Monica did an outstanding job at the Stith’s hospital.

She received the Christmas tree, wreaths, garland and poinsettias Shirley ordered.

She, Sally and Vivienne made the decorations for the Christmas tree, wreaths and garland.

Aunt Beverly and Mabel came to put the finishing touches on the decorations.

Everyone at the hospital was happy with the festive look of the hospital.

Monica and Shirley went over all the expenses of the hospital.

Shirley paid all the merchants until February.

She did not want anything to distract from her holiday.

Shirley gave Monica an additional thirty dollars for working at the hospital and overseeing her Christmas celebration for the handicapped students and their families and friends.

Monica and Vivienne would go each day and visit Lorraine.

Lorraine was staying awake for hours at a time but not speaking and not moving her eyes.

Ryan was worried.

He talked to Dennis about Lorraine.

Dennis told Ryan he did not know what that was especially since she grinned when the people touched her.

Monica loved the extra thirty dollars she received from Shirley.

She and Vivienne went to Smith’s that Thursday before Shirley’s Christmas celebration for the handicapped students.

Dr. Charles had given Vivienne a hundred dollars for the holidays.

Vivienne was angry with him but accepted the money.

She bought him a gift and Sally a doll and tea set.

Vivienne bought Meredith, Monica and Lorraine hair bows.

She sent Bruce a special Christmas card from she and Sally.

Monica bought, Leon and Spencer and the carriage driver a gift and she put poinsettias in Leon and Spencer’s room.

Spencer was doing better and Dennis was releasing him from the hospital.

Spencer did not know whether to go home for the holidays or remain there.

He decided to go home and stay.

Meredith carried him to the Stith’s hospital to see Leon and spend a hour with him before he left.

Spencer was happy.

He counted his money that was being held in his saddle bag.

Patrick and Brenda sent him a telegram of thanks and had Shirley to give him a hundred dollars.

Meredith and Felipe carried Spencer to the train station and Patrick and Brenda arranged for him to have first class accommodations all the way home.

Spencer arrived home three days later.

His entire family was at the train station to greet him.

He felt proud and loved.

He had a wonderful holiday.

Spencer met a local young woman and decided to marry her.

They planned their wedding for the first day of spring.

Spencer bought a nice home in the city and opened a business.

Leon was feeling much better.

He could move one arm and both legs.

Dr. Woodson and Dr. Ralph were happy.

Dr. Ralph would spend two nights a week at the hospital with Lorraine and two nights on call at the Stith’s hospital.

Dr. Woodson left work before noon and went to Dr. Greene’s house.

Dr. Woodson knocked on the door and Dr. Greene walked to the door and opened it.

Dr. Woodson grinned when he saw his old friend.

Dr. Greene grinned.

Barry ran to door and said, “Hey.”

Dr. Woodson said, “Hey Barry.”

Barry bite his bottom lip.

Dr. Greene was proud of Barry and looked down at Barry and grinned.

Dr. Woodson said, “Tony you had two weeks off. Come back to work. We need you. Tell Deborah hello and no hard feelings.”

Dr. Greene said, “Thank you Bradley. She and I know there are no hard feelings. It has been a bad two weeks. That’s why Barry is nervously biting his lip.”

Dr. Woodson said, “I noticed.”

Dr. Greene smiled and said, “I know you saw. I will return to work on Monday. I think we need to spend Sunday together as a family and go to church and have family time.”

Deborah was hiding behind the door and she walked from behind the door and looked at Bradley.

Dr. Woodson smiled at her and said, “Hello Deborah. It is good seeing you.”

She smiled and tears filled her eyes and she began to cry.

Dr. Woodson stepped into Tony’s house and hugged Deborah.

Barry grabbed Dr. Woodson’s legs and his mother’s legs and hugged them.

Dr. Greene looked at Barry and smiled.

Dr. Greene was tearing up.

Dr. Woodson turned Deborah loose and walked out the door.

He said, “Bye Barry. I’ll tell everyone you two are fine and Tony you will be back at work on Monday.”

Dr. Woodson mounted his horse and rode through town.

He saw a toy shop and stopped and went in and bought Sally a huge coloring book and colors. He bought Barry a ball. Then he made a facial reaction like Tony might not like it.

He stopped by his room and left the two gifts until Christmas day.

He left his rooming house and smelled the sugar and butter from the bakery. He stopped at the bakery and bought several dozens of pastries for the staff and patients.

Dr. Woodson returned to the hospital and released Shirley so she could attend her Christmas party.

Hutch had adjusted Shirley and Monica helped her to dress.

Vivienne was standing in Shirley’s door talking to her.

Vivienne said, “Shirley you are a pretty young lady. I don’t ever want to hear that you have acted liked Sally.”

They nurses heard Vivienne and laughed.

Shirley and Monica laughed.

Shirley went to Leon and talked for a few minutes and gave him a bottle of cologne for a Christmas gift from her family to him.

Leon was moved with joy.

Shirley hugged Meredith.

Monica brought the gifts that Patrick and Brenda sent the doctors and Sally.

Shirley said, “You want the gifts now are wait?”

Everybody said wait.

Shirley walked to Sally and saw the plaque on the door that said, “Shirley’s Room.”

Shirley touched her heart.

She hugged Sally and said, “Bruce and my family sent you a Christmas gift.”

Vivienne was helping Monica get everything out the room.

She heard Sally yelled, “Give me the presents now Shirley.”

Shirley closed the door and smiled at the doctors and nurses and walked to the door.

Vivienne was rushing pass a grinning Dr. Charles to get to Sally.

The staff was used to Sally’s screaming.

Shirley stopped and was thinking.

Dr. Woodson said to Dr. Hutch, “Watch Shirley. She just realized why the room is called Shirley’s room.”

The nurses were snickering.

Dr. Ralph was sitting and reviewing a chart and was listening.

Monica walked to Shirley.

Shirley turned around and walked to the nurses’ desk and said, “DR. Woodson.”

Dr. Woodson looked at Shirley.

Shirley said, “Who name that room after me?”

Dr. Woodson said, “Dr. Greene.”

Shirley said, “Why?”

Dr. Woodson said, “Because you were the most terrible patient we have ever had medically and behavior wise.”

Shirley said, “You put all of medically difficult patients in that room?”

Dr. Woodson said, “If you want to believe that Shirley.”

Vivienne was looking at how pretty Shirley looked.

She was thinking about Sally and how Sally’s facial structure, eyes and cheeks were changing.

Dr. Charles was looking at Vivienne and he knew she was thinking about Sally.

Shirley said, “I choose to believe I did not have that behavior.”

Sally yelled, “Yes you did!! With your bad a\*\*.”

Vivienne closed the door.

Shirley was shocked at Sally.

Dr. Ralph grinned.

He rarely grin, but he was thinking about Lorrainer and her condition.

Shirley and Monica left the Stith’s hospital and went straight to the college.

The cook and his three assistants had decorated the room and set the tables and the president had a number of chairs brought to accommodate the families.

Monica was thinking about what she bought that day at Smith’s. She bought her a fancy suit for Sundays and a nice dress to wear on an evening out with Stephen.

Shirley was going over her papers. She completed two papers at the hospital.

She was happy and had only two more papers to go and they would be much shorter and she wanted them finished by the week-end so she and Monica can pack to go home.

Shirley thought and said, “Monica what are you going to do for the holidays?”
Monica said, “I want to stay with Lorraine.”

Shirley said, “Are you going to stay at the apartment for the entire holidays?”

Monica thought, “Like I got money to stay anywhere else.”

Shirley said, “The reason I ask where you are going to stay to determine if you need to rent you a horse and buggy or whether you need a carriage for the month.”

The carriage driver said, “She needs a carriage for the month.”

Monica and Shirley laughed.

The carriage driver wanted to be paid.

Shirley said, “I have to re-do my budget when I get in this evening.”

Monica was proud of how she was not drinking.

Monica and Vivienne talked about her drinking and Vivienne’s terrible relationship with Dr. Charles.

Monica was trying not to think about either.

They arrived at the college.

The carriage driver stepped out and got Shirley’s wheelchair and went and picked Shirley up and placed her in the wheelchair.

Monica had stepped out the carriage and was carrying Shirley’s papers.

Shirley saw the red and green balloons and grinned.

The president of the college and his wife and the deans and their families were there to attend the Christmas celebration.

The carriage driver pushed Shirley to the room.

Shirley spoke to the president and the deans.

Eleanor sent a photographer to take pictures.

The photographer was taking a lot of pictures.

Shirley and Monica entered the room and was shocked at the number of people who were there.

They greeted everyone.

Shirley whispered to Monica, “Do we have enough food?”

Monica said, “I’ll see.”

The president watched Monica and Shirley exchange.

Monica walked to the cook and said, “Shirley wants to know is there enough food?”

The cook said, “I don’t think so. I sent two of my helpers to go and get the two turkeys and the two hams I was sending on the midnight train to New York. We can make it back in time to cook them something else.”

He looked at Monica and said, “Whose paying us?”

Monica said, “Shirley. It is not me.”

The cook and his assistant laughed.

Monica shrugged her shoulders and walked away.

Monica told Shirley the cook was sending for food from the train.

The dark hair young man and the blond hair young man and one of the young women walked into the Christmas celebration.

They saw the president and the deans watching them.

The three walked to Shirley and spoke.

Shirley being very happy and cordial showed her big grin.

The three felt comfortable and begin to talk to Shirley.

Steven wheeled up and spoke to them.

Mr. Hall sat and watched.

He looked at how nice the decorations were.

Aunt Beverly and Mabel came by earlier and decorated the room.

The president and the deans were standing against the walls with their families.

They loved the decorations and the festive atmosphere.

Mr. Hall stood and walked to the center of the room and said, “May I have your attention.”

Everyone became quiet.

The president was watching Shirley and the three from the group and Steven.

The children had balloons and were running to their families.

Shirley grinned at the children.

The president watched Shirley.

Mr. Hall said, “Shirley Stith Simmons…”

He looked at Shirley.

Shirley grinned because she did not want Bruce’s family to get any recognition for anything her family did.

Mr. Hall said, “Shirley asked me to speak on her behalf, in case she was not able to attend. I’m going to let Shirley speak. She is here and we are happy that she is.”

Shirley grinned.

The carriage driver ran and wheeled her to Mr. Hall.

The carriage driver was looking back at the tables and tables of food.

The people saw him and laughed.

Monica was watching Shirley.

Monica wanted Shirley to stay at the hospital until she left for home next week to make everything easier for her.

Shirley stood.

She grinned at the carriage driver and turned to the people.

The president’s wife touched her husband’s arm.

He leaned over to hear what she was saying.

She said, “Shirley has great pose.”

The president nodded his head.

Shirley said, “That you Mr. Hall you did a great job.”

The cook and his assistant were watching Shirley because she would be their boss one day.

They laughed and all the people laughed.

Mr. Hall bowed.

Steven cheered his daddy.

The three from the group looked at Steven and grinned.

Shirley looked very chic and European in her festive Christmas outfit.

Monica was proud of Shirley’s hair and accessories she made.

People were looking at Shirley because she was standing.

Shirley refused to sit at her first Handicapped celebration.

She said, “I am Shirley. I have a disability. I was born with all types of deformities inside and out. I was a round ball of human flesh. I was in terrible unbearable pain each day. I was blessed to have doctors who are totally dedicated to their patients…”

The president nodded his head.

The deans looked at him.

Dr. Greene and Dr, Ralph arrived to see Shirley’s first handicap celebration.

They stood back and watched her.

The president recognized Dr. Greene and wanted to greet him. He did not know the other man.

Shirley said, “For nearly two years I laid in a hospital bed and the doctors worked harder on me each day like it was their first time working on me. GOD blessed me. I spent a year and a half in Europe with my family where I was able to walk and yes sometimes run. I was released from the hospital this afternoon because I had overdone it.”

The president watched as Dr. Greene leaned to Dr. Ralph and asked. “What happened?’

Dr. Ralph said, “Some twists.”

The president realized that the other man had to be a doctor also.

Shirley said, “I found out today the hospital dedicated a room in my name. I thought it was because of improved health then I found out it was because of my bad attitude.”

Dr. Greene laughed and said to Dr. Ralph, “Who told her?’

Dr. Ralph said, “She figured it out.”

The cooks two assistants were walking in with the two hams and turkeys.

Dr. Greene and Dr, Ralph moved out of their way to bring in the food.

The carriage driver was peeping at the food.

The children were laughing at him.

The photographer was taking a lot of pictures.

Shirley said, “Every day is a fight to live. With the pain, lack of medical care, lack of love and support with ridicule and rejection. I wanted to do something for you and your families and friends to bring a little cheer to this time of year when sometimes our families and friends forget to spend that precious time with us. You are a hero.”

Everyone stood and clapped.

Dr. Greene and Dr. Ralph clapped.

Dr. Greene was tearing up.

The president rushed up to Shirley and said, “Give me a minute.”

The children were running to the gingerbread cookies on the tree.

Dr. Ralph told Ryan about Shirley’s Christmas celebration for the handicapped students.

The cook baked several dozens of the cookies.

Dennis took the cookies to the hospital and over to the president that afternoon.

That is what made the president’s to attend. That this great surgeon had time to come to their school and drop off cookies for this event.

The president saw Dennis looking around the grounds for the building.

He ran out of his office to Dennis.

Dennis spoke to the president and said, “Good after noon sir.”

Dennis was still looking around.

The president smelled the cookies and said, “Dr. Wade how can I help you.”

Dr. Wade said, “I am to drop off these cookies to the Christmas handicap celebration.”

The president said, “Awe yes. You are not far. I will walk with you. Give me one second to get my hat and coat.”

The president rushed to his office and grabbed his hat and coat and ran back to Dennis and said, “Dr. Wade I apologize for not inviting you in the office while I got my coat. Let’s walk over here it is the next building.”

Dennis said, “I am a surgeon I should be able to follow directions to the building. Speaking of that I have surgeries lined up for today. Laura is doing great. I attended to her this morning. She can leave by Monday, but I wanted her to go out to the Stith’s hospital if they can take her and give her therapy for about two weeks.”

The president of the college walked to the building and opened the door.

Beverly and Mabel were decorating the room.

They spoke.

Beverly and Mabel were working fast to leave because the city was having racial violence against blacks. The mayor was determined to put an end to it. Specially at the holidays and people servants were out and about.

Dennis walked to Beverly and said, “Hi Beverly.”

Beverly said, “Hello Dr. Wade.”

Dennis said, “Ryan sent these for Shirley’s celebration. You all be careful and safe.”

Beverly was looking at the gingerbread cookies and smiled.

She looked at Dennis and said, “We will.”

Dennis and the president walked out the building back to Dennis carriage.

Dennis shook the president’s hand and left and went to his hospital only a short distance and prepared for his surgeries.

Ryan came later to the hospital and helped his father with the surgeries.

Shirley peeped around the president to see what the children were running to.

She saw the Christmas tree and the gingerbread men cookies.

She clapped and laughed.

The president laughed.

He said, “We all remember those days.”

Dr. green thought. “Barry would have torn that tree down.”

The president said, “Shirley I know Dr. Greene who is that other man?”

Shirley looked at the president and then at the door and saw Dr. Greene and Dr. Ralph.

She grinned and walked over to them.

They hugged.

She looked at Dr. Greene and said, “No hard feelings?”

Dr. Greene held Shirley’s hands and said, “Absolutely not.”

Dr. Ralph smiled.

The president of the college walked over and said, “I am Strafford the president of this college. I know the outstanding Dr. Greene who save my daughter’s life. I don’t know you.”

Dr. Ralph said, “I am Dr. Ralph. I am a doctor at the Stith.”

He looked at Shirley and smiled.

President Strafford said, “May I introduce you?”

Shirley grinned.

Dr. Greene said, “I guess so.”

He looked at Dr. Ralph.

The president rushed back to the center of the room and said, “I want to introduce you to some outstanding doctors. Dr. Greene and Dr. Ralph.”

Steven cheered and said, “Hey Dr. Greene.”

The three looked at Steven and grinned.

Dr. Greene stopped briefly and shook Steven hand.

The president said, “These are two of the doctors Shirley spoke of. Dr. Greene left the hospital a week ago and came to my house and helped me take my daughter to the hospital where she has recovered and doing well. If it was not for him my daughter would have died. I want to see more of you become medical doctors.”

Some of the women said, “Hey Dr. Ralph.”

Shirley was laughing.

The cook said, “Wait a minute I was interested in those two.”

Dr. Ralph looked back at the cook.

Dr. Greene laughed.

Some of the female students said, “Dr. Ralph you work at the Stith’s hospital?”

Dr. Ralph said, “Yes.”

Women started clapping.

Steven turned and saw his mother clapping.

He said, “Mom!”

His daddy looked and said, “Let her.”

Everyone laughed.

The president said, “It is a time of thanksgiving to God. Regardless of what we are facing. Mr. Hall would you say the grace?”

Mr. Hall said, “Sure. GOD thank YOU for good and bad. Help us to grow as we travel through the bad to get to the good. Bless these here and those throughout YOUR earth who have disabilities and let them live and be heroes for us ll. And bless the cook.”

The cook cleared his throat.

The president looked back at the cook and grinned.

Mr. hall said, “Bless the cooks. In JESUS’ name Amen.”

The children ran to the tree.

Dr. Greene said, “I want one of those gingerbreads for Barry.”

Dr. Greene walked to the Christmas tree and took a cookie for Barry and wrapped it in his handkerchief.

Everyone went to the food.

Shirley was talking to Dan and he could sometimes walk on his canes.

The three ran to the food and had full plates.

The young woman brought Steven a full plate.

She sat and talked with Steven for most of the afternoon.

The president’s wife and the deans’ wives loved the decorations that Beverly and Mabel had in the room.

The president was eating and talking to Mr. Hall and Mrs. Wilson about their children and the difficulties they had overcome.

The president’s wife said, “Excuse me for a moment.”

The president looked at the cook and said, “This is excellent.”

The cook nodded.

The president looked at his wife.

She said, “Can we keep the decorations in this room?”

One of the dean’s wife said, “They are quite lovely.”

She saw the children and Dr. Greene eating the gingerbread men and said, “We have to decorate the tree or get them to bake some more cookies and decorate the tree.”

The president did not like the way the dean’s wife said it.

He looked hard at his wife.

The president’s wife knew that meant he did not like the way the dean’s wife spoke.

The president said, “You have to ask Shirley.”

His wife looked around and saw Shirley in her wheelchair talking to two young children a boy and a girl.

Dr. Ralph sat in a chair and joined them.

Monica went and stood in line and brought Shirley and the two children plates of food.

The children were surprised that Monica showed them kindness.

Dr. Ralph looked at the children.

He said, “Where are your parents? Are they here?”

The children looked down.

Monica was walking back with their punch.

She looked at the children.

The children said, “They are dead.”

Dr. Ralph was shocked and said, “Who brought you here?”

The children said, “Mr. Hall.”

Mr. Hall walked over and passed his son and the pretty blonde talking.

He walked to the children and said, “I see you two have something to eat.”

The children were sad and said, “Yes sir.”

Shirley’s heart was breaking.

Monica was hurt that the little children were in this mean world by themselves and they were in wheelchairs meant people would mistreat them.

Dr. Ralph said, “Where are their parents?”

Mr. Hall said, “They died from their wagon falling over on the whole family. The children were hurt.”

Dr. Ralph put down his plate.

Monica put the children’s punch under their chairs.

Dr. Ralph stood and said to the little girl, “Can I touch your neck?”

The little girl did not know what to say.

Shirley touched her hand and nodded for yes.

The little girl looked at Shirley and said, “Yes sir.”

Dr. Ralph touched the girl’s neck and began to manipulate it and it popped.

The girl said, “Whoa!”

Steven leaned back and said, “It felt good didn’t it?”

The girl said, “Yes.”

The president was watching and Mrs. Wilson.

The president’s wife said, “He should not be doing that here.”

The president looked at her.

Mrs. Wilson, “He is a doctor. He practices medicine wherever he is. If you were sick and needed help would you tell him not to help you and you would get to the doctor whenever you could? Let him practice.”

Dr. Greene stared at the president’s wife.

She huffed and passed Dr. Greene she and the dean’s wife.

The president was thinking.

The boy said, “Me sir. Can you help me?”

Shirley nearly cried.

Dr. Ralph examined the boy’s neck and said, “You need more help.”

He looked at Mr. Hall and said, “Are you able to take these children to the hospital now?”

The president was listening.

Mrs. Wilson was watching.

The president’s wife and the dean’s wife walked to Shirley.

The president’s wife said, “Shirley, we want to keep these decorations for our events this holiday.”

Shirley said, “Since you asked me. Yes.”

Everybody laughed.

The president was glad Shirley answered his wife like that.

Dr. Greene said, ”Dr. Ralph, I ‘ll go to the hospital and attend to them . You go to south hospital.”

Mr. Hall looked at Steven and said, “Can you and your mother stay here until I get back?”

The carriage driver was eating a mouth full of food and said, “I charge fifty cents. I can take them home after I take Shirley and Miss Monica.”

Monica was happy the carriage driver respected her in front of everybody.

Mr. Hall reached in his chest pocket and gave the carriage driver fifty cents.

When Dr. Ralph stood to leave the women said, “Bye Dr. Ralph.”

Dr. Ralph smiled and nodded and left.

The president grinned at the women who were not ashamed to be openly flirting with Dr. Ralph.

Mr. Hall and Dr. Greene took the two children to the hospital.

Dr. Woodson, Hutch and Dr. Greene examine the two little children.

The doctors agreed in this case the two little children’s bones need to be broken and they probably will be able to walk again.

They sent a telegram to Ryan stating their evaluation.

Ryan was in surgery.

When he had a break he sent the doctors a telegram and said, “I will come tomorrow.”

Mr. Hall was so happy.

He asked Dr. Greene how long would the children be in the hospital.

Dr. Greene said, “About four months.”

Mr. Hall said, “Thank GOD. I did not want them to go to that dreadful orphanage.”

Dr. Greene said, “What do you mean? I thought the orphanages had drastically improved under this governor.”

Mr. Hall said, “The orphanages have improved but these are black children. No one cares for them. I knew their parents. Good people. Some kind of way their wagon flipped over and they were all pinned under the wagon. No body helped them. When I got off work an hour later I saw their wagon and pulled over and ran to them. The wife, Samantha was already dead, their two babies were dead. The boy and girl were crying. My friend Brad was dying.”

Dr. Greene could not believe what he was hearing.

Hutch and Felipe were listening.

Nurse Sharon bowed her head.

Mr. Hall said, “Brad said Mark help my boy and girl. Brother Geoffrey in St. Louis. Some more people ran and we lifted the wagon off them. The boy and girl were screaming in pain. We buried Brad, Samantha and their two babies the next day in one grave. We did not have money to take the children to the doctor. I am so sorry. I did not know about this place.”

Dr. Greene put his hand on Mr. Hall’s shoulder and said, “This accident happened a month ago?”

Mr. Hall began to sob and nodded his head.

Mr. Hall went and sat in a chair in the lobby.

Dr. Greene stared at him.

Shirley gave her two papers to the deans.

She and Monica left for the evening.

The three from the bourgeois group had a good time at the Christmas celebration for the handicap.

Steven and his mother helped clean the room.

Mrs. Hall and Steven had a routine for clearing the tables.

The people left were laughing and having a great time.

The president ate another piece of ham.

He asked the cook did he cook on the side.

The cook said, “If I am not on the train.”

The cook and his three assistants had to prepare the Stith’s hospital Christmas dinner and two more parties over the next two weeks.

The president looked at the cook.

Several deans were standing with the president.

The president said, “Gentlemen what you think about our staff dinner this year?’

The head dean said, “My God who else would we get. When you can cook ham that is as juicy as this.”

They all laughed.

The president looked at the cook and said, “Can the four of you cook for two hundred people?”

The head dean said, “Our families about three hundred and fifty.”

The president was enjoying his ham and was chewing and said, “That’s a lot for these four to cook.”

One of the deans said, “If they can do the hams that would be good. And one for me to take to my family dinner in two days.”

They all laughed.

The cook was listening.

The president said, “Sir can you cook …”

The president looked back at the deans.

The president said, “Twelve hams.”

The dean said, “One for me.”

The cook said, “When sir?”

The president said, “On the twenty second.”

The cook was thinking about their work schedule.

The assistants were calculating their time.

The cook looked at his assistants.

They were calculating the time and nodded their heads for yes.

Shirley went to the apartment and undressed and went to bed.

The president said, “The dinner will be at four pm in the large hall. We can have our cafeteria to cook the rest of the food.”

A dean walked up and was eating a gingerbread man cookie.

He said, “This is great. Wo bake these? You sir?”

The cook said, “No sir.”

The president said, “Dr. Wade brought these cookies today. His baker had over bake and the ladies that were here used them to decorate the Christmas tree.”

The cook said, “The baker was Paul?”

He president looked at the cook and said, “Baker and cook strife.”

Everyone laughed.

The cook did not laugh but continued to clean up.

The president and the deans smirked.

The cook eased over to the Christmas and pulled one of the few remaining gingerbread man cookies.

The president was watching the cook.

The president nodded at the deans.

They were snickering at the cook tasting the cookie.

One of the deans said, “My God we have envy over everything.”

They all snickered.

The president finished with his ham and stood to take his plate to the table and one of the assistants walked and to him and got the plate.

They were packing all the plates. To wash them on the train.

The president looked around the round and saw Mrs. Hall and Steven sweeping the room.

He grinned.

He looked back as the assistants were taking everything to the two wagons.

The president said, “You gentlemen be safe and don’t linger on dark streets.”

The black assistants said, “Yes sir.”

They left and went to the railroad and unloaded the wagons.

They counted their money that Monica paid them earlier that day.

Shirley whispered to Monica to give them an additional fifty dollars.

The deans were watching.

Shirley gave the money to Monica.

Monica quietly went to the cook and gave him the money.

The cook and his assistants cleared twenty five dollars each.

They were jumping up and were happy.

They loved their railroad jobs.

The other two parties were in New York over the next week. Then the Stith’s Hospital and the last party was the president’s dinner and all they had to do was to bake the hams.

The cooks three assistants were off until the third of January.

The cook could manage the cooking by himself.

Because the trains did not have a lot of riders.

Patrick and Brenda kept the trains running but on a limited schedule so the workers could have some time with family and friends. And so that riders can access to travel with their families or spend more time on holiday.

Monica had everything ready for the next morning.

Shirley closed her door and went to bed.

Monica was glad Shirley was in the bed for night.

She went in her room and tried on the dress and outfit again and she looked at the clothes she bought over the two weeks.

She sat on the bed and did a budget.

She thought, “I get thirty dollars next week. I need to put that in the bank and don’t touch it. I have fifteen dollars on me for my expenses.”

Monica laid on the bed and jumped up and ran to the front door.

She had not looked the front door and she locked the front door and put the bar across it.

She checked the windows and the door by the kitchen.

Shirley said, “Monica.”

Monica said, “I forgot to lock the front door. I did it.”

Shirley said, “Good night.”

The children heard Sally acting up all night.

Dr. Woodson put the boy and the girl in the same room.

He knew they were afraid and he wanted them to be comfortable.

He put them at the beginning of the hallway.

The doctor’s room was at the end of the hallway next to the backdoor.

Hutch would be sleeping there Thursday and Friday night and Dr. Ralph Saturday and Sunday nights.

Dr. Woodson thought about the two children and were grieved. He knew they were not given medical attention because they were black.

Dr. Woodson went home and prayed about the two black children and petitioned GOD that the children completely recover and that he sends somebody to take care of them.” He asked GOD to bless Tony and his family and it felt good to have him back and working side by side.

Dr. Charles was standing at the nurses’ desk.

He had his left elbow on the desk and his hand over his mouth.

He was angry at how blacks were being treated.

He thought, “Those children have to go through hell now to have their bones broken and re-set. God help them. Their parents may still be alive if somebody would help then. God, I need my divorce from my wife finalized to marry Vivienne and take her away from this evil country. I believe Sally’s family will come looking for her. I will heal Sally. I must have Vivienne as my wife.”

The nurses looked at Felipe and Dr. Charles.

They both were quiet.

The nurses knew they were angry over the little black children.

Usually the nurses would say something that make them feel better but this situation they could not.

Brenda and Patrick were trying to find the medical schools that Ty and Skip’s son were in.

They were not getting anywhere.

They contacted the railroad to see who sent out the request.

Patrick said, “Mabel!”

Brenda looked at Patrick.

He said, “Doesn’t she date Skip’s son?”

Brenda said, “That’s what he said.”

Patrick laughed and said, “Let’s send a telegram to Bev for her to ask Mabel and send us her answer back fast.”

Patrick sent a telegram to Beverly.

Beverly asked Mabel.

Mabel told her the names of the school that Ty and Skip’s son were at.

Brenda and Patrick found the information for the schools and telegrammed to confirm they attended the schools.

The medical schools confirmed they attended and the balances on their accounts.

Patrick immediately sent Skip’s son full payment.

They waited for the receipt of payment.

They received it.

Patrick and Brenda sent Ty’s school the money for year.

They waited for a receipt of payment.

They did not receive it.

Patrick telegram the school for the receipt.

He received a telegram that the money was applied to a more worthy student balance and that Ty would be dismissed from medical school.

Brenda stood up.

Gen caught Brenda’s arm.

Eleanor looked at her mother.

Patrick looked at Brenda.

Gen said, “Move Patrick.”

Gen sat and sent a long telegram to someone.

Ty was at school crying because he wanted to be a doctor so bad.

Ty was not to complete his classes.

The next morning Patrick received a telegram from the president of Ty’s medical school.

He stated in the telegram the employee was terminated. The money was applied to Ty’s account. Ty’s account was paid for the fall and the spring semester along with all of his books and room and board.

Patrick and Brenda sent Ty and Skip’s son ten dollars for a Christmas present.

Ty sent a beautiful thank you to Patrick and Brenda and to tell his sister hello.

Eleanor rolled her eyes.

Patrick shook his head.

Skip’s son sent a beautiful message of thank you to Patrick and Brenda that moved them to tears.

The outdoor Christmas decorations were completed.

The Christmas tree was in the hall and partially decorated.

Gen and Brenda met Mag and Natalie in town for lunch on Friday.

Brenda had no rest nor peace until she got Ty and Skip’s son schools paid.

Eleanor was in town working from the office.

Patrick went to the sheriff’s office and visited with Nathan for a while.

Patrick left and went home.

Nathan smirked he knew Patrick eased into town to watch the women.

Jose had the house in order.

He and Harriet went and helped Gen make her house holiday ready.

They stood in the yard and looked at Gen’s decorated house.

Gen loved it.

Shirley’s house was dark and vacant.

Jose looked and said, “That’s going to be a headache.”

Gen whimpered.

Harriet looked at Gen then Jose.

Jose and Harriet left.

Jose took Harriet come and waited for her to go inside the house.

Thomas had completed the menus and the grocery lists for the different events.

Dan was ready for the ground breaking reception and the dinner in two days after it.

Peter was to do the reception. He would be trying out several new dishes.

He prepared the dishes and let Patrick, Brenda, Gen and Eleanor try them before he ordered the ingredients.

They loved the dishes.

Eleanor said, “Peter the red dish is too hot. The flavor is great but I would not be able to enjoy it.”

Brenda said, “Eleanor you know that country’s food is hot and spicy. Don’t eat none.”

Patrick was weeping.

Patrick said, “Peter I love it. But it is too hot and spicy.”

Brenda turned and looked at Patrick.

Nadine snickered and bit her lips to keep from hollering out in laughter.

Gen said, “I can speak?”

Brenda looked at Gen and said, “Go ahead.”

Gen said, Peter can you make one hot like this and put a milder one another table and put a sign that say mild?”

Eleanor looked at Gen and said, “That is too much trouble.”

There was a knock on the door.

Nadine looked out the window and said, “The ambassador and his wife and their security.”

Patrick stood and walked to the door and opened it.

He was happy to see them and invited them in.

They walked in the family dining room and kissed Eleanor and spoke to Brenda and Gen.

Claressa said, “What are you doing?’

Eleanor said, “Tasting new dishes that Peter wants to serve at the Ground-breaking reception. We are disagreement over the red dish it is too hot. People around here won’t eat it. I want a milder flavor.”

Alvin said, “May I?”

Brenda was hot and said, “Yes.”

Patrick was walking back with a glass of white wine.

Gen looked at Patrick and said, “Patrick.”

Brenda looked at Patrick.

Claressa sat on the other side of Eleanor.

Brenda thought, “Look at that crap after fifteen years they are still the same.”

Peter gave Alvin and Claressa a plate with the dish on it.

They knew the dish.

Alvin said, “Eleanor this is great. It is suppose to be hot as fire.”

Claressa said, “It is perfect.”

She looked over the table and said, “May I try those other dishes?”

Peter split the remaining dishes with she and Alvin.

They loved the food.

Brenda said, “Peter we are going with this version of this dish. You put a place card and say ‘Hot’.”

