

They laughed.

Jose said, “Monica said, you are assigned to that bedroom. How thick Aare the walls?’

They all laughed.

Jose said, “Harriett the next room is Dr. Woodson. Then the library with all of these crates out here.”

Harriet said, “Dr. Woodson like to read.”

Jose said, “Harriet you know too much about Dr. Woodson.”

Jose looked and saw Joseph’s room.

He said, “I don’t think they are ready to put anyone in Joseph’s room.”

He looked across the hall and said, “Vienne you are patient you are assigned to Dr. Charles and his blind wife.”

Harriet stared at Jose and said, “What am I suppose to do?”

Jose stared at Vivienne and said, “You are not her personal helper just pick up stuff and keep her from stumbling. I guess. I don’t know. Vivienne I am through talking to you. Mellissa you got Dr. Greene, Debra and Barry in the room next to Dr. Charles and his blind wife.”

Jose said, “You know how to make the rooms shine, with fresh flowers. We need to hire some washer since we lost three and they have been two weeks and the laundry is piling up and Brenda and Patrick want their room changed out to what Brenda bought in Europe. Now I got to go and look for that s\*\*t.”

Harriet walked and looked in Brenda and Patrick’s room.

Jose looked at her and was about to start cursing.

He said, “Dr. Woodson’s Harriet you can change the room out.”

Jose looked around and said, “We need the washroom cleared out.”

Monica said, “I’ll help Harriet to change out the Stiths suite.”

Jose walked up the hall and saw Nadine, Ruth and some more workers still standing outside Patrick’s office.

Monica, Mellissa, Vivienne and Harriet were walking and looking in the rooms to see what else they had to do.

Jose looked at the closed door and said, “We need to hire someone or work overtime and get this laundry under control until we hire some laundry people and we need to pay for some extra people to get the hot water and the tubs for these four bedrooms.”

Nadine said, “Instead of carrying the tubs all through the house, why can’t you use that bedroom to store everything in.”

Jose said, “That’s what we will do. Go and tell Louis and Gary for them to bring all that stuff in that guest room out of sight. We need to hire four drivers and have four carriages ready for the guests. That will take care of the guess.”

He began to walk up the hall there was hard knocking on the front door.

Thomas and Dan walked out the kitchen and went to the door.

There was a wagon parked outside.

The men said, “We got trout to be delivered to a Percy Simons.

Jose stood still.

Dan said, “Trout delivery for Percy.”

Nadine went to her knees laughing.

Jose said, “What?”

Dan stepped outside on the porch with the men.

He did not feel right about them.

Dan looked at the wagon and said, “How much do you have?”

One man said, “A hundred were ordered late last night. We are finished for the season.”

They heard Jose, “Percy!! Trout delivery.”

Percy heard Jose and he jumped up and ran down the hall followed by Bruce.

Percy opened the front door and looked at the men and saw Dan.

He and Bruce stepped outside and Percy said, “Where’s the trout?”

The other man looked and said, “In the wagon.”

Patrick jumped up and ran behind the boys.

Patrick opened the front door and walked outside.

He greeted the two men and cut his eyes at Dan.

The two men were staring at Patrick.

Dan eased his hands on both of his guns.

He swore he would never let anything like the children’s beating and torture every happen again.

He had been practicing everyday.

Nathan had been teaching Dan how to fight and use knives and guns and anything he can get his hands or feet on.

Patrick walked to the wagon and saw the trout.

Patrick Patted Percy on his back and said, “When did you order these?”

Percy said, “The day Meredith was upset. I walked out over the yard not to hear any more and I saw the pond was empty. I know you love that trout pond.”

Patrick grabbed Percy’s neck and said, “My boy.”

The men said, “Sir we have to go.”

Patrick said, “Percy how many did you order and how much did they cost? Is that why you were getting that money?”

Percy said, “Yes.”

