Everyone went into town the next day.

Eleanor ordered supply wagons to meet them in the city the first week of January.

She, Brenda and Patrick would take Shirley to the hospital in Philadelphia.

Brenda would take Mable to the hospital.

Patrick and Eleanor would get off at the city and stay in wagons fortwo to four weeks with the engineers and buy the land and get workers and order their supplies for the one to two years.

Patrick would go back to Philadelphia and put the shipping business in order.

Eleanor had given Mr. Wilson the instructions for the “The Stith House.”

He told her the house would be ready in the middle of March.

Eleanor would dedicate it when Brenda and Patrick, Shirley and the boys were back.

She placed her catered ordered and ordered the stationary for the opening.

The count would be in New York and meet them in Philadelphia.

Gary would remain in America and she got the paperwork for Gary to start filing out with the count helping him.

Eleanor was so worried about Gary and if Denise wanted him being a slave.

Eleanor went and poured a large glass of sherry and drank it all.

The count looked at her.

He did not know what to say or do but help fill out Gary’s forms.

Eleanor hired him part time to take care of Percy, Bruce and Thomas’ horses.

Gary wanted to school to learn.

The count told Eleanor of Gary and his family that nearly all of his money goes to his mother and sisters. That he was the only son and his father would beat him and abused him and his father would call him dumb all the time.

The count said, “He’s much like Denise and Mable. That maybe why he relates to them.”

Eleanor rolled her eyes at the count.

Eleanor finished the papers for Mable and Denise.

She anticipated problems, but she would fight to get their papers stating they were free.

Eleanor planned a small celebration for them at the house with cake and punch.

Brenda and Shirley went to the dress shop.

She and Brenda were passing by the jewelry shop.

Shirley and Brenda were looking in the shop window.

The manager remembered Brenda and he stared at Shirley.

Brenda stared at him.

Shirley was excited to be going shopping for the first time.

Shirley was pointing to the sapphire earrings.

Brenda said, “Come on Shirley let us go and get you a few dresses, because you can get what you want in Europe.

Shirley said, “What’s wrong grandma?”

Brenda said, “We will look somewhere else for your earrings.”

Shirley said, “But I really love those earrings. They are exactly what I want.”

Brenda said, “No Shirley.”

Shirley turned and looked at the manager and sales clerk.

She said, “Is it because I am rare?”

Brenda started laughing and said, “You are as rare and precious as those earrings.”

They walked away.

Stanley was in the carriage follow them in case Shirley got sick or became tired.

He realized what happened.

William had a wagon and beat them in town to get the liquor for the holidays.

William ran into Brenda and Shirley as they walked from the window.

The stock clerks brought the liquor to the covered wagon.

William saw Stanley and walked to the carriage and said, “Stanley were Brenda and Shirley turned away from the jewelry shop?”

Stanley said, “They did not go in Shirley was looking in the window and pointed at something. And the manager and sales clerk looked at her as if she was a monster. Brenda took Shirley and left.”

William turned and walked to the jewelry shop and stared in the window.

He walked away.

Stanley thought, “What was that?”

William checked the liquor.

Brenda and Patrick ordered two dozen of the finest champagne for their friends Christmas gifts.

William thought, “I got to wrap this s\*\*t and take it to them.

The brown coat man was watching from across the street.

Stanley looked up and saw him in the nick of time.

He got a very good look at him and the slight knife scar on his right cheek.

Stanley said, “You were in a knife fight and leaned back just in time to be kept from being killed. Huh. Who are you?”

Everyone was talking about the mob man in the brown coat.

The mob man did not see Stanley sitting in the carriage.

He walked across the street and watched William with all the liquor.

He walked to the jewelry shop and looked at the window.

Stanley sat in the carriage and watched the mob man in the brown coat and said, “What are you doing?”

Eleanor and the count were a striking couple.

Stanley watched the count and Eleanor.

Eleanor and the count went to the dress shop where Brenda and Shirley were.

Brenda and Shirley selected five dresses and three pairs of boots.

Shirley had on the scarf, gloves and hat Denise knitted for her. She loved the colors and the way it felt.

Brenda and the store clerks were trying on Shirley the dresses.

Shirley said, “Momma Grandma and I were looking at the jewelry shop and I saw the perfect sapphire earrings.”

Brenda said, “Stop Shirley.”