Peter said, “Yes ma am.”

Brenda said, “Eleanor I don’t know why you are talking about the spice. You don’t eat that much anymore.”

Patrick said, “Peter one day can you make that dish for the family during the holidays but not hot.”

Peter was thinking and looked at Nadine and said, “Yes sir.”

Brenda knew they would be off until New Years’ eve.

Gen said, “Peter the lamb in this dish is delicious.”

Claressa leaned over and bumped into Eleanor and said, “Sorry El it is delicious.”

Eleanor said, “I did not say it was not delicious but too hot.”

Alvin said, “Don’t eat any.”

They all laughed.

Peter and Nadine took the dishes to the kitchen.

Nadine said, “I agree with Brenda. Eleanor doesn’t eat a lot anymore. Don’ eat it.”

Peter said, “Shush Nadine.”

Dan heard them. He knew they were talking about the hot dish.

Dan thought, “The dish is good but folks around here don’t at anything that hot and spicy.”

He looked around for some more.

Nadine said, “That Claressa ate the last of the sample.”

Dan said, “Ok.”

 Patrick, Brenda and Gen left Alvin, Claressa and Eleanor in the family dining room and went to her office.

They addressed the remaining Christmas cards and placed them in a bag so Brenda would take them into town on Friday when they met Mag and Natalie for lunch.

Gen said, “I have to go. I want to do my Christmas greetings and post them tomorrow also. You know it can take four weeks for them to get the cards. I try to do something different every day. With Ben gone it is quiet and lonely. I read at night.”

Brenda and Patrick looked at Gen.

Gen said, “Oh I joined the choir at church.”

Brenda and Patrick laughed.

Gen said, “We have rehearsal on Wednesday and by Sunday I don’t remember the songs.”

They all laughed.

They walked Gen to the door.

She said, “Good afternoon,” to Alvin and Claressa.

Gen was leaving to go home and Jose was leaving.

She grinned at Jose.

Jose called to Gen.

She stopped.

He said, “I want to decide on one of two houses today. I suppose to have done it the week after Thanksgiving but it was hectic. Can you go with me?”

Gen said, “Sure Jose. How far? Where is it?”

Jose looked at her and said, “Not far from you.”

Gen grinned and said, “You lead the way.”

Jose rod passed her house and cut through the next two streets.

He stopped in front of the two houses across from each other.

The husband looked and said, “He’s back.”

The wife rushed to the window and saw Jose.

She said, “Who is the woman.”

Jose walked to Gen’s buggy and helped her out.

They husband and wife looked at each other.

Gen turned around and saw them looking out the window.

She told Jose, “Don’t buy that house. That is one of my enemies’ house.”

Jose said, “Gen I was leaning to it.”

Gen said. “Lean no further. Len this way.”

Gen put her air on and walked up to the house.

Jose knocked on the door.

The man opened the door and his wife was standing behind him.

They invited Jose and Gen into the house.

Gen walked through the house and saw the smallest thing.

Jose was checking on the structure of the house.

They stepped out into the backyard.

Jose fell in love with it.

Jose said, “I know I have to paint but I will buy this house.”

The couple told Jose the price.

They cut the price a little so Jose could paint.

Jose said, “I will be busy this holiday. I have some time tomorrow morning can we meet at your layer’s office and sign the contract and then we can go to the bank.”

The couple was middled aged and they were so excited.

They wanted to spend New Year’s in their house in the New York.

They loved the arts and the theatre.

Gen said, “We are beginning to grow. I hope you come back.”

The couple shook their heads for no.

The husband said, “Too slow.”

The wife said, “No fashions.”

Jose said, “Your lawyer’s name and address.”

They told him the lawyer’s name.

Gen touched Jose’s arm and said, “That’s my lawyer I know where his office is.”

Jose and gen left the house.

Jose was impressed with the large parlor and kitchen.

The house had two wash closets and a laundry.

Gen was grinning because she knew her enemy was looking out the window.

Jose walked on the side of the house and said, “Gen this house did not look that big on the outside. I can add on rooms if I want.”

Gen was putting on her gloves and said, “When you start your family.”

Jose helped Gen into her buggy and he got into his carriage and followed Gen home.

Jose was only a few minutes from Gen.

Gen was grinning that she blocked her enemy from selling her house that day.

Gen went home and rode to the water well and picked up her water pails and coal bucket and rode back to her garden house.

She was grinning to herself.

She said, “I hope she won’ come to the ground breaking reception.”

Gen stepped out the buggy and went to the kitchen door and unlocked it.

She struggled with the water pails.

She brought in the coal bucket.

Gen said, “God You said, I would not have to struggle with these house chores. I have to find someone to help me.”

Gen poured the water in the water barrel and looked in the water barrel and it was a fourth filled.

She cried and walked out the back door and went to the well two more times and filled the water pails.

The water barrel was half full.

She put coal in the fireplace,

Gen filled the coal bucket upstairs in her bedroom with coal.

She filed the bucket in the kitchen with coal.

She cried all afternoon.

She completed that task.

She went in the house and undressed and put on her nightgown and hung up her clothes.

She selected one of the festive skirts Sarah made to wear to lunch with Brenda and mag and Natalie.

Gen washed her face and washed off and went into the sitting room and sat at the desk and wrote Christmas messages to everyone of her friends.

She sealed all the messages.

She saw it was late.

Gen decided to start sleeping back upstairs.

She had started a small fir in the fireplace.

Gen had not yet decided to change all her stoves to furnaces.

She knew Eleanor had changed over to the furnaces.

Gen looked towards the wall and said, “That little Shirley like all the modern things. She will probably go with furnaces.”

She laughed and laid down and tried to pray but fell asleep.

Gen woke late on Friday.

She crawled out of bed and went on her knees and said, “GOD Almighty. I bless YOU and JESUS this morning. I honor YOU True and Living GOD and YOUR Son JESUS the Christ. They did not tell me about Lorraine, because they thought it would be a lot on me. YOU made me stronger than that. Bring Lorraine back better than what she was. She loved that man. I believe that he is her husband. Help Monica stop being a drunk. We all got problems. Deliver Mabel and the other former slaves from the evil minds the slave masters put in them. The employee that took Ty’s money from that boy and gave it to that white boy, judge him. YOU have already started judging him when YOU picked a fight with him. Complete YOUR judgment. Show me how to bring the coal, fuel and water into the house…”

Gen heard the horses neighing.

She held her head down and screamed into her bed.

She waited for a minute and held her head up and continued her prayer, ”…I forgot about the horses. I have to feed them and give them water. LORD forgive me of my sins. I don’t love my enemies. I did not do good towards them yesterday when I steered Jose from them. In JESUS’ name. Amen,”

Gen heard the horses again and shook her head.

She thought, “Maybe Eleanor and Shirley can come up with a way to make these chores easier.”

Gen shook her head as she thought about all she had to do before she left for lunch.

She had to pick up Brenda.

Gen put on her boots and a coat.

She was about to go out the door to feed the horses but turned and started a fire in the pot belly oven.

She put her bath water pail on the stove to begin to heat.

Gen walked out the door and saw the horses loose.

She said, “Damn.”

I can’t run after these horses.

She was about to close the kitchen door and her eyes fell on the apples.

She stepped back and picked up the apples and walked out the door.

She whistled.

The horses turned and looked at her.

Gen did not move from the back porch in case she had to run back in the house.

She said, “Look at these horses looking at me like who is she whistling at and didn’t feed us for a couple of days.

She held out an apple.

One horse slowly walked to her.

Gen bit the apple.

The horse neighed at her and walked closer.

He started smelling the other apples.

Gen said, “I can’t believe this. The horse don’t want the apple I bit. Like I got a sickness.”

She went and gave the horse another apple out of the sack.

He bit it.

The other two horses approached Gen.

She gave each of them an apple.

Gen went and got their water pail and filed their trough with water.

The horses ran back and began to drank the water.

She put their feed down.

She petted the horses and groomed them one at a time.

Gen was about to get the same horse she has been riding for two weeks.

Her mind said, “No”.

She got another horse and walked him to the buggy and hooked him up to the buggy.

Gen swept out the buggy.

She locked the stables to keep the horses from getting out again.

A thought came to Gen that she did not thank GOD for keeping her horses.

Gen said, “GOD forgive me for not thinking about YOU and thanking YOU for reburking the devourer for My sake. Because I did not have to go and buy any more horses. They were in my yard.”

Gen rode the buggy to the house. And tied it on the pole.

She went in the house and thought about the water as she closed the kitchen door.

Gen thought, “That water has boiled out by now.”

She walked to the stove and saw the water pail was near full and frowned.

Gen picked up the water pail and carried it to the washroom.

She was frowning and thinking aid, “That water should have boiled out.”

She poured the water in the tub.

Ran to the kitchen twice and got pails of cold water to cool the boiling water.

Gen realized she had enough water to take a bath.

She added Lorraine’s strawberry oil and soaked for a minute and enjoyed her bath.

She dressed and combed her hair.

Gen walked to the parlor and looked around.

She walked into the kitchen and placed a candle near the door and a match in case she returned at dark.

Gen walked out the door and locked it.

She looked at the horse and untied it and stepped into the buggy.

Gen said, “I don’t know what time it is. I know I am about an hour late. Brenda will be mad especially about the post. Oh GOD.”

Gen jumped out the buggy and ran to the back door and unlocked it.

She ran into the house and grabbed her bag of Christmas messages and greetings.

She looked at her house and said, “Maybe a Christmas tree.”

Gen locked the door and was about to step off the back porch.

The horse looked at her and turned its’ head.

Gen topped and said, “This horse has a problem with me.”

She got in the buggy and rode to Brenda.

She thought all the way there about how to get the daily chores done.

She arrived at Brenda on time.

Gen ran to the door and knocked.

Jose came to the door and opened it.

He said, “Good morning.”

Gen said, “I know I am late.:

Jose said, “It is fifteen after eleven. I just returned from your lawyer’s office. He said, he needs to see you.”

Gen said, “I must have not slept right because I thought I was an hour late.”

Gen stepped inside the house.

Jose closed the door.

Gen said, “How did things go?”
Jose said, “I signed all the papers. They signed all their papers. I gave them half the money today. Because they had to produce a clear deed to the house. They told the lawyer they had a copy of it at home.”

Gen said, “Why they did not bring it with them?”

Brenda was walking down the foyer to Gen.

Gen looked at her best friend and sister.

Jose looked at Gen and thought, “The hell they went through for freedom.”

Gen turned back to Jose and saw him looking at her.

Gen said, “Jose what is look about?”

Jose said, “I just admire you all for what you did for our country.”

Brenda heard Jose and looked at him.

Gen said, “Thank you.”

Brenda said, “Thank you.”

Gen said, “Jose be careful. Don’t give any more money until they produce the clear deed. If not get your money back or get the house for what you have paid them.”

Brenda said, “May I ask what you two are talking about?”

Gen looked at Brenda and then Jose.

Jose said, “I am buying a house.”

Brenda said, “Congratulations. You must tell us when you get it and we will give you a house warming gift.”

Jose said, “Really?”

Brenda looked at Jose and said, “Really.”

Jose was awe struck and turned and said, “I want that silver punch bowl, tray and ladle and twelve cups.”

Brenda said, “You’re not getting that.”

Jose opened the front door.

Patrick was standing back in the foyer watching.

Gen said, “You got to fight that little Shirley for that.”

Brenda and Gen laughed.

Patrick giggle.

He could see selfish Shirley beating Jose for the punch bowl set.

Jose stared at the women.

They looked at Jose and kept laughing.

Brenda said, “Make sure it is ready for next week.”

Jose did not say anything.

The women were walking off the porch.

Gen said, “Guess who lives across from Jose?”

Brenda said, “Who?”

Gen said, “Abigail.”

Brenda yelled and said, “What?”

Jose watched them get in the buggy.

Brenda said, “Jose is mad at me that’s why he did not walk out here and help us in the buggy. Patrick will get him.”

Patrick stood back and watched Gen and Brenda pulled out the yard.

They were laughing and talking all the way.

Gen said, “Brenda this is the holiday season.”

Brenda patted her bag.

Gen nodded in the back of the buggy.

Brenda looked back and saw the shotgun and said, “Nice.”

Jose watched the women out of sight.

Patrick walked behind Jose and said, “You were suppose to walk them to the carriage.”

Jose close the front door and locked it.

He said, “They made me mad.”

Patrick looked at Jose.

Jose was passing Patrick and said, “Your horse is ready.”

Patrick looked at Jose as he was walking towards the liquor table.

Patrick said, “Jose!”

Jose turned and walked through the billiards room.

Patrick shook his head.

He said, “Damn, he is worst than Percy and Bruce.”

Patrick walked through the formal dining room through the kitchen out the back door.

He had a blanket on the horse.

He mounted the horse and wrap the blanket around him and leisurely rode to town about a mile behind Gen and Brenda.

He was whistling and singing all the way to town.

Eleanor went into town that morning with Jose.

She was thinking and planning all the way into town.

She cut the distribution company out of the last shipment of coal.

Eleanor used the family’s money.

She was putting the money back in their personal account.

Eleanor was adding everything up and started grinning.

She was happy when she counted their profits.

She counted twice.

Eleanor screamed with excitement.

Nathan looked up from his desk and he looked out the window.

He said, “She is happy when she is making money.

Nathan put his head back in the application for the federal agent.

He saw they were putting an office in the capitol, which was an hour away not across the country.

He could come home everyday.

Denise loved that idea.

She was getting used to living in Cedartown.

She and Nathan will go to Philadelphia and New York for their honeymoon and spend three weeks.

They would visit Mabel and Beverly in Philadelphia.

Nathan could see Leon.

Meredith sent a telegram that Spencer decided to go home.

Patrick and Brenda called a meeting with the staff and told them that Spencer was well and went home to stay.

Samantha walked off.

Jose looked at her and kept listening to Patrick and Brenda about, Vivienne and Sally.

Brenda said, “Sally is worst than Shirley. She spits on people.”

Nadine said, “The hell.”

Peter flinched.

Ruth said, “That’s what happen when you adopt your non-blood.”

Mike and John looked at Ruth.

Ruth knew they did not like her.

She kept her distance from them.

Nathan had not received the telegram back he was expecting.

He wanted it before he leaves for his honeymoon on the twenty six.

They will go to Washington DC in the spring and spend two weeks.

Nathan had selected the person to substitute while he was gone, Trevor.

He told Trevor he had to go to the military headquarters and used their shooting area and physical training to get in shape.

Trevor started getting his military mind back.

He would go every day and spend two hours training at the military headquarters and then go home.

Nathan noticed the physique of the federal agents.

He would exercise for several hours every day at the jail.

Monica woke and started their day.

She heated the water from the water barrel and made Shirley her omelet.

Shirley bathed and dressed.

She felt so much better.

She wondered did they find that Christmas tea set she asked about.

Shirley grinned she loved parties.

Monica dressed.

She combed and brushed Shirley’s hair.

Monica said, “Shirley can we have dinner out today?”

Shirley said, “I don’t want to go out after school. I want to come home and rest and start working on the last two papers. I want to be finished with them this week-end, because I have to go over the budget and get everything ready for the month I will be away for holiday. You are going to stay here. You have to have food, coal, water and fuel and carriage ride money.”

A knock on the door.

Monica said, “Who is that?”

Monica walked to the door and said, “Who is it?”

The man said, “Mr. Locket.”

Shirley said, “That’s the proprietor let him in. I have to pay him for this month’s rent.”

Shirley walked in her bedroom and got her book out with the rent.

She picked up her receipt book.

Monica said, “Come in sir. Miss Simmons will be with you.”

Shirley walked out the bedroom and said, “Mr. Locket come to the table please.”

Mr. Locket walked to the eat-in- area.

He saw Shirley with money in her hand.

Shirley said, “Good morning sir have a seat.”

They sat.

Shirley said, “This is Monica my employee. She will be here during the holidays. I need to coal, fuel and water for the months of December and January.”

Shirley said, “I’m sorry this month’s rent is late. It will never happen again. I was in the hospital for several days.”

Mr. Locket smiled and looked around and saw her wheelchair.

Shirley counted out December rent and gave it to Mr. Locket.

She pushed the receipt book to him.

She counted January’s rent and gave it to him.

She pushed the receipt book to him to sign.

She paid for the coal, fuel and water for two months and pushed the receipt book to him to sign it.

Monica stood and witness everything because she was not going to be put out on the street while Shirley was gone.

Shirley was going over her book.

A knock was on the door.

Monica went to the door and it was the carriage driver.

He walked in the sitting area and Monica walked and said, “Here’s the wheelchair.”

Mr. Locket looked at the carriage driver.

The carriage walked in the eating area and said, “Good morning.”

Shirley looked up from her books, which Eleanor taught her to always look people in the eyes and speak.

She said, “Good morning Greg. How are you?”

He smiled and said, “Good. Thank you for asking.”

He looked at Mr. Locket and picked up Shirley’s wheelchair and took it out to the carriage.

Monica had placed on her scarf, hat and coat and was putting on her gloves.

Mr. Locket looked at Monica’s uniform.

Shirley said, “Mr. Locket is there any other expense I need to pay for? I will be busy with school and don’t want to overlook anything.”

Mr. Locket shrugged his shoulders and said, “No.”

Shirley stood and grinned.

Monica was walking back with Shirley’s hat, scarf, gloves and wrap.

Shirley was grinning and said, “Mr. Locket you and yours have a very merry Christmas.”

He grinned and said, “You also.”

The carriage driver walked back in the house.”

Shirley had on her scarf, hat and wrap and was putting on her gloves.

Monica walked to the door and held it open and had the keys in her hand,

Gregory said, “You’re ready?”

Mr. Locket looked.

Gregory picked up Shirley and carried her to the carriage.

Monica had Shirley’s bag and her books.

She locked the door after Mr. Locket.

Gregory put Shirley’s in the back of the carriage.

Mr. Locket looked and saw her wheelchair on the back of the carriage.

Gregory helped Monica in the carriage.

Shirley was going through her books and said, “Monica I need for Greg to take you to his boss and pay the bill for this month and next month and get receipts.”

Gregory laughed.

Monica said, “So you want to eat at home tonight?”

Shirley said, “Yes. And tomorrow. I will spend an hour on Sunday with Lorraine. I have to finish these last two papers this week-end. The only I have to do is pay for the hospital’s Christmas dinner and helped Mabel with the flowers. We should be on the same train with my brothers. I can’t think of anything else.”

Monica said, “We will take you to school. Where you will be until two pm. I will go and pay Gregory’s boss and get a receipt. Stop at the grocery and get food for a few days. Go home and put it on the stove. Go and check on Lorraine for a few hours?”

Shirley laughed and said, “Yes.”

Shirley continued to read over her books.

Gregory said, “We’re here.”

He looked at Monica and said, “Miss Monica I made out good here last night. I paid for my room for the rest of this month.”

Monica said, “Great!”

Gregory got Shirley’s wheelchair and pushed it to the carriage and picked up Shirley and put her in the wheelchair.

He pushed her to he first class which was an hour and a half.

Gregory pushed Shirley to class.

She felt better than yesterday.

She had a lot to do and did not want to be in that type of pain again.

Gregory said, “I’ll take Monica to my boss and be back in time to take you to your next class.”

Shirley grinned and said, “Thank you.”

The pretty blonde girl from the bourgeois group sat next to Shirley.

Shirley looked at her and smiled and spoke.

The girl spoke to Shirley.

Gregory ran pass the college president.

The president stopped and looked at him.

Gregory jumped in the carriage with Monica and pulled off.

The college president realized it was Shirley’s carriage driver.

He chuckled and thought, “Shirley got them busy this morning.”

The college president turned and started back walking to his office and spoke to the students and staff.

Gregory took Monica to his boss.

Monica told Gregory’s boss, “Miss Stith wants to pay in full the month of December and January and you to sign and acknowledge receipt of the payment and her request for the carriage and your driver Gregory.”

The boss said fine.

He counted the money for both months and signed the receipts.

Monica was walking out from the boss.

Gregory looked at Monica and gestured his boss.

His boss laughed.

Monica heard them and kept walking to the carriage.

Gregory jumped in the carriage.

Monica said, “What was that laughed about with your boss.?”

Gregory pulled off and leaned to Monica and said, “I got a job until Shirley gets back.”

Monica stared at Gregory.

Gregory said, “Where to now?”

Monica said, “Is there a butcher near?”

Gregory laughed and sped the horses closer to the school.

He stopped in front of quaint grocery market.

Monica stepped out the carriage and looked at the grocery market and thought, “This is the place Lorraine shopped.”

Monica went in the market and Gregory followed.

Monica got a few oranges and apples, orange juice and apple juice, stew meat, potatoes, carrots, onions and sweet biscuits for Shirley and paid for them.

She went back to the carriage and Gregory was walking out with a piece of bread and jam for his breakfast.

They rode back to the school and made it back as Shirley’s class ended.

Gregory went and retrieve Shirley from that class and took her to her next class for another hour and a half.

Two people walked to him and asked him to carry them home.

He looked at Monica.

Monica turned her head.

That meant it was up to him.

He dropped Monica at Shirley’s apartment but several doors down so no one would know where Shirley lived.

Monica walked to the apartment and unlocked the door.

She started a fire in the stove and washed the meat and vegetables and put them in the pot.

Monica made Shirley’s bed and gathered the rest of her linens and tied them in a bundle.

Monica heard a knock on the door.

She thought, “We have a half hour before Shirley’s lunch break.”

Monica looked back at the table at the snack she made Shirley of apple, orange and sweet biscuits and some orange juice.

 Monica was happy she thought about Shirley’s lunch while she was at the grocery store.

 Monica had the bundle of linens in her left arm and was about to open the door with her right hand, when the imagine of Lorraine head above water as she floated in the river.

Monica gasped and looked down and saw she had not locked the door when she rushed in with the packages.

She thought, “Can I ease and lock the door?”

She dropped the linens to the floor and grabbed the doorknob and she felt a hard grip on the outside of the door.

She heard several men yelling and someone running away.

Monica opened the door and saw the back of a man running.

She realized it was the man that watched her as she walked back to Shirley’s apartment.

Gregory was ridding up and looking around as the men were chasing the other man.

Monica thought, “The mob. I should have opened the door and had that knife in my hand.”

Gregory jumped down and stood in the street and saw other men joining the pursuit.

He ran to Monica.

He said, “Monica what happened?”
Monica said, “He was after Shirley. I was walking in the sitting area with the linens, We have to stop by the washers on our way to Shirley. There was a knock on the door and I thought it was you and I nearly opened the door and then a split second thought had me to look down and I saw I did not lock the door as I rushed into the house. The men began to yell.”

Gregory was scared and he swallowed hard.

He stepped back to the street and looked after the men.

They had caught someone and was holding the person to the ground.

Gregory ran to Monica and said, “The men caught somebody. Get your stuff so we can go.”

Monica stepped inside the apartment and pocked up Shirley’s linens and all the towels.”

Gregory said, “I know which laundry they take these to.”

He ran to the carriage.

Monica looked around the apartment.

She checked the stew she put on the stove and aid, “It should be ready when we get back.

She tied Shirley’s lunch together and put on her scarf, hat and coat and gloves.

Gregory ran back to the opened door and stood watching the men.

The men carried the man and put him in a wagon.

Several men were on horses surrounding the wagon and the beat up man was tied and mouth gaged, laid in the wagon with a bloodied face and lips and nose.

Monica rushed to the door and was putting on her gloves.

The man looked at Monica and Monica looked at the man.

Monica slightly frowned and begin to mumble.

Mr. Locket ran back to the building.

He stood by Gregory.

Mr. Locket said, “That man has been lurking around here for some time. I’m glad we got him. It is the holidays and we have customers and don’t want them hurt or ran off from our businesses.”

Monica shook her head.

Mr. Locket reached towards Monica and said, “Ma am it is ok. He is going to jail.”

Monica tried to smile.

She and Gregory walked to the carriage.

Shirley had wheeled out her classroom and was sitting in the pathway waiting for Monica and Gregory.

Steven saw Shirley sitting by herself and he was going to her when the pretty blonde girl and her brother the blonde young man and the dark color curly hair boy were coming back from the class.

They saw Steven and spoke.

Steven stopped and spoke to them.

They told Steven they were on the way to lunch and if he wanted to join them.

He looked at Shirley in her wheelchair and said, “No.”

They told Steven they see him around.

Shirley was sitting and thinking.

She knew Monica would not be late unless something was wrong.

Steven was rolling to Shirley.

Shirley was sitting in her wheelchair with a blanket over her lap and her books and bag on her lap.

The three from the bourgeois group was passing the president and the blonde young man said, “I want some of that ham from last night.”

The president grinned.

The three greeted the president.

He spoke to them and continued to his meeting.

He looked down the pathway and saw Shirley and Steven talking and Monica rushing with a towel in her hand. He figured it was Shirley’s lunch.

Monica said, “Good afternoon.”

Shirley and Steven looked up at Monica.

Shirley said, “You’re late.”

Steven looked at Shirley and said, “You are a hard employer. What ten minutes?”

Shirley turned and looked at Steven and said, “I know Monica is late only because something is wrong.”
She looked at Monica and said, “Monica what is wrong?”

Monica reached the towel to Shirley.

Shirley took the towel and opened it and placed it on her lap.

She smiled and said, “I was a little hunger.”

She looked at Steven and offered him the orange.

Steven took the orange and began to peel it and feed it to Shirley.

They laughed.

Monica sighed and looked at Shirley because she thought about Skip.

Monica said, “Shirley.”

Shirley turned from Steven to look at Monica and said, “Yes.”

Monica stared at Shirley.

Steven said, “I know that look. My mom does that to my father all the time. That looks mean they have something to talk about and for me to move.”

Shirley started laughing.

Steven turned his wheelchair around to leave.

He said, “May I have some sweet biscuits?”

Shirley said, “Yes.”

She reached him the napkin.

Steven took two of the biscuits and said, “See you next week Miss Shirley.”

Shirley laughed.

Steven said, “See you Miss Monica?”

Monica was shocked Steven knew her name and she said, “See you Steven.”

Shirley looked at Monica.

Monica said, “A man came to your apartment earlier.”

Shirley shrugged her shoulders.

Monica said, “Shirley he came for something. I did not let him. The men of the area chased him and beat him up and took to the jail.”

Shirley kind of jumped.

She said, “What does that have to do with me?”

Monica wanted to say something to Shirley.

She kept calm and said, “Shirley that man meant no good. Mr. Locket said they had been watching him for some time.”

Shirley bit a sweet biscuit and said, “This good Monica.”

Monica looked at Shirley and said, “The receipts for the carriage are in the book, beef stew is for dinner and we dropped off the linens. You said you have to pay Mabel today. When?”

Shirley gasped and said, “That’s right. I owe her fifty dollars for the Stith’s decorations and the decorations from last night and I have to give her a hundred dollars for the flowers for our house Christmas decorations. Grandma and momma love Mabel’s decorations. DO we have that amount left in the book or do we need to go to the bank?”

Monica was thinking.

She said, “Yes Shirley you have that much left.”

Shirley said, “Let’s go by there today after I get out of class at two pm.”

Monica was looking at Shirley.

Shirley said, “Monica there is a nice store Lorraine would buy lace from over about a mile from here. Can you go and buy Mabel and Aunt Beverly a lace handkerchief and put them in nice paper. I want to give them those as a thank you gift.”

Monica said, “Fine Shirley.”

Monica turned to walk away.

Shirley said, “Monica I heard you about the man. I can not do anything about someone’s heart and mind t hurt me. I have to protect myself. But not giving up my freedom to enjoy the things that GOD what in my life to enjoy. My family, My friends and that include you Monica and Steven even Gregory. I like to dress and have parties and eat.”

Monica smirked.

Shirley said, “I’ll be ready at two pm Monica.”

Shirley turned and rolled down a little farther to her class.

Monica watched her and turned and walked to the carriage three students were at the carriage asking for a ride home.

Monica looked and said, “In the back.”

Gregory smiled.

Monica said, “Drop me off at some lace store a few streets over.”

The young lady said, “Harold’s on fifth.”

Gregory held his head up to listen to the young lady’s directions.

He shook his head.

Monica said, “Thank you.”

They arrived at Harold’s.

Monica looked and saw how nice the store was.

Stepped out and took Shirley’s receipt book.

She looked at Gregory and said, “She wants us back at two pm.’

The fat male student got out the carriage and sat up front.

The students were going to work at a restaurant.

They were happy that Gregory was at the college it saved them a lot of time.

Monica stared at the fat male student.

Gregory grinned and turned his head.

The student finally sat in the seat.

Monica stood and looked at him.

The fat male student tried to smile at Monica.

She stood and watch them out of sight.

She thought, “No workers at the Stith’s house is overweight maybe because we all are drunks.”

Monica turned to walk in the store.

The doorman opened the door for Monica.

Monica smiled and nodded at the doorman.

He winked at Monica.

Monica grinned.

She thought, “Maybe not heavily drinking affected my looks.”

She walked in the store and the salesperson looked her up and down and knew she was a rich woman’s maid.

The salesman by the door greeted Monica.

Monica said, “Sir where is your ladies lace handkerchiefs?”

The salesman took Monica by the arm and pointed upstairs.

He looked at the accounts book Monica had.

Monica said, “Thank you.”

Monica walked upstairs and saw some of the most beautiful handkerchiefs she ever seen.

She saw different designs and color stitching.

Monica decided not to ask for the saleswomen opinions about which handkerchiefs.

She wanted the salespeople to believe she had taste and could make the choices on her own.

Monica saw a white handkerchief that was trimmed in pink lace and had a stitched ‘M’.

She bought that for Mabel.

She bought Aunt Beverly a white totally lace handkerchief.

Monica smiled reached the saleswoman the handkerchiefs,

The saleswoman took the handkerchiefs and begin to fold them and put them in separate pretty boxes.

Monica watched the saleswoman fold the ladies’ handkerchiefs.

She was impressed that there was a specific way to fold handkerchiefs.

She noticed that Brenda folded her handkerchiefs all the time. She wondered how someone taught that type of thing.

The saleswoman said, “Ma am the total is ten dollars.”

Monica nearly screamed and realized it was not her money.

Monica was nervous but remembered she had plenty of money the accounts book and the saleswoman was a worker like her.

She smiled at the young saleswoman who was standing with her hands folded in front of her.

Monica took out the accounts book and counted ten dollars.

The saleswomen were trying to peep and see how much money Monica had in the book.

The saleswoman reached for the ten dollars.

Monica thought, “That’s why the handkerchiefs had their own separate boxes.”

The saleswoman gave Monica the bag with the handkerchiefs in it.”

Monic nodded at the saleswoman and left.

The saleswomen looked at Monica and smiled.

She went downstairs and saw Gregory looking for her.

She walked to him and the salesman at the beginning of the store smile at them.

The doorman opened the door or she and Gregory and Monica smiled at the doorman and walked to the carriage.

Gregory helped Monica into the carriage.

Gregory jumped in the carriage.

Monica said, “Even the workers are snooty.”

Gregory said, “This whole side of town. The governor’s house is down the street. The college students pointed it out to me a little while ago.”

Monica said, “Do we have time to see it?”

Gregory thought and twisted his mouth and said, “No.”

Gregory turned around and sped back to the college to pick up Shirley.

Monica said, “You have earned a bit today and it’s not quitting time.”

Gregory leaned over towards Monica and said, “I love you and Shirley. I always get a customer or two with you. I have paid for room for this month and next month so I won’t worry about being put out in the cold.”

Monica aid, “It is cold. I am glad we brought our blankets.”

She cut her eyes and looked at Gregory.

Gregory cut his eyes at Monica and said, “He only sat on it for a part way down the street.”

Monica said, “With his fat self.”

Gregory laughed.

They arrived at the school and Shirley was rolling down the hall.

Gregory ran to her.

Monica stood by the carriage to greet her.

Monica had been watching the other rich people’s servants.

Shirley was impressed with Monica growing more in her services.

Gregory pick Shirley up from the carriage and put her in the carriage.

Monica took the blanket and laid it on her lap.

Monica saw the college president and dean watching them.

She walked around the carriage and got in and Gregory sped off.

Gregory said, “Part of time?’

Shirley told him.

He thought, ”That’s not too far from here.”

Gregory turned around and went down another street.

Monica said, “Shirley the napkins were ten dollars. I did not buy another bag or paper for them. Can you look at the handkerchiefs and verify you have enough money for Mabel?”

Shirley looked at the napkins and said, “I love them Monica and you selected these yourself.”

Gregory cut his eyes at Monica.

Monica thought, “How she know?”

Shirley was counting the money and writing it down in her accounts book.

Monica said, “Shirley how you know I did not ask the saleswoman for help?”

Shirley said, “Monica I like to have fun but I also notice people a lot while I was sick. The little I know about you is that you want to make your own way. You want everyone to know you have the ability to make decisions and stand by them. You did that at the hospital all week.”

Monica cried and said, “Thank you Shirley. I do have worth as a person that has been nearly been destroyed out of me.”

Shirley said, “You are welcome Monica.”