The man said, “He ordered a hundred for twenty dollars. We have fifty more or ten dollars. We are ready to go instead of taking fifty trout back in the city.”

Patrick went in his pocket and pulled out thirty five dollars and handed it to the two men.

Jose told Gary to drive around the front and get the trout from the men.

Gary rode around the front in a wagon and he took the trout and the men got in the wagon and drove away.

Bruce watched the men out of sight.

Patrick reached for Bruce to go in the house.

He said, “Bruce what is wrong?”

Dan looked at Bruce.

Percy jumped in the wagon with Gary.

Bruce said, “Grandpa those men are bad. They will be back.”

Dan looked after the men.

Patrick said, “We will be ready.”

Patrick grabbed Bruce’s neck and said, “Come on.”

Dan walked behind them and stepped in the house he looked back at the driveway.

Patrick said, “I’m going to see the trout.”

Bruce ran behind Patrick.

Patrick said, “Bruce put your boots on. I will wait.”

Monica and Harriet were taking a lot of the bedroom stuff to the storage area.

Jose was working on the next week’s schedule.

Meredith and Lorraine were sitting in the workers’ area talking.

Meredith looked at Lorraine.

Lorraine said, “What?”

Meredith started crying.

Three of the security men were sitting behind them when Meredith started crying.

Patrick was walking through the back with Bruce.

He stopped and said, “Morning.”

Everyone spoke.

Patrick said, “Meredith what’s wrong with you?”

Meredith sniffed and said, “I don’t have a photographer.”

Lorraine looked back at Patrick and pointed and said, “Send her with that man.”

Patrick looked at Meredith.

One of the security men said, “I am a photographer. I can take your wedding pictures.”

Lorraine said, “Are you going to take the photographs at the Fourth of July Celebration? What about the Stiths Rest stop for Freed Men?”

The man swallowed some coffee and said, “If I am asked. I will.”

Lorraine looked back at Patrick.

Patrick said, “Lorraine you have boss everything else. And I still want to talk to you.”

Lorraine turned around and looked at the security man and said, “You are hired.”

The security man looked at Patrick.

Patrick looked at the security man and said, “You are hired.”

The lead security man was walking in the house to get some coffee.

He said, “Good morning.”

Patrick said, “Good morning. I need to talk to you today.”

The lead security man said, “Yes sir.”

He held the door for Patrick and Bruce.

He looked at the other security men and sat with them.

Lorraine was sitting at the table and she looked at the man from his feet up to his rear and stayed there.

The security men sat there and stared at Lorraine.

She was looking at the man’s rear so hard, he pulled out a chair and he turned and looked at Lorraine.

Lorraine was biting her lips and staring at his seated rear and when she finally looked up he and the other men were staring at her without a smile.

Lorraine jumped and left out.

Meredith looked at Lorraine and said, “Lorraine where are going?”

Meredith stood and followed Lorraine.

The lead security man poured him some coffee.

He shook his head and took a sip of coffee.

They snickered at Lorraine.

Patrick and Bruce walked out to the trout pond.

Jose was standing up looking at the trout and Gary and Percy were taking their time and using their hand and putting the trout in the pond.

Jose said, “Why can’t you throw them in the pond?”

Percy said, “This is fun.”

Bruce ran and fell on his knees and started helping them.

Jose said, “Here you come felling on your knees and getting those pants dirty. You could have worn them again.”

Bruce looked up at Jose.

Patrick said, No washing workers?”

Jose said, “Not yet.”

Patrick said, “You know if you don’t hire anyone or pay overtime you have to wash all that stuff and our household will double Sunday.”

Gary said, “I can do it.”

Jose said, “What?”

Gary said, “Overtime.”

Bruce said, “Look grandpa at this fat one.”

Patrick said, “That one is with trout we want catch that one.”

Bruce stood and ran to the house.

Jose yelled, “Bruch those pants off boy.”

Patrick said, “What is wrong Percy?”