Shirley looked at Brenda.

The count looked at Brenda.

Eleanor looked at Shirley’s appalled look at Brenda.

Shirley looked at Brenda and turned up her nose.

The count knew someone must have said something to Shirley.

Eleanor was thinking she got everyone a gift including Earle and Gary, Lorraine and Meredith.

She knew it was too late to order Shirley the earrings.

She looked at the five dresses they selected.

The salesclerks were standing and watching this chic dressed woman.

The count watched how the salesclerks were watching each of Eleanor’s clothing.

Eleanor said, “I like these five dresses and the shoes are fine Shirley.”

She looked around and the salesclerks ran over.

Eleanor said, “Please tally up what she has.”

She looked at Shirley and thought, “A coat Miss Shirley.”

Shirley started laughing.

Eleanor picked out several coats and said, “Which one Shirley you won’t be needing it for s few times.”

Shirley said, “It’s hard momma. I can take all of them?”

Brenda and Eleanor spoke at the same time.

Brenda said, “Yes.”

Eleanor said, “No”

Brenda turned her head.

Eleanor said, “Just because you can Shirley does not mean you should.”

Shirley said, “Like Michael and his lamb chops?”

Eleanor said, “Yes.”

Eleanor was holding up the coats.

She held up each coat to Shirley and said, “Red.”

The salesclerk tally everything up and told Eleanor the sum.

Eleanor paid the bill.

The count was watching out the window and saw the mob man in the brown coats, walking through out the town square.

He saw a few teenage girls walking and talking.

The girls walked to the shop to window shop.

The count moved out their way.

The girls saw Shirley and pointed at her.

The count watched them and looked back at Eleanor.

The three girls ran into the shop and ran to Shirley.

Brenda braced herself.

Eleanor looked at the pretty girls.

They said, “Hey Shirley.”

Shirley leaned on Eleanor and turned and looked at the girls.

The girls said, “It’s me Ginger, Alice and our cousin Mary Beth.”

Shirley smiled and said, “Hi.”

Alice said, “We are coming to your tea party tomorrow.”

Ginger said, “Are you picking out a dress for the tea party?”

Alice said, “Can we bring our cousin Mary Beth?”

Marybeth was looking at Shirley because of her deformity.

Shirley looked at Eleanor then Brenda.

Neither one said anything.

They were letting Shirley make that decision.

Shirley smiled at Mary Beth said, “Yes.”

The girls screeched.

Eleanor saw the count in time that he closed his eyes.

Eleanor said, I have a few more errands. I will see you young ladies tomorrow.”

The teenage girls begin to giggle with Shirley.

Brenda watched them.

She saw Mary Beth was offended at Shirley.

Brenda was proud of Shirley.

The teenage girls left the dress shop giggling.

Shirley turned to the salesclerk and said, “I want to buy this dress shop.”

Brenda was helping to get the packages.

Stanley saw Eleanor and the count leaving the dress shop.

Eleanor saw Stanley and motioned for him to come.

He pulled the carriage to the dress shop.

He got out the carriage walked in the store.

He had on his black peacoat, hat, scarf and gloves.

The salesclerk was being sacarastic and saod, “It’s not for sale.”

Brenda did not say anything.

Stanley walked in the shop and the owner heard Shirley and walked out the back.

She was an older lady who knew Brenda for years.

She said, “I heard the giggles of teenagers.”

She looked at Shirley and said, “Was that you?”

Shirley said, “One of the voices.”

The owner said, “Are you Shirley, Eleanor’s daughter?”

Shirley was proud of Eleanor and said, “Yes.”

The owner said, “I know your grandma Brenda and your momma Eleanor. They have and their friends have kept me in business for years. Will be retiring at the end of this year.”

Her sales clerks turned and looked at her.

She said, “Shirley I will think about selling this shop to you as to closing it.”

One of the salesclerks said, “She is a child.”

The owner said, “A child with money and taste.”

She turned and walked in the back to her office.

One of the salesclerk was eyeing Stanley.

Stanley was looking very stately standing and listening to them.

The salesclerk picked up Shirley’s packages and walked over to Stanley and gave them to him.

Brenda saw the salesclerk open flirtation.

Stanley said, “Thank You.”

He took the packages to the carriage.

He turned and walked to the dress shop and opened the door for Brenda and Shirley.