Gregory looked over at Monica he reached and patted her hand and held it until they arrived at the building.

Gregory looked at the building and saw the black children running and playing.

He said, “Is this it?”

Monica looked and said, “Yes. That’s Beverly standing and watching the children.”

Beverly looked up at the carriage.

Shirley was leaning in the carriage’s back seat and said, “Hey Aunt Bev.”

Beverly looked and said, “Whose that?”

The former slave children stopped playing and ran to Beverly.

Beverly hugged them and said, “It’s alright.”

Gregory turned and in excitement said, “They are slaves. They are slave children. I never seen any.”

Gregory tried to jump out the carriage.

Monica grabbed his hand and said, “Gregory No.”

Gregory peeped in the carriage and he Shirley’s shocked face.

Gregory said, “Am I wrong?”

Shirley and Monica said, “Yes.”

Gregory puffed and sat in the carriage.

Monica stepped out the wagon and ran to Beverly and they hugged.

Beverly said, “Monica you look well. Maybe Ryan can give you more to live and enjoy this life.”

Beverly leaned towards Monica and whispered, “With a man of course.”

Monica said, “Of course.”

They laughed.

Monica stayed with Beverly and Albert when Patrick and Brenda spent time with Ellen and Captain Moss, while Ryan examined and ran tests on her.

The two became great friends.

Beverly looked at the dejected young white man who was sitting in the carriage angry.

She said, “Who is that? He won’t let Shirley out the carriage.”

Mona stomped to the carriage and said, “Gregory speak to Mrs. Beverly and let Shirley out the carriage.”

Gregory waved at Beverly.

She waved back.

Albert was standing in the door with his guns on.

Mabel and Curtis help Beverly and Albert out around the “PLACE” with the former slave children.

Head Nurse Lillian come once per week and help them with the children.

Albert was a retired doctor, and he took good care of the children.

Out of the seventeen children they started with, three were adopted by the preacher and his wife.

Beverly watch the children very closely to see if anything is wrong.

The three boys that the preacher adopted have he and his wife running all the time.

Two of the sisters went to the college their cousins were attending.

The cousins were still in school and did not want to be separated anymore. The people of the community worked together and bought them a house and furnished.

Each woman in the community would cook a dinner once per month for them and that way no one was overburden.

Beverly and Al had twelve children left.

Two would be going to college next year. If they survive the racial violence in Philadelphia. All over the country the white people were thing the blacks and the former slaves for unemployment and for their family members who died.

The president of the country and the governors’ of each state took a hard line and would not bulge against the violence, the penalty was hard and swift.

Beverly was glad because she had seven boys left and five girls. She did not want them beaten, raped or lynch.

Al had to go and take care of several children who were attacked and near hang until some people ran off the attackers and came and got him to come and help them.

The five year old girl that would be with Beverly all the time ran to Beverly and leaned on her and watched the people in the carriage.

Gregory stood and reached for Shirley.

Shirley got the boxes and her accounts book.

She walked to her aunt Beverly.

Shirley spoke and bent down and looked at the five year old and said, “Hello.”

The five year old had her finger at the top of her lips.

Everyone laughed.

Mabel said, “Shirley you are not shame.”

Shirley said, “I am Shirley like you.”

Beverly said, “When she came no one knew her name so Al and I named her Shirley this year.”

Shirley looked at Beverly and said, “Why?’

Al walked out the building and kissed Shirley on her cheeks and held Beverly around her shoulders and said, “Because we have not known anyone that has gone through the difficulties you have been through and landed on your feet ahead of everyone else.”

Shirley was stunned at the respect her grand aunt and uncle had for her.

Little Shirley was peeping through Al’s legs looking at Shirley.

Mabel and Curtis watched Gregory.

Gregory saw them watching him.

Monica was standing at the carriage and watching everything.

Gregory turned and said, “Monica they think I would harm them?”

Monica said, “Yes.”

Gregory said, “Especially with you standing by me.”

Monica looked at Gregory.

She said, “It is Shirley’s decision if she want to introduce us to them.”

Gregory said, “I may not know etiquette but didn’t you run to that black woman…”

Monica said, “Aunt Beverly.”

Gregory said, “…and hugged and kissed her.”

Monica said, “we are dear friends.”

Gregory said, “How did you get to be a dear friend of rich people?”

Shirley spoke to the other children.

They were standing back with Mabel and Curtis.

Beverly said, “Shirley.”

She looked up at Beverly.

Beverly said, “We name you after this young woman my niece.”

The little Shirley looked at the white Shirly and said, “You feel better too?”

Shirley broke down and cried.

She nodded her head for yes.

Monica said, “Do you see why you are here?”

Gregory said, “Yes.”

Monica and Gregory were speaking at the same time.

Monica said, “No you don’t.”

Gregory shook his head and said, “No I don’t.”

Shirly reached Beverly the box.

Beverly opened the box and said, “’M’”.

Beverly peeped behind A and said, Mabel. This is for you.”

Mabel walked to Beverly and opened it and stood.

Shirley was going in her bag to get the other box.

She looked at Mabel could not move.

Monica smiled she made a great choice for Mabel.

Shirley handed Aunt Beverly her box.

Beverly opened her box and was delighted.

Al peeped in the box and said, “If I knew that’s all that made you happy I could have bought you a dozen.”

Beverly kissed Al.

Al grinned and winked his forehead at Shirley.

Shirley grinned.

Beverly hugged Shirley.

Mabel turned and said, “Thank you Shirley.”

Shirley grinned and said, “You are welcomed Mabel. Are you ready to leave next week-end?’

Mabel said, “Yes.”

Beverly said, “I wish I could come to the ground- breaking we will see it next year.”

Beverly looked at Monica and said, “I know you picked this out.”

Monica grinned big.

Albert looked at Monica and whispered to Beverly.

Gregory looked up at Monica.

Monica looked at Al and Bev.

Bev said, “I don’t know.”

Monica was trying to read their lips and she could not.

Gregory looked at her.

Shirley walked in the yard and introduced herself to Curtis.

She spoke to the other children.

Mabel walked to Shirley.

She and Shirley sat on the front porch and talked.

Shirley said, “Mabel here is one hundred dollars for the decorations at the hospital and my Christmas celebration at the college last night. I need for you to sign the receipt.”

Mabel signed the receipt.

Shirley said, “Mabel, grandma sent this hundred dollars for the decorations at our house. I need you to sign this receipt.”

Mabel signed the receipt for the hundred dollars.

Mabel looked around and said, “I hide my money.”

Shirley was offended and said, “Why?”

Mabel perceived it offended Shirley.

She said, “I’m sorry I should not have said anything.”

Shirley realized Mabel trusted her.

Mabel was standing to walk away from Shirley.

Shirley grabbed her arm.

Mabel looked at Shirley.

Shirley realized Mabel was under the slavery mind and quickly turned her arm loose and said, “I’m sorry Mabel, please sit and tell me why you said you hide your money.”

Monica and Beverly saw Shirley and Mabel.

Monica thought, “I better go and find out what they are talking about.”

Monica rushed from Gregory to Beverly and Albert.

She stood in front of them and said, “What?”

Beverly said, “Who.”

Monica said, “Who?”

Albert said, “Beverly and I are having a nearly dinner with a friend of mines. He is a retired doctor.”

Beverly said, “He’s not that old. He has money and travel the world. He is here for the holidays. In the spring he will go on another trip for two to three years.”

Monica said, “Sounds interesting. He travels by himself?”

Albert said, “Of course or else we would not introduce you to him.”

Beverly said, “We are meeting him about a mile from here by the governor’s house. He loves that restaurant there.”

They heard, “I know the restaurant. What time?”

They all turned and looked at Gregory.

Shirley looked at Gregory.

Beverly said, “Who are you?”

Gregory reached his hand to shake Beverly’s hand.

Albert intercepted his hand and shook it.

Albert held Gregory’s hand so he would not try to shake Beverly’s hand.

Albert said, “What’s your name young man?”

Gregory said, “Gregory sir.”

Albert said, “What you do?”

Gregory pointed backwards and said, “I drive the carriage.”

Albert said, “Have you thought about studying to become a doctor?”

Monica said, “Beverly.”

Monica and Beverly stepped away.

Beverly said, “Three pm and wear something smart. He likes a good outfit.”

Monica said, “I bought three dresses since I have been here.”

Beverly said, “What about Shirley?”

Monica said, I made a beef stew for tonight. Shirley does not eat a lot. She will have some of that left for dinner. I bought her fruit and, sweet biscuits to snack on. I’ll make her the omelet she likes.”

Beverly laughed.

Monica said, “A man came to the apartment this morning, but the men of the area chased him and beat him and they said, they took him to the jail.”

Beverly said, “How is Lorraine?”

Monica said, “After we leave here, I will go to the hospital for several hours and be with her. Dr. Ralph started this week spending two nights with her and he spend two nights at the Stith.”

Beverly said, “I think that man was looking for Lorraine or to see if she is dead or alive. If she could identify him. Don’t tell anyone where she is.”

Monica said, “In the morning I’ll go and stay until around noon. Meredith has been going every day for a few hours.”

Beverly said, “Isn’t it time for her to deliver her baby boy?”

Monica said, “She and Felipe argue about her working every day. One of the two security guards was released yesterday, and she and Felipe took him to the train. She has only patient left, Leon. But Leon is well taken care of.”

Beverly said, “Here’s that noisy man. We will talk more tomorrow.”

Monica said, “I’m going to wear a brown dress tomorrow.”

Beverly said, “Brown,”

Albert and Gregory walked over to the women.

Monica said, “I can look nice in brown.”

Beverly laughed and said, “I’m sure. You know what I am saying.”

Monica said, “He will make his decision over brown.”

Albert patted Gregory on his shoulder and said, “This young man will collect you Monica at two thirty and bring you and pick you up around five pm.”

Monica looked at Gregory and said, “I need to be at the hospital around nine and leave around noon and stop at the market and be home around two to freshen up and leave around two pm.”

Gregory said, “We are together all day tomorrow,”

Beverly giggled and turned her head and mumbled.

Monica said, “I’ll see you two tomorrow.”

She grabbed Gregory by the arms and walked to the carriage and got in.

The former slave children were running and playing so that little Shirley joined them.

Mabel said, “I trust everyone here, I know at the last place the men would be nice to me and get my money your grandma paid me and give it to the other women. I was glad they put them on the street.”

Shirley said, “Have you seen any of them?”

Mabel said, “A few of the men living on the streets. I think one of them was killed a few weeks ago in the race violence. I know I should not say it but if so I am glad.”

Shirley did not say anything about Mabel’s feeling because she felt that way about John Jr.

Mabel said, “I work here for living here. I love the children and washing and helping cook and clean is easy because I love everyone here. But I have no money. I want to go to the ground- breaking celebration and the reception. I don’t have anything to wear. I don’t have a hat or coat.”

Shirley said, “Mabel you have to do for yourself, Lorraine and Monica shop there. I would take you myself, but I have these two papers I have to finish by next week.”

Shirley said, “Aunt Bev.”

Beverly turned and walked to Shirley.

Shirley said, “Can you take Mabel to Smith’s tomorrow?”

Beverly said, “I love to.”

She looked at Mabel and said, “What you getting Mabel?”

Mabel looked confused.

Beverly said, “I love Smith’s.”

Shirley said, “Mabel needs winterize. She needs a coat, scarf, hat and gloves, two pairs of dressed shoes, a dress for the ground-breaking ceremony and a dress for the reception and the dinner. And accessories if anything is left.”

Beverly said, “sure. Smith’s opens at eight. We should be back here no later than two so I can dress and go to early dinner.”

Mabel said, “Shirley I don’t have enough money.”

Shirley said, “Yes you do. Open your hand.”

Mabel opened her hand.

Shirley said, “This hundred dollars is for you and this hundred dollars is for grandma things.”

Mabel said., “I plan on buying all the children socks, stockings, and shoes.”

Shirley looked at Beverly.

Beverly tried to grin.

Shirley said, “What is it Aunt Beverly?”

Al was standing watching the children play.

Beverly looked at Al and said, “They stopped his pension.”

Shirley said, “What? Is that why he said, he wanted to go back to work?”

Beverly was watching Al and nodded her head.

Beverly quickly said, “one pension from Dr. Wade’s hospital, he said he will check and find out why. The other pension is from the big hospital for twenty years.”

Shirley heard the children and said, “Do the children have coats, hats, scarves and gloves?”

Beverly said, “No.”

Shirley said, “Why didn’t you say something Aunt Bev?”

Beverly said, “Heartbroken. We have lived off the money we got from there. We budget it and we make it to the spring if we buy only our necessities.”

Shirley looked off and was thinking.

Beverly said, “I can’t understand it?

Shirley said, “Dr. Wade has a problem with the mob stealing his money even the patients’ medications.”

Beverly was shocked and bent over and placed her hands on her knees and said, “What?”

Al turned and looked.

He walked over and looked at Beverly and said, “What is it?”
Beverly said, “The mob has been stealing Dr. Wades money and even the medications for his patients.”

Al looked at Shirley and said, “Not possible.”

Shirley said, “Yes possible. Grandpa had to telegram for an engine to take them to Harrisburg that he left the hospital with Dr. Wade and drove himself to get the medicines from Dr. Wade’s brother-in-law.”

Al looked at Beverly and walked away.

Beverly looked at Al and said, “I don’t understand what that means.

Shirley, Mabel and Beverly watched Al. playing with the children.

Shirley said, “Aunt Beverly I can’t hel because I have papers to write and then pack. I am going back to the hospital and spend two days then that long train ride home and the boys will be on the train.”

Beverly said, “How is that gambler?”

Shirley waved her hand and said, “He still gambles and he still hates me. What is the good clothing store for the children? Go and opened an account…”

Beverly was saying, “Shirley I can’t. I don’t have the money.”

Shirley held up her hand and said, “Aunt Beverly I said, I am too busy. I can’t do this. I said You go and open an account and you use it to buy you and Uncle Al and these twelve children and Curtis…”

Shirley was firm and hard and had acid in her speech.

She named each thing to buy and counted them off by counting on her fingers.

Beverly was shocked that Shirley talked to her that way.

Shirley continued, “you get socks, stockings, ribbons, hair accessories, hats, scarves, gloves, nightgowns, nightshirts, slippers and robes., two pairs of shoes and or boots and coats and underwear. That will give me time to think. You can buy you a couple of dresses.”

Beverly said, “I’ll buy me a couple of dresses from Smith’s. She turned her head from Shirley

Shirley said, “Aunt Beverly open an account at Smith’s for you and Mabel and get the things I told her she needs and a bag for travel.”

Beverly said, “Sure.”

Mabel said, “I can use this hundred dollars for their Christmas gifts.”

Shirley started to get up and said, “I can’t do this. Mabel you go tomorrow and pay for whatever grandma sent that hundred dollars for and you put your hundred dollars in the bank.”

Curtis looked.

Beverly noticed Curtis.

Mabel said, “Then I won’t have anything to buy your family a Christmas gift.”

Shirley said, “My family needs nothing. We are not buying each other gifts. Give them a Christmas message. They love them”

Mabel said, “Ms. Gen.”

Shirley said, “Her too. Kept ten dollars Mabel. Aunt Beverly can you please make sure these are done. I will be thinking and I will ask momma and grandpa to help me think about this pension problem. Mabel you need two travel outfits. I’ll see you next Sunday on the ten am train. You have first class accommodations going and coming.”

Mabel said, “Thank you.”

Shirley said, “Aunt Beverly, you give me those bills for those two stores. I am not tolerating any foolishness.”

Beverly said, “Ok Eleanor.”

Shirley said, “Have a good Christmas.”

Beverly said, “You too.”

Al looked back.

Shirley waved and rushed to the carriage.

Gregory drove away and said, “I had a good visit. Thank you much.”

Monica looked at him and said, ”You better not messed up my date tomorrow.”

Shirley was quiet and laid down in the carriage.

Monica kept looking back at Shirley and finally said, “You need to go to the hospital?”

Shirley said, “No. I want to go home and go to bed.”

Gregory took Shirley home and waited.

Monica checked the apartment and coal in the fireplace and check the beef stew and it was done.

She put some beef stew in a bowl and got water for Shirley to wash her face and hands.

Monica put Shirley’s books, [paper and pencils on the table and light the candles in the Shirley’s bedroom, her bedroom, kitchen and the eat in area.

She put Shirley a picture of water and a glass on the table and moved her wheelchair into the sitting area.

Monica doubled check the windows and left to go to Lorraine.

Shirley walked into the eat in area with her nightgown on and her hair.

Monica plai ted it in one plait before she left.

Shirley ate her stew ab drank a glass of water.

Dr. Woodson told Shirley to make herself drink a glass of water each day then after a while two glasses.

She knew Eleanor was drinking five glasses of water each day.

Monica went to the hospital to stay with Lorraine.

Several nurses needed rides.

Gregory piled them in the carriage and took each one home.

He charged them fifty cents.

He returned to the hospital and took another group of nurses’ home.

Gregory laughed.

He earned enough money to buy him a pair of boots.

Shirley was trouble over Aunt Beverly and Uncle Albert financial problems.

Shirley went over her budget and she budget it to the penny.

She had five dollars for food until she left, but Monica would be there until she gets back.

Shirley thought, “Monica has to manage her money, because I am not going to the bank before I leave.”

She was satisfied with her budgeting.

She was concerned she overlooked something at the Stith Hospital with Debra and she did not want the mob to come in again and take control.

Shirley wrote on a paper all night.

Monica returned home and unlocked the front door.

She placed the bar behind the front door.

Shirley was seated at the eating table.

She was hard on her papers.

She would jump from one paper to the next.

Monic walked in the house and looked around.

She saw Shirley’s bowl of half- eaten stew on the counter.

Monica was walking to her bedroom and said, “Shirley I am back.”

Shirley grunted, “Ok.”

Monica pulled off her coat, hat, scarf and gloves.

She walked back in the kitchen and stored the food and washed the dishes.

She was finished for the night.

She put water in the pail on the stove to heat for Shirley in the morning.

Monica was walking out the kitchen to go into her bedroom.

Shirley did not look up but said, “Monica.”

Monica stopped and looked at Shirley.

Shirley sat back and said, “I did the budget from now until I come back, there is five dollars left for food for four weeks. I am not planning on going to the bank before I go home. Are you able to stretch the five dollars?”

Shirley looked Monica in the face.

Monica thought, “Yeah.”

Monica said, “Yes.”

Shirley had her thirty dollars for the next week in an envelop.

Shirley raised the envelop off the table and said, “Monica this is your pay for next week. I know you asked for this week pay in advance last Saturday and I gave it to you. This is your next week pay in advance. You may need to use this for your food.”

Monica thought, “Hell no. Smith’s.”

Monica walked to the table and took the envelope. She counted the thirty dollars.

Shirley reached Monica the pen and the receipt book.

Monica was grinning inside.

She was thought, “That’s forty five dollars total I have. I have not had this amount ever.”

Monica reached the pen back to Shirley.

Shirley said, “This is the five dollars for this week and next groceries. I like these sweet biscuits. I want some more. Here is the five dollars for the groceries until I come back. Thank you.”

Monica said, “Ok.”

Shirley looked through the accounts book and saw everything was paid and paid in advance.

Monica was sitting on her bed silently laughing and kicking up her heels.

She silently said, “No more whiskey during this holiday. Shirley is going to the Stith next Friday and leave Sunday morning with Mabel to go home with those four bad ass boys. Who I love. Wait so I only have to buy enough food for the next…”

Shirley said, “Monica.”

Monica said, “Damn. I lost count.”

Monica walked to Shirley.

Shirley said, “Place these books in the first drawer in the dresser in my bedroom.”

Monica thought, “Bossy like damn Eleanor. Let me know upfront that you ask for nothing. You tell me what to do. Well that’s why you’ll pay me well.’

Shirley was looking at the papers on the table.

Monica said, “Shirley do you need to go back to the hospital?”

Shirley grunted and said, “No.”

Monica said, “Shirley if something happens to you that…”

Shirley was waiting for Monica to say what she wanted.

Monica said, “…momma of yours will have my ass.”

Shirley grunted and reached for the pen and laughed and said, “Mine’s too. Have a good time with your date tomorrow.”

Monica said, “Thank you.”

Monica looked at Shirley barely reaching for the paper.

She moved the paper and a few pens closer to Shirley.

Shirley grunted.

Monica walked into her bedroom and closed the door.

Monia saw the envelope with her forty five dollars.

She started dancing.

She heard Shirley grunt again.

Monica put her hands on her hip and looked at the ceiling.

She said, “God Shirley wants to spend time with Steven that’s why she left the hospital instead of getting well. I don’t know why Dr. Woodson let her go. Dr. Greene seemed not to take her throwing her weight around.”

Monica laughed when she thought about Dr. Greene the softest one but the sternest one.

She said, “God I need Your help. I hate my husband and over the years I have basically forgotten about him and my children. If he is not dead I want a divorce. My children should be grown or dead. I don’t want them ever in my life. How do I begin to get rid of my husband. Help Vivienne, because she loves Charles. Let her know if he is to be her husband. Help God.”

Shirley grunted loudly.

Monica rolled her eyes and sarcastically said, “Help her out there. Amen.”

Monica undressed and prepared for bed.

She pulled out her new nice brown dress.

She said, “Bev wants me to spruce up for this man. I think I will look fine. What is my signature style? It was the whiskey bottle. Bev is lace handkerchiefs. Maybe mine will be a flower in coat collar. I have to see.”

Shirley grunted again.

Monica prepared her clothes for her date.

She looked at her clothes and were happy. She did inventory, one coat, hat, gloves, two boots, underwear, stockings, very nice blue dress and one outstanding outfit.

Monica stood frozen.

She said, “I have no clothes. I drank them up in whiskey. I have the good dress and outfit and pair of boots and coat at the Stith’s house.”

Monica thought, “Eleanor said she had a few dresses I can have. She dress nice I just hope it is not some of her junk she bought when she was crazy. And she want to know why her children are crazy. She was crazy when she was carrying them.”

Monica was laying on her bed thinking.

She said, “I’ll go to Smith’s first thing in the morning and buy me two nice dresses and a dress pair of boots.”

Monica’s eyes fell on the piece of a paper by the dresser.

She looked and pulled the cover back and jumped out the bed.

It was a Smith’s bag with the two dress pair of shoes she bought last week. She started counting why she had enough to buy the shoes last Saturday with her advanced pay and buy the fine dresses on yesterday.

She jumped off the bed and said, “Oh God thank You for showing me the money. I did not look. I did not have fifteen dollars left. I used it to buy these shoes. So I have only these thirty dollars. It time for Shirley to grunt again. I can buy me two really nice dresses and save ten dollars for the holidays.”

Monica thought, “Shirley did not grunt.”

She put he nice shoes back in the bag and in the armoire.

She walked to the door and opened it.

Shirley was sleep with her head on the table.

Monica said, “I don’t want her to wake hollering from a crook in her neck. I sure can’t help her. I think I want a crystal pair pen as my signature style.”

She put her hands on Shirley’s shoulder and slightly shook her and said, “Come to bed.”

Shirley woke and Monica walked her to her bed and pulled back the covers and thought, “I should have let her bed covers down earlier, watch she say something about that in the morning.”

Monica put Shirley in the bed and covered her and put out the candle an closed her door.

Monica took the lantern Shirley was using and put out the light and put it in the kitchen.

She said, “I’ll get that damn Gregory to take me on all of my errands tomorrow. Why am I cussing like this?”

Gregory was taking the college students back and forth all night until twelve am.

He took the horse to the stables and slept in the tables.

He feed the horses and gave them water and groomed them.

He counted his money he earned fifteen dollars. He could not believe he made that much money.

He counted the money again and put it in his back pocket and slept on the floor.

Gen, Natalie, Mag and Brenda were having a great time at lunch.

Gen said, “Brenda we forgot to send our mail.”

Natalie said, “You know I have been thinking about the mail. Let the train take the mail to New York or Philadelphia and let it go by post from there. It can save a lot of time.”

Gen sat and thought.

Brenda was thinking.

She looked at Mag and Gen and said, “That could take a week to two weeks off the delivery time.”

Gen said, “You have to have a person from here take the mail to the train. Then from the train to the post in Philadelphia and New York. Once per day or once per week?”

Brenda said, “Once per week for the next three months. Great idea Natalie.”

Gen said, “I’ll do it on a volunteer basis once per week. I need something to do during the holidays besides baking and decorating cookies.”

Mag said, “I’m sorry Gen.”

Gen said, “I knew in my heart but I wanted to have a good time and enjoy life. That what I get.”

Natalie said, “No.”

Mag said, “Bren what about Morgan?”

Brenda was thinking and looked at Mag.

Mag said, “He bought me a nice green dress.”

Gen laughed and said,”What?”

Natalie nodded and laughed.

Brenda said, “I’m sorry what are we laughing about?”

Natalie said, “Mag and Morgan.”

Mag elbowed Brenda.

Brenda mouth dropped open in surprise.

She said, “You like him.”

Mag said, “We have been on our first date and I wore the green dress.”

Natalie laughed.

Mag said, “Oh my he scared me to death.”

Natalie said, “Me too.”

Gen and Brenda stopped laughing.

Mag said, “He fell out on the floor and finally came to, said he was having flashes. I was scared to leave him there. Nobody there but Mattie.”

Mag and Natalie looked at each other.

Brenda said, “What!”

Mag said, “She gave me money to buy her six children a toy for Christmas.”

Gen said, “Mag have you seen that general store. You may have to go to the capitol but you need to shop quickly.”

Gen looked at Brenda and said, “I think I want a Christmas tree this year. I have beat myself up over and over I want to enjoy this season.”

They food came and they ate.

Gen said, “I can sort out our mail in about thirty minutes and take it to the train. Brenda you know who got at each stop to get the mail and take it to the post. And you know when the trains will arrive in each city. Then I want to shop for a Christmas tree.”

Brenda said, “That’s good Gen,”

Mag said, “While yall are sorting mail. Natalie and I can go to the general store and buy six toys. If they don’t have any we will ride to the capitol.”

Natalie said, “Can we go and get a Christmas after we go to the general store?”

Mag said, “That’s fine. If there are no toys then we might have to go to the capitol tomorrow but we have to leave early tomorrow morning.

Brenda said, “I used to depend on Morgan.”

Natalie said, “Mike said he wants the job as manger for the small city.”

Brenda said, “Can I trust him. When is he talking about coming and that messy wife of his.”

Mag hollered.

Brenda looked at Mag and said, “They are probably in so much mess they have to flee Philadelphia.”

Mag was near screaming.

She said, “I knew he was desperate but I did not know why.”

Brenda said, “She would keep up so much mess with other women and men then run to the train station and hide out on my trains.”

Gen hollered.

Nathan passed the restaurant and heard Gen laughing.

He grinned and kept walking.

He wondered where John Jr and Betty were hiding.

Nathan did not care because they were federal criminals.

He thought, “I wonder how much time they will get. Let me stop thinking about them because I don’t want them to show up and I have to deal with arresting them and transporting them. I am getting married to my love in three weeks then after Christmas we are off to New York then Philadelphia.”

Nathan wet his lips and grinned.

He walked around the town square.

He stood and watched the people being busy.

Nathan said, “Denise and I don’t need Christmas decorations this year. She is at work until that Sunday and at the rest stop. I will be at the jail.”

Mag said, “Bren can we still come to Christmas dinner?”

Natalie said, “She wants to come to wear Morgan’s dress.”

Brenda said, “Mag are you serious about Morgan?’

Mag said, “Bren is something wrong with him? Speak quick.”

Brenda said, “I can’t say anything one way or another.”

Gen was staring at Mag.

Mag said, “Gen what’s wrong with you? Do you know him?”

Gen started tearing up and eating her food.

Natalie said, “Miss Gen what is wrong?”

Brenda looked at Gen.

Gen said, “I was going to invite you three over for Christmas dinner so I would not be alone.”

Mag leaned over her plate to look at Gen and said, “Stop it Gen. We can have Christmas with you. We can arrive early and cook all day and eat dinner and leave late. Brenda has a full house for Christmas and Lorraine will be back.”

Brenda did a double take and looked at Mag.

Natalie said, “Mag when was you told Lorraine would be home for Christmas?”

Mag said, “Didn’t you tell me.”

Natalie frowned up and said, “No. I haven’t heard anything about Lorraine.”

Mag stared at Natalie.

She said, “Natalie I have not seen anyone but you.”

Gen started looking at the manager and hollering, “Check. Check. Put this in a to go. Check.”

Natalie said, “Gen what wrong? We have to finish Christmas plans.”

Gen said, “I have to go. We don’t have to finish the Christmas plan yall stay at home. Keep that with yall.”

Gen looked at manager and said, “Don’t bother here is five dollars for our lunch.”

Gen was trying to move the manager out the way as she was getting up and pulling her coat with her.

Brenda was shocked and looked at Gen.

Mag said, “Brenda there goes your ride home.”

Brenda jumped up and ran out he restaurant and yelled at Gen to stop.

Nathan looked at Gen and he looked at Brenda and he spoke and kept on moving.

Gen stopped at the end of the street and yelled, “You better come on.”

Brenda turned and walked back in the restaurant and sat.

The manager just stood and looked out the window and walked to the women and said, “Is Mrs. Olsen alright?”

Mag was eating her meatloaf and Natalie was stirring the gravy in her potatoes.

Brenda was sitting with her mouth open.

Mag said, “She was spooked.”

Natalie hollered.

Brenda was looking out the window when Gen returned to pick her up.

Brenda said, “She is going to sit there until I finish eating and taking this mail to the train for Peter. I will talk to Patrick when I get back about Mike.”

Natalie looked up from her potatoes and gravy and looked at Gen sitting in her buggy with her feet on the hood of the buggy and her elbow on her knee and looking the other way.

Natalie fell over in the seat hollering at Gen.

Mag kept eating like it was nothing.

Brenda kept talking like Gen ‘s behavior was normal.

Brenda said, “I have talked to her about that over the years and she can’t shake it. During thanksgiving, Shirley asked about a poinsettia tea set. Her great grandmother would use to play with her. Gen beat the maids running out the dining room.”

Natalie sit up and stopped laughing.

She said, “Great grandmother?”

Natalie yelled, “Check! Check!”

The manager said, “It’s already paid.”

Natalie grabbed her coat and hat and threw it on backwards and grabbed her gloves and left her scarf and bag and rushed out the restaurant.

The manager looked at Natalie.

He looked at Brenda and Mag.

The manager said, “Spooked.”

Mag and Brenda said, “Spooked.”

Nathan was standing at the jail and looking up by the restaurant at Gen when Natalie ran out the restaurant.

Natalie ran out the restaurant with her hat on backwards, coat hanging off her shoulders and both gloves on the same hand.

He started to walk to them then he thought, “That’s women’s mess.”

All Nathan could see was Natalie great swollen stomach.

He smiled at when he and Denise will have their one boy child.

He wondered how Josiah was doing being a mix person.

Nathan thought and said, “Alice and Emilou’s brother is mixed.”

Mag sat up and peeped out the restaurant’s window at Natalie.

Natalie leaned on the side of Gen’s buggy and slid to the porch and leaned backwards almost falling on the porch.

Nathan was shocked at Natalie and turned and stared at her.

Some town women were passing Nathan and said, “Afternoon Sheriff.”

Nathan looked at the women and nodded his head. But he kept watching Natalie and Gen.

Mag rolled her eyes.

Brenda looked at Natalie.

She and Mag continued to eat lunch until they finished.

The telegram office clerk locked the office door and ran all the way to Nathan.

He stopped and looked at Natalie and Gen.

Nathan was leaning on the pole in front of his office and saw the telegram clerk running until he got to Gen and Natalie.

Nathan was anxiously waiting for the telegram from Utah that Ruth told him about.

Nathan rushed to the telegram clerk.

Gen and Natalie did not turn around to look at them and the other people that were passing.

Nathan reached out his hand to the telegram clerk.

He was looking at Gen and Natalie, he said, “Sir is that for me?”

The telegram clerk looked turned and looked at Nathan.

He reached Nathan the telegram and the book and pen to sign he received the telegram.

Nathan turned his eyes from Gen and Natalie and put it to the telegram signature book.

He signed the book and gave the telegram clerk the book and his pen.

Mag and Brenda were looking out the window.

Mag said, “Look at them drawing attention to themselves.”

Brenda said, “Whose going to help Natalie up?”

Natalie was sitting and leaning back on her hands and twisting her feet in the dirt.

Mag sat up and peeped at Natalie and continued to eat her apple pie.

She said, “Bren try this apple pie. It taste like yours.”

Brenda said, “No. I want to have a whiskey after this.”

Mag hollered.

The manager looked at Mag and Brenda then he looked at Natalie and Gen and the sheriff.

Mag said, “When was the last time you bake your famous peach pie?”

Brenda said, “Decades. I gave my recipe to the cooks.”

Brenda twisted her nose.

Mag hollered, “Nothing like your perfect touch.”

Brenda was looking at Nathan.