Percy said, “We are going to eat the momma and leave her babies without a momma. He’s thinking about Eleanor. He doesn’t like for her to be away from us.”

Jose said, “Oh God. You got all of that form him running away.”

Gary said, That’s the last one Percy.”

Percy heard the horses.

He jumped off his knees and turned and looked back at the stables and said, “Grandpa can we go riding today?”

Patrick said, “We will see. We have a lot to do. Jose do you have to go to town for anything?”

Jose said, “You know what the most peculiar thing…”

Gary reached the bend the trout came in to Jose.

Jose said, “What am I suppose to do with that?”

Gary looked at Jose.

Patrick reached for it.

He said, “We can use this when we come out here to fish.

Jose stood and looked around for Ben.

Jose walked to Gary and said, “You go and tell Ben he better not steal any more trout and eggs.”

Gary said, “Only if I can work overtime.”

Jose said, “Fine.”

He turned and walked to Patrick.

Patrick was kneeling and enjoying the site of a full pond of trout.

He saw the workers washing the windows.

He was pleased.

Patrick said, “Jose what type of crop do we have this year? What is on the Fourth of July Celebration menu?”

Bruce was sitting on the back porch.

Percy went and sat next to Bruce.

Patrick heard Percy say to Bruce, “God created the fish for us to eat. That’s why the momma fish have all of those baby fish. So when she dies they can grow and do the same thing. Humans can’t have that many babies we were not made to be a food for something else.”

The head security man was standing listening to Percy’s explanation to Bruce.”

Patrick said, “Bruce why did you stop on the porch?”

Bruce said, “Because momma is sad and I didn’t want my sadness to make her more sad.”

Jose turned his head.

The security man looked at Bruce.

Patrick looked at the security man and said, “Leon I need to walk and ride the perimeter of the house with you and talk.”

Leon said, “Now?”

Patrick said, “Yes. I want to do things while I got some time.

Percy said, “Grandpa can we go with you?’

Patrick said, “Yes.”

Percy hit Bruce and they ran to the stables.

Patrick said, “Leon I don’t want the family to be afraid, but I believe there is danger lurking about. Are you and your men able to protect yourselves out in the field and the sides of the property. Do you think you need to reposition yourselves or do you need ammunition or anything because this is the fourth of July and we have a big celebration here. I want to make sure everyone is safe.”

Leon saw Gary walking out the horses.

He said, “We need guns and ammunition and binoculars.

The fence is holding up good. We check it once per week. We will check the fence today and Sunday. One of the security men married one of your maids before you got back. They moved to his hometown. He is becoming a preacher. She is going to school to be a nurse.”

Patrick said, “Jose did not tell me that.”

Gary walked Patrick ‘s horse to him.

The security man walked to the stables and got his horse.

He rode his horse to Patrick.

Patrick said, “Jose who got married to one of Leon’s men.

Jose nonchalantly said, “Sue.”

Patrick said, “Did you complete her paperwork. Tell Mrs. Stith. I heard you this morning.”

Jose stood on the porch and looked around and around.

Patrick looked at Jose.

Percy and Bruce were ready to ride and looked at Jose.

Leon started looking around.

Patrick was thinking, “Jessie and his sons can handle any trouble. I better buy some guns for the house.”

Patrick and Leon rode off with Percy and Bruce who still looking at Jose.

Patrick and Leon rode about two hours and checked the fence on the left side.

They rode down to the field and Patrick talked to Jessie for a good time and walked the field with Jessie.

The lead security man said, “Mr. Stith can I get some of this corn?”

Jessie said, “Leon look over there we already got you some corn and peas and tomatoes.”

Leon said, “I can’t carry this.”

Leon looked at Percy and Bruce and tied the bucket between their horses and showed them how to ride and carry it to his men.

Leon stood and watched Percy and Bruce clear the fields.

He turned and talked to Jessie and Patrick they walked the back fence.