He helped them in the carriage.

The salesclerk walked to the door and smiled at Stanley.

Brenda thought, “Margaret will beat you down.”

Stanley watched the smiling clerk and pulled off.

He looked back again at her.

Shirley said, “Whew it’s cold on my legs.”

Brenda took the blanket and was putting it across Shirley’s legs.

Brenda sat up in the seat and screamed.

Stanley stopped the carriage and jumped out.

He ran to Brenda.

He saw her staring at Shirley.

He said, “Mrs. Stith?”
Shirley started laughing.

Brenda said, “Shirley how long have you had feelings in your legs?”

Stanley looked at Brenda then at the laughing Shirley.

Shirley said, “A week. Percy and Bruce said for me to wait and surprise everybody.”

Stanley walked and got in his seat and drove away.

Eleanor was sitting in the bank moving her bank.

The count was looking out the window and saw Stanley. He was about to go out and see what was wrong, until he saw him get back to his seat.

Eleanor went to the coal company and had the collection man called to the office.

He was around the corner talking to the mob man in the brown coat.

They all watched him.

They saw him returning.

The count sat in the outer office.

The manager of the coal company was sitting behind his desk.

Eleanor stood and walked to the window.

The man walked in the office without knocking.

The manager was shocked.

The count who was sitting in the outer office was shocked.

The two clerks were shocked.

Eleanor was very coy.

She was taking off her gloves and said, “Sir. I am the owner of this business. I do not want you to work for me. You are fired. If you go to any of my customers to collect any money or just to talk I will have the sheriff hunt you down. If you represent yourself as my employee or doing work for me. I will hunt you down. If you sabotage my business or hurt any of my workers, I will hunt you down and kill you. Understand me.”

The manager was shocked at Eleanor and had his mouth opened and slowly looked at Eleanor.

Eleanor had a look on her face that she meant every word she just said.

The man looked at Eleanor and walked out the office.

The count ran out the door to watch the man.

The man ran to the mob man in the brown coat and another man with a gray coat on.

The cunt watched the men.

The coal man pointed over to the coal office.

Eleanor walked out the coal office.

She walked to the message center and sent a message to the owner of the jewelry shop to purchase the shop.

The message center clerk said, “You are the second requesting to buy the jewelry shop.”

The count looked.

Eleanor became angry.

Eleanor and the count went to their buggy and took the hour ride to talk.

Patrick and her four boys rode their horses in town and went and put the order in for the orphans Christmas toys.

The store clerk said the same thing, “There should be another railroad in the city. That would mean we can get our orders faster. This may get back here just before Christmas.”

Bruce and Percy were standing and listening.

Bruce said, “Grandpa is there another way to get these toys before the twenty third?”

Patrick said, “Your momma had some supplies sent to our mid- way point and loaded on our train to come here.”

Percy said, “Let’s try that.”

Patrick and the store manager begin to send the telegram.

Patrick told the store manager to send him a telegram at the house.

They saw William coming from the liquor store with the clerks.

They had lunch at a restaurant in town.

Patrick went to his office and stayed for two hours.

Percy stayed with him. The other three boys he sent with William back to the house.

Percy pulled up a chair next to Patrick.

Patrick looked at Percy.

Percy looked at Patrick and said, “This will be my business in a few years and I want to learn as much aas I can from you. Momma said, “I was named after your father who was agreat man and started this business. I want to honor him and make money.”

Patrick was outdone by Percy.

He looked at Percy and begin to explain to him what to look for.

Patrick said, “They said, you sent the weekly telegrams to Shirley and Michael and you know how to read the train records. Show me.”

Percy showed Patrick what he knew.

They left the office and for the hour ride back home.

Patrick shared business secrets with Percy and how to hold on for a good while before expanding a business.

He told Percy to learn to be quiet and watch people and know who would be a good business partner.

Percy said, “I already know.”

Patrick said, “Really.”

Percy said, “Shirley, Bruce, Thomas and Michael.”

Patrick thought on that way and said, “Never do business with the criminal elements and never become a criminal Percy.”

Percy looked straight ahead.

Patrick looked at him.

They got home just at dark.

Nathan and Gary were lighting the torches.

Percy stopped and looked.

Patrick looked at him.

Percy said, “I love the way the torches show light to the house.”