She said, “I want to know what that telegram is about that the clerk ran to give to Nathan,”

Mag said, “You think it is about John Jr?”
Brenda said, “I don’t think so. John Jr. is wanted on federal charges. Nathan is local. I know…”

Nathan turned and saw the women looking at him.

Brenda gave Nathan a grin like Shirley.

Mag had her fork in her mouth and was cutting her eyes at Nathan.

Nathan turned and looked at them.

He said, “That’s where Shirley gets that beautiful grin from and that other think she can be coy. Women. They have been married a long time and their husbands had to put up with their shenanigans.”

He thought about Denise and grinned and said, “I can’t wait.”

Brenda turned around and was looking at the telegram.

Nathan saw her and move the telegram.

Brenda grinned and batted her eyes at Nathan.

Mag was not playing with Nathan she was watching Nathan.

Nathan looked at Mag and went to the jail.

He closed the door and put the telegram on his desk and hung up his hat and coat.

Mag said, “Did he just leave Natalie on the ground and did not pick her up?”

Brenda said, “I did see Utah.”

Mag put down her coffee cup and said, “ ‘Utah’? That’s something big and messy.”

Brenda raised her eyebrows and grinned and said, “I know.”

They grinned.

Mag said, “Let’s go and get them., so we can go home before dark. Gen will pass by you Brenda.”

Brenda threw her head back and laughed.

They stood and put on their scarves, hat, coats and gloves.”

Mag said, “What are we doing for Christmas and for New Years?”

Brenda said, ”You all can go to Gen. But why don’t you stay the night with her?”

Mag said, “Does she still snore?”

Brenda said, “I don’t know.”

Mag said, “Nall you would not know in that big behind house. You can’t hear nothing. Has Morgan every been married?”

Brenda said, “I don’t know I just know he is a little younger than you.”

Mag grinned and said, “I know.”

They said, “Good afternoon to the manager and left the restaurant.

The manager pointed and said, “You need help with them?”

Mag said, “I better not. She and jj will be out here all night.”

Brenda laughed.

The manger walked and watched them.

Gen was still angry and upset.

Brenda stood in front of the carriage and stared at Gen.

Gen looked at Brenda.

Brenda said, “Gen what is wrong?’

Gen started cussing she ended her fit by saying, ”… your \*\* in this buggy so we can finish everything so I can get home by dark. You are fine with a house full of servants.”

Brenda and Mag hollered and bumped into each other.

Eleanor was skipping coming from the bank.

Mag said, “Look at Eleanor what the ‘h’ is that?”

Gen said, “That’s the happy money skip. She has made money somewhere”

Brenda was thinking.

Eleanor got to them and Natalie looked at Eleanor and said, “Eleanor can you send me the box?”

Eleanor said, “Are you coming to church tomorrow?”

Natalie said, “No. We go to a different church.”

Brenda said, “I miss Joe and Peggy.”

Mag said, “I would love to see them. Send them a telegram to find out how they are spending their holidays?”

Brenda said, “What? They only live five minutes from here.”

Mag said, “Maybe we can go by and give them a fruitcake and spend a little time with them.”

Brenda said, “I like parties and dinners.”

Gen said, “That’s where Shirley takes that from.”

Eleanor gave a silly grin.

Gen perked up and said, “How much?’

Mag said, “Gen?”

Gen said, “You and that one owe me.”

Mag and Brenda started fusing with Gen.

Gen started backing up her horse.

Natalie looked at them.

Eleanor stopped giggling and looked at Gen.

Eleanor said, “What has happened?”

Natalie said, “Miss Brenda and Mag started talking about spooks.”

Eleanor hurried away she did not look back but passed the jail and unlocked her door and locked it back.

She breathed and started giggling again.

Gen said, “Bren get your butt in this buggy so we can go home.”

Brenda stepped in the buggy.

Mag looked down at Natalie.

Natalie looked up at Mag.

Natalie said, “I can get up.”

Nathan was about to read the telegram and saw Eleanor rushing pass and not looking in the window at him.

He was peeping at the others.

Gen was about to get out the buggy to help Natalie up.

Natalie flipped over on her knees.

Nathan jumped and continued to look out his window.

Gen stopped.

The restaurant manager was about to walk out the restaurant.

Mag was embarrassed and looked back at Gen and Brenda and said, “Aint’ this some s\*\*\*?’

Natalie yelled and raised up her finger and said, “No cursing around my baby.”

Mag turned and looked at Gen and Brenda.

Nathan was watching Natalie he wanted to know what she was going to do.

Natalie said, “I get off my knees everyday.”

Mag said, “Get to your knees.”

Gen held her head down and snickered.

Brenda looked at Natalie.

Natalie pushed off the walkway and was bent over nearly touching her toes.

Gen’s mouth dropped open.

Mag was waiting.

Natalie wobbled and stood up.

She looked at Mag.

Mag said, “You take over the wagon.

Mag stepped in the wagon.

Natalie fought and finally got in the wagon.

Nathan had his head on the window pane looking at them.

His mouth was opened.

Brenda said, “Let’s go.”

Gen pulled out and they went to the railroad.

Brenda gave their mail to Peter and said, “Who is at Philadelphia that can take this mail to the post?”

Peter said, “Joel.”

Brenda said, “end him a telegram to pick this up Monday and take it to the post. I want to see how quickly we can get mail around the country.”

Peter grinned and took the bags of mail and said, “Yes ma am.”

Benda said, “Good afternoon.”

Gen pulled away and they rode to the Christmas tree stand.

Gen selected a tree, wreath and garland.

The manager told Gen he would deliver the tree that evening or the next morning.

Gen said, “Thank you.”

Gen turned the buggy around and sped out of town.

She dropped Brenda off.

Brenda snickered all the way home.

Gen said, “Yall come to church this Sunday and said me move my mouth.”

Brenda laughed and waved and went in the house.

Gen sped home.

She stopped at the kitchen and unlocked the door and lit the candle.

Gen ran into the parlor and light the fireplace.

She looked at the coal bucket and grabbed it.

She got a water pail and ran out the house and got in the buggy.

Gen went to the well and got water and then she came back and stopped at the coal shed and got coal.

She rode to the house and place the buckets in the kitchen.

Gen got back in the buggy and rode to the stables and unlocked the gate.

She drove in the stales and unhooked the horse and buggy and gave the horse feed and water.

Gen petted the horse and groomed it.

She petted the other horses and brushed their coats.

She locked the stables and rushed to the house.

Gen went inside and locked the kitchen door and looked around and put the bar on the kitchen door and felt the warmth of the fireplace.

She lit a small fire in the pot belly stove.

She began to walk upstairs and was pulling off her clothes.

Gen started a fire in her fireplace and checked the others and closed the doors to keep the warmth in the hallway.

She stood in her bedroom mirror and looked at herself.

She heard a knocked on her door.

She thought and jumped.

Gen ran downstairs but grabbed the gun she kept on the handrail.

She said, “Yes.”

The man said, “Christmas tree.”

Gen hid the gun in the kitchen and unlocked the door.

The man rushed in the house and ran to the wagon and brought her garland and wreath.

Gen gave him a dollar tip.

The man tilted his hat and said, “Thank you.”

Gen said, “Merry Christmas.”

She quickly locked the front door and put the bar across it.

She was glad the Christmas tree came on a stand.

Gen moved the Christmas tree around most of the night then decided to put it in the front window from the front door that led to the parlor.

She was tired and went upstairs and put on her nightgown.

She fell on her knees and burst out in laughter as she thought about Natalie.

She kept thinking about Mag’s face and laughed so hard that she sat on the floor with her left arm across the bed.

Then she turned around to pray and was grinning and said, “Father I need more of YOU and JESUS. Amen.”

Gen got in her bed and laid for a while thinking about how to decorate her tree, wreath and garland.

Gen finally drifted to sleep.

Eleanor went through the office and checked the locks on the windows and doors.

She did not use any coal in the fireplace because she did not know how long she would be in the office.

Eleanor brought blankets and wrapped up.

She packed all her papers in the bags and pulled the window shades.

She picked up the blankets she had in the office and went out the door.

Eleanor put everything in her carriage and untied the horse and ran to lock the door.

She turned and saw Natalie trying to get up.

Gen pulled away.

Mag got in the wagon then Natalie.

Eleanor eased in her carriage and put her blanket over her lap and sped home.

She beat Brenda home.

She said, “Jose I need someone to take this box to Natalie this evening or in the morning.”

Jose stood and followed Eleanor to her office.

Eleanor pointed to the box on the floor.

Jose was peeping in the box and said, “Baby clothes?”

Eleanor sighed and Jose thought she was sighing at him.

Eleanor said, “Lorraine bought those for Natalie’s baby.”

Jose said, “How is Lorraine?”

Eleanor did not respond but cried.

Jose looked at Eleanor and walked out her office and closed her door.

Jose went to his room and put on his hat, two scarves, his coat and gloves.

He took one of the carriages he had to be ready at all times.

He wrapped a blanket around him and sped into town.

Jose was pulling in Mag’s yard as they were pulling in.

Mag and Natalie bought their Christmas tree and garland.

Jose got out the carriage and carried the tree in the house for them.

Natalie brought in the garland.

Jose went back to the carriage and brought in Natalie’s baby box.

She said, “Thank you Jose. I will see you Christmas.”

Jose said, “I’ll be with my family for Christmas. Dan and Nadine will be working in my place.”

Natalie said, “That’s nice.”

Jose went and got in his carriage and sped back to the house.

He returned to see Gen leaving the Stith’s house.

Eleanor was in her office for hours working on all the business for the ground- breaking.

Dan had more than enough ingredients for the hot coco and whipped cream, hot apple cider, hot coffee and tea and cookies and his famous muffins.

Jose had the tent ordered and they received the ceremonial shovels.

Eleanor was excited.

Her family was establishing a hospital in their city that would take everyone.

Eleanor had re-written her will so that half of all her money goes to the hospital.

She knew that would keep the hospital going for at least fifty years after her death.

She smiled that Thomas would be monitoring all the money for all their foundations.

Thomas will not let a single penny be lost.

He loves his money but is quiet about it.

He told Eleanor when they were I Austria with Joseph he loves being rich. It can take him places and let him see things that other people can never see.

Thomas said, “I love to see what makes other people who they are. I like to see our money do good for the poor.”

Eleanor smiled.

She left her office and went upstairs to her room.

She looked in her armoire and selected her outfits for the ground-breaking, which was the outfit she worn to the re-naming off the hospital. Foer the after five reception she selected a dress she wore before in Europe. For the dinner she selected a dress she wore with Joseph to a royal reception.

She held the dress and stared n the fireplace.

She remembered the whole evening and the love and fun she and Joseph shared.

She walked to the fireplace and put her head on the mantel and closed her eyes and said, “Joseph, my love. Why did you die? Life is hard without you, but the children keep me busy, especially Michael and Percy.”

Eleanor sob.

Patrick was standing in her door looking and listening to her sorrow over Joseph.

He tipped down the stairs as Brenda was walking in the door.

Brenda walked in the door.

She saw Patrick tipping down the staircase and grinned and was about to holler at him.

He put his finger to his mouth and nodded his head for Brenda to walk down the hall.

She looked puzzle and locked the front door and put the bar behind it.

She slowly walked down the hall and greeted Patrick with a kiss on his lips.

He held her by the waist, and they went to their bedroom.

Patrick told Brenda about Eleanor grieving over Joseph.

Brenda and Patrick were sitting at the foot of their bed.

Brenda said, “I really know that Joseph was to be Eleanor’s true love.”

Patrick said, “I loved him too and wanted him to take her and the children from here and live over there but without his parents stealing Eleanor’s money.”

Brenda slightly turned her head to Patrick and said, “How could time and distance bring them together and then separate them? Why Patrick?”

Patrick said, “I thought about that too. I believe Joseph was Eleanor’s husband but because of that one they did not have the chance to meet and marry…”

Brenda thought and said, “Patrick, my GOD.’’

Patrick said, “What Brenda?”

Brenda looked scared into Patrick’s eyes.

Patrick became scared and did not ask Brenda again.

Brenda said, “We were to send Eleanor to boarding school in Sweden. Then she would have met Joseph. Because…”

Patrick twisted his mouth and finished Brenda’s statement, “Because he and his fellows would go to the spring balls in Sweden.”

Brenda slid off the bed onto her knees.

Patrick was too stunned to move.

He said, “That’s why the boys said, Joseph was their daddy. Especially Thomas.”

Brenda grabbed Patrick’s hand and pulled him to his knees next to her.

Brenda prayed, “Dear LORD GOD Almighty forgive us for being selfish and keeping Eleanor here. If we would have sent her off to boarding school then she would have met Joseph, her destine husband and lived with him. Forgive us and help us to be sorrowful unto repentance. Help Eleanor for the rest of her life to be happy and have joy that she did meet her real husband. Help Gen to stop being scared over ghosts.”

Patrick squeezed Brenda’s hand.

Brenda continued, “… and Patrick too. Let us all celebrate this season with those who have nothing. Let us do your well. In JESUS’s name. Amen.”

Brenda and Patrick stayed on their knees and said, “how could we have denied our daughter and GOD’s will over our fleshly desires?”

Brenda said, “Never again. GOD gave us this answer I want the answer about Patrick Jr, Christopher and John. I don’t care about their wives’ families. Like we have to take care of them. Filth.”

Patrick was quiet.

He knew not to say anything to Brenda about the grandchildren.

Patrick said, “I know how Gen feels that your blood does not turn out like you.”

Brenda stared at the headboard for a minute and said, “Patrick I never want to see or have in my house any of their wives, children and their thieving parents. They thought they were going to bring that trash into this house, that we both build and worked on, so they could live a lavish life with their frends at our expense.”

Brenda stood from her knees and went to her side of the many armoires and started selecting her outfits for the ground-breaking ceremonies.

Patrick knew that was an argument that would separate them unto divorce and Brenda would take everything.

Patrick was quiet and thought, “LORD GOD Almighty I know Brenda feel betrayed by Patrick Jr and Christopher. She hates their trash wives and she feels they want to steal her money. I feel that way too. She feels we failed at Patrick Jr and Christopher and John and that we would fail at help raising their children. She does not want that responsibility ever. Eleanor will not tolerate the children ever also. She would not want them around her children ever. GOD help me with this. Do their children grow up with no family relations with us or a very limited relationship with us. I know Shirley, no one claims anything but her. She is not willing to share anything. Thomas and Michael will not give anyone a penny. Bruce is the only soft hearted one. Percy wants to ride the trains with a shotgun to protect his interest. He will not give them any money. How do I become a part in their lives to steer them from the path of their fathers and mothers. John four boys will be escorted out the state to never return again and the court is making their mother’s family take care of them. Good. That one is settled forever. The children were evil and had bad hearts over our money. How can you raise children like that? I need YOUR help.”

Patrick exhaled and slowly stood from his knees.

Brenda was around pulling out her accessories for her three outfits.

She was humming and trying on jewelry for the reception and dinner.

She settled on her jewelry.

She would wear pearls for the ground -breaking ceremony. Emeralds for the reception that evening with her read and green dress and diamonds the next night at dinner.

She was happy and she was settled on her grandchildren.

Brenda knew Patrick wanted to talk to her about letting the grandchildren come for the holidays.

Brenda hated her grandchildren because they were vile people.

She could not understand how her sons could put their children from trash women above Eleanor’s children and try to kill Eleanor’s children to destroy her for not giving them the railroad and the shipping business.

Patrick knew Brenda was thinking about all of that. He had no answers.

Eleanor walked downstairs and knocked on their door.

Brenda was humming and knew it was Eleanor’s knock.

She chipperly said, “Come in Eleanor.”

Patrick looked at Brenda.

He knew that attitude Brenda was showing.

Eleanor walked in the bedroom and handed Patrick the receipts from the coal purchase.

Patrick flipped and read and flipped and read.

Eleanor was so excited and happy.

Brenda looked at Eleanor.

She said, “Eleanor forgive me and your father for keeping you here with us. If we would have sent you to boarding school in Sweden you would have met Joseph.”

Patrick stared at Brenda and said, “Brenda damn.”

Eleanor said, “I know. I and Joseph talked about it. I would have ben seven years older than he. He introduced me to some of the ladies of society that would have been my classmates. I got over that part of this momma. But the part I can’t get peace over is when Joseph had to die.”

Brenda’s eyes were filled with tears.

Patrick looked at Brenda and then at Eleanor.

Patrick said, “Eleanor do you forgive us?”

Eleanor was crying and smiled at her daddy and said, “If you give me your share of the profits from the coal.”

Patrick reached the papers to Brenda.

Brenda bent out the vanity chair and reached for the papers and begin to read the papers.

Patrick said, “No ma am”

Eleanor ran to Patrick and sat on his lap and hugged his neck. And cried.

Patrick kissed her on her cheek.

Brenda kept reading the papers.

Patrick and Eleanor looked at Brenda.

Brenda lifted her head up and said, “We made this type of money from that one business action?”

Eleanor grinned and nodded her head.

Brenda said, “Is this why you were skipping from the bank today?

Eleanor grinned and said, “I used our personal money to transact that business. Everybody has been paid. The accounts verified that amount. I made them go over it several times with me. They gave me the money and I deposited it in our family account.”

Patrick said, “Good GOD. That replaces the money for Ty and Skip’s son. All the money for these socials, the money we spent for Mag and Natalie’s shack and furnishings, the children schooling. Really this gives us a good amount left over. We can pay for the family trip to Africa and Jose’s trip to Europe. Great GOD!”

Eleanor was grinning.

Brenda looked at Patrick and Eleanor and said, “Do we all agree to replace the money we used this year and pay for the family trip to Africa and pay for Jose’s trip to Europe next year?”

Eleanor said, “Yes.”

Patrick said, “Yes.”

Brenda said, “Monday I’ll go on Monday and pay for the trip. Who are going?”

Patrick said, “Me, you, Eleanor and her five, Hutch…”

Brenda said, “Good in case any of us get sick. He would know what type of medicine to bring.”

Patrick and Eleanor looked at Brenda.

Patrick continued to count and said, “We have to take Gen. We can’t take Beverly and Al because they have those children. Maybe Thomas for our food and maybe one maid since it won’t be as many of us and we won’t be gone for a year only for six months.”

Brenda said, “Gen probably will need to be out of town especially if they catch John Jr and Betty. What about Joe, Peggy, Sarah for Shirley and Mag, Natalie and Josiah.”

Eleanor said, “What about Peter and Nadine since they are a married couple?”

Patrick and Brenda said, “No.”

Eleanor said, “Mag may not want to leave her new grandbaby, because I believe Natalie and Josiah won’t travel. Maybe Ellen and Captain Moss.”

Patrick said, “That’s a good idea.”

Brenda said, “We won’t have our wedding anniversary ball.”

Patrick said, “We can plan for it in the fall. After we get back.”

Brenda looked a little thrown off and said, “Ok. Fine.”

Eleanor said, “Guess what I found out from Dr. Woodson?”

Patrick said, “What?”

Brenda was looking at Eleanor.

Eleanor said, “All that champagne I bought was from Dr. Charles’ family winery. Vivienne is marrying a rich doctor.”

Brenda grinned.

Patrick said, “If he gets rid of that evil wife. She won’t let him go.”

Eleanor said, “Guess what else?”

Brenda was looking.

Patrick said, “What?”

Eleanor said, “Dr. Charles owns apartment buildings in France and he owns the hospital he and Felipe work at.”

Brenda said, “Good girl Vivienne.”

Patrick looked at Brenda.

Eleanor and Brenda were laughing.

Patrick pushed Eleanor off his lap onto the floor.

Jose knocked on their door and saw Eleanor on the floor and said, “Dinner.”

He waked back up the hall to the family dining room.

Brenda stood and said, “Eleanor get up and walk with me to dinner.”

Patrick knew that meant to him that Brenda was still mad with him.

Eleanor got off the floor and walked to Brenda who was at the door and walking out the door.

Eleanor said, “Momma I saw your clothes and jewelry are those outfits what you will wear for the ground-breaking?”

Brenda said, “Yes. I have only worn the emerald earrings twice. But I chose the red and green dress for the reception and the emerald earrings.”

Eleanor said, “That is a lovely outfit.”

Brenda said, “What about you Eleanor?”

Eleanor whimpered and smiled.

She said, “I selected three outfits. Claressa and Alvin has an ambassador friend coming to stay the holiday with them because they all will be leaving in January to go to Washington DC and get their new assignments. They want to go out and dine. We don’t have a place to dine in Cedartown.”

They walked into the family dining room and sat.

Brenda said, “Gen is lonely. Maybe we can talk her into hosting something at her house the week of Christmas.”

Eleanor said, “Good idea momma. Are we going to have you and daddy’s traditional Christmas Eve brunch?”

Patrick was sitting down next to Brenda.

Brenda looked at Patrick and said, “I don’t know. What you think Patrick? It’s only going to be the family for Christmas dinner. We are going to the governor’s New Years Eve ball.”

Eleanor said, “Can we get tickets for them?”

Patrick said, “Do they want to go. They go to all that sort of stuff all the time.”

They were eating a very good vegetable soup and cornbread for dinner.

Eleanor said, “Maybe I can have them over for an informal evening. Play some cards, billiards, games and a small flair of cheese, crackers, wine and fruit.”

Brenda said, “Some kind of meat.”

Patrick said, “That Claressa love meat.”

Brenda said, “She looks good and she is slim and toned.”

Eleanor said, “Some sweets. Maybe sweet biscuits or teacakes.”

Brenda said, “I like lemon flavor in the teacakes.”

Patrick said, “When will the Christmas tree be finished?”

Eleanor said, “It looks nice now and it is unfinished.”

Brenda grinned and said, “Mabel will be here with Shirley in a week. She will finish the tree and put finishing touches around the house.”

Jose stood and watched their table and if they needed something else.

He and Ruth walked out the family dining room back to the kitchen.

Jose thought, “Eleanor talking about an evening. She better think quick. I’m going home on the twenty third. I hope my family don’t make me curse them out and I have to come back and hide in the butler’s bedroom.”

Patrick, Brenda and Eleanor finished dinner and went to the parlor.

They were talking about the decorations and how many people can be in the parlor.

Eleanor said, “The music room only has the piano. We can put some chairs in there.”

Brenda said, “Oh my GOD.”

Patrick looked at Brenda.

Eleanor said, “Momma?”

Brenda said, “We don’t have musicians. And not Percy.”

Eleanor said, “Oh my God. I completely forgot about music.”

Brenda said, “It’s too late to go to Gen, I’ll go in the morning. She can get in touch with Olivia to see if she can perform at the reception. She and her boys are wonderful singers and musicians.”

Eleanor said, “Momma I think Olivia has moved with the professor that was renting Gen’s house.”

Patrick was baffled.

Brenda said, “I need at least two musicians. I don’t care who she is with.”

Patrick stared at Brenda and said, “Brenda that is one of the most selfish things I ever heard you say. That’s why you be in trouble with GOD all the time.”

Eleanor looked from Patrick to Brenda.

Brenda did not know what to say to Patrick.

Patrick said, “Gen may know some more musicians and singers. You can ask her tomorrow Brenda.”

Eleanor and Patrick walked out the parlor to the music room. They were talking.

Patrick said, “This hallway and foyer are large enough to accommodate a few.”

Eleanor said, “Daddy what about the billiards room at least eight people can be in there.”

Patrick said, “We can have it opened but I bet you the governor will be in here playing.”

Eleanor laughed.

They walked to the sitting room.

Eleanor said, “Ten people can be in here. No one on the right side of the house or upstairs.”

Patrick said, “Right.”

Eleanor said, “Daddy you have your clothes ready. We are going to be busy and I don’t want you to be running around trying to find something to wear.”

Patrick said, “Eleanor your mother makes sure I have clothes. I have at least one hundred ties, one hundred shirts and fifty suits and twenty five pairs of dressed boots and then I have dressed top coats, scarves, hats and gloves. All tailored made. Your momma took over my clothes when you were born.”

Eleanor smiled.

She said, “Daddy you do look good when you dress.”

Patrick nodded.

Eleanor said, “Guess who said they want to dress like you?”

Patrick said, “One of your boys?”

Eleanor laughed and said, “Yes. Who else?”

Patrick shrugged his shoulders and bent his head.

Eleanor said, “Guess.”

Patrick said, “Bruce?’

Eleanor said, “No. Bruce likes to dress like Joseph.”

She was quiet for a half of a minute.

Patrick looked at her.

He wondered how GOD would heal his daughter so she can enjoy life with her children.

Eleanor said, “Thomas. He loves your old money style.”

Patrick said, “He loves money. He tries to be calm about the money you can see it in his eyes.”

Eleanor said, “Daddy I am having trouble with Thomas and Michael.”

Patrick frowned and looked at Eleanor.

She looked at her daddy and said, “They think they are too cute. Women love their thick, curly long hair.”

Patrick laughed.

Eleanor said, “No really daddy. At the Christening, Michael was sitting at the table with Debra and talking to her about her outfit and how good she looked that morning and she deserved to eat meat, this is after she and Dr. Greene argued about her diet.”

Patrick hollered in the foyer.

He nearly went to his knees laughing.

Eleanor said, “Daddy I have to address this. Dr. Greene looked at Michael and said, ‘Are you flirting with my wife?’ Michael knew enough not to say anything. But Thomas said, ‘We know how to talk to women’.”

Patrick was laughing hard. He had to sit on the stairs.

Eleanor said, “I told you and momma we had a problem here and they all jumped and ran into their rooms. I got to Michael’s room and was about to take the hinges off. Jose came grabbed me from behind and takes me downstairs. Michael comes out of his room looking at me and tells Thomas, ’she was about to make me mad kicking on my door like that.’”

Patrick laid out on the stairs and hollered.

Eleanor said, “Daddy it’s not his door. What was he going to do to me for kicking on my door?”

Patrick was catching his breath.

Eleanor said, “I said they can wear their academy logo at the ground-breaking ceremony.”

Patrick said, “Oh.”

Patrick looked back towards the parlor and Brenda.

Eleanor looked at Patrick and said, “What?”

Patrick said, “I have to tell all the staff. Alice had a set of twins. A boy and a girl. Huff said, Alice swear she will never have another baby.”

They laughed.

Brenda was jarred out of her desperation when she heard her loves laughing without her.

Eleanor said, “…I thought the boys could wear them to the reception.”

Patrick cut off Eleanor and said, “Eleanor you know better than that. They can wear their dressed logo at the reception or the dinner the next evening. But they would need another outfit.”

Eleanor said, “Daddy they are growing so fast. I bet you one of them has outgrown something in these two weeks…”

Eleanor rolled her eyes.

Patrick laughed.

Patrick said, “It was the right decision to let them go back and finish this semester there. It would have been too much on you to get nannies.”

Eleanor said, “That’s where Lorraine would step in…”

Eleanor held her breathe.

Patrick held Eleanor by her shoulders.

Brenda walked out the parlor and saw Patrick holding Eleanor.

Eleanor put her head on Patrick’s shoulder.

Patrick said, “While we have a minute lets go and look through the boys’ clothes and find an evening outfit for the formal reception.”

Patrick and Eleanor walked up the stairs.

Brenda was wondering what they were talking about that made Eleanor lean on her daddy.

Brenda thought, “GOD don’t let Patrick leave here. Eleanor would not have nobody to lean on. Unless YOU show her how to lean on YOU. GOD can YOU provide at least two musicians for this reception and maybe after the dinner as we are sitting around?”

Brenda followed Eleanor and Patrick up the stairs.

They walked down the hall towards the boys’ room.

Eleanor and Patrick walked in Percy’s room first. They went through his armoires.

Eleanor said, “That boy came behind me and messed up the way I had his clothes set up. All his dress clothes were in one armoire. Now look at this.”

Brenda sat on Percy’s bed.

Patrick was standing with his left arm on the post of the cane bed.

Eleanor was looking at Percy’s pants and dress coats.

Patrick said, “Eleanor do that pair of pants and the coat you just put back with a white shirt and a solid black tie.”

Brenda was peeping and said, “What is that for?”

Eleanor said, “To wear to the formal reception.”

Brenda said, “That’s nice. What are they going to wear to the ground breaking and the dinner?”

Eleanor said, “Their academy logos to the ground-breaking and their dressed uniforms at the dinners.”

Brenda said, “That’s nice. What were yall talking about that Patrick was laughing about?”

Patrick said, “God Brenda you are noisy. First I got a telegram form Huff that Alice had a set of twins.”

Brenda was surprised and exclaimed, “What!”

Patrick said, “A boy and a girl. Alice said she won’t have no more.”

Brenda held her head down and giggle.

Brenda knew Alice love her men and she will have nothing that disrupts that.

Patrick looked at Brenda.

Eleanor put the three outfits on the other side of the armoire.

Eleanor said, “Well that’s it for Percy. I don’t have time to come back and make sure he is dressed properly. He and Thomas want to dress themselves. I don’t trust them. Now to Bruce. I know someone has outgrown something.”

Brenda stood and they walked to Bruce’s room.

Brue’s armoires were organized.

Eleanor was tickle at Bruce’s armoires.

She said, “Bruce don’t want no trouble with me. If he thinks he could do his dirt and get by with it and I can’t trace it then he will do it. He is just as bad as Percy. I have not determined if he or Thomas is the mastermind behind all the trouble they get in.”

Eleanor picked out Bruce’s outfits.

Eleanor said, “Yall know Gary is leaving in January. He finished the elementary courses to get him a certificate. He will be moving to the capitol to study either medicine or law. He said he saw my children were having emotional problems and no one was here to help them. He said, it maybe law to legally fight the unlawful people. I think Denise wants to go to school to help the former slaves get all that slave evil out of their minds. She was taking about the suicides and that some of the slaves acted just as the masters against other blacks.”

Patrick and Brenda listened.

Brenda said, “After that day that Mabel was talking about killing herself. I saw that the physical body was free but the soul had to be set free also. Denise would have great success in that field as a job.”

Brenda was looking at Bruce’s outfits.

Brenda and Patrick said at the same time, “Eleanor.”

Eleanor said, “I know, but Bruce likes this tie that Joseph gave him. I am going to let him wear it to the reception. This is the only set that it kind of go with.”

Brenda said, “What else yall were talking about that had Patrick hollering?’

Patrick began to snicker.

He said, “That Michael.”

Eleanor said, ”Talking about ‘she almost made me mad kicking on my door’.”

Patrick started laughing.

Brenda said, “That’s my baby Eleanor.”

Eleanor said, “Your baby was nearly gone if Jose had not come and grabbed me and took me down the stairs. I’m looking at him and he staring at me like he was going to whip me.”

Brenda grinned.

Eleanor said, “I know now that when someone is addicted to something they go mad until they get it. He owed that money to those grown men. I told those grown men not to gamble with Michael anymore. They said yes. I looked at Michael and said, you better not gamble ever again.”

Brenda said, “What did he say?”

Eleanor said, “He looked at me strange and said, “yes ma am’.”

Eleanor hung Bruce’s clothes on his armoire.

They went to Michael’s room next.

She said, “We need to bless this room.”

She shook her head and exhaled.

Patrick grabbed her by her neck and Brenda walked in his room and sat on his bed.

Patrick sat next to Brenda.

Eleanor opened Michael’s armoire and turned and looked at her momma and daddy.

They looked at the armoire.

Patrick said, “What Eleanor? I don’t see nothing.”

Eleanor said, “Right. He got something up.”

Brenda looked back and said, “Is that door cracked?”

Eleanor got scared and looked at the door.

She knew Brenda was fierce about her house.

Patrick peeped around Brenda at the door.

He said, “Eleanor.”

Eleanor said, “I’ll see about the door.”

Brenda looked at Eleanor and said, “You need to see somebody. Because that is a solid oak door. If you would have broken that door down and got to Michael, you are right you would have killed my baby.”

Brenda stood and walked out.

Patrick stared at Eleanor.

Eleanor walked to the door and said, “Sorry momma. I’ll get Jose to fix it.”

Jose was about to walk and checked the house and he turned and eased down the backstairs.

Patrick said, “Eleanor you have to stop that rage and wrath. You are directing all of that against your children when you know you should have directed it against Bruce.”

She was standing with Michael’s academy logo suit in her hands.

She said, “I know I got a problem. When Joseph was here I was happy and my children were happy. It’s like now I have more of a time being happy with them.”

Eleanor walked back to Michael’s armoire and pulled out his dress uniform.

Patrick was looking in Michael’s armoire and said, “Eleanor get that pair of navy pants. Does he have a light blue shirt?”

Eleanor pulled out the pants, a blue shirt and a black coat and tie.

Patrick said, “That’s nice. We have one more to go.”

They walked out of Michael’s room and went to Thomas’ room.

Patrick said, “Did you see anything in Michael’s armoires?”

Eleanor said, “Yeah he had a deck of cards in his dress boots.”

She shook her head.

Patrick said, “Your mother and I are patient with you…”

Brenda was walking up the rear stairs with a pouting Jose and yelled, “No I’m not anymore.”