Their back fence was the back of the Gibsons.

Patrick was satisfied with the back of the fence but he was concerned with the sides of the house.

Patrick said, “Leon you have ten men here and Jessie and his four sons.”

Leon said, “That should be sufficient.

Leon said, “Patrick if you are expecting trouble. We can set traps. The back rows of corn we picked for the Fourth celebration. We can set traps and hear anybody that jumps the fence or crosses the fence.”

Patrick said, “Do that.”

Leon said, “We don’t have a concern about the back of the house. Jessie what type of traps are you setting? I need to put the traps in the long distance between the three men on the sides of the house.”

Jessie said, “Yeah you need some traps to cover three men. I can have you about six traps ready at first dark.”

Leon said, “That you.”

Jessie said, “I’ll use the wagon, because I got watermelons, corn, tomatoes and peas to bring to the house for the Fourth celebration.”

Percy and Bruce took the bucket to the security men and said, “Leon told them to bring the bucket to them.

The security men took the bucket.

Bruce said, “Let’s go back.”

Percy said, “Lets go riding like we did yesterday.”

Percy turned to pull the reign of their horse.

Bruce tried to pull the reign of horse.

They looked and saw big hands holding their horses.

The horses looked at the security man.

The security man scared them.

He said, “Go home.”

Bruce started crying and said, “We are boys.”

The security man looked at them and at the horses and said, “Go home.”

He looked at the horses and said, “You take them home.”

The security man turned their horses loose.

The horses ran wildly to the house and rode into the stables.

Gary and Ben said, “Damn.”

Gary ran into the stables and grabbed the horses reign and said, “What spooked the horses?’

Bruce was mad and crying and said, “Those men in the field.”

Ben ran and grabbed Bruce’s horse and helped him down.”

Gary helped Percy down.

Percy and Bruce ran into the house and went to Eleanor.

Eleanor was upstairs taking a bath.

Lorraine had Louis bring everybody hot water.

Jose was talking to Brenda and helping Harriet and Monica put the curtains, tablecloths and linen in the bedroom.

The room took on a new look.

Monica went out in Brenda’s flower garden and a good number of flowers and made several bouquets for their suite.

Brenda saw the bouquets how they blended in the room.

Brenda was thrilled.

Brenda looked in her closet and was trying to pull her clothes together for the next week.

She thought about Sunday her outfit for church and to pick the guests from the train station and to host them and for dinner. For the wedding and for the Fourth celebration.

Jose was looking in the bedroom and said, “Brenda, Patrick told me to tell you that Sue married one of the field hands and they moved to his hometown and he is becoming a minster and she is going to school to be a nurse.”

Brenda kept a book of the people who get married.

She looked at Jose and said, “When were you going to tell me?”

Jose said, “I didn’t like her.”

He walked out of the bedroom and passed Patrick’s office.

He checked the liquor table.

He went to the supply room and only found Eleanor’s champagne.

Jose nearly panic.

He had to have his liquor to get through all of these functions.

He ran through the hall and passing Eleanor walking down the stairs.

He stopped at the liquor table and grabbed the smidgen of sherry and took the bottle with him.

Eleanor said, “Order a case.”

Eleanor went to her office and went through her telegrams and mail.

She knew what the letters were saying from the address.

She threw all the letters away and the telegrams.

She saw a letter from Joseph’s mother and looked at the date.

Eleanor said, “That’s the date we left Europe. How did she know?”

Eleanor pit the letter aside and cleared her office of her mail by dinner.

She realized she was not to eat.

She sat and thought about all the trash God was cleaning them of in the first day of the fast.

Jose sat and sent a telegram ordering a case of each liquor.

Jose was sitting and drinking the smidgen of sherry as he was sending the telegram.

He thought about all that liquor Patrick took with them to Europe.

A telegram came through from Alice.

She said, “I and Mr. Huff will settle in the town he has a big job teaching and making enough money for the two of us. He got the job because he proved he was a teacher in Europe. Love you all.”