They sat there for a few minutes and then rode to the stables.

They washed their faces and hands in the guest’s area and went to the family dining room.

Patrick said, “Percy I am going to my office and check on some things. Tell them I am on my way.”

Percy looked at Patrick and said, “Yes grandpa.”

Peter cooked dinner.

The maids brought the dinner plates.

Patrick went to check the telegrams.

He looked at the telegrams.

He sat and was quiet and looked off in space.

He stood and walked out his office.

He entered the family dining room and handed Shirley a telegram.

Eleanor looked at Shirley.

Patrick handed Shirley several telegrams.

He handed Michael a telegram.

Brenda looked around the table and looked at Patrick and said, “Where’s mine?”

Everyone laughed, but Eleanor and Patrick.

Eleanor was watching Patrick.

Shirley was excited and said, “Grandma she said, ‘yes.’”

Brenda thought and grinned and said, “Really?”

Patrick said, “Yes. Really.”

Brenda looked at Patrick.

Percy said, “What Shirley?”

Bruce and Thomas looked at Shirley.

Michael was reading his telegram and looked at Eleanor.

Eleanor looked at Michael.

He did not say anything but reached his telegram to Eleanor.

Eleanor looked at Michael.

She began to read Michael’s telegram.

The count was watching Eleanor and Michael.

He saw when Eleanor frowned up.

Then he thought, “Who is sending a child a telegram?”

Shirley was so excited and exclaimed, “She said I can buy the dress shop grandma.”

Brenda smiled and said, “That’s great how are you gonna manage that and the hospital being a child?”

Patrick was watching Michael.

Brenda saw Patrick watching Michael.

Percy saw Patrick and he whispered to Bruce.

Ruth watched those two and said, “Eleanor already told you’ll to stop.”

Patrick said, “Michael say the grace.”

Michael said, “Grace. Amen.”

Bruce looked at Michael.

Percy said, “Michael is that it?”

Michael turned sideways in his chair and held onto Eleanor’s arm and tried to read the telegram.

The count knew something was bad.

Thomas leaned over on Eleanor’s other arm to read the telegram.

Thomas turned his head sideways and like he was thinking.

Percy and Bruce were watching Thomas.

Shirley said, “Momma what is it?”

Eleanor said, “Your friend’s you buried. His family is suing Michael.”

Michael leaned back like he was about to faint.

Patrick was about to eat a piece of his rack of lamb and stopped his fork in mid-air.

He was thinking he had to catch Michael.

Michael started moaning.

The count stared at Patrick.

Shirley was mumbling like Brenda.

She said, “Suit, is that money? They want Michael’s money and my money. I bought that hospital.”

 Ruth and Monica looked at each.

William heard Shirley said she bought the hospital.

He thought, “A child has that kind of money to buy a business.”

Patrick looked at the telegrams and stood and walked to Thomas with a telegram in his hand and said, “Thomas you got one.”

The count put his fork down.

Ruth and Monica stood in silence.

Thomas opened his mouth wide and hollered with tears falling down his face.

Eleanor took Thomas’ telegram and read it.

She fanned it in the air and said, “This is nothing.”

Thomas turned to Eleanor with his mouth opened and tears begin to drop over his face.

Patrick looked through the telegrams and said, “Passed this one to Shirley.”

Shirley began to holler.

Brenda looked at Shirley.

Eleanor said, “Thomas this lawsuit is for money.”

Thomas started kicking his feet and said, “No. No one gets my money!”

Eleanor said, “The Byrons’ said, you untied their horses and they lost their six horses.”

Thomas was still crying.

He had his head back and crying and said, “Not my money. Not my money.”

Brenda said, “The Byrons’ never had two good horses.”

Eleanor said, “They say this happened in July at momma’s celebration.”

Brenda looked up.

Percy said, “Get your shotgun grandma. We were in Austria.”

Eleanor said, “This I will get a lawyer to have it dismissed.”

Eleanor turned and took her napkin and dried Thomas’ tears.

Thomas leaned on Eleanor’s shoulder.

Michael was staring at Eleanor.

Eleanor looked at Michael and said, “Michael we will go to court against them.”

Michael said, “Not my money.”

Shirley was reading her telegram.

She said, “Momma I can’t read this.”

The count took the telegram and passed it to Eleanor.