Eleanor turned and yelled, “I’m sorry momma.”

Patrick looked at Brenda.

He continued to talk to Eleanor he had a nervous breakdown. Most children can spring back from it. But he is taking a longer time and why I don’t know. That’s why we are going to Africa so he can get relief from whatever it is that is blocking him from his deliverance.”

Brenda and Jose were at Michael’s door.

Jose was working on the door.

Patrick was peeping out the door at Brenda.

Eleanor whispered, “Where’s momma?”

Brenda yelled, “I’m out here heifer.”

Eleanor exhaled and said, “I’m sorry momma.”

Patrick said, “Eleanor you know how your momma feels about this house and the property.”

Eleanor said, “I know daddy, but it happened so quick.”

Eleanor said, “He tells me that I am not the only one with problems.”

Jose was working on the door.

He hung doors with his family construction company that is how he knew what to do at Vivienne’s place.

Brenda yelled at Eleanor, “You better be glad that Jose fixed this door.”

She looked at the door then Jose and said, “You have been here all this time and you did not fix this door?’

Patrick knew Brenda was about to fuss at Jose.

He did not want her to be fussing with the workers.

He hurried out the room and walked to Brenda.

Jose stood and looked at Brenda.

Brenda balled up her fists at Jose.

Jose said, “Nadine.”

Brenda’s fists fell down.

Jose ran down the front stairs.

Brenda said, “That’s right.”

Patrick stood and looked at Brenda in shame.

Brenda looked at Patrick and dropped her eyes down to the floor in shame.

Patrick did not move.

Eleanor had her ear to listen and she did not hear anything.

She tipped to the door and saw her daddy standing looking at her momma.

She saw Brenda’s head down.

Eleanor walked from the door and grinned.

Eleanor said, “Daddy what about this?’

Patrick walked back to a grinning Eleanor.

Patrick gave Eleanor a stern look but she could not stop grinning that her daddy had scolded her momma.

Patrick looked at the pants and shirt and said, “Get him that brown jacket and that brownish tie.”

Eleanor turned and looked back at Thomas’ ties and said, “Daddy that is a good match. I never seen that tie before.”

Patrick said, “Lorraine bought him that tie last month because she said, he did not have a tie to match those pants.”

Brenda walked in Thomas’ room with her head down and sat on his bed.

Patrick did not move he kept standing with his hands on his hips.’

He cut his eyes at Brenda.

Eleanor looked at her dejected momma and said, “I’m sorry about Michael’s door momma.”

Brenda knew Eleanor was being smart in front of her daddy so he could defend her if she got smart with Eleanor.

Brenda rolled her eyes at Eleanor.

Eleanor turned and saw Brenda rolling her eyes at her and burst out laughing.

Patrick looked at Eleanor and then he looked at the shamed Brenda.

Eleanor ran to her momma and kissed her on her cheeks.

Patrick thought, “Now is going to be the only time.”

He said, ”Eleanor, hang Thomas’ outfits on the armoire.”

Eleanor looked at Patrick and walked to Thomas’ armoires.

Brenda looked and said, “Eleanor we might have to go through their clothes again after the holidays.”

Eleanor’s heart was racing in her chest.

She knew Patrick wanted something.

She could not think what it was.

Brenda looked at Patrick.

Eleanor closed Thomas’ armoires.

Patrick closed Thomas door and said, “You two get ready to get mad.”

Brenda turned her head and looked at Patrick.

Eleanor looked at Patrick and sat on Thomas bed next to Brenda.

Patrick said, “I can’t rest until I get this off my chest. You two are my living family.”

Brenda said, “Patrick.”

Patrick put up his hands up for Brenda to be quiet.

Brenda though, “He is ready to fight me and Eleanor. It has to be about those damn folks.”

Patrick walked to Eleanor and said, “I sent a telegram to Christopher and Patrick Jr’s wives telling them they are never welcomed to this house nor around this family nor none of their families. I meant that. I will never change that.”

Brenda was thinking, “GOD! GOD! GOD!”

Eleanor was breathing hard.

Patrick saw her.

He said, “Baby I am sorry. I don’t want to turn away their children. They were raising their children wrong.”

Brenda did not say a word.

Eleanor did not move.

Patrick said, “Your momma and me did not do things right with Christopher, John and Patrick Jr. That’s why they turned out evil and GOD would not let our businesses grow until HE got rid of the evil. HE would not let the evil thorns destroy you Eleanor.”

Eleanor sat and looked at Patrick.

Patrick said, “John has twenty-five years in prison and Joyce got twenty years. The judge banned their fours out the state. They can never return. I was told Joyce’s family sold their house and everything in the house, but kept the wagons, buggies and horses. We never have to be bother with them, because once they have served their time they are banned from this state.”

Brenda did not say anything.

Eleanor was looking in the eyes of her beloved father.

She did not want her heart to change towards him.

Patrick said, “The only people I am going to address are the grandchildren.”

Brenda did not move.

Eleanor did not move.

Brenda looked at Eleanor and then at Patrick.

Patrick looked at Brenda and said, “Brenda I know I am risking my relationship with my beloved Eleanor. Both of you know I cannot rest until things are solved. When I am wrong. I will take the responsibility for my bad decisions.”

Eleanor was still and not blinking at her beloved daddy.

Brenda was looking in Eleanor’s face.

Patrick breathed and said, “Christopher had two children. Patrick Jr. had three children. Could we invite the children here for Christmas Eve and let them stay overnight and leave after Christmas dinner. We buy them toys and clothes and send them home. And do that once per year. They won’t go on family vacations. We won’t ever give them any money. I just don’t want them to hold hatred in their hearts and then come after us and your children Eleanor.”

Eleanor said, “Daddy you took a big risk as a business man with my feelings. You put aside that Patrick---Jr. and Christopher used their inheritance and tried to usurp this country. GOD. Your GOD put an end to that. Your beloved Patrick –Jr. and Christopher…”

Eleanor held her head down and shook it.

Brenda looked at Eleanor’s face.

Eleanor lifted her head and looked into her daddy’s eyes and said, “They plotted to and succeed in kidnapping and killing my two babies. They were trying to get Shirley on the train. You think I don’t know that the mayor and his wife were to shot Bruce and Percy.”

Brenda gasped.

Eleanor looked at Brenda and laid her hand on Brenda’s hand.

Eleanor said, “I read the telegram from the judge. That’s why they gave the mayor and his wife twenty years a piece and they have been banned from the state when they serve their sentence. The military went to that small city unknown to Mag and Natalie and got all the mayor’s family one night and took them by force out the state across two states and dumped them there.”

Patrick swallowed and thought, “What else does she know?”

Eleanor said, “Think daddy, if your beloved sons that were evil to kill my children as a threat because I would not give them our railroad and shipping business that they would destroy them. Where did they get a wickedness only matched by the devil? Did they get that evilness from you daddy? Did they get that evilness from you momma?”

Eleanor turned and looked at Brenda.

She continued, “You and momma swear you don’t know where they became evil and wicked from. If you don’t know where their evilness came from how can you stop that evilness in their children?”

Patrick looked at Eleanor and said, “I don’t want to know they turned out like their daddies and I did not do anything to steer them away from being evil.”

Eleanor said, “Daddy you forgot I bought this house from you and momma.”

Brenda smiled.

Eleanor said, “I told you and momma you will continue as you always have. This is your dream home and you are free here. I don’t want those children near my children that their daddies tried to kill. But your GOD, daddy stopped them from taking my children away from me. I would have died with my children. They wanted to destroy you and momma also. You want to bring that evil into your life you have that right. But it wont be coming here in this house.”

Brenda smiled at Eleanor’s calmness.

Eleanor said, “Patrick –Jr and Christopher, Christ like that is a mockery. They were killed nearly six months ago their wives could not be found to claim their bodies and bury them because they had no money. But waited until you and momma returned and paid for their burial. Now at the most joyous season on earth, they found out how to send a telegram to you for holiday cheer. Daddy you can go to them if they tell you where they are or mail them holiday cheer or meet them in town or the capitol for holiday cheer. They have already brainwashed those kids to believe you and momma treat my kids better, because my kids live here and they don’t.”

Brenda said, “True.”

Brenda looked at Patrick and said, “The kids found out that Patrick Jr and Christopher tried to kill them.”

Eleanor said, “What momma?”

Patrick said, “Yes Eleanor. We did not want you to know because you were having a lot of problems to solve yourself.”

Brenda said, “How would Eleanor children treat the children of the men that tried to kill them. I notice they all are jittery. Even Shirley.”

Patrick said, “I’m sorry Eleanor and Brenda. I had to try to get this solved in my heart and mind about those five children. I sent Chasity a telegram and asked if she heard anything about Sue. She said no but would be praying for us. I had Josiah to check the school’s records and he said he saw nothing.”

Patrick looked at his hurt daughter and sighed.

Eleanor finally looked up at her daddy and said, “Daddy I know you are a good man…”

Brenda nodded her head.

Eleanor said, “I know if my children were lost I would want you and momma to go and find them. You and momma have been doing that over all of their lives. I know you love your God and I have never seen you stray away from what you say He commands you to do.”

Brenda nodded her head.

Eleanor said, “I can’t blame you daddy for trying to solve this problem of how to kept some of your grandchildren from growing up hating and plotting against your other grandchildren. I say to you daddy in front of momma, pray to your God daddy. Pray and ask Him to take the evil seed out of those children’s hearts so they can be live. I swear the killing of my children will never happen again.”

Brenda looked at Patrick.

Patrick was shocked and raised his eyebrows at Eleanor.

Eleanor looked at her daddy and said, “Is there anything else about your grandchildren?”

Patrick was stunned at Eleanor demeanor.

He said, “No Eleanor. I heard what you said.”

Eleanor said, “You heard what I meant daddy.”

Patrick said, “I will pray and ask GOD to cleanse their hearts and minds and yours. You have been through a lot and I don’t want anything else to be against you. I don’t want you to have no malice in your heart nor mind about your five nieces and nephews. That is where you allow the devil to block your blessings. You deserve so much more in this life Eleanor.”

Brenda patted Eleanor’s hand.

Eleanor said, “Thank you father for praying for my heart and mind.”

Patrick noticed Eleanor stopped calling him daddy.

He said, “Eleanor I am your daddy and I will always be your daddy. I just told you not to have malice in your heart because that would stop your blessings. No prayers can jump over what is in your heart that GOD’s demands us not to have to get you a better life.”

Eleanor blinked and turned her head.

Brenda peeped around in Eleanor’s face.

Patrick looked at Eleanor.

Brenda shook Eleanor’s hand. All she could think of was that she can’t die.

Eleanor said shook herself and said, “I swear it seemed like Joseph was saying something. I don’t believe in ghosts, but I don’t want that to happen again.”

Patrick said, “If it takes Joseph talking to you from the dead to get your heart back good then fine.”

Brenda was looking at a bewildered Eleanor.

Eleanor started breathing heavily.

Brenda said, “Patrick go and get her some water.”

Patrick looked at Brenda and said, “You are not off the hook.”

Brenda looked up at Patrick and rolled her eyes.

He walked to the end of the hall and yelled, “Jose bring me a glass of water.”

Jose was sitting at his desk working on the Christmas work schedule.

He primped his mouth and walked to the water pitcher and poured water in a glass and put it on a tray with a napkin and walked to the back stairs and saw Patrick standing at the top of the stairs watching him.

Jose walked up the stairs and handed the tray to Patrick.

Patrick took a swallow of the water and put it back on the tray.

Jose turned around and walked down the back stairs to the kitchen.

Mike and John were laughing at Jose.

Jose looked at them.

They walked out the back and jumped on their horses and left for the night.

Peter and Nadine were walking through the house to make sure everything was locked up and no dishes were left and all the kitchen was cleaned.

They went to their room for the night.

Jose looked outside and looked at the other buildings and went back in the house and locked the back door and put the bar across the back door.

They always leave a candle on the kitchen counter.

He looked around the kitchen and walked through the house and checked the windows and doors.

Jose walked down the hall in front of Brenda’s and Patrick’s offices and double checked all the suites and the windows.

He turned and to leave but turned and walked to the back window where the settee was and saw the curtain was not all the way closed.

Jose thought.

He doubled checked the locks.

Jose walked back through the house and went through the billiards room and down the hall by Eleanor’s office.

He checked all the doors and windows.

He thought, “This is a real easy job. I miss cooking, but I won’t say anything because I get paid well. William and Wyonna will be back next year. I don’t know if they will retire or continue to work or if they will move to France. I think Margaret and Earl will live in Paris. Meredith will be in Paris with Felipe. I would know some people whenever I go.”

Jose went into his room and undressed and went to bed.

He drifted to sleep thinking about the chores for the next week.

Ruth was in her room but reading and scared at what the answer would be from Utah and Nevada that Nathan was waiting for.

Nathan read the telegram and locked it in the safe.

He walked out the jail and locked the door.

Nathan rode the horse around the town.

He saw the mangers of the different stores closing for the night.

He spoke to them.

Nathan was glad to see the lit torches.

Eleanor donated fifty lanterns to the town.

Nathan grinned at Eleanor always thinking about her family.

The lanterns start a mile from the Stith’s rest stop up to town. The Stith’s rest stop had light from it to town.

The former slaves had light to walk or ride to the rest stop.

Nathan thought that Denise said, last Christmas they had a full house of former slaves and their children.

Eleanor wanted to see how the lanterns worked out and said, “The wire contractor and a group of a hundred men will travel to America and install wires and lanterns around the train stations, shipyards and our house.”

Nathan turned and rode back to the jail.

He tied his horse in front of the jail and put a blanket over the horse.

Nathan wanted people to know he was at the jail.

He kept the horse in the stables in the back all day.

Nathan would meet Trevor Saturday morning at the jail so he can show him what to do while he was on his honeymoon with Denise.

Patrick took Eleanor the glass of water.

They talked in Thomas room for another hour.

Eleanor took the water and said, “Thank you.”

Eleanor said, “Mother what will happen to Lorraine?”

Brenda said, “I am not your daddy. You will not address my formally but ‘momma’. What do you mean what will happen to Lorraine?”

Eleanor said, “Will you leave her in the hospital or put her in a sanitarium for the reminder of her life?”

Brenda said, “Mag thinks Lorraine will be here for Christmas. GOD knows we need a miracle.”

Eleanor said, “If not.”

Brenda said, “A sanitarium. Thomas knows how to pay.”

Eleanor said, “The New York police act like this normal behavior.”

Brenda said, “Mob crime is normal behavior.”

Patrick was still standing.

Brenda and Eleanor looked at him.

Patrick saw them looking at him.

He said, “I know you know my heart and mind are not settled about the grandkids. I can send a telegram to Lillie and Sue for them to pick up a box for the children at whatever train station they say. I will send it back to the telegram I received it from tonight. I will wait a week to hear back from them. If I don’t hear back I am finish.”

Brenda looked at her distress husband and said, “Fine Patrick.”

Patrick started thinking about what he will put in the telegrams.

Brenda said, “I miss Joe and Peggy and I want to go and visit them tomorrow.”

Patrick looked at Brenda.

Patrick said, “What time are we leaving?”

Brenda said, “Around ten and takes an hour to go into town. Let’s take them a bottle of whiskey and wrap it in Christmas paper. We can tell them about their Christmas present to Africa.”

Patrick said, “I saw Joe a few months ago. He said they were doing much better when they found that money in the horses’ saddles.”

Brenda grinned.

Eleanor said, “I’ll go to Gen and try to find some musicians and contact as quickly as possible.”

Brenda said, “I think I want some musicians after the dinner.”

Eleanor said, “That would be nice.”

They walked out Thomas’ bedroom.

Eleanor looked at her love’s room and walked out with Patrick and Brenda.

They all walked to their bedrooms.

Eleanor went to her room and dressed for bed.

She put a little coal un her fireplace because the furnaces she put in the house while they were in Europe were keeping the house barely warm.

The fireplaces helped a lot.

Eleanor laid in her bed under a lot of blankets.

She thought about all they did that year to help others.

Eleanor kept seeing Christopher and Patrick Jr faces,

She thought of them as children and could not understand how they changed.

Eleanor said, “Lord God help me to know You like my parents.”

Eleanor went to sleep.

The next morning Eleanor took a hot bath and relaxed for a long time in the tub.

She got out and dressed.

He heard some talking and new it had to be Patrick and Brenda going to the family dining room for breakfast.

She had Jose to change their breakfast, while the kids were away, to oatmeal, fruit, coffee, tea and juice.

Eleanor finished dressing and walked downstairs to the family dining room.

She passed the fifteen feet tree and grinned.

She thought, “This Christmas is going to be grand. Thank You God of Brenda and Patrick.”

Eleanor was walking to the family dining room and Jose had the breakfast tray and stopped and let her walk in.

She though she heard the telegram machine.

Eleanor said, “Good morning momma and daddy.”

Brenda said, “Good morning Eleanor. That’s a cheery dress Eleanor.”

Ruth looked at the dress and smiled

It made her feel better that morning.

Patrick noticed Ruth smiled at Eleanor.

Patrick sat and said, “Good morning Eleanor.”

Eleanor was standing and pointed backwards.

Patrick and Brenda looked at her.

Eleanor said, “It’s early But I thought I heard the telegram machine.”

Jose was putting the breakfast tray on the table.

He said, “I’ll go and check.”

Patrick knew Jose wanted to be noisy.

He put in his pants pocket and reached his office to Jose and said, “Jose here is the key.”

Patrick looked at Ruth and said, “Ruth.”

Ruth looked at Patrick and said, “Sir.”

Patrick said, “We won’t need anything else. You are excused.”

Ruth smiled and said, “Yes sir.”

Brenda watched Ruth leave she slowly looked at Patrick.

Jose heard Patrick and he knew they were going to be talking worker’s business. He knew he had to hurry back from Patrick’s office so he could hear some of the talk.

Jose set their bowls of oatmeal in front of each one and the fruit, coffee, tea and orange juice and honey in the center of the table.

He took the key from Patrick and put it on the tray and placed the breakfast tray on the suffer and picked up the key.

Brenda watched Jose and looked at Patrick.

Patrick watched Jose.

Eleanor was not caring.

She said, “This is a going to be a grand Christmas. The Christmas tree is fifteen feet tall. It looks good and smells good. Michael likes to smell the scent. Thomas likes the scent of gingerbread men cookies.”

Eleanor looked back as Jose as walking out the door.

She turned back around and looked at Patrick and said, “Daddy what did you want to talk about?”

Patrick was stirring his coffee and looked up to make sure the coast was clear.

He said, “Nathan said that Ruth said she is a wanted woman by the law. She came to him to turn herself in and he would not arrest without proof that she was wanted. He sent a telegram out to Utah and Nevada for their answer.”

Brenda said, “My GOD. Nathan got a telegram yesterday.”

Patrick turned and looked at Brenda and said, “How do you know that Brenda?”

Brenda said, “Mag and I were in the restaurant looking out the window the telegram clerk ran out the office with it and the receipt book in his hands.”

Eleanor said, “That’s how she knew to fight me. Jail bird.”

Brenda laughed.

Patrick said the grace.

He said, “FATHER GOD bless this food you have given to us and let it nourish our bodies and give us strength to do our work for the day. Thank YOU. In JESUS’ name. Amen.”

Jose tore the telegram off the machine and was turning to rush out when the machine started again.

He exhaled and sat down in Patrick’s chair and waited. Several telegrams were coming through.

Brenda said, “I know Jose is kicking himself that he can’t hear this conversation.”

Eleanor threw her head back and laughed.

Patrick said, “Not a word until he get his answers back. He believed that is where Ruth met Craig, the man that is married to Maureen.”

Brenda stared and said, “Where?”

Eleanor laughed again.

Brenda was staring at Patrick then turned and looked at Eleanor.

Patrick looked at Brenda and said, “Brenda somewhere breaking the law.”

Eleanor was laughing and stomping her feet.

Brenda said, “Is Maureen a bit…”

Jose walked in the dining room.

He walked and reached the telegrams to Patrick.

Patrick said, “Jose these telegrams are balled up and tripped up and I want them on a tray.”

Eleanor fell out laughing.

Jose stared at Patrick.

Brenda said, “I see I am not the only noisy person in the house.”

Patrick reached the telegrams back to Jose.

Jose walked to the server and got a tray and put the telegrams on it and tried to straighten them out.

Eleanor was trying to catch her breath.

Brenda was staring at Jose.

She said, “That meant you did not read them, because you were too busy trying to get back here to hear what we were talking about.”

Jose did not say anything but reached the tray to Patrick.

Brenda said, “Jose I have not seen Maureen this week. Where is she?”

Jose said, “I gave her off until everyone is here.”

Eleanor looked up at Jose.

Brenda said, “Why?”

Jose looked at Brenda.

Patrick was reading the telegrams and sensed Jose looking at him.

Patrick took off his glasses and put the telegrams and his glasses down on the table he said, “Jose, why did you give Maureen all that time off?”

Jose said, “I saw her one day walking home.”

Patrick said, “What’s wrong with that?”

Brenda said, “She lives on the same street with Steven.”

Patrick looked at Brenda.

Eleanor looked at Brenda.

Brenda frowned up and said, “That’s miles away and it is freezing cold.”

Patrick looked at Jose.

Jose said, “Since you got to know. You told me to deal with the workers the best way I see fiit and if there was a problem then come to you. Maureen is not a problem. I believe she has a head injury from when a boy hit her in her eye as a child. We don’t where she came from or anything about her family.”

Patrick sat back in his chari and folded his arms and said, “What did you do?”

Jose looked back at the door and said, “Not me.”

Brenda said, “Who?”

Jose said, “Nadine jumped on the neighbor and beat him bad.”

Eleanor turned and looked at Jose.

She said, “Jose I got all kind of problems but you are not making any sense.”

Jose said, “I saw Maureen walking home. I asked her where was her ride. She said she did not have one. She walked two hours in the morning in the freezing cold and two hours in the evening in the freezing cold. I put her in the carriage and took her home and told her not to report until everyone is back here. That way she would not be out tolling to get to work.”

Eleanor said, “What about her pay?”

Jose said, “She would not get paid. The next day I and Nadine were having problems and I had to take Lorraine to the train station. We argue all the way to the train station.”

Brenda said, “Who?”

Jose said, “Me and Nadine.”

Brenda twisted her mouth and said, “At least no one heard you.”

Jose turned his head.

Patrick said, “Jose, who heard yall?”

Jose said, “That Nathan. But he did not say anything. I dropped that Lorraine off at the train and waited with her. That man was there that she was flirting with. I TOLD her not to.”

Eleanor turned and looked at Jose.

Jose said, “I took my money and went to the grocer and bought Maureen enough grocery for the week nd put money on an account that no one but her can get.”

Brenda said, “Jose why would you do that when you think Maureen is abused.”

Jose looked at Brenda and said, “I did not think Maureen was abused. You do.”

Patrick and Eleanor looked at Brenda.

Brenda was shameed and sunk her head.

She said, “I do think that and I would not fire her that time she was about to steal my food. I figured she was stealing the food because of a mand. I would not put her in a position to be beat on. I was in that position and refused to et another woman be beat on.”

Eleanor jumped and leaned over the table and said, “Momma.”

Patrick looked at Jose and said, “Jose please finish so I can read these telegrams and get my buggy ready and a carriage for Eleanor. We will be leaving here around ten am. We need singers and musicians for next week do you know anybody? I have to hear them and they have to be some good.”

Jose stared at Patrick and said, “You said about seven things sir.”

Brenda said, “That shows you were listening.”

Jose looked at Brenda.

He said, “Nadine walked into the grocery and knew the manager because she used to live with him.”

Eleanor was shocked at Brenda and shook her head and looked up at Jose with surprise at Nadine.

Jose said, “She is not as old as I thought. But we went to Maureen. And I did take her a few buckets of coal you had in the backyard.”

Patrick said, “Fine.”

Brenda waved her hand for him to continue.

Jose said, “I took the grocery to her door and knocked. She came to the door…”

Jose held his head down for a minute.

Then he lifted his head up and said, “She talked like a little kid. I could not believe it. All the time we worked here I never talked to her. She looked at Nadine and said, “Hey Nadine.”

Jose stopped talking.

Brenda said, “I bet that head injury came from a man and not from a boy throwing a rock.”

Patrick said, “Brenda!”

Brenda stared at Patrick.

Jose started talking again and looked at Brenda.

Eleanor looked at her.

Brenda did not say anything.

Jose said, “I went to the carriage and got one bucket of coal and took it and put it on her front porch.

Craig came to the door yelling at Maureen about who was at the door and grabbed the bags of food from her. I told her I put money at the grocer for her…”

Brenda said, “You should not have said that in front of the man.”

Everyone looked at Brenda.

Jose said, “I did not now he was at home, until later Nadine said he doesn’t work but live off Maureen’s salary. He and his son. But any way. One of their neighbors saw me stopped and took the grocery and coal to Maureen he said ‘what you selling that coal for? I was about to take the other bucket out the wagon when Craig comes out laughing and telling the man what he was going to sell the coal for.”

Eleanor turned all around and looked at Jose.

Jose said, “Nadine jumped on the man and beat him so bad. Steven and Alicia were coming back from town and saw Nadine on top of the man beating him. Craig was still trying to sell the coal. He was sitting on the porch by the bucket of coal. I went and got the bucket of coal and took it back to the wagon. He telling me to hurry and bring him the coal. When Nadine finished beating the man. She went to get her hat and gloves…”

Brenda said, “Craig stole them.”

Jose said, “Yes. Nadine was about to jump on him and he ran in the house. Then we fled. She gets up from this man and talks to Alicia and Steven like she was refreshed. Then we fled. Nadine said she wants to be the sheriff.”

Eleanor was shocked.

Patrick said, “And maybe a good one.”

Eleanor turned and looked at Patrick.

Patrick leaned forward in his chair and unfolded his arms and said and started reading the telegrams.

Jose was looking over the table.

Eleanor said, “Momma and daddy.”

They looked at her.

She said, “Can I invite Claressa, Alvin and their ambassador friend, and Gen to Sunday’s dinner tomorrow.

Jose said, “No” and walked out the family dining room.

Brenda said, “Send them a message and have them to wait for a response.”

Eleanor yelled, “Jose!”

Jose was headed to the liquor table and stomped and walked to the hallway table and got a pen, envelope and paper.

He walked back in the family dining room.

Eleanor looked at him.

He picked up the tray the telegrams were on.

Patrick moved his elbow so Jose could get the tray.

Jose put the paper, pen and envelop on the tray and gave it to Eleanor.

She stared at Jose.

Patrick said reached a telegram to Brenda and said, “I don’t know what to think about that. Shirley is upset because Al’s pensions have been stopped. Ryan’s father said he will see what has happened. She said, “The children have no shoes, coats or anything for the winter. She told Beverly to go and open accounts in her name and she would pay the bills when she returned.”

Brenda was reading the telegram.

Eleanor looked up from her message to think.

Brenda said, “Why would his pensions stop like that?”

Patrick said, “Mob.”

Brenda said, “That’s why Al was talking about going back to work.”

Eleanor was looking down at her message and said, “What are we going to do?”

Patrick said, “I believe Shirley has done it. She told Beverly to get accounts and buy them everything they need.”

Eleanor was still writing her message and said, “Why could not Shirley go and do all of that?”

Patrick and Brenda yelled at Eleanor.

Patrick said, “She is in college Eleanor with all her work she has to do. She just got out of the hospital. She has to deal with Mabel to get your momma’s decorations here with them or before. She has been going everyday and staying with Lorraine. And trying to balance her businesses accounts. That’s why she sent the hospital book for us to review the book. She suspects something but she is young at this. She doesn’t know what to look for. She wants to know was there anybody else stealing money from the hospital.”

Jose was standing and listening.

He said, “Debra was over the money.”

Patrick, Brenda and Eleanor looked at Jose.

Patrick said, “Jose not a word.”

Brenda said, “That’s why Al had that ugly suit on again, because he could not go and buy another one.”

Brenda looked at Eleanor and said, “Eleanor Shirley wants to know how the sales at the dfress shop.”

Eleanor said, “Everything is sold. There is nothing else and she is not going to send Anyone Else SHOPPING FOR HER!”

Eleanor’s voice rose high with each word, because she was thinking that Lorraine would be alive and well if not shopping for selfish Shirley instead of her closing the shop for the holidays.

Brenda said, “Be quiet Eleanor. No one could have thought that shopping errand that Lorraine wanted to do, could end like this. You better not accuse Shirley of causing this evil harm against Lorraine. We have to work quietly to get to the bottom of this. But Lorraine is our priority and for her to be well. Whenever she comes home we have to be ready to help her.”

Patrick had a very stern look on his face and said, “Eleanor do you understand?”

Eleanor started whimpering.

And handed the message backwards to Jose.

Jose did not look at Eleanor but took the message.

Patrick said, “Eleanor.”

Eleanor folded her arms and said, “Yes sir.”

Brenda looked at Eleanor and down at the message.

Patrick read the next telegram.

He said, “This is from Lillie. She said, she will meet us at the capitol next week.”

Eleanor and Brenda yelled, “Us!”

Patrick did not respond.

He said, “She has two boys and one girl. Do yall care to help me shop for them?”

Jose looked at Patrick.

Brenda said, ”No.”

Eleanor said, “Hell NO!”

Patrick looked at Eleanor and said, “Do you need some of that medicine Hutch left here to calm you down?”

Jose raised his hand.

Patrick and Brenda were looking at Eleanor.

Brenda said, “Jose put your hand down and you take that message to the ambassador and wait for their answer. If they say yes. Shop for a prime beef dinner and at least two desserts. We won’t be back until later. Anything else Eleanor?”

Jose said, “I have a question. Are we suppose to be doing anything for Nathan and Denise’s wedding in two weeks?”

Patrick stopped looking at Eleanor and looked at Jose.

Brenda looked from Eleanor to Jose and said, “I don’t recall. If you go to the butcher stop and ask Nathan. I think. First ask Peter and Nadine. If they say yes then they will tell you what to do.”

Patrick said, “Brenda let’s send Beverly and Al cash for their Christmas present.”

Brenda said, “Can we send it today? We will be quite busy from today on.”

Patrick said, “Fine. Shirley said, they were using their saddle money to live on. Lets send enough for them to buy decorations, tree and food. So they will have something until this mess is sorted out.”

Jose turned and walked out.

He did not want to talk to them anymore.

He went into the kitchen and said, “Peter are we suppose to be doing anything for Nathan and Denise wedding?”

Peter said, “I’m doing her wedding cake and punch.”

Jose said, “What about the workers wedding gift?”

Peter said, “Everyone said money, since they will be going on their honeymoon the next day.”

Nadine grinned and elbowed Peter and said, “We didn’t have to travel.”

Jose walked out the kitchen to his bedroom.

Peter turned and kissed Nadine.

Hosea went and put on two hats, two scarves, his gloves and a blanket.

He went outside and got in a carriage and rode to the stables and told them to get the Stiths’ buggy ready and a carriage for Eleanor.

Jose left and went on the opposite side of town into the Stith’s old neighborhood.

He had forgotten about that neighborhood. It was stately and grand.

Fe also forgot which house was Claressa, both of her parents are dead and she is the only child.

Jose said, “God where is her house? I guess they are at her house and not Alvin’s house with his family.”

Jose was about to turn around and saw one of the security guards standing in the front of the house watching him.

He turned slightly and rode to the house.

The security guard looked at him.

Jose lifted up the message and said, “I have a message for Ambassador Alvin and Claresa from Eleanor Stith.”

The security guard said, “Who?”

Jose rolled his eyes at the security guard because Eleanor’s name was still Simmons until the change took effect.

Jose said, “Simmons.”

The security guard walked to the carriage and took the message.

Jose said, “She said for me to wait for an answer.”

The security guard looked at Jose and said, “Who?”

Jose nodded his head for ok and said, “Miss Simmons.”

The security walked up the stairs and went into the house.

Claressa and Alvin were peeping out the window laughing.

They looked at the security guard when he entered the house.

Alvin and the other ambassador were laughing.

Claressa had her hand held out for the note.

She said, “Frank give me the note.”

Alvin said, “Good job Frank.”

Frank said, “Thank you sir.”

Claressa said, “Eleanor is inviting us over tomorrow for Sunday supper.”

Alvin looked at the other ambassador and said, “What time is your tea social?”

The other ambassador, Earl, said, “From one to three pm.”

Alvin said, “You want to join us for dinner after that?”

Earl said, “Sure.”

Claressa wrote yes on the message and said the other ambassador will be joining them later.

She gave the note back to Frank.

Claressa said, “You know Alvin I haven’t been to church since we buried daddy. I think I want to go to church tomorrow.”

She stood and walked upstairs to their bedroom.

Alvin looked at her.

Frank walked back to Jose and handed him the note.

Jose looked at Frank and rode off.

He stopped and yelled back at Frank, “I have to know if they are coming to dinner so I can go to the butcher.”

Frank said, “Yes.”

Jose turned the carriage around and sped to town which was closer than from the Stith House.