Brenda was passing and Jose saw her and said, “Mrs. Stith.”

Brenda stopped and looked at Jose and he waved the telegram.

She read the telegram and said, “Huh.”

She took the telegram to her office and complete her paperwork on the workers and wrote who was married.

She normally have a picture or something from the couple.

She thought, “I need something from Meredith.”

Jose was tired.

He was leaning over Patrick’s desk and thought, “I can do this. They paid William forty percent more than me. I can see how he and Wyonna bought that nice house and furnished it off and sent their boys through college.”

Jose was tired and he said, “They don’t need to comeback. I need to look for me a house. I can buy a little house now or get a bigger house and pay it off in a few years, I don’t have a son. I am by myself.”

His telegram came back from the liquor store his order would be ready Friday. Jose was so relieved.

He stood and walked out Patrick’s office and went into the kitchen and told Thomas, “Only cook enough for the children. The adults won’t be eating.”

Thomas said, “Shirley won’t be eating?”

Jose said, “Shirley is not one of the adults.”

Nadine said, “She’s eighteen.”

Jose said, “For the next three days only cook for Shirley, Thomas, Michael, Percy and Bruce.”

Thomas passed Jose.

Jose rubbed Thomas’ head.

Thomas said, “I’m hungry.”

Thomas said, “Lunch is in a few minutes.”

Jose looked and said, “You can go to the table if you want.”

Percy and Bruce ran in the house earlier looking for Eleanor.

Lorraine made them bathe and put on nice clean clothes.

She realized Meredith would be busy and pulled out the children’s clothes for a week.

She thought and went through the house looking for Brenda.

She was passing Brenda’s study and stopped and turned around and walked to the door.

Brenda knew al the house workers foo steps.

She did not look up and said, “Yes Lorraine.”

Lorraine said, “Suppose Felipe don’t want Meredith? What are you all going to do about the other four children’ nurses. If he marries Meredith, then you need nurses until the children go to school. And what is Shirley going to do away by herself?”

Brenda looked up at Lorraine.

Lorraine said, “I need to find me a job.”

Brenda said, “Or work on your businesses.”

Lorraine and raised her head up and said, “OH. Right.”

She turned and walked out of Brenda’s office.

Brenda said, “An empty house again.”

Brenda heard the children running to the family dining room for lunch.

She stood and walked to the family dining room and she drank a glass of water.

Vivienne said, “Mrs. Stith are you eating lunch?”

Brenda said, “No. I am here to keep the children company.”

The children were talking and laughing.

Patrick and Leon went into on Thursday and bought every gun in the shop and ammunition.

Nathan walked in the shop and looked around.

Patrick looked at Nathan.

Nathan said, “I really need a few guns.

Leon said, “Have you had anymore trouble?”

Nathan said, I had to escort a group to the railroad tracks.”

Patrick said, “In this town?”

Nathan said, “I need a rifle and two more guns and ammunition. I’ll give one gun to Robert and one to Stanley and I’ll keep the rifle at the rest stop.”

Leon and Patrick walked with Nathan and give him the rifle and two guns and ammunitions.

Patrick took the guns home.

Leon gave the former soldiers an additional gun and a rifle and ammunition.

He gave Jessie, ammunition.

Leon gave Gary a gun and ammunition.

Leon gave the men in the barn a gun each and a rifle each.

He put a rifle and ammunition in the remodeled supply shed.

The five men who washed the windows and the five men who attend the grounds only come once per week and they do not live at the house.

Leon gave Jose a gun and ammunition.

Louis requested a gun and ammunition.

Thomas looked at Louis.

Leon and Patrick put a rifle in the basement by the washroom.

They put a gun in the kitchen under the counter.

Patrick did not want any guns in the main living areas.

He had his gun in his bedroom drawer.

The last gun Brenda requested and put it high in her bathroom where it could not be knocked down.