Eleanor read the telegram and said, “Shirley it is the same lawsuit for money.”

Shirley started crying.

She said, “Michael was my friend. Nurse Wanda was stealing his medicine and giving it to the mob.”

Ruth and Monica stared at Shirley.

Shirley said, “He was my friend and I paid for his burial. I did not tell his parents to be poor and thieves. I want my money.”

Shirley hit her fork on the table.

Everybody looked at Shirley.

Shirley looked at Percy and said, “Percy lets go.”

Percy looked at Shirley and said, “Grandpa told me not to be a criminal.”

Patrick looked over the table at Percy and then everyone looked at Shirley.

Patrick said, “Shirley you may not be able to buy that dress shop.”

Before Patrick finished Shirley hit her fork on the table.

Eleanor said, “Shirley what the hell wrong with you?”

Shirley said, “Percy.”

Percy looked at Patrick.

Patrick looked at Percy and said, “Pardon me. I have been looking at the wrong child.”

Brenda sat and stared at Shirley.

Shirley said, “I am a kid. I like helping my friends and wearing pretty dresses.”

Patrick said, “Yeah Eleanor you got something in the telegrams.”

Patrick was waving his fork at Eleanor.

Michael and Thomas were still laying on Eleanor’s arms.

Patrick looked at Shirley and said, “Shirley that evil streak to get revenge stops now. You can’t even run. You will get caught every time. You better pray. I mean it. I will have sleepless nights and no peace if you try to get revenge on people. I forbid you Percy, Bruce, Thomas and Michael from every helping Shirley for getting revenge.”

Michael looked at Patrick then he peeped over the Shirley and said, “Shirley when we go?”

The count nearly fainted.

Patrick just told them never to get revenge.

The count saw that Michael was the bold one.

Ruth turned around and looked out the window and was watching the torches.

Eleanor read the telegram.

She looked at Patrick and said, “Yes.”

Patrick said, “Eleanor you can’t buy things to solve problems.”

Eleanor said, “I know. That is the last thing I will purchase. I added it up and everything should be balanced out the first quarter.”

Brenda looked at Eleanor.

She said, “What did you buy?”

Eleanor looked at her mother and was ashamed and said, “The jewelry shop.”

Shirley said, “Can I get my earrings now?”

Eleanor looked at Shirley and said, “Yes.”

Brenda exhaled.

The count said, “I am out of place but the clerk said, the mob mand was trying to buy the jewelry shop just before Eleanor.

Eleanor said, “Shirley I do not like that revenge spirit. Your grandfather is right. You must pray. I know that was your friend and his parents could not bury him. You took your personal money and gave him a very nice burial. His family want’s money. They think because you are children you will be crushed under the pressure and they win over you. I will get a lawyer who will fight them in court. I promise you will not lose. His family thinks you would give them some money as to go to court. Go to Shirley. You will not lose being a friend to someone.”

Shirley stood and walked to Eleanor.

Percy and Bruce whispered.

Ruth and Monica looked at Shirley.

Eleanor looked at Shirley.

Shirley hugged Eleanor.

Eleanor kissed Shirley.

Michael said, “Momma do we have to pay a lawyer?”

Eleanor said, “Yes.”

Michael looked around the dinner table and said, :I am going to be a lawyer and we won’t need to pay no body.”

Thomas said, “I am going to become an account to control our money.”

Patrick looked at Percy and Bruce.

Percy whispered to Bruce.

Brenda looked at them.

Ruth turned her head.

Michael looked at his plate and saw his one lamb chop.

He puffed his mouth and looked up at Eleanor.

Eleanor said, “No Michael.”

Michael started crying and laid his head on Eleanor and said, “I am a child and was sued for being a friend.”

Eleanor said, “No.”

Percy and Bruce begin to eat their dinner.

Patrick looked at his telegrams and gave one to Brenda to pass over to Percy or Bruce.

She said,”Who?”

Percy and Bruce stopped eating and stared at Patrick.

Patrick said, “Percy.”

Percy started screaming and stood up.

The count was about to eat his squash and had his fork up to his opened mouth.

Eleanor looked at Percy.

Patrick said, “Boy sit down and shut up. That telegram is about the toys.”

Percy sat and started back eating.

Brenda just looked at him.

Percy took the telegram and said, “Thank you grandmother.”