He went into town to the butcher and bought the food and sped back to the house to take a nap until dinner.

Patrick said, “Ryan said Lorraine was the same since the last time.”

Patrick read the next telegram he said, “Dr. Woodson said, “Meredith is officially off duty until next year…”

Patrick started laughing.

Brenda and Eleanor looked at Patrick.

Patrick said, “Bradley said he believed that Meredith had to take off or would be getting a divorce from Felipe.”

They laughed.

Patrick took one telegram and folded it and put it in his shirt pocket.

Eleanor looked at Brenda.

Brenda said, “Patrick.”

Patrick said, “It is a telegram from Morgan to Mag. We can go by there today so I can give it to her.”

Eleanor said, “Have we heard from everybody?”

Patrick reached a telegram across the table to Eleanor.

Patrick looked at Brenda.

Eleanor was huffing she knew it was the military academy about her children.

Patrick looked at Eleanor.

Brenda looked at Patrick then Eleanor.

Eleanor read the telegram and threw it on the table.

She sa9id, “I’m going to Gen. Maybe I can take her to lunch. She is close to Robert and Bethany. Daddy did you like their restaurant?”

Patrick said, “Eleanor you are not going to address that telegram?”

Eleanor said, “No.”

She stood and walked upstairs to her bedroom.

She put on her hat, scarf, coat and gloves.

Eleanor checked her money in her bag. She always carried at least twenty five dollars.

She left and walked out the house and got in the carriage and put the blanket across her lap and rode out the yard and to Gen.

Thirty minutes later she rode in Gen’s carriage way.

Gen saw Eleanor pulling up.

She had her nightgown on and was sitting and cutting out paper ornaments that she drew that morning and painted.

Gen’s hair was over her head.

She looked around and rushed to the door.

She took the bar off and unlocked the front door.

Eleanor was looking out at the stables.

She saw Gen’s horses watching her.

Gen opened the front door, before Eleanor knocked.

Eleanor was reaching for the doorknob and back at the horses.

She said, “Good morning Gen. Let me in. Your horses are spooking me.”

Gen said, “I don’t even look at them. I bought them from Jessie.”

Eleanor said, “Didn’t Jessie get those horses from the dead mobsters?”

Gen sad, “I don’t know. If he did that is why they are spooky. Come in. Why are you here?”
Eleanor rushed in the house and closed and locked the door behind her.

She said, “We forgot. We need musicians for the reception and maybe after dinner the next night. We want to know about Olivia.”

Gen said, “Olivia quit. She moved in with the college professor that rented my house to. Hurt Dan. But I am sure GOD has him a wife. Olivia and Matthew will have a New Years Eve wedding and immediate reception following at their church over here. I have to tell Jose they bought Abigail’s house. Abigail and her big eye husband will be moving to California during this month. I think they leave next week.

Eleanor said, “Do you know anyone that can sing and play an instrument?”

Gen said, “Sure I do.”

Eleanor said, “Who? Not you.”

Gen said, “No. Robert and Bethany your former butler and his wife. They are excellent.”

Eleanor said, “Are you sure. Daddy asked Jose and Jose did not say anything.”

Gen said, “They did not get along.”

Eleanor said, “Let’s go to their restaurant for lunch. I can ask them to sing or play something because momma’s heart was set on Olivia and her sons.”

Eleanor was looking at the mess around Gen’s parlor.

She looked at the Christmas tree and her eyes buck and she said, “Whoa.”

Gen looked around and said, “It’s a mess. I will clean it up. I asked GOD to keep me busy.”

Eleanor said, “Your artist is coming out. Look at this tree.”

Gen started laughing.

She said, “Let me wash and dress they are not open all day. I haven’t had anything to eat since yesterday amid that foolishness.”

Gen went and put more coal on the in the stove.

She watched Eleanor loving her tree and the ornaments.

Eleanor heard the kitchen door but did not turn around.

Gen ran outside to the stables with her nightgown and got a pail of water from the well and took it to the horses.

She put more feed in their trough.

She petted the horses and walked back to the house.

She unlocked the kitchen door and Eleanor jumped.

Gen looked at Eleanor and said, “You did not know I was gone?”

Eleanor said, “No.”

Gen tested the water and it was hot she took it in the downstairs washroom and went back in the kitchen and added some cold water to the water pail and took it to the washroom.

Eleanor looked at Gen’s hard work.

Eleanor yelled, “Gen how are you going to decorate your wreath and garland with the same ornaments.”

Gen yelled, “Yes.”

Eleanor said, “Any particular pattern?”

Gen said. “No.”

Eleanor said, “Can I help?”

Gen said, “Yes.”

Eleanor sat and cut out the ornaments and pasted them on the wreath and hung the wreath on the front door.

Gen walked downstairs and was looking festive like Eleanor.

Eleanor stood as Gen was putting on her gloves.

Gen looked around and said, “Where’s the wreath?”

Eleanor opened the front door.

Gen looked at the wreath sand said, “Beautiful Eleanor. I knew you were artistic. You need to start painting. Let’s go and eat.”

Eleanor looked around and said, “Gen, can I look at your washroom?”

Gen said, “You need to use it? Come around here.”

Gen led Eleanor to her washroom.

Eleanor looked at the room and she was swinging the door back and forth.

Gen stood and looked.

She knew Eleanor’s mind was not like most people.

She knew Eleanor was trying to figure something out about her washroom and the water and the wall that was separating the two rooms.

Gen grinned as she stood and watched Eleanor’s mind work, that she had water coming into their house and being heated through a furnace. The workers loved it. They only had to fill the water barrel once or twice per week depending on how many baths.

Gen thought let her do what she does. People don’t know how great of an engineering mind she has. John used to sit and watch her as a baby and said, ‘she is going to do great things. She can build anything’.”

Eleanor’s mind was on what she was doing and passed Gen and walked in the kitchen and searched the kitchen.

Gen got tired and sat on the steps with one foot on the step the other on the floor and her left elbow on her thigh and her left hand under her cheek.

She said, “Eat.”

As Eleanor walked out the kitchen door,

Gen jumped up and ran into yhe living and grabbed Eleanor’s bag and gloves and locked the kitchen door and put the bar behind it and ran out the front door and locked the front door and jumped in the carriage and drove to the well where Eleanor was walking to.

Eleanor bucked her head back.

Fen said, “Get in Eleanor You can do this Monday. I need to eat and I told you Harold and Bethany is not opened all day and you have to get home by dark.”

Eleanor blinked and jumped in the carriage.

Gen turned the carriage around and sped out of her yard and onto the street.

She sped through the neighborhood that Jose like and said, “Eleanor that is Jose’s house he is buying. And that is Abigail in front of him.”

Eleanor peeped out the carriage and saw men loading up wagons.

Eleanor said, “They will be loading the ten am train in the morning. You will see your enemy for the last time today unless you see them on your way to church. And Aunt Gen you will not be at the train station tomorrow or stake it out tonight. You got to be here for Shirley’s children.”

Eleanor chuckled.

Gen looked at Eleanor.

She sped out on the main street of the city that lead to the new military headquarters.

 People yelled at Gen for cutting them off.

Eleanor said, “Gen this carriage has our name on it. They will come after us and not you. You know how momma and daddy feel about that.”

Gen slowed and bowed at the two wagons of people.

The people bowed back.

She continued up the street and pulled in front of Robert and Bethany’s restaurant.

Eleanor stepped out of the carriage and walked around to help Gen out.

People looked at this well-dressed woman.

Robert saw Eleanor, the heir to everything stand in front of their restaurant with Gen.

He stood for a moment and beckoned for Bethany.

Bethany walked over and looked out the window and said, “Shue” and ran into the kitchen.

Robert looked after Bethany.

Their helped looked at Bethany.

The patrons looked at Bethany.

Eleanor was holding Gen’s arm like she does Eleanor.

Some well dressed men stopped on the street and tilted their hats to Eleanor and Gen.

Robert was thinking, “Damn I got to protect them while they are on my property.”

He looked around and left the shotgun in the kitchen by the pantry.

He thought about his guns were in the safe.

Robert was walking to the door as Eleanor and Gen were walking to the door.

He kept saying “Lord don’t let anything happen. Lord don’t let anything happen! LORD DON’T LET ANYTHING HAPPEN!!!!!!”

Robert opened the door and said, “Greetings ladies.”

Eleanor let Gen walk in first.

Robert waited for Eleanor to step in the restaurant as he was closing the door he rolled his eyes.

The two men that greeted Eleanor and Gen turned and walked to the door.

Robert’s hand was still on the doorknob when the younger man knocked on the door.

Robert umped and opened the door and smiled and greeted the men.

He thought, “What do they want?”
He offered the men a table near the front of the restaurant.

Gen and Eleanor walked to the back of the restaurant to watch the carriage.

The younger man pointed to the back.

Robert looked and said, “Follow me.”

He looked around and thought, “No sign of Bethany. This is stupid, She has been to the ball and the wedding. She has been around Eleanor. I know Eleanor is a fight but that part of our relationship is over.”

Robert sat the men several tables from Gen and Eleanor.

The younger man pointed closer to Gen and Eleanor.

Robert smiled and said, “No.”

The younger man looked at Robert and said, “So you know who those delightful ladies are?”

Robert smiled and reached the gentlemen his signature hand written menus.

He walked to Gen and Eleanor.

He stood in front of their table with his back to the two gentlemen.

Robert was used to seeing gentlemen from when he worked at the Stith House.

He said, “Those two gentlemen followed you ladies in here.”

Gen peeped around Robert and saw the older man peeping at her.

She smiled.

Eleanor was looking around and said, “Robert this is delightful. I can offer you a few suggestions that will set your restaurant apart from everyone else.”

Robert was surprised and said, “Thank you Eleanor.”

The younger turned and said, “Eleanor.”

Robert closed his eyes.

Eleanor looked at Robert then she peeped around Robert at the younger man.

The younger man.

He said winked at Gen.

He stood and said, “Let me introduce myself. I am United States Senator Lee Richardson from the great state of California. And this…”

He pointed to the older gentleman.

Lee said, “This is the esteemed United States Ambassador Orin Watkins, our country’s ambassador to Switzerland.”

The older gentlemen stood and bowed.

Gen was grinning and flirting.

Robert rolled his eyes at the senator and walked away to find Bethany.

He put in an order of liver and onions for Gen and soup for Eleanor.

The girl at the bar said,
“Sir you did not take their orders.”

Robert said, “I have for years.”

Bethany was finally coming downstairs with Robert Jr. Who she had washed and dressed.

Robert looked at his son and grinned.

Robert was putting hot tea on a tray and lemon and honey.

Bethany looked at the tray and said, “Twist the lemons.”

Robert said, “I forgot.”

Their helpers looked at them.

Bethany said, “We served them for years. We know what they like and don’t.”

Robert walked in front of Bethany and Robert Jr.

The U. S senator looked at Robert and waved his hands.

Robert rolled his eyes at him.

The U. S. ambassador looked at Robert.

Robert put the tray on Eleanor’s and Gen’s table and served them tea.

He walked to Bethany and said, “You know Bethany, and this is our son Robert Jr.”

Robert Jr said, “Hey.”

Everyone was delighted and laughed and talked.

Robert looked back and saw the gentlemen rolling their eyes at him.

He was grinning at Robert Jr.

He walked over to them and said, “Gentlemen I am truly sorry. Whatever you want it will be on me, the proprietor of this restaurant.”

They looked at Robert and the younger man said, “All will be forgiven if you tell me who those ladies are.”

Robert said, “Sirs I cannot tell you. If they tell you it won’t be on me.”

Robert Jr. walked to Eleanor.

She picked him up and started talking to him.

She was pronouncing words he was repeating after her.

Robert was grinning and ah with Bethany and Gen.

The Us senator turned and looked out the window at the carriage Gen and Eleanor arrived in and said, “Stith”.

Robert turned and looked at him and said, “Sirs what about a glass of brandy?”

The ambassador said, “Whiskey”

He turned his head from Robert in anger.

Robert went to the bar and poured them a double amount of Patrick’s brand of whiskey.

He walked immediately back and served the gentlemen the whiskey.

Commander Tyler walked in the restaurant.

He saw Eleanor sitting in the back and playing with Robert Jr.

The commander saw the men watching Eleanor.

He walked to the back and Robert saw him and his uniform.

Robert thought, “Damn. I am not prepared for these dignitaries.”

Robert walked to the Commander and reached out his hand and said, “How can I serve you?”

The U. S. senator said, “You can’t get too close to the women he bites.”

Eleanor looked at the U. S. senator.

Gen looked up.

Bethany turned around to see who the men were talking to.

Eleanor said, “Commander Tyler how are you?’

Commander Tyler nodded and walked to the front of the restaurant and waited for the other commanders to arrive.

They begin to ride up.

Bethany turned and saw them.

She ran to greet them and put them at the front of the restaurant.

Their helpers brought Gen her liver and Eleanor her soup.

Gen said, “He knew what we eat after all of these years.”

The Us ambassador said, “Which one of you is a Stith?”

Eleanor was proud of her family’s name.

She said, “I am.”

The distinguish gentlemen men looked at Eleanor.

The younger man said, “Moss Eleanor we notice the proprietor tried to shield you from us.

Eleanor and Gen laughed.

Gen said, “I am Genevia Perkins. Widow of John Perkins…”

Robert was walking back to check on the distinguish gentlemen, while Bethany and their helpers began to take their orders.

The Ambassador said, “I remembered Ambassador John Perkins. We worked together in India for three years.”

Gen stared at the man.

The U.S. senator saw Robert standing and listening and pushed his whiskey glass and said, “Get us refills.”

Robert went to the bar and got another tray and was peeping and trying to listen to the distinguish men conversation with Eleanor and Gen.

He put two clean glasses on the tray and took the bottle whiskey to the distinguish gentlemen.

The commanders were watching Robert.

Robert set the clean glasses on the table and poured the whiskey from the bottle in the clean glasses and removed the dirty glasses.

Robert Jr said, “Hey daddy.”

Robert grinned and turned around and walked to Robert Jr, who Eleanor was feeding him the broth from her soup.

Robert said to Eleanor, “I’ll bring you some more soup.”

Eleanor said, “No. I need musicians and singers for our ground-breaking ceremony.”

Gen had her head down and had the fork in her left hand and was thinking.

She raised her head up and said, “I remember you. You were the Undersecretary’s aide. He was always arguing about not doing a double copy of his reports.”

The ambassador threw his head back and heartily laughed.

He commanders looked at the man.

Robert stepped to the side and looked at the Ambassador.

Robert looked at the commanders.

One of them pointed to bottle of whiskey.

Robert walked to the table of the distinguished gentlemen and picked up the bottle of whiskey and put

it on the tray with the dirty glasses.

He walked to the bar and took the dirty glasses off and wiped the tray and took four clean whiskey

glasses and put them on the tray with the bottle of whiskey.

He walked to the table with the commanders and poured the four a little more than a shot, because

they waited for him.

Bethany and the two workers rushed out the kitchen with the commanders’ meals.

Robert was looking at the presentation of the plates of food and was pleased.

Commander Tyler said, “Sir.”

Robert walked to him and bent down to hear him.

Commander Tyler said, “Who are those gentlemen?”

The other commanders were quiet and listening.

Robert looked back and said, “The older gentleman is the United States Ambassador to Switzerland.”

The commanders said, “oh.”

Robert turned his back a little to the crowded restaurant and said the younger one is the United States

Senator from California.

The commanders looked at them and continued to eat their late lunches.

Gen was laughing and talking to the ambassador to the delight of the other patrons.

Eleanor was playing with Robert Jr.

The commander noticed Robert kept looking back at Eleanor and said, “Sir problem?”

Robert said, “No. We were not expecting so many of you distinguished gentlemen. I used to be her family’s

butler. I am hoping I am doing well.”

The commanders looked at Robert.

Robert moved so Bethany could serve the last two commanders.

The commanders loved how good the food was and the presentation of the plates.

Two men slowly passed Eleanor’s carriage and nearly stopped when they saw the name.

The young U. S Senator saw them.

Robert saw them.

The commanders saw the two men.

They watched the men.

The commanders just had an all morning meeting about the mob strong holds.

The men walked across the street and stopped to watch who would get in the carriage.

The U.S. Senator was concerned for the ladies.

He understood why Robert was protective of the ladies.

Gen and the ambassador were laughing and have a great time reminiscing.

Gen turned to Eleanor and said, “What is Alvin’s last name?”

Eleanor said, “Smith.”

Gen said, “Orin do you know Ambassador Alvin Smith?”

He hollered and said, ”Yes and his wife Claressa.”

Gen pointed to Eleanor, “They are her best friends from childhood up to now.”

Orin looked at Eleanor and said, “MY lady it is good to meet you.”

Eleanor grinned as she continued to feed Robert Jr.

The U. S. Senator watched Eleanor playing and feeding Robert Jr.

Robert back and said, “Excuse me.”

He said, “Miss Stith when are you leaving?”

Eleanor looked at Robert.

She said, “Why Robert?”

Robert looked out the window and said, “I think you need to go home.”

Eleanor looked out the window and saw the two men lurking across the street.

The U.S. Senator looked out the window.

The ambassador looked out the window.

Gen stopped laughing and said, “What is wrong?”

The U. S. Senator said, “Those two fellows across the street took a great interest in your carriage.”

Eleanor said, “They should have taken an even greater interest in the shotgun on the floor.”

The distinguish men laughed.

The U. S. Senator looked at Robert and said, “Who are you sir?”

Robert looked at him and said, “I am her family’s former butler.”

The U.S. Senator said, “That’s how you knew what to serve them and how to perfect the twist of the

lemon on their tray?

Eleanor told Gen she was invited to supper after church service tomorrow.

Gen said, “We are having dinner at the Stiths tomorrow.”

She looked at Eleanor.

Robert walked away.

The U. S. Senator smirked because he saw Robert as Eleanor’s former butler knew what that meant.

Eleanor said, “Sure you are invited to Sunday’s supper.”

Robert walked back to get Robert Jr.

Eleanor said, “Robert before you get your handsome baby…”

Gen was looking at Robert Jr and smiled and said, “Yes he is.”

Robert blushed and said, “Thank you.”

Eleanor said, “Robert can give Ambassador Watkins and Senator Richardson the address to the house?”

U.S. Senator Richardson said I have a tea to attend tomorrow from one to three pm, may I come after that

time?”

Eleanor said, “Yes sir.”

Eleanor reached Robert Jr. to Robert.

She and Gen stood and put on the coats, hats, scarves and gloves.

Robert gave Bethany their son.

He ran back to Gen and Eleanor.

The distinguished men stood as Gen and Eleanor were about to leave.

Eleanor looked out the window at the two men still lurking by the buildings.

The commanders were enjoying their food, but watching the two men outside and the distinguished

guests in the back.

The U.S. Senator exclaimed,” Stith. The shipping and railroad magnates.”

Gen looked at the U.S. Senator.

The ambassador looked at the U.S. Senator and they burst out laughing.

Gen said, “You sat there and tried to remember the name.”

U.S. Senator Richardson said, “We are walking you outside to your carriage. I wondered why those thugs

recognized the name and was lurking around the square.”

The U.S. Senator was leaving money for the whiskey.

Robert rushed back with the address and picked the money up and gave it to the U.S. Senator and said,

“No sir.”

He reached the ambassador the Stith’s address.

Gen looked back at the window.

The gentlemen walked the ladies to the door and saluted the commanders and walked to the carriage.

Eleanor stepped in the driver’s side and Gen in the rider’s side.

They looked around and did not see the two men.

The U. S. Senator looked and said, “That’s strange.”

The U.S. Ambassador looked around and saw the two men had mounted horses.

Commander Tyler and the commanders saw the men.

Commander Tyler said, “They walk around these streets and see who they think they can rob. Where is

our men?”

One of the commanders pointed with his fork and said, “Right there.”

They ate in silence and watched.

The commanders were determined to break the mob and get them out that state.

Eleanor looked and saw the men were now on horses to follow them.

Gen reached back on the floor and got the double barrel shot gun and loaded it up.

Eleanor went in her bag and put her gun on her lap.

Eleanor said, “See you gentlemen tomorrow.

Gen laughed and giggled and waved.

Eleanor turned around and sped onto the street.

The two men tried to ride next to the carriage on each side to force them to stop.

Commander Tyler saw the men and jumped from his lunch and stood.

Commander Tyler saw the tip of the double barrel shotgun.

He walked outside the restaurant and joined the U.S. ambassador and the U.S. Senator watching.

Commander Tyler pointed at the carriage with Eleanor and Gen and three men on horses flew to catch

the carriage.

Gen shot at the man on her right and he fell off his horse.

The three soldiers sped up.

One of the soldiers caught Eleanor and he threw the man to the ground and Eleanor kept going.

Gen felt good.

Eleanor and Gen talked about supper the next day.

Eleanor got out the carriage and walked in the house with Gen.

Gen said, “I need water.”

Eleanor put the water pails in her carriage.

She and Gen rode to the well.

She dropped Gen off at the stables, while she got the water.

Eleanor was looking at the distance between Shirley’s house and the well. She could not think but will

come back and measure the distance.

Gen petted her horses.

Eleanor rode back to Gen.

Gen got in the carriage and they rode back to the house.

Gen and Eleanor took the water pails in the house.

Gen said, “I have to shampoo my hair and do my nails and bathe in the morning.”

Eleanor had two lanterns in her carriage that she used when she was out at night.

She put one on Gen’s front porch and one close to the stables.

She lit the lanterns and Gen’s cottage looked beautiful.

It was beginning to get dark.

Eleanor wanted to be home to talk to her momma and daddy about their guests for Sunday’s supper and

the men lurking about town.

She told Gen how to light the lanterns and it should last for twelve hours each day.

Eleanor waited until Gen locked her doors.

She turned the carriage around.

She saw Shirley’s house a small distance away.

Eleanor sped home.

She rode to the back of the house and went through the kitchen.

Eleanor said, “Jose has dinner been served?”

Jose looked at Eleanor and said, “When you go to the dining room.”

She ran up the backstairs to her bedroom.

Eleanor heard her momma and daddy down in the sitting room.

She took off her hat, scarf, coat and gloves and threw them on her couch.

Eleanor used her bath area and washed her hands.

She walked out her bedroom and to the stairs.

She saw Patrick and Brenda walking to the family dining room.

She hurried downstairs to the family dining room.

Brenda and Patrick walked in and were sitting.

Eleanor ran into the family dining room.

Patrick and Brenda were watching Ruth.

Ruth smiled at Eleanor and looked at her dress.

Eleanor saw Ruth smiling at her dress.

She said, “Hi Ruth.”

Ruth said, “Hello Miss Stith.”

Eleanor wanted to ask Ruth what she was running from the law for.

Patrick knew Eleanor was thinking that.

He rolled his eyes at Eleanor.

Eleanor looked at Patrick and sighed.

Brenda looked at Eleanor.

Eleanor said, “Good evening momma and daddy.”

She was putting her napkin in her lap.

She said, “Gen and I went to Robert and Bethany’s restaurant this afternoon.”

Jose was walking in with the dinner tray.

Dan brought some fish and they had salad and green beans with rolls.

Patrick was delighted when he saw the fish and laughed.

He said, “Dan?”

Jose said, “Yes sir.”

Patrick said, “Tell Dan I said, thank you. How badly I wanted some fish.”

Brenda looked how sad Ruth’s eyes were.

But Ruth tried to smile and be pleasant.

Jose was placing the dinner plates in front of the three.

Eleanor said, “Jose what did Claressa say?”

Jose said, “She said, yes and another guess.”

Eleanor was excited and cut her fish.

She said, “Trout? I thought the season was over for the trout.”

Patrick said, “Grace.”

He said, “GOD thank YOU for putting on Dan’s heart to bring us this fish. We needed it. Bless him LORD. In JESUS’ name.”

Patrick put a fork of fish in his mouth.

He closed his eyes and said, “oh my. I love it. Give me some of that butter sauce.”

Jose reached Patrick the butter sauce dish.

Eleanor said, “Right? Daddy this is trout.”

Patrick looked at Eleanor’s fish and said, “Yes.”

Jose was about to leave.

Eleanor said, “Jose we have more guests for dinner.”

Jose stopped and looked at Eleanor.

Brenda looked at Jose.

Patrick was putting another fork of fish to his mouth and he looked at Eleanor.

She tried to grin.

Patrick, Brenda and Jose looked at Eleanor.

Eleanor rolled her eyes at Jose.

Jose stared at Eleanor.

Patrick said, “Eleanor.”

Eleanor turned from Jose and looked at Patrick and disgusted Brenda.

Eleanor said, “Momma. This is the holiday season.”

Brenda said, “My house is not like I want it to look to greet guests Eleanor.”

Jose shook his head at Eleanor.

Brenda said, “Jose stop. I told you, Eleanor and Lorraine to stop acting like spoiled brats.”

Ruth said, “Ma am, how is Lorraine?”

Everyone turned and looked at Ruth.

Ruth stepped back and said, “I’m sorry.”

Patrick said, “I understand most of the staff wants to know Lorraine’s condition. I just got the latest report from her doctor today before me and Mrs. Stith left for the day.”

Patrick looked at Jose who was staring at Eleanor.

Patrick said, “I’m getting like Mrs. Stith. Yall fuss and fight like sisters and brothers. You act like little children all the time. Keep it up I’ll let Mrs. Stith whip all of you.”

Jose said, “Who?”

Eleanor yelled, “Whip?”

Brenda turned and looked at Patrick and said, “Let me?”

Jose and Eleanor burst out laughing.

Ruth looked at Jose and Eleanor whose reaction was synchronized.

Patrick looked at them.

Brenda slowly turned her head and looked at Jose an Eleanor.

Patrick said, “I did not go outside our marriage at all.”

Brenda looked at Patrick and said, “Neither did I.”

They continued to eat and watch Jose and Eleanor laugh.

Brenda said, “Eleanor who did you invite to Sunday supper?”

Eleanor had to catch her breathe and said, “Gen, we met an ambassador and a United States senator today at Roberts and invited them to dinner.

Patrick said, “You invited an ambassador and a United States senator to our common Sunday supper Eleanor?”

Eleanor said, “Daddy I rally hate when you put my name at the end of a sentence like you are scolding me.”

Patrick stared at Eleanor.

Brenda was staring at Eleanor and said, “Eleanor why would you do that when we are not prepared to entertain and dine them?”

Eleanor looked at them and said, “I started to invite Commander Tyler and his commanders and wives.”

Brenda turned and looked at Patrick.

Patrick did not look at Brenda but said, “She’s trying to get back at me. Look at her arm across the back of the chair.”

Brenda slowly looked back at Eleanor.

Jose had stopped laughing and looked at Patrick.

Brenda looked at Jose and said, “It’s not funny now is it Jose.”

Jose said, “I really don’t like for you to put…”

He looked at Eleanor.

Eleanor said, “My name at the end of a sentence like you are scolding me.”

Patrick looked at Eleanor then at Jose.

Patrick said, “Jose, I have to meet your family.”

Jose said, “No you don’t. They are like me.”

Jose and Eleanor burst out laughing.

Brenda stared at them.

Patrick looked and kept eating.

He said, “Brenda ignore them.”

Brenda was flabbergasted.

Patrick said, “An ambassador and an United States senator. That is nine people.”

He looked at Brenda and said, “We can do it.”

Brenda said, “Ruth.”

Ruth stepped forward.

Brenda said, “I’m sorry for this quick change of plans. I want you and Nadine to set this family dining room formally tomorrow for Sunday supper/ I know it should not be, but the formal dining room is too large for nine people. Use the second set of formal china, crystal and flatware. See what you all can come up with for a centerpiece that would match the tablecloth and the dishes.”

Ruth said, “Which tablecloth?”

Brenda said, “I would say the white one, but I do want it to be kind of fancy. See about the light pink.”

Jose and Eleanor were finishing their laughing.

Patrick kept eating and looking at them.

Brenda said, “Jose remember this while your tickle box is open…”

Patrick chuckled and kept eating.

Brenda looked at Patrick and said, “Jose did you get the prime rib for tomorrow. If you did how much did you get?”

Jose caught his breathe and waved his hand.

Patrick looked at Jose and said, “What does that mean?”

Jose said, “I bought the whole piece of prime rib because I know yall.”

Patrick said, “What?”

Jose said, “Yall would invite the whole church.”

Patrick looked at Brenda and said, “Get him.”

Jose ran.

Eleanor looked at Jose.

Ruth was stunned and did not know what to do.

Brenda said, “’Get’?”

Brenda said, “Ruth do you know how much greens and green beans are left? You may not.”

Ruth said, “No ma am I don’t know.”

Brenda was looking at Eleanor.

She said, “Go and tell Peter or Dan to check. And see what other vegetables are there for tomorrow.”

Patrick looked at Ruth and said, “Tell Jose to get back in here.”

Brenda turned to Patrick and said, “I don’t believe she did that?”

Patrick was looking at Eleanor.

Eleanor was looking at Brenda.

She said, “Momma. You always say don’t let people be strangers. Gen knew the ambassador. They had a great time talking about other diplomats they knew. I did not John was fifteen years older than Gen.”

Brenda said, “So.”

Patrick looked at Brenda and said, “I didn’t know he was that much older than Gen.”

Eleanor grinned and said, “This ambassador is the same age Gen.”

Brenda looked at Eleanor and said, “We will see.”

Patrick said, “What?”

Brenda said, “Match making.”

Patrick said, “Eleanor stay out. What are you going to do about Percy?’

Eleanor said, “I can’t help him anymore. After Christmas he will go to Bruce in Philadelphia.”

Brenda said, “What Eleanor?”

Eleanor said, “Drunk.”

Brenda stared at Eleanor and said, “Sending him to that lush won’t help Percy.”

Eleanor said, “Momma, Percy has to go. I have worked with him and got sick. I spend more time talking to him and trying to show him love and compassion. I told him all he had to do, for two weeks not to get in trouble. It has only been a week. I told Percy he would be blocked from the railroad or any family business.”

Jose was on the outside of the door listening.

Ruth walked up and they listened.

Eleanor said, “I over did everything with Percy. He has used up all I have. He can visit for the summer and go on vacations with us.”

She turned and looked at Patrick and said, “I thought about him being sent to Bruce forever and the other children not having any contact with him. That would turn him to a Patrick Jr or Christopher. Momma, Daddy.”

Patrick and Brenda looked at Eleanor.

Eleanor said, “Percy can go to the academy, but Bruce has to pay for it and all parental issues he has to solve. He is free no more. I never want Bruce at this house. Therefore, I can send him back wherever with Jose.”

Jose started stomping in the hall.

Ruth walked in the family dining room because she knew they could hear Jose stomping in the hall.

Patrick looked at Ruth.

Brenda looked at Ruth.

Eleanor turned and looked at Ruth.

Ruth said, “Excuse me. Peter said, they have potatoes white and sweet yams, turnip greens, pole beans and yellow squash.”

Brenda said, “Where is Jose?”

Jose was catching his breathe.

Ruth said, “He was on his way back. I’ll check.”

When she turned to walk out the family dining room Jose walked in.

Brenda said, “Jose, I am not sure whether to have hors d’ oeuvres or go right to supper.”

Jose said, “Go right to dinner. It is a heavy meat and vegetables.”

Brenda said, “Have Peter to make his famous assortment of rolls and breads and butters.”

Jose rolled his eyes.

Eleanor grinned and looked up at Jose.

Patrick said, “Eleanor I did not spank you enough when you were little.”

Eleanor stared at Patrick.

Brenda kept talking and said, “The vegetables are fine. I want the au gus and a horseradish sauce and two different desserts.”

Jose said, “My suggest a second meat for tomorrow and at the formal dinner in two weeks.”

Patrick said, “Why?”

Jose said, “Everyone doesn’t eat beef.”

Patrick said, “What second meat is in the house?”

Jose said, “Some veal that Dan bought for something.”

Eleanor hollered.

Patrick looked at Eleanor.

Brenda ignored them.

She said, “All of you better act right tomorrow, All of you never missed up Stephanie’s wedding with all those commanders here. I will not be embarrassed.”

Jose pointed and said, “That was this lush and the other one.”

Eleanor stopped laughing and sat up and looked at Jose.

Eleanor said, “You were the one watering down the people’s drink.”

Patrick could not speak.

Brenda stared at Eleanor.

Jose said, “You know she is getting back at me.”

Patrick said, “She better Jose.”

Brenda just stared at Jose.

She said, “Jose…”

Jose did not say anything.

Brenda said, “We have three United States Ambassadors coming to dinner along with a United States Senator. No watered drinks.”

Patrick said, “No watered down nothing.”

Jose said, “I put it on Lorraine as a joke. I went and got the real stuff out the wine cellar. Everyone was fine.”

Patrick looked at Brenda and then Jose.

He said, “Is that why the commanders said to me, ‘You saved the best for last’.”

Brenda said, “What did you tell those commanders Jose?’

Jose said, “Name last again. I told them I had to water down that specific bottle because of Lorraine and Eleanor. They looked at Lorraine and Eleanor and said they understood.”