She ran from her bed and grabbed her vanity seat and throw it to the cabinet and loaded the gun and throw the chair back.

Patrick was timing her and said, “Slow.”

Brenda was grinning because she thought she was doing good.

Jose liked the laundry room.

He and Gary went to washroom and used all four washer and started getting all the clothes washed.

Jose and Gary spent all day Thursday and mostly Friday washing all the clothes.

Max was glad to have some help.

Max said, “Jose have you heard anymore about Margaret and Steve?”

Jose thought, He is so dumb.”

He said, “I read a telegram from William and Wyonna earlier this week, that Margaret and baby Earle were released from the hospital and were improving. The last thing Brenda said, was Eleanor signed the papers to prosecute Steve. The police said, Steve would get twenty- five years in prison.”

Max said, “My God. What would make you do something like that.”

Jose looked around at all the laundry and was about to go crazy.

Max looked at him and Gary and said, “It’s not simple like you all thought is it?”

Jose said, “I have to talk to Brenda.

Jose was walking through the back to go to Brenda.

Eleanor was walking out her office and saw Jose.

She had finally her office and started working on the two hundred mile project.

She and Patrick did not mention the railroad extension into the south around Brenda.

Jose saw Brenda working in her study and stopped and said, “Brenda I am going to need help.”

Brenda said, “What?”

Jose said, “I want the bathtubs and all the washcloths and towels for the guests to be kept in the spare bedroom until your guests. The family dining room only accommodates twelve. It will be fifteen people. I hate to sound spooked, but I don’t want to hire anyone to be hire right now. You have the ten grounds people once per week. The four men in the stables. And I don’t want them nowhere. The five men who attend the livestock.”

Brenda said, “Let’s see.”

They walked down to Joseph’s room and Brenda said, “Ok. You can put the tubs and wash towels in here.”

They walked to the front of the house.

Harriett and Monica had completed drying and pressing Brenda’s linens and bedspread.

Brenda smiled because it was pretty.

Harriet and Monica walked into the bedroom and finished making up the bedroom.

They walked to the family dining room.

Brenda pointed and said, “This table sits sixteen people. There is another piece that goes in the table and the chairs better be in my storage area.”

They walked to the storage area and Brenda found the piece for the table and showed Jose the other chairs.

Jose said, “Ok. The last thing is that the laundry is a lot. Gary and I have been in the washroom ten hours a day.”

Brenda said, “It is not a simple job that any twit can do.”

Jose mouth dropped opened, because he would call Margaret and Phyllis twits all the time.”

Jose said, “Can we change the linen every other day instead of everyday?”

Brenda said, “We bath daily. Change the family linen twice next week and change the guests linen everyday.”

Brenda said, “Meredith’s reception is going to be in the formal dining room. Use the beige tablecloth and the beige and purple dishes and two punch bowls sets and the yellow cake plate and two champagne buckets, you go that?”

Jose said, “Yes.”

He and told Gary about putting the bath stuff in the spare bedroom.

He and Gary ran with the tubs.

They put all the washcloths and towels in the tubs.

They put the tubs in the guest room.

Jose took the washcloths and towels and made sets and put them on the sofa.

Gary was standing and looking at the room.

Jose was about to say something smart but he realized Gary was thinking about Joseph.

Jose said, “We are finished with the guest rooms. He and Gary brought the clean sheets for each day of the week.

He and Gary were glad that chore was over.

Jose had Gary to help him put the extra piece of wood in the table and brought the chairs from storage.

Jose dust and waxed the dining room.

Jose went into town Friday and picked up the liquor.

He needed oil for the lamps.

Jose told the workers if they need something washed they had to do it themselves for the next week in between their breaks and lunch.

Gary was being paid everyday for washing the clothes.

He was being paid overtime for the extra hot water.

He was lighting the torches in the evening.

Jose got the liquor and took it to the house and re-stock the liquor table.