Brenda said, “Boy if you ever screamed and holler like that again I will get my shotgun.”

Percy very calmly said, “I understand and it won’t happen again. I just ain’t giving nobody my money. Because I will not be poor.”

Michael looked at Eleanor.

She looked at him because she knew he was going to try something.

Brenda watched Michael and knew he was about to say something.

Michael tried to primp his mouth and look pitiful and said, “Momma that means I can’t go to the military academy because I have to go to court.”

Eleanor said, “Then you go to Bruce.”

Michael looked up at Eleanor.

She stared at him.

Michael looked at Bruce and Percy.

Percy and Bruce looked at him.

Eleanor looked over the table at Percy and Bruce.

Percy and Bruce slowly looked at Eleanor.

Eleanor said, “Who wants to go to Bruce?”

Percy and Bruce stared at Eleanor.

Thomas raised up from leaning on Eleanor’s arm and said, “After we beat him?”

Thomas sat up and started eating his dinner.

Eleanor said, “Shirley you walked all the way over here.”

Shirley stood from Eleanor’s lap and said, “We were not going to tell everyone until later.”

Eleanor said, “We who?”

Shirley said, Percy, me and Bruce. I have feelings in my legs.”

Eleanor looked down at Shirley’s legs.

Patrick stared and said, “Shirley what does that mean?”

Shirley said, “That I can run.”

She walked to her seat.

Patrick said, “That’s your angry answer. You pray about that. God has blessed you to have alive legs and you are still revengeful that you are going to tell me you can do evil and now with the blessing God gave you, you will still do evil and then run with His blessings. Shirley. Shirley.”

Shirley hopped in her chair and was crying.

She said, “I am angry that was my friend.”

Patrick said, “I don’t care about your good intent to your friend. Somebody is always going to find something to speak against your good intentions. You and Michael decide now if you are going to do good or you are going to stop doing good because someone is going to speak evil of your good intentions.”

The count drank his wine.

They all ate dinner.

Percy and Bruce looked at Brenda.

Brenda looked at them.

They slightly titled their plates.

They did not like lamb chops.

Brenda said, “Eleanor let Michael have some of Percy and Bruce’s lamb chops.”

Thomas said, “Mine’s too.”

Eleanor looked around and said, “You do not like lamb chops?”

Michael was looking around.

Shirley was still puffing mad.

William turned his head.

Eleanor looked at Michael, who had his last piece of lamb chop in his mouth.

Eleanor was stout hearted.

She looked at Michael and said, “Percy give Michael one of your lamb chops.”

Eleanor looked at Ruth and said, “Please come and take the plates away. Tell the cooks don’t give no one but Michael lamb chops.”

William said, “Yes ma am.”

They ate their dessert.

Eleanor went into Patrick’s office and sent telegrams out.

She sent one to Dr. Woodson not to let the suit interrupt his work.

A lawyer would represent the hospital.

Eleanor sent a telegram to the owner of the jewelry shop to meet her at her lawyer’s office Friday at ten thirty am.

She was going to be home for Shirley’s first tea party.

She sent a telegram to her lawyer to represent her children and draw up the contract for the jewelry shop.

She sent a telegram to the store that the toys would be picked when they arrived.

Everyone went to bed.

Stanley laid in his bed and thought about that dress shop salesclerk.

He loved Margaret, but he wanted at least one child.

He turned over on his side and said, “Lord show me the way.”

Gary was lying on his back thinking about Denise.

Denise was lying in her bed and each time she thinks about Gary the slave massa face would up in her mind and his fist or his kick to her stomach or a whip across her back.

Denise felt her stomach and the knots in her stomach from the slave master’s kicks.

She cried more because she knew she could never have pleasure with a man and especially never give him children.

Jose and Nancy were still staying in the re-modeled supply shed.

They would hear Denise and Mable crying and having nightmares all through the night.

Sometimes Mable had jumped up and ran out the residence and was just running.

Jose and Stanley would run after her.

Nancy was not able to bear the torment Denise and Mable were going through.

Jose told Nancy, “We have to find a place to live and a job for me.”

Nancy said, “Can you work part-time here and if we have to go and get room. I just can’t take their tormented minds and beings.”

Jose said, “Somebody has to be out here with them.”

Nancy said, “That man with the horses like one of them.

Jose said, “I’ll talk to him tomorrow.”