Eleanor sat up and looked at Jose.

She looked at Brenda and Patrick.

She said, “That’s the reason Commander Tyler and the other commanders kept watching me today like I was a drunk.”

Jose said, “At least they remembered you.”

Eleanor’s mouth dropped opened.

Patrick looked at Eleanor and back at Jose and said, “Jose did you make up the drinks with the commanders?’

Jose said, “Yeah.”

Brenda shook her head.

She said, “What have we solved? Tomorrows supper. Percy. Ground -breaking ceremony. Reception which I think is going to be fantastic. The dinner. Jose you have a good idea to have two meats. We will have ham, turkey and goose the next week. I’ll be tired of eating the same food by then. You all get together and think of a classic but two different meats for the dinner next week.”

Eleanor could not speak but pointed at Jose.

Patrick looked at Eleanor and said, “We sent Beverly and Al their Christmas present. I feel good about that. I sent Beverly a telegram to ask Dr. Woodson and the staff if they wanted a ham, turkey or goose for Christmas or the holidays?”

Brenda said, “Why?”

Patrick looked at Jose and said, “We ordered for a hundred workers. We forgot thirty workers are gone this year. So we have plenty of meat left over.”

Brenda said, “We can give it to the orphanage or the Rest stop.”

Eleanor was still pointing at Jose.

Patrick said, “Eleanor I am not going to say anything to Jose. You three were terrible at Stephanie’s wedding.”

Brenda said, “I came pout great.”

Patrick looked at Brenda and said, “What about tomorrow?”

Brenda looked at Patrick and said, “Patrick. I do not believe you said that. Like you are hoping that I mess up on something.”

Patrick looked at the last fish and said, “Jose put that fish on my plate.”

Jose put the fish on Patrick’s plate.

Patrick said, “Damn how many people are coming to the dinner next week?”

Brenda and Eleanor did not say anything.

Patrick looked at them and said, “You better get a firm count and flowers and a firm menu. That I want handwritten Jose and passed out to the guests as they enter the formal dining room.”

Jose looked at Patrick.

Brenda said, “Like the restaurant we went to in Austria. That was nice.”

Patrick said, “Eleanor go and count the number of actual champagne we have left. And make sure Percy can’t get to it.”

Eleanor was getting up and looked at Patrick.

Patrick said, “Ruth we have something to talk to you about. Come and sit down.”

Eleanor flopped back in her seat.

Jose flopped down at the next seat.

Ruth stood still.

Jose said, “Ruth come and sit and close the door.”

Ruth walked to the door and was closing the door behind her.

Jose jumped and caught her and walked her back to the family dining room and closed the door.

He sat Ruth in the chair close to Brenda.

Patrick said, “Why are you two here? I said Ruth.”

Eleanor said, “I live here.”

Jose said, “I work here.”

Brenda said, “I’m finished talking to you two. I want my third one here.”

Brenda started crying.

Patrick looked at Brenda and started talking.

Eleanor mouth dropped open that Patrick was not comforting her momma.

Eleanor pushed her chair back to get up.

Patrick looked at Eleanor and said, “You get up. You go.”

Eleanor sat back down.

Jose looked at Eleanor and chuckled.

Patrick said, “Ruth this mess about Maureen I heard about it and that you and a few other workers have a disagreement.”

Ruth was looking and thought, “That damn Jose.”

Patrick said, “It did not come from Jose. Someone voiced concern over the disagreement. I believe that has been disregarded by the other parties.”

Eleanor looked at Patrick and thought, “He is bluffing Ruth. He does not know anything.”

Patrick said, “I want to find Maureen’s family. Do you anything about Maureen?”

Ruth said, “No sir.”

Brenda looked at Ruth and said, “Like Lorraine. She doesn’t have anyone but the people who work around her.”

Ruth was thinking and said, “There are times that Maureen talks like a grown up and there are times when she talks like a kid. I think when she is having a bad time as an adult she acts as a child.”

Jose grunted and cut his eyes at Eleanor.

Brenda saw Jose.

Ruth said, “I believe she had a great childhood because she is always happy when she acts as a child.”

Brenda jumped and looked at Patrick and Patrick looked at her.

Eleanor and Jose looked at Brenda.

She said, “My GOD. I forgot to count, Steven, Alicia and Emilou for the dinner. The reception is fine because it is not a formal seating. Eleanor, we need to do a formal seating chart and put all the children by you.”

Patrick looked at Brenda.

Jose looked at Brenda.

Ruth was still trying to think about Maureen.

Eleanor jumped and looked at Brenda and said, “Daddy.”

She looked back at Brenda and said. “You will not put all the children by me. Did Ryan say you well in the head?”

Patrick looked at Eleanor.

Ruth was still thinking and said, “She said something about seals at the waterfront all the time.”

Patrick said, “California.”

Brenda said, “Thank you Ruth.”

Ruth had her hands on the arms of the chair to push back.

Jose was about to stand.

Patrick said, “Ruth, now about you.”

Ruth was half way sitting.

Jose sat down.

He wanted to hear this.

Patrick said, “Brenda and some friends were having lunch yesterday and the telegram clerk was running to the sheriff but stopped by the restaurant’s window and Brenda was able to see a name that was on the telegram. It said, ‘Ruth Dillingham’, is that you?”

Jose and Eleanor looked at Ruth,

Eleanor said, “Look at momma. She is sitting there like daddy is telling the truth. He is bluffing Ruth again. Momma has to tell me about her being abused. The slave freer.”

Jose very seriously said, ”Ruth.”

Eleanor looked at Jose and thought, “Look at this so and so.”

Ruth sat and said, “I have talked to Nathan.”

Patrick was a little stern and said, “But you are in my house.”

Ruth said, “I know sir.”

Jose said, “You know what happened to Lorraine.”

Ruth said, “No.”

Jose said, “Someone found her floating in one of canals in New York.”

Ruth said, “What that has to do with me?”

Jose shrugged his shoulders and said, “Nothing. We don’t know what happened to cause that to happen. We don’t want someone to come looking for you. Here.”

Ruth stood and walked out.

Brenda said, “Thank you Ruth. We will be out of here in a minute for you and Nadine to set up for tomorrow.”

Ruth looked at Brenda and then at Jose.

Ruth saw how Eleanor was looking at Jose.

Ruth realized they were concern about her safety.

She found Nadine and told her what Brenda said.

Nadine started looking for something for the center piece.

Ruth was just standing staring.

Mike and John looked at Ruth.

John said, “They have gotten on her about something.”

Patrick looked at Jose and said, “Thank you.”

Jose nodded.

Brenda said, “He was being sarcastic.”

Jose nodded his head again.

Eleanor looked and said, “Jose you just caused a mess with Ruth. Suppose the law is looking for her. You gave her a head start to run.

Jose was sitting and thinking about his house and did not care about Ruth.

He did not like her because of the way she treated some of the workers.

Patrick said, “Did they find Shirley’s tea set?”

Jose nodded his head.

Patrick said, “Jose tell the staff that the word on Lorraine she is the same. No change. Alice had a set of twins yesterday. A boy and a girl. Spencer was much better and went home today. Permanent. Leon is constantly improving.

Meredith is on leave until she has her boy. Monica will stay with Lorraine until Shirley return.”

Eleanor said, “Like what she can do.”

Brenda looked at Eleanor.

Patrick said, “I’m going to send a telegram to thee law enforcement for California. Maybe somebody know something about Maureen. If Maureen is her real name.”

Patrick said, “We had a great visit with Joe and Peggy today.”

Brenda grinned.

Eleanor said, “How are they?”

Patrick said, “Much better than at the beginning of the year.”

Brenda laughed.

Brenda said, “Sarah was out of school for the holidays. She will be going to the state college in the capitol in the spring. She going into business like Shirley. She was making Christmas skirts when we were there.”

Patrick said, “We gave them their Christmas early. They loved the whiskey. I went with Joe down in the woods. He was looking for a Christmas tree they had not had one in decades. He found one and I helped him cut it down and take it home and set it up.”

Eleanor said, “What daddy?”

Patrick looked at Brenda and pointed at Eleanor.

Jose stood and walked out.

He walked into the kitchen and pass Ruth.

Nadine said, “Ruth come on.”

Ruth turned and walked out the kitchen with Ruth.

Jose finished the schedule for the next thirty days.

He posted the schedule for everyone to see.

He went outside to the re-modeled barn and stables and called the men into the house for a quick meeting.

Jose walked back to the house and went downstairs to the workers wash area and the laundry rooms and had the few workers to come to a meeting.

He knew no one was upstairs and he went into the storage are and called Nadine and Ruth for a quick meeting.

Jose looked around and everyone was present.

Mike and John looked at the stablemen.

Mike shook his head.

John said, “They don’t wash at all.”

Mike frowned and tuned up his nose.

Samantha was turning around and around and smelling her underarms.

She kept looking around.

Veronica said, “Samantha, what are you doing?”

Jose was looking at her and said, “Samantha what is wrong?”

She was looking at the bottom of her boots.

Mike and John were silently hollering by the cabinets where they could only be seen by Nadine and Jose.

Jose looked at them.

He said, Mr. Stith wanted to pass on news from some of our workers. Lorraine is still the same. No change.”

Veronica said, “Is she dead?”
Everyone looked at Veronica.

Veronica said, “I like Lorraine and I want to know what is going on.”

Theresa and Mellissa said, “Veronica.”

Jose said, “That is all the doctor said in his telegram to Mr. Stith today. Spencer is much better.”

Samantha grinned and said, “Thank God.”

Jose heard her.

Nadine said, “Huh.”

Peter looked at Nadine.

Jose said, “Spencer has been released from the hospital.”

Samantha clapped.

Ruth looked at her.

Jose said, “Meredith and Dr. Felipe took him to the train station today to go home today. Meredith said he received a telegram that his parents and family and friends are waiting for him.”

Mike yelled, “Good boy Spence.”

Samantha looked.

Veronica looked at her and said, “I told you to go and see about him or at least write him.”

Samantha looked shamed.

Mellissa and Theresa looked at Samantha.

Jose was glad because Samantha was too stupid.

Briana looked at Veronica.

She and Jose had secretly started dating the week after Thanksgiving.

Jose was older than she so is her father over her mother and they are happy.

Jose likes Briana because she is honest, has integrity and want to have fun.

Ruth said, “What about Meredith?”

Jose looked at Ruth and said, “Meredith was still working until today. She would not leave any of the men from this house until they were well.

John clapped.

Veronica clapped.

Briana grinned.

Mellissa said, “Good.”

Jose said, “Leon is the only one left and he has all kind of doctors and nurses. He is getting better every day. He may be released by the spring.”

Jose looked at Ruth and said, “Meredith went on leave today when she her husband, the doctor…”

The women laughed.

Briana looked at Theresa and giggled.

Jose looked at Briana.

Mike and John stepped around to see who Jose was looking at.

Dan saw them looking.

He started looking too.

Jose turned and saw them.

They grinned at Jose.

Jose said, “Meredith will be on leave until next year. Vivienne is still with Sally. They say Sally is bad.”

Nadine said, “What yall expect. Yall acting like she was not going to be hell.”

Peter said, “Nadine hush.”

Nadine looked at Peter.

Mike said, “Peter you know better than that.”

Mike and John made a face at Peter.

Dan held his head down and chuckled.

Jose looked around and said, “All I know Sally was spiting on people and Brenda told her she would beat her and the pain from her disability would be nothing on what she would put on her. Brenda said, “Shirley did not spit on people and she beat her. The doctors banned Brenda from Sally.”

Everybody laughed.

Mike frowned up and said, “That’s the sick child that is spitting on people? She’s not sick anymore.”

Jose said, “I got a telegram that what was told me. Mrs. Stith does not talk about people. She won’t say anything.”

Mellissa said, “Was she really Sally’s mother?”

John looked at Mellissa.

Jose acted like he did not hear Mellissa.

He said, “Monica will stay there to be with Lorraine.”

Jose held his head down and he was quiet for a few minutes.

Nadine began to tear up.

Briana looked at Jose.

Theresa said, “Jose, anything else?”

Briana looked back at Theresa.

Jose voice cracked and he said, “Monica, Vivienne, Leon, Meredith and their husbands and fiances will spend the holidays together.”

Briana grinned and said, “Thank You Lord. They will have someone for this great season and not be alone.”

Mike and John walked around the cabinets to get a look at Briana.

She looked at them.

Jose said, “To end on a good note.”

Nadine said, “All of it was good. We just have to keep praying for Lorrainer and that bad ass Sally.”

Mellissa said, “Yall I don’t believe that was her child.”

Theresa said, “Mellissa.”

Mellissa looked at Theresa and said, “If the law come around here looking for that child or her what you gonna say?”

Dora laughed.

Veronica said, “You all know that Mellissa has a criminal pass theory on everybody.”

Ruth said, “What is mine’s.”

Everybody looked art Ruth.

Jose said, “Alice had an unexpected set of twins.”

Briana and Mellissa were overjoyed.”

Jose said, “Hutch said she said never again.”

Dora said, “What she had?”

Jose looked at her his mind was still on Lorraine.

Dora said, “Boys or girls.”

Jose said, “They had one boy and one girl.”

Mike said, “That’s nice they got that over. She was maid?’

Dora said, “Yeah she met her husband, the kids teacher in Europe and thy married. She never came back here but went straight with her husband to his hometown. His whole family are teachers in the western part of the state.”

Mike said, “That’s nice.”

Jose said, “Nobody has said anything yet. But I know the Stiths will be cutting workers. There were a hundred of us. Now the last month were down to seventy.”

Ruth said, “Because some of them were crooks and in jail.”

Nadine said, “What happened to Steve?”

Jose said, “He got twenty years in France.”

John said, “The laundry man for what?”

Jose said, “He was in a plot to kidnap and kill Shirley and get money from Eleanor.”

Mike looked at Jose.

John could not say anything.

He thought, “GOD bless us for fighting for them. I am glad I stayed that night. I got more money than I could ever earn. I bought a very nice house. I need to furnish it.”

Jose said, “I just wanted you all to know, because you see only three of them are here. We have been busy this year with parties and weddings. This holiday is going to be busy beginning next week. Tomorrow there will be three ambassadors here and a United States senator be on your best behavior. Nadine.”

Everyone snickered.

Nadine was talking to Peter and heard her name.

She turned and looked at Jose.

Jose said, “I want you to look out for your future.”

Mellissa said, “I need to get married.”

Jose said, “That too.”

Theresa said, “I don’t want this type of money. People want to kill you over your own money.”

Mike looked at Theresa and said, “If you have a penny someone wants to kill you over that penny. You might as well have money and enjoy life.”

Theresa said, “You got money?”

Mike looked at Theresa and turned his head.

John stared at Theresa.

Nadine said, “I know they are getting ready to make some changes. I have a husband.”

Peter looked at Nadine.

She said, “He can work three jobs to support us.”

Peter turned his back on Nadine.

Ruth’s mouth dropped open.

Dan was tickle that he was chuckling inside.

Mike looked at Peter.

Jose said, “I’ll give you a head up. Oh, Natalie is back and she will have her baby this month. She is going to college next year to become a school teacher like Josiah”

Dora said, “Good.”

Jose said, “The Stiths are big on helping people to go to school. There are only manual jobs around here. So you might have to move or find three jobs to meet your needs.”

Stephen and Steven were listening.

Jose said, That’s all. Anyone has anything. The work schedule for the next thirty days I have posted. That will take us through the middle of January. Look at it and if you need to change and can’t find someone to change with, then see me. I will not be here Christmas Eve nor Christmas day. I will be here the next day to see Denise and Nathan off on their honeymoon. What about their money gift yall?’

Briana said, “When we get paid.”

Jose said, “Fine.”

Nadine said, “Whose watching Lorraine’s house?’

John raised his hand and said, “Me and Stanley.”

Nadine turned and looked at John.

John said, “Yes I live in that neighborhood. You are not the only person who live in a high class neighborhood.”

Peter was still reeling from Nadine saying he can work three jobs.

Dan was still chuckling.

Jose thought, “Wait until they find out where I’m moving.”

Jose said, “Does anyone have questions?”

Ruth said, “When will we get our Christmas gift?”

Jose said, “I don’t know. They just got back this week. Give them some time.”

Jose looked around the kitchen and said, “Dan, Mr. Stith said, ‘thank you’ for the fish.”

Briana grinned and said, “I loved it.”

Everybody said, “Yeap.”

And they clapped.

Dan grinned.

Dan had so many fish swimming in his stream all he had to do was take a bucket that he put used his pocket knife and pierced holes in the bucket and put it out in the stream and a few hours later he went out and pulled the bucket out and it as filled with different fish.

Jose saw Briana like fish.

He had to think of where to take her to eat.

He did not like Robert and Bethany.

Jose thought, “Maybe I can take her to the capitol and take her to a different restaurant each time we go.”

Jose walked out the kitchen and walked down the hall and checked the rooms.

Nadine and Ruth walked behind hin and went into the linen roon and got the tablecloth and put all the things on a cart.

The stable men went back to the stables.

Samantha turned her head and smelled under her arms.

She checked her boots again.

Veronica looked at her.

Mike and John were grinning and locking at her.

Veronica whispered and said, “It was those stablemen.”

Samantha said, “What?”

Veronica turned and looked at Samantha and said, “The stinch.”

Samantha’s mouth dropped open.

Mike and John shook their heads.

They started cleaning the kitchen.

Allen came to get Veronica, Samantha and Dora.

They grabbed their things and rushed out the door.

Rita, Briana, Mellissa and Theresa rode with Steven.

They grabbed their coats and scarves and ran out the door.

Nadine and Ruth cleared the family dining room and cleaned the dining room.

Jose walked upstairs and checked the rooms.

He passed Eleanor’s opulent bedroom and went downstairs.

He saw Nadine and Ruth with cart and setting up the family dining room.

Jose walked the side of the suites and checked the windows and the doors.

He cleaned the parlor and swept and dusted the room.

He cleaned and swept the sitting room and dusted the furniture.

Jose checked the liquor table and moved the near empty bottles and brought new unopened bottles and placed on the liquor table.

He walked to the billiards room and swept and dusted the room.

Nadine and Ruth walked through to go back to the storage area with the cart.

Nadine said, “Jose will help out. That Robert would not lift a finger nor William.”

Jose heard them and kept dusting.

He thought about Percy being a drunk and Michael being a gambler and Eleanor will send them to Bruce. She probably wait another year with Michael. They are not bad kids. I just don’t know what is Percy’s problem.”

That Saturday.

Shirley took her bath and dressed.

Monica cooked her the famous omelet and a slice of bread and some apple.

Monica washed and cleaned up the kitchen and emptied the bath and wash water.

Monica was excited about her date that afternoon.

Shirley was trying to write her papers but began to grunt again.

Monica became mad and said, “Shirley while I go and run the errands and check on Lorraine you go to the Stith. I’ll come back around one pm and get you and bring you home until I get back from my date”

Shirley said, “OK Monica.”

Monica helped Shirley dressed and comb and brush her beautiful hair.

Shirley had written her message to Patrick and Eleanor and said, “Monica I need you to send this telegram to grandpa.”

Gregory knocked on the door.

Monica ran to the door and said, “We have to take Shirley to the Stith first.”

Gregory walked in and picked up Shirley and Monica grabbed her bag and a blanket and ran to the door and locked it.

Gregory put Shirley in the back of the carriage and Monica put the blanket over Shirley and jumped in the front of the carriage and yelled at Gregory.

She said, “Gregory clean this filthy and smelly carriage or else I will terminate your job with us and get Shirley’s money back.”

Gregory said, “Ok. I was running people all over town last night and made it back late to the stables and did not clean nor feed the horses and slept a few hours and came on.”

Monica was angry.

Gregory sped to the Stith.

He jumped out and picked up Shirley.

Dr. Woodson and Dr. Ralph had just arrived at work.

Dr. Ralph looked at Shirley.

Dr. Woodson said, “Bring her here.”

Nurse Sharon looked at Shirley and Monica who was right behind Gregory.

Monica looked at everybody and said, “Good morning.”

Monica said, “Dr. Woodson.”

He was walking to the room with Shirley.

He looked at Monica’s hand and said, “Yes.”

Gregory was coming out the room.

Dr. Woodson looked at him.

Monica looked at the stinky Gregory and said, “Shirley wants me to send this telegram to her mother and grandfather.”

Dr. Woodson walked back to the office and unlocked the office.

He was about to check the office when he heard Shirley crying in pain.

He ran out the office.

He went to Shirley and closed the door.

Monica went to the telegram machine which was on and there was a number of telegrams.

She sent the telegram to Patrick and Eleanor.

Monica wanted to leave but it was not right that she would leave the business part not taken care of.

She put the telegrams in folders.

She filed the paid bills away.

She got all Dr. Charles’ telegrams from his wife and did not read them.

Dr. Woodson had several telegrams.

Two bills Monica paid and sent the merchants a telegram back that she paid their representative and had him sign the receipt book.

Monica heard Shirley crying.

She walked out the office and walked and spoke to Leon and walked to Dr. Charles and said, “Good morning. Your name is on these.”

She walked and spoke to Vivienne and Sally.

Monica saw Dr. Woodson.

She rushed to him and said, “Dr. Woodson these telegrams were for you. Two merchants sent telegrams they were not paid. I sent telegrams back with the names of their representatives and they signed the receipt book.”

Dr. Woodson looked at Monica and said, “Thank You.”

Monica said, “I told Shirley I would come back and get her by one. Is that alright?”

Dr. Woodson said, “No. She will be here this week-end. I will try to get her through the few days next week for school because it is important to her. Get her books and papers and pen and bring her a few nightgowns and socks.”

Monica stood and stared at Dr. Woodson.

Dr. Woodson saw Monica was not understanding Shirley’s condition.

He said, “Monica.”

He took Monica by the hand and walked her down the back hallway towards the kitchen.

Dr. Woodson he looked around and said, “Shirley is not normal. She had tremendous disabilities that none of us ever had seen. GOD gave us direction and guided us every day to help Shirley. Her insides were twisted and gnarled. Dr. Ralph helped to straighten them out. We can’t see inside the human body so we have to feel. We did not know if she had all her internal organs or not. We did not know if she had a reproductive system. We just assumed she did not. But Shirley has a cycle. It was extremely painful for her and us to put her through all of that. The previous surgeons had removed some of her bones out of her legs which would make her incapable of moving her legs yet along walking.”

Monica was stunned and said, “She runs.”

Dr. Woodson grinned and said, “GOD. GOD kept Shirley alive to do good things for other people. HE put her in a family with money that the money can help others.”

Monica was still stunned and said, “Like this hospital?”

Dr. Woodson said, “And the one they will be opening in two years. The children took their trust fund money and build the hospital.”

Monica nodded her head.

Dr. Woodson said, “Shirley will not live a long time unless GOD decides otherwise. She will have good times and bad times until it is her time to go to GOD. She is determined to be her normal until she does go to GOD. Her momma and grandparents finally accepted that and let Shirley live her life the way she wants to live it. She is taking double courses so she can get her college degree next spring.”

Monica tried to grin and said, “She is smart.”

Dr. Woodson looked up and saw Hutch waiting for him.

He said, “Monica thank you for the telegrams. Remember what I said to bring to Shirley.”

Monica nodded and stood and thought about Shirley for a minute.

Hutch looked at Gregory, who was sitting in the chair by the nurses’ desk.

Hutch looked at Gregory and was about to tell him to go and bathe.

Dr. Woodson walked to Hutch and Dr. Charles was walking to them.

They started talking about their rounds.

Monica walked to Gregory and said, “Come on stank.”

The nurses heard her and snickered.

Gregory walked behind Monica.

Monica said, “The south hospital.”

Monica went into the hospital and stayed for two hours and saw Lorraine twice and touched her feet and prayed for her before she left.

Gregory had time to go and get feed for the horse and water.

He brushed the horse’s coat and said, “We don’t both have to be nasty and unkept.”

Monica was disturbed over Shirley.

Ryan saw Monica.

He walked over and said, “Hello Monica, where is Shirley?”

Monica slowly looked up and tried to smile and said, “She’s in the hospital.”

Ryan thought and said, “Ok. You take care.”

Ryan went in to attend to Lorraine.

Monica walked out the hospital.

Gregory saw Monica’s face and knew it had to be about Shirley and her friend there.

He looked at Monica.

Monica said, “To the apartment and then to Smith’s and back to the Stith and back home.”

They rode in silence.

Monica stepped out the carriage.

Gregory jumped out the carriage and started sweeping it out and cleaning the seats.

Monica unlocked the front door and walked in and the apartment and went to the table and got the books, papers, and pens.

She went into Shirley’s room and took out three nightgowns and six pairs of socks. One robe and her comb and brush.

Monica knew Shirley love her soap from Lorraine, she put a bar in the midst of her nightgowns.

Monica put everything in a bag.

She walked out the apartment and locked the door.

Gregory had completed sweeping the carriage and wiping the seats.

He took Monica to Smith’s.

Monica was stunned she did not know what to think.

She went into Smith’s and saw a green dress nd a red dress.

She walked to the counter to pay.

Harry told her the dresses were on sale.

He gave the dresses to his manager.

Monica was waiting for the price.

The manager was checking his books and grinned and said, “You will like this price. They were twenty dollars a piece. But the owner has them for ten dollars each.”

Monica smiled and gave the store manager the twenty dollars. Now she was broke.

She walked out the store.

Gregory took her to the Stith Hospital.

Monica said, “Shirley you will be in here for next week. I brought the two books on the table and paper and pen.”

Monica closed her door and helped her put on a nightgown and socks.

Monica folded Shirley’s clothes and put them on the dresser and her nightgowns and socks in the drawers.

She placed her comb and brush on the dresser.

She said, “Shirley what else you need or want?”

Shirley said, “Eleanor.”

Monica said, “Me too.”

Monica put Shirley’s blanket on top of her and placed her books and paper so she could easily reach them.

Monica said, “I’ll see you tomorrow.”

Shirley said, “Ok.”

Monica went into the hospital’s administrator’s office and sent Eleanor a telegram that Shirley was in the hospital and will probably be in it until she comes home. She asked for Eleanor. Monica said me too.”

Patrick received the telegram as he and Brenda were going to their bedroom.

Patrick and Brenda read the telegram.

He walked down the hall and up the stairs to give Eleanor the telegram.

Patrick stood and looked at Eleanor.

Eleanor read the telegram and said, “Daddy I can’t do anything about this.”

Patrick said, “I know.”

Patrick said, “Good night.”

He kissed Eleanor on her forehead and left the telegram with her.

Eleanor stood for a few minutes.

She went and dressed for bed and comb and brushed her hair.

She was thinking about Percy the most that evening.

Patrick and Brenda went in their suite and dressed for bed and put their prayer pillows on the floor and prayed for most of the night.

Brenda said, “GOD help Eleanor to pray and pray for her children. I don’t know what is wrong with Percy, but don’t let any of them turn out like Patrick Jr and Christopher. In JESUS’ name. Amen.”

Eleanor was sitting on her bed for most of the night and finally she walked to the side of her bed and got on her knees and said, “God I can’t help my own children. Help them please. Amen.”

Monica went back to the apartment and dressed.

Gregory was out in the wagon.

Monica locked the apartment and went and got in the carriage.

She thought, “It looks better and smells better and the horse has eaten.

Gregory took Monica to the restaurant.

He saw Al and Beverly arriving.

Gregory spoke to them.

Monica had her five dollars and walked to them.

She took her coat off and Al and Beverly said, “You look great.”

They stepped inside the restaurant.

Gregory went to his room after he picked up a couple of customers and took them home.

They sat in the back because of his smell.

Gregory went to his room and bathed and put on clean underwear and socks and a shirt and pants.

He shampooed and dried his hair and brushed his teeth.

He picked up the college president and took him to the north hospital to get Laura.

He took them to the Stith Hospital.

Dr. Hutch had her a room next to the two little black children.

Dr. Woodson said, “President Shirley is here and maybe here until school is out. She has all of books and papers working on her classwork. Will there be a problem with her attendance?”

The president said, “No. Can I see her?”

Dr. Woodson walked to Shirley was lying on her side and reading.

Shirley looked at the door and saw the president of her college and tried to grin.

He said, “Hello Shirley I brought Laura here. She will be here for a while. Don’t worry about your attendance. Complete the other two papers and turn them in this week.”

Shirley said, “Thank you.”

She tried to flip over on her back

Dr. Woodson walked over and helped her onto her back.

The president saw the terrible pain Shirley was in and said, “Good afternoon Shirley.”

He walked out Shirley’s room and thank God for that hospital and the doctors are caring and kind.

The president walked back to Laura’s room and told her Shirley was in the hospital.

He sat with Laura for a while and they talked.

The little black boy and black girl were playing between themselves.

Steven and his father came to visit them.

Steven heard the president of his college and rolled to the next room and saw him and Laura.

Steven was glad to see Laura.

Mr. Hall helped the little black kids open the colors and the coloring books.

The president told Steven that Shirley was in the hospital up the hall.

Steven left and went looking for Shirley.

He rolled to the nurses’ desk and said, “Ma am, where is Shirley?”

The nurse put her finger to her mouth and pointed backwards.

Steven mouthed, ‘Thank you.’

He found Shirley and spoke to her.

Shirley was trying to go to sleep.

Steven looked at her papers and books and left so Shirley could sleep.

Monica had a great time with Al and Beverly and their doctor friend.

Al and the doctor went to the bar.

Beverly said, “Monica what you think?”

Monica said, “He is out of my status.”

Beverly said, “You need somebody.”

Monica said, “Besides whiskey? Shirley is in the hospital and probably be there until she goes home for the holidays.”

Beverly said, “Does Eleanor knows?”
Monica said, “I sent her a telegram this afternoon. I can’t go with Shirley because I will be watching Lorraine.”

Beverly said, “Shirley knows what to do. She will get on that train and don’t move. The boys will be on the train with her. I will go and see her tomorrow.”

Al and the doctor returned to the table.

The doctor liked Monica and was talking to her.

Gregory was taking customers home.

He was riding all over the city.

He returned to the restaurant three hours later.

Al, the doctor, Beverly and Monic had just walked out the restaurant.

Monica saw Gregory and said, “Perfect.”

The doctor smiled at Monica.

He asked her for her address.

Beverly hit Al’s arm.

Al were grinning.

Al and Beverly spent the last of their funds, for the month, on the dinner for their friends.

Monica kept a note pad and peen.

Brenda demanded the workers to keep a note pad and a pen at all times.

Monica wrote the address for the apartment and handed it to the doctor.

She and Beverly walked to the carriage with Gregory.

They talked for a minute and said, ‘Good evening.”

Al and the doctor laughed and talked.

The doctor walked to Monica and raised the note with her address and said, “I will be in contact with you Monica.”

He held her hands and said, “Good evening.”

Monica was blushing.

He helped her into the carriage.

Gregory pulled off.

He found a new way to Shirley’s apartment from some students and it took thirty minutes to get back.

Monica was grinning and excited.

Gregory looked at Monica and thought, “The chambermaid turning into a princess. Well a queen at her age.”

He was quiet and let Monica enjoy her time from a great date.

He knows how that feel.

Al and Beverly were standing back at their carriage and eagerly waiting for Jerome.

Jerome stood and watched Monica ride away.

He was grinning.

He turned to look at his friends.

Al and Beverly began to grin and be excited for him.

He held his head down and turned and looked back at Monica’s disappearing carriage.

Beverly was holding Al’s arm and hitting it with her other hand.

 They were excited.

Jerome walked to his friends and grinned.

He looked at Al.

Al’s lips were quivering.

He remembered the hell Jerome went through at each hospital he worked.

They hated him because he was brilliant.

No hospital wanted to accept him.

Not only was Jerome a brilliant doctor but an outstanding surgeon.

He struggled in Pennsylvania.

Al became his friend when he moved to Philadelphia after he married Beverly.

Al and Beverly were Jerome’s only friends for decades.

They kept him going.

Some of his patients were evil and lied on him., to get him fired from the hospitals.

They fired him time after time. Jerome would stay with Al and Beverly, but he started putting all his money up.

He lived in a room on the black side of town.

He saw vacant houses that needed to be repaired.

During the time he was fired, he took the little money he had and bought the houses and repaired them.

The hospitals would pay Jerome less than all the doctors, but Jerome accepted the little money because he wanted to be a doctor and a surgeon.

The black side of town found out Jerome was a doctor and a surgeon and started going to him instead of the white doctors, who mostly treated them bad.

The blacks stopped going to the white hospitals.

The white hospitals and white doctors realized they were losing money without the black patients.

The white doctors went to some of Jerome’s black patients and told them to say Jerome mistreated them. The white doctors went to the state board to have Jerome’s license be taken from him.

The black community found out who talked to the white doctors and lied on Jerome.

They found those men and tied them up and carried them all the way to another state.

Everyone was waiting for the white doctors’ witnesses.

Jerome was scared to death.

Al and Beverly were with him, sitting on each side of him.

Beverly was holding his arm.