He handed Gary the bottles.

Jose and Brenda roped off the yard to be used for the celebration.

Gen’s maid and her sons would be performing.

Jose cleaned out the four carriages.

Gary, Ben, Max and Jason would be taking the guests arrived.

The security man that would be taking the photographs went into town and got his supplies.

Jose thought and went to the poultry shop and purchased ten dozen of eggs.

Gary looked at Jose.

Jose said, “I have to pick up the ribs on Monday and prep it for Wednesday.”

Jose was satisfied for all the hard work was done.

He laid in his bed and said, “All the doctors will get here today. The family is going to church. The train should be arriving just a little before church is out. I am fixing them a cheese and fruit tray and lemonade. They have an hour before dinner. The rest of this week is a blur.”

Th family attended church that morning.

Skip was there along with Jake and the lead soldier.

Shirley invited them to Brenda’s Fourth of July celebration.

Michael and Thomas were playing football with Skip.

Patrick talked to Skip for a short time.

Patrick sensed that Skip was a strong man that was full of pride.

When they were leaving church, their carriages passed and Brenda smiled.

Gen elbowed Ben and said, “Look at her got all the doctors.”

They laughed.

Everyone got in the carriages and rode away.

Patrick was riding in one carriage with Brenda, Michael and Thomas.

Shirley was riding the other carriage with Eleanor, Percy and Bruce.

They arrived a few minutes behind their guests.

Jose helped with the bags.

Jose and Monica went into Brenda’s flower garden and filled the house with flowers.

Felipe was looking for Meredith.

Jose said, “Meredith is not here.”

Felipe’s face dropped.

Jose said, “These are your maids, Vivienne, Monica, Mellissa and Harriet. They will show you to your rooms and we have a small snack until dinner.

Dr. Woodson saw Felipe’s face.

While they were standing in the hall, the family came up.

Patrick and Brenda greeted everyone.

Gary and Max too the bags to their rooms.

They washed and came back to the greet.

Felipe said, “You know Meredith is?”

Brenda looked and said, “No. Today is her off day. Maybe she will come later.”

Dr. Woodson looked at Felipe.

Felipe was worried and could hardly concentrate on his patients and his courses.

Felipe said, “If Meredith does not show up for dinner I like to go to her.”

Patrick said, “Sure.”

Everyone changed and washed and meet in the parlor,

Barry was running and screaming.

Percy, Bruce, Thomas and Michael were playing and playing with him.

Eleanor had Jose to take a sofa that was in the storage area in the hallway underneath the pictures.

Dr. Greene looked at Patrick, Brenda and Eleanor and saw the running and screaming children did not bother them.

Vivienne said to Jose, “I don’t like that Meredith is not here. Give me a buggy so I can go and see what she is up tp.”

Vivienne left work and went to Meredith’s room.

The homeowner went and knocked on Meredith door.

The lady came back and said, “She is sick.”

Vivienne walked to Meredith’s room and started packing her clothes and toiletries.

Vivienne got her hair comb and brush and the homeowner’s husband picked up Meredith from the bed and carried her out to the carriage. His wife and Vivienne carried out her bag.

Vivienne said, “Lorraine can come and get her things.”

Meredith told the homeowners she was getting married and moving with her husband.

Vivienne knew something was wrong with Meredith.

She drove steady and fast back to the house.

Leon saw Vivienne when she pulled up.

Vivienne jumped from the carriage and ran to the porch.

Leon said, “Ma am id there a problem?”

Vivienne pointed to the carriage and he went to the carriage and picked up an unconscious Meredith.

Vivienne ran down the hall in front of Leon to Felipe’s bedroom.

Dr. Greene was standing in the hallway in front of the parlor watching Barry to tell him to calm down a bit.

He saw them carrying an unconscious Meredith and said, “Felipe.”

Felipe was talking to Eleanor.

He looked at Dr. Greene.

Dr. Greene said, “Meredith. I think you need to go to her.”

Dr. Woodson and Dr. Charles looked at Dr. Greene.

Felipe stood and walked out the parlor.

Felipe said to Dr. Greene, “Where?”

Dr. Greene, “Down the hall I believe to your room.”

Dr. Woodson and Dr. Charles looked at Dr. Greene.

Debra and Dr. Charles wife were a good time talking to Eleanor and Shirley.

Dr. Greene walked down to Felipe’s room.

He was working on Meredith.

Felipe finally brought Meredith to. He said, “Bring her water.”

Vivienne ran and brought Meredith water.

Felipe had her to sip some water.

Meredith was hot but she did not have a fever. Her clothes were soaking wet.

He pulled off her clothes and were fanning her.

Meredith calm down and went to sleep.

She slept for nearly an hour and started trying to wake.

Felipe was sitting on the bed watching her and thinking.

Meredith kept turning to sleep on her side, Felipe kept turning her to sleep on her back. Felipe was looking at Meredith very intensely.

Dr. Greene was watching Felipe to try to figure out what he was thinking whether he wanted to marry Meredith or not.

Dr. Woodson eased out of his chair and went down the hall to see what was going on.

He walked in the room.

Felipe looked back at Dr. Woodson.

Dr. Woodson said, “How is she?”

Meredith weakly called, “Felipe. Felipe.”

Felipe looked at Meredith and held her hand and said, “Meredith.”

Meredith slowing started waking.

She said, “Felipe.”

He looked at Dr. Greene and Dr. Woodson and they left and closed the door.

Debra said, “Shirley we heard your good news.”

Shirley said, “You mean me running.”

Dr. Woodson and Dr. Greene were walking in the door and grinned.

Shirley said, “I did not know I was even running. When I got to the kitchen everyone’s mouths were opened and Thomas said, ‘Shirley you are running.’ I started screaming.”

Jose walked to the parlor and said, “Dinner is served.”

Dr. Greene looked back at the boys and said, “Come to dinner.”

Shirley walked to the door and Barry was running up the stairs and Shirley ran and got Barry and picked him up.

Dr. Woodson, Dr. Greene and Debra stared at Shirley.

They went into the family dining room and ate salad, ham, green beans, candied yams.”

Brenda looked and said, “Jose where is Dr. Felipe?”

Dr. Greene was staring at Shirley.

Debra was watching Shirley.

Dr. Woodson said, “Someone brought Meredith here and she was not well. Felipe is with her.”

Patrick stopped eating and looked at Dr. Woodson.

Dr. Charles said, “I love your house.”

Brenda said, “Thank you.”

They enjoyed their dinner.

Felipe did not leave Meredith.

He and Meredith sit in the spacious bedroom suite and talked the whole night.

When dessert was served Barry was sleep.

Dr. Greene took Barry and put him to bed.

Brenda said, “Oh my God I did not think about Barry’s bed. Debra you can use the nursery upstairs or we can have a bed brought to your bedroom.”

Debra said, “I love that room.”

Dr. Greene was walking back to the parlor/.

Debra said, “Tony do want to take Barry to the nursery or bring a bed to our bedroom.”

Dr. Greene said, “Neither one. He sleep in the bed.”

Debra turned her head.

Dr. Charles was tickle and held his head down.

Dr. Woodson looked at Dr. Greene and then at Debra.

Dr. Woodson looked at Eleanor as she stood and went for a drink.

Jose brought a tray of Sherry.

Dr. Woodson walked and said,” Do you have scotch Eleanor?”

Eleanor said, “What we don’t have. Jose buy the liquor he like.”

Dr. Woodson laughed.

Eleanor handed him his glass and they walked back to the parlor.

Everyone went to bed.

Dr. Woodson walked to the library.

He was impressed. He looked around at the unopened crate.

He selected a book and sat and read for a few hours.

He then went to bed.