The hearing room was packed with the hospitals representatives and the black community was not allowed in but were in the hall and outside the hearing room building.

The two men take took the three men out of state rode to the building.

One of the men looked at his wife.

She grinned inside herself.

She knew the three men could not make it back that day.

Everyone waited all day.

The white doctors kept running up to the license board members looking back at Jerome and Al grinning.

Al and Beverly knew the white doctors were acting as if they had won the case because the board members were on their side.

Everyone was growing tired.

No one was moving out of their seats.

Beverly was very angry and wanted to say something.

Al whispered in her ear and said, “This is about Jerome, not you.”

Beverly looked at Jerome and sealed her mouth and sat.

The board members told the white doctors to send and get their witness and be back before five pm.

The white doctors stood and grinned and looked at Jerome and walked to the back of the hearing room.

They yelled at the black people.

One of the white doctors said, “Hey boy.”

The black men looked at the white doctors.

The white doctors pointed at the black men.

The same white doctor, “Said go and get Curtis, Reuben and Mark and bring them here and I said ‘now’.

The black man stood and looked at the white doctors.

Beverly turned all the way around and looked the white doctors in the door.

The all white medical board members were snickering and looking at Al and Jerome.

Al watched them.

The white board members were not hiding they will rule against Jerome.

Al became angry,

He said, “GOD this is evil. YOU made Jerome to be a doctor. These men are mad because he has stopped a part of their money. They do not care about the people. Please end this for Jerome so he can go and do what you have called him to do. In JESUS’ name.”

One of the black men stood and said, “My name is Boy. You come out here and tell me again what you said for me to do.”

The white board members stopped giggling and laughing.

Beverly turned around and was looking back out the opened door.

The white doctors finally realized the black ‘boy’ was not playing with them.

They huffed at the black ‘boy’.

All the black people huffed back at the white doctors and the attendees in the hearing room.

The white doctors saw the black community was not afraid of them.

The men been rotating watching the community because of threats of the white group coming into the black community shooting it up as they had in the past.

Killing and wounding black women and children and leaving the men for dead.

Racial hatred ran deep.

The white board members became uneasy because there was only one way in the building and one way out. Once they reached outside they had to get to their guns in the carriages and on their horses.

 The board members stared at Jerome and Al and told them to make the black people go home.

Beverly slowly turned around and stood up.

Beverly said, “How dare the evil racist men think you can do your evil and make people accept it and bow down to it. Peter my father and mother were physicians in this great city. They took you under their wings and taught you everything you know as a doctor.”

Al looked at Beverly.

Beverly said, “Michael, you were rejected from every medical program on this eastern seaboard. They said you had a learning disorder. My black mother and father took you under their wings and taught you as if you were just going to kindergarten until they found out what was causing you not to learn.”

Al and Jerome looked at Michael the head of the board.

Beverly looked at Victor.

Victor turned his head.

Beverly said, “Don’t you dare turn your head away from me. The many times I had to go over your homework and correct it. So you could pass the basic medical courses.”

Beverly said, “Where is Reginald? I saw Reginald in here.”

Reginald was in the back talking with some of the attendees. He started slipping down in the back so no one could see. The people started looking back and saw him hiding.

Beverly said, “I know you are in here. You have never been a man and never had any backbone. Speaking of backbones.”

Reginald jumped up and said, “Stop Beverly! Don’t you dare tell that.”

Marlene, Reginald’s wife was sitting up front.

She turned and looked at Beverly, then she glimpsed her husband walking to the front.

Marlene watched Beverly.

People started turning around and watching Reginald as he walked back to the front of the room to the table with the other white board members.

Beverly said, “Reginald, who are you yelling at. I told you about that many times.”

She pointed at Jerome.

Beverly said, “This man is a damn good doctor. You know he is. You have been trying to destroy him for a long time. You been chipping away at his reputation. You have conspired to have some patients lie and say he gave them mis-treatments and some of them were not his patients. You pay him way less than all the doctors in your hospitals. You stripped away his support systems to see him fall. He did ----not---fall.”

Beverly turned and looked around at the white board members and all the white people in attendance.

She said, “You know why he did not fall?”

Beverly looked around on the white people faces.

The black wife and others were peeping in the hearing room.

Beverly said, “B—U—T G O D!”

No one said anything.

Victor knew Beverly meant every word and she was speaking the truth.

Victor looked at the other board members.

Beverly said, “Why are you looking at each other. You know what is right. My parents saw struggling potential doctors and helped them not because they were white but because this city and state needed more doctors. They did not care about the color of skin nor the texture of one’s hair. They cared about the health of the person. You all know that. They could only teach you the academics of medicine. Only GOD can teach you humanity.”

Victor looked at Beverly and said, “Case dismissed.”

Beverly stood and pointed at Al and said, “This one too.”

Reginald rolled his eyes at Al.

Al saw Reginald.

Beverly said, “Clean up Jerome’s record and I want to see it.”

Michael said, “You still bossy as shit.”

Reginald started laughing and looking at Michael.

Albert could not understand how they knew Beverly especially Reginald.

Jerome stood and shook Albert’s hand.

Jerome hugged Beverly for a long time.

Reginald was looking at Jerome hugging Beverly.

Beverly, Jerome and Al were walking out the hearing room.

Albert slowed up and looked back at Reginald.

Reginald was staring at Beverly.

He saw Albert staring at him.

Reginald turned around and talked to the other white board members.

The white doctors ran to the front of the room yelling at the board members.

Michael said, “Let it go. The man is a damn good doctor. I am ashamed that I let you all move me against him. I am going to clean up his record. Go on. We still have to get out this building and get to our horses.”

The white people started looking around.

The black community had a two hour ride in front of them.

They loaded up in the wagons.

The men and women were sitting in the wagons with their children.

They were eating, laughing and talking all the way back to the city.

The black community was on alert.

The black ones that worked in town saw the other blacks returning to town.

The caravan pass some of the blacks with shouting.

The blacks knew that Dr. Jerome won his case.

Marlene stood in the door of the hearing room and watched, Beverly get in the wagon with Dr. Jerome and Albert, her husband.

Reginald walked out the hearing room and watched Beverly ride away.

Marlene felt Reginald standing behind her.

She said, “No backbones Reginald.”

Reginald said, “None Marlene. Let’s go home.”

Jerome practiced in the black community until spring.

He taught several people how to take care of the sick and wounds.

He told them to get Albert if they were really sick.

Jerome helped the blacks to get into medical school.

The blacks fought every day in medical schools to stay and have the money to stay.

The black ‘boy’ finished number one in his class.

He went deep in the country to be a country doctor and surgeon for black people and for any people who came to him.

The black wife, moved her family further to the west of the state to help the black community there.

The other black medical school graduate stayed in Philadelphia and continuously recruited more blacks to go to nursing and medical school and dentist school.

Jerome went out west and stayed twelve years.

He recruited many to go to nursing school.

The people felt the seven years for medical school was too long.

Jerome lived meagerly.

He was paid by the people’s gifts of food and housing.

He finally got a teaching position at one of the medical schools. He taught there five years. He moved to the mid-west and got a job as a teacher at the medical school. He recruited many to attend the nursing school and got several to medical school. He got two blacks from the mid-west to attend medical. They graduated.

Jerome was well pleased.

Jerome was trying to get rid of the pain and hurt he went through at the hands of the other doctors.

He taught his way back to Philadelphia.

When he reached Philadelphia he and Al rode out to the shore.

Jerome saw the ships leaving for Europe.

He retired.

Jerome counted his money.

He took the next ship to Europe.

He worked at different hospitals in Europe.

The doctors and the nurses loved him.

He was paid well.

He would spend two years in Europe and return home for a year and back to Europe.

This was his sixth year of retirement.

He loved his life.

He would be in America until the last ship for Europe in October.

He looked forward to spending Christmas in Philadelphia in the black community.

The black community built a clinic in Jerome’s honor.

It was staffed twenty four hours a day.

The community sent twenty residents to become nurses.

Some returned home.

Some married and stayed in the other cities.

Some went to underdeveloped communities.

The black community was proud.

They received a reputation for preparing and sending many to medical and nursing and dental school.

Jerome settled in that week in one of the houses he bought.

He would start working at the neighborhood clinic on Monday.

Jerome was glad to have been with Beverly and Al that week-end.

He was glad to meet Monica.

He invited them to church the next day because they were giving him a program for his dedication to their community and medicine.

Al and Beverly said yes.

Monica said she had to attend to Shirley and Lorraine.

Jerome rode his horse back to the black community.

Al and Beverly grinned all the way home.

Albert said, “I wondered whatever happened to Reginald.”

Beverly knew Al was talking about.

She said, “Reginald who?”

Albert turned and looked at Beverly.

Beverly was looking straight ahead.

Albert said, “Your first Beverly.”

Beverly said, “That was a long time ago in another place.”

Albert said, “I love you Beverly and sometimes at night you cry for Reginald.”

Beverly turned quickly and looked at Al.

Al looked at her.

Beverly was stunned and could not talk.

Al looked at her and said, “Again Beverly I love you. Who you were with before me does not take away love. Any babies you lost does not take away my love for you.”

Beverly bent over in the carriage and put her face in her hands and bewailed the lost of her two children by Reginald.

Al stopped the carriage and pulled off the street to let others pass.

He reached and grabbed Beverly.

He said, “Baby I knew why you could not have any children. Out of twenty five years those scars are finally healed.”

Beverly was in much pain.

Al pulled Beverly into his lap and held her for a long time.

He held her and kissed her.

Al rocked her.

He laughed and said, “Within a year we had seventeen children.”

Al kissed Beverly’s forehead and rode home with her in his lap.

Beverly wailed all the way.

Mabel and Curtis tried the children on their new coats, hats, scarves, gloves and boots.

Mabel and Curtis did the once a week hair washing of the twelve children.

Curtis brought the water in and placed it on the bottom floor so the children can have their once a week bath.

Beverly bought each child two nightgowns and nightshirts and three pair of long johns and five socks and stockings.

Beverly did not like doing laundry.

She had a laundry service to picked up the laundry once a week and dropped it off on Saturday.

Al never complained because that was one of those things he learned not to fuss about.

Mabel did not like washing clothes either.

She spent her free time planting flowers and plants around the yard.

Beverly bought the seven boys a suit, shirt and tie.

She bought the girls two dresses each.

She told the boys the store was sold out for the holidays.

Beverly told them when the new shipments come in she would get them another suit.

The boys were happy with what they had.

The five girls and Mabel were on the third floor.

The seven boys and Curtis were in the second floor.

She and Al slept on the first floor, where the sitting room was and the eat in kitchen.

Mabel and Curtis saw Al when he pulled up in the yard and that Beverly was sin his lap.

Mabel and Curtis thought Beverly was sick they ran out the house.

Al saw them and waved for them to stop.

He said to Mabel and Curtis, “She is ok.”

Al smiled at them.

He liked that they had a caring heart for others.

Al and Beverly stayed outside for about an hour.

Beverly bought Al and Curtis a suit, shirt and tie and socks for the holidays.

Beverly frowned.

Beverly and Mabel went to Smith’s.

Beverly loved that upscale store.

She bought Mabel a coat, scarf, gloves and hat, two pairs of shoes, several stockings, underwear, a dress for the ground- breaking ceremony, an after five dress for the reception and an after five dress for the dinner.

Shirley told Beverly to buy Mabel two travel dresses and a suitcase.

Beverly and Mabel found two blouses and two skirts and a belt for Mabel to wear.

Mabel came home and packed and put her suitcase under her bed.

Beverly looked around and bought herself two dresses.

A blue and a green.

She saw some earrings and told the sales person to give her those two earrings.

Beverly wore the green dress and earrings to dinner with Monia.

She told Al she would wear the blue to the church service the next day.

The manager at Smith’s opened the account for Beverly and he kept saying “Stith”.

Harry walked up and smiled at Beverly.

He whispered, “The heiress of the railroad and shipping empires.”

The manger jerked and looked at Beverly.

He remembered Monica’s uniform and Vivienne talking about her doctor boyfriend.

The manager thought, “If they can shop in here and date doctors they must be rich too.”

The manager quickly opened the account without limit for Beverly.

Harry winked at Beverly.

He helped Beverly and Mabel to the carriage.

He said, Miss Bev you ask for me when you come back. You too Miss Mabel.”

He watched Beverly pull off and ran back in the store and said, “Mabel is a former slave.”

The manager and the other salespersons said, “What?”

Harry said, “The Stiths gave her a job seeing about their gardens.”

One salesclerk said, “She is their gardenerette.”

The salesclerk walked away.

Harry made a face at the snotty salesclerk.

The manager said, “They must have a lot of money for their workers to be shopping here.”

One of the salesclerks had a copy of the magazine that listed the riches families in America and the Stiths lead the list.

Harry nearly fainted.

The store manager said, “We can’t tell anybody.”

Harry said, “Why not. That will bring in business.”

The manager said, “That will bring in robbers.”

Harry and the salesclerk threw the magazine down.

The manager told the staff to treat them like anybody else and keep their mouths shut.

Al said< “Beverly you looked very nice today.”

Beverly heart’s said, “Thank you.”

Al walked her in the house and took her to their bedroom and put her to bed.

He went outside and put the horses in the stables and feed them and gave them water.

He checked the coal supply and twisted his mouth,

He went into the house and locked the doors.

The twelve children were running and playing up and down the stairs.

Al dressed for bed.

He got in bed and held Beverly.

Al listened to Mabel telling the children to go to bed.

Beverly finally went to sleep.

Al continued to hold her.

The house was quiet and still.

Monica was locked in the apartment.

She put the water pail on the stove for tomorrow.

She was thinking about going to the church service honoring Jerome.

Monica sat on her bed and looked at the armoire.

She had the three very nice dresses and the outstanding outfit.

She thought, “I’ll go and see Lorraine and spend the night with Shirley.”

Monica was thinking.

She did not tell Gregory a time to come to her for Sunday.

Monica went to bed happy for the first time in a long time.

She thought, “I wonder if my husband is still alive. I have to get rid of him and those grown sons. I know someone, if they are still alive that will tell me if my husband is still alive.”

Monica pulled the covers off her and got out of bed.

She went to Shirley’s table and lit a lantern.

She wrote a long letter.

The letter was addressed to a cousin.

She decided to write her husband and used the Stith hospital’s address.

She tried to think of how to quickly get the letters down south. Because she wanted her divorce from her husband.

She looked back at her bedroom.

Monica stood and walked in the bedroom.

She sat on the side of the bed and was thinking.

A thought came to her that she can catch the Stith’s train that go into the south. Then transfer over to another train that would take her further. She though the train went into her old city. Because her city was the biggest city on that side of the state.

If that was the case she could hand deliver the letters and see for herself. If he was alive then she can file for her divorce while she was there. But she wanted to spend Christmas with Lorraine.

Monica was getting sleepy.

She said, “I got to get to the train station and find out about the trains. It will probably take thirty days to get there and get back. I need money. I need two outfits and wear a nice pair of boots. I need a loan to take care of my expenses. Shirley is too sick for me to ask her. I have to ask that damn Eleanor.”

Monica went to sleep.

She woke early and went to the kitchen and put coal on the fire to hit her wash water.

She looked in the kitchen and saw the groceries were sparce.

Monica had a nervous stomach.

She experienced that nervous stomach before when she made a decision to leave her husband and three sons.

Monica fell on the wall and cried.

She began to pull on hair and screamed.

The more the memories of her sons and husband came to her she started beating on the walls and the floor and she screamed and she screamed.

Gregory had arrived to take Monica to one of the hospitals.

He saw the apartment proprietor running to Shirley’s apartment.

Gregory jumped out the carriage and ran to Shirley’s apartment.

The apartment proprietor’s wife was standing in their door peeping out.

Gregory ran and looked at her.

She looked at him.

Gregory ran to the apartment proprietor who was trying to unlock the door, but Monica placed the bar behind the door.

Gregory said, “Sir, what’s wrong?’

Then he heard Monica screaming.

Gregory stepped back and looked at the apartment.

He said, “The backdoor.”

The proprietor pointed and they ran around the back.

His wife ran through their apartment to their backdoor and ran outside to see what was wrong.

She ran to her husband.

Gregory saw the bedroom window and he tapped the window several times and the lock shook.

He opened the open and crawled in.

The proprietor said, “Open the backdoor. I am too big to get in the window.”

Gregory ran to the kitchen and stepped over Monica and unlocked the kitchen door and took the bar off.

The proprietor and his wife stepped in the backdoor.

He pulled his wife quickly inside and closed the backdoor.

He said, “Honey I don’t want anyone to see or hear anything.”

The three of them stood and saw the anguish Monica was enduring.

His wife remembered her aunt, went crazy like that and all the children ran out the house into the fields to hide from her.

Here was loud banging on the front door.

Gregory kept his eyes on the screaming Monica.

The banging started on the back door.

Mr. Locket jumped and exhaled.

He went to the back door and unlocked the door and cracked the door opened and said, “Yes.”

Jerome said, “Sir open this door.”

Gregory turned and looked and he recognized Jerome from yesterday.

Mr. Locket opened the door.

Jerome frowned at the apartment proprietor.

He saw Monica on the floor screaming.

He knew she was having a nervous breakdown.

Jerome ran to Monica.

Jerome sat on the floor and grabbed Monica.

He folded her arms and looked around and said, “Get me a clean washcloth and a glass of water.”

The apartment proprietor looked at Jerome.

Jerome was struggling with Monica to hold her.

He looked up at the three and said, “I said get me a washcloth and a glass of water. N O W!!!!”

The wife jumped and looked around and saw the dishes and poured water in a glass and gave it to Jerome.

He drank the water.

The apartment proprietor stared at Jerome.

Jerome said, “The washcloth?”

The wife ran to the eat in area and got two washcloths.

She walked back to Jerome and had a washcloth in each hand and reached the washcloths to Jerome.

He looked at the two washcloths.

She said, “One for you and one for her.”

Jerome looked at her.

Mr. Locket laughed.

His wife walked back to him.

Jerome was struggling with Monica he said, “Go to my buggy and bring my doctor’s bag in is behind my seat on the floor.”

Mr. Locket made a face and looked at his wife.

His wife made a face and looked at him.

Mr. Locket pushed Gregory.

Gregory looked at Mr. Locket.

Mr. Locket pointed at Jerome and said, “He said, “Get his doctor’s bag and bring it here.”

Gregory stared at Mr. Locket.

Mrs. Locket pointed her hand and said, “Go it now. You heard the doctor.”

Gregory ran out the backdoor.

Jerome looked at Gregory.

Mr. Locket and Mrs. Locket turned and looked at Gregory.

Mrs. Locket said, “That’s a smart one.”

Jerome said, “Manchester?”

Mrs. Locket turned and looked at Jerome.

Jerome said, “Monica. I need you to stop fighting. I am here to help you.”

Gregory ran back in the backdoor with Jerome’s medical bag.

Jerome brought the medical bag and reached it to Jerome.

Mrs. Locket looked at her husband.

He shook his head and frowned.

Jerome looked at the bag and then up at Gregory.

Jerome said, “Sir open the bag and give me the bottle of medicine with the number two on it.

Gregory opened the bag and reached Jerome the bottle that had number two on it.

Jerome was watching the screaming Monica.

He said, “Monica you can come out of this. We are here to help you.”

Jerome turned and looked at Gregory and said, “Look in the bag and give me the little box.”

Gregory reached in the bag and pulled out the little box.

Jerome said, “Open the little box and give me a needle.”

Jerome was looking at Monica and was wondering what caused her to have a nervous breakdown.

Gregory opened the box and was pulling out the needle, when he recognized how long it was.

Jerome was thinking about Monica, when he heard three thumps.

He looked up.

Mr. Locket and his wife were passed out by the backdoor.

Gregory had fallen over Monica’s legs.

Jerome looked at Gregory and said, “At least Monica won’t move.”

He reached over and grabbed the needle out the box and put the sedative in the needle. He filled it halfway and thought., “I have to go to the church service and then back here. I wanted to take her to breakfast this morning. Maybe dinner this afternoon.”

Jerome stick the needle into Monica’s arm.

He put the needle in his bag.

Jerome held Monica until she went to sleep.

He wiped her face with the washcloth.

He said, “Monica you have firm arms and body. You are a worker.”

Mr. Locket was slightly sitting up on his side and had propped himself on his left elbow and said, “Is that being a doctor?”

Jerome reached back in his bag and pulled out the needle.

Mr. Locket passed out again.

Jerome got off the floor and moved Gregory off Monica’s legs and picker Monica up and carried her into the bedroom by the kitchen.

He figured that was the servant’s bedroom.

He laid Monica on her bed.

And he sat by her side and thought for a minute.

He looked at her armoire and said, “Empty. She doesn’t need anything wearing an uniform.”

He saw the letters on Monica’s table.

He reached for them.

He stopped and sat back.

He looked at the letters and picked them up.

He saw the date on the letters.

He said, “Monica, is this what caused you to have a nervous breakdown.”

He sat and read each letter.

Jerome folded the letters up and placed them on her table.

Monica started snoring.

Jerome looked at Monica and grinned and said, “That’s what I wanted to hear.”

He looked at the time and stood.

He covered Monica with her blankets

Jerome bent down and kissed her forehead.

Mrs. Locket and Mr. Locket were standing in Monica’s doorway.

Mrs. Locket said, “That’s doesn’t look very much like a doctor. Does it.”

Jerome turned and looked at her.

Mr. Locket held his medical bag in the air and said, “Your needles are in here.”

Jerome smiled and shook his head.

He said, “Sir, I have to go to a church service honoring me. It is about an hour away. Can you please watch Monica until I return.”

Mrs. Locket said, “They will have a dinner or at least a reception in your honor.”

Jerome said, “Which part of Manchester?”

Mrs. Locket grinned and said, “I won’t tell you may know my ex.”

Jerome said, “I can’t leave her here alone.”

They heard Gregory snoring.

Mrs. Locket said, “Today is the day I cook our Sunday supper.”

Mr. Locket frowned up.

Jerome said, “I would pay for you to eat out today, if you watch Monica until I return.”

Mr. Locket said, “Yes we can.”

He rushed in the room and handed Jerome his medical bag.

Mrs. Locket looked at her husband and said, “You don’t like my cooking?”

Mr. Locket looked at Jerome.

Jerome reached Mr. Locket two dollars.”

Mr. Locket grinned and said, “Rosie’s.”

He loved the food there.

His wife grinned at him.

Jerome passed them and looked at Gregory and walked to the front door.

He took off the bar and went to his carriage and rode a way.

He thought about what Monica wrote.

He shook his head and said, “She wants to be free. What does Beverly know about Monica’s past?”

Mrs. Locket and Mr. Locket walked to the kitchen and looked down at a sleeping Gregory.

Mr. Locket said, “What are we to do about him. Another two dollars?”

Mrs. locket said, “Nothing.”

Mr. Locket closed and locked the back door and put the bar across it.

Jerome saw Al and Beverly and the five year old girl entering the church.

He grinned, especially at the little girl scooting and playing while holding Beverly and Al’s hands.

Jerome pulled in the church yard next to what he believed was Al and Beverly’s carriage.

He looked at their horses and thought, “They need better horses.”

He walked to the church and greeted people as he was walking to the church.

He held the door for the people.

He felt good.

He had not been this happy in years.

He walked into the church and looked for Al and Beverly.

He saw the little pop up on the pew then he saw Al’s head and Beverly sitting next to him.

He thought, “they are happy. They have no children.”

The pastor’s wife walked to Jerome and said, “Doc Jerome. You come with me and ssit upfront. You are the one who is getting this honor and let the people see you.”

Jerome said, “Ok Mae But I want to say hello to my fr9ends.”

Mae said, “Hurry.”

Jerome rushed to Al and Beverly.

He spoke to them and Al grinned and spoke.

The five year old girl looked at Jerome and said, “Hey.”

Jerome looked at the sweet baby and said, “Good morning sweetie. How are you?”

The five year old girl said, “Well thank you.”

Beverly looked at her and grin.

Jerome looked at Beverly and said, “Bev you’ve been crying. What’s wrong?”

Al looked at Bev.

She looked at Jerome.

Mae came and grabbed Jerome by his arm and took him up front and sat him nexto the pastor.

Everyone laughed.

Al grinned.

The five year old girl popped and said, “Where he go?”

Everybody heard the little girl and laughed.

Mae sat next to Jerome.

Her husband preached about letting the dead be dead.

To start a new life and enjoy the GOD that heals from all evil.

He said, “The community for nearly thirty years benefited from Dr. Jerome.

He encouraged others to take up medicine. And others have been encouraging others.

The pastor asked all to stand that was in the medical profession because of Dr. Jerome.

So many people stood.

Black and white.

Dr. Jerome became weak and covered his face and cried.

Mae held him.

The black “boy’ was there with his three sons who finished medical school.

The black wife was there with her four daughters that were nurses.

The other ‘first one’ was there and he and his wife had three sons who graduated from medical school and two daughters that were dentists.

Al were standing and clapping with the people.

Beverly was coming out of her sadness and begin to grin.

Everyone was clapping and screaming at the success of the poor black people and the white people.

The pastor said, “We have a special visitor. Sir please come forth.”

Al saw movement behind him.

He was grinning at all the successful people.

He stopped grinning and stared at the man and woman that were walking forth.

He could not believe his eyes.

Reginald and Marlene were walking from the back of the church.

Al recognized Reginald from his slim build and curly mustache.

Al could not think.

Reginald and Marlene walked pass Al.

Beverly jumped out her seat and made one leap to Reginald.

Al grabbed her before she reached the aisle.

Mae saw Beverly.

Al was holding her.

The five year old girl was on her knees and saw Beverly and said, “Whoosh. Fast.”

Al whispered in Beverly’s ears and said, “Baby let him go. Show me you love me.”

Beverly was in a rage and wanted to rip off Reginald’s head.

Al could not believe this was happening.

He knew to hold onto Beverly.

Mae watched Beverly and was trying to figure out what was going on.

Beverly looked vaguely familiar to her.

She tried to watch Beverly and the distinguish white man and his wife that were walking to the podium.

Jerome was looking out at all the medical professionals and cried.

He took out his handkerchief and wipe his face.

Then he heard a voice he swore he would never forget.

He looked at the slim man and the white woman.

Jerome recognized Reginald.

Reginald asked for the people to be seated.

Everyone sat but Beverly.

Reginald looked and recognized Beverly.

He wanted to smile at her but knew that was out of question.

Al pulled Beverly into the seat and said, “Bev this program is about Jerome. These people don’t know.”

Mae was still looking at the well dressed Beverly.

Reginald introduced himself and his wife Marlene.

He said, “He was the head of the medical board of licenses.

He stated Michael and Victor died decades ago.

But he remained and continued the work of the board.

Jerome could not believe this.

Mae was watching Beverly.

Al was holding Beverly tight.

Reginald told the story of Jerome.

People became mad and began to boo Reginald and his wife.

Jerome stood up and put his hands up for people to stop and settle back down.

The first people to stand was the black ‘boy’.

Mae walked up and said, “Sit down! You all know better than this. This is the HOUSE of GOD. Everyone is welcomed here.”

One of the people threw a piece of paper.

Mae pointed and said, “You better come and pick up that piece of paper”

The man stood and walked and picked up the piece of paper.

Mae pointed at a scared Marlene and Reginald and said, “They got something to say. They would not have traveled all this way and come into a poor black community to say evil and hurtful things that cut the wound of hate opened again. Sit down and shut up!!”

Al looked at Beverly.

The five year old jumped in Beverly’s lap and covered her ears.

Everyone looked at the fat Mae as she went and sat down and pulled Jerome to his seat.

Marlene rushed to Reginald and held his arm.

The pastor was looking at the hurt the people felt.

He remembered that day.

His father loaded the wagon up with the five children and his mother and his aunt.

He was thinking about the banana pudding Miss Trouth made.

The pastor looked out at the people and recognized Beverly’s face. The woman who saved Jerome’s life that day.

He was glad to see her.

He saw the same white man sitting next to her that day as he did twenty years ago.

He caught Al’s eye because Al was looking at the five year old and her covering her ears.

The pastor looked at Al and nodded and smile.

Al tried to smile, but he was thinking, ”GOD what is all this pain about?”

Al could not think that fast to figure out what was going on.

Reginald paused and said, “I am sorry for all that pain.”

He held onto Marlene.

He continued and said, “It has been many years. That’s no excuse for the pain that was caused. I see today that out of the pain I helped caused, many health professionals were pushed to become what GOD created you to become. I had nothing to do with that.”

He turned and looked at Jerome and said, “This doctor is the one that took all the criticism, hatred and prejudice and helped build many careers.”

Al was frowning up.

He wanted to know why Reginald was there and that it was him that he did not have posterity.

Al found himself getting mad with Reginald because he did not have any children.

Reginald said, “I was like Paul on the road to Damascus.”

Mae looked at Reginald and then at the black ‘boy’.

She wanted to hear more of what he had to say.

Al did not want to hear anything.

He was with Beverly to jump on him.

Al was thinking, “I bet he has at least one or a house full of children.”

Reginal turned and looked back at Jerome and said, “You changed my life that day. I know GOD did it. My wife and I went home and prayed. I stayed on the board to watch the people who were graduating from medical school. I started a grant to help the medical graduates take courses that would help them pass the license. We established a scholarship and put it in the black and poorer schools. We opened more clinics and had more visiting nurses throughout the state.”

Reginald looked back at Jerome and said, “That evil day was the thing GOD used to create all of this good for the people of this state that other states want to know how to build a world class health system.

Al and Beverly were ready to jump on Reginald.

Reginald looked at the confusion on their faces.

He said, “I ask you to forgive me. My wife has worked hand in hand with me over the years to do this many of tasks. We accepted JESUS a s our LORD and SAVIOR.”

Mae nodded her head and looked at the audience.

Al was still looking confused and thought, “I don’t care I don’t have any heirs. You rascal.”

Beverly blinked.

She was holding and rocking the five year old.

Al wanted to know what he was doing.

Jerome was in pain.

Reginald said, “Jerome, the state board has established a life long scholarship in your name for black and poor people to go to medical college. The surgical building at the state university has been re-named after you. The board voted to have you replace the retiring member, me.”

Al was still thinking.

Mae stood and clapped.

The pastor was thinking about Miss Trouth banana pudding.

He looked at the usher by the side door and thought, “I know that rascal is thinking about the banana pudding too. I saw him the last time got about a fourth and I got about a fourth.”

The people clapping drawn out the pastor’s thought about the banana pudding.

He sat still and listen to see what he missed.

He looked at Miss Trouth, a former slave who was brought to Philadelphia by the slave freers.

She said, “She left her children and her men and took the only way out besides death.

She has been trying over the past several years to get a word on her seven children and her three men.

The slaves were not allowed to marry.

She could not live in sin with a man because another man said, they were not humans and they could live like animals that mated.

She called herself the ‘truth’.

Al was still confused.

Beverly was still angry.

The little five year old girl still had her ears covered.

Reginal said, “I accepted the call of GOD on my life. So did my wife. We will be travelling the state preaching the Word of GOD and healing people with medicine. “

Mae looked at the audience and shook her head.

Jerome was standing and was shocked.

He always hated the doctors that brought him before the board. He wanted a clean heart.

He thought about Monica and the pain she was in that morning.

Jerome saw Al and Beverly’s faces.

He said, “GOD help. All of this is happening for a reason.”

Reginald turned and Walked to Jerome.

Jerome reached out his hand and took the plaque and the paper and shook Reginald’s hand.

Reginald said, “Forgive me Jerome. I did not have any backbone then but GOD helped me over the years. I have a little now.”

Marlene was teared up and looking at Jerome.

The pastor finally stood and watched Jerome and Reginald and Marlene.

Reginald said, “Jerome you will be sworn in on the board the third of January.”

Jerome shook his head.

He did not think of the fact he was going to be leaving to go back to Europe for two years.

The black ‘boy’ stood and clapped along with the wife and her family and everyone else in the church,

Al sat.

Beverly sat.

After the church service.

Reginald rushed to Beverly and Al with Marlene.

He said, “Beverly I asked GOD to let me see you again to ask for your forgiveness.”

He said, “Forgive me for not having any backbones.”

Al said, “Because of you I don’t have any children.”

Beverly looked at Al and said, “Reginald, I did not know you would be here today. GOD brought all of the pain that anyone could image a person could suffer to affect me yesterday. The way you treated me. The way you threw me away after I had two babies by you. And moved on to live your white life. You left me tormented, scared and destroyed. Now twenty five years later you waltz in here amongst the negroes and said, “I am changed. I am good now. Like that will take away all the hell you brought into our lives Reginald. “

She looked at a scared Marlene who was holding onto Reginald’s arm.

Mae was standing behind Marlene to walk them out the church.

Al was not saying anything because he was mad by now.

Beverly said, “All you did was destroy good people. I bet you are behind stopping A;’s pension.’

Reginald looked at an angry Al.

Reginald said, “I am sorry Beverly. I can’t prove it to you. I am sorry about the two babies that died.”

He looked at Al and saw such an angry.

He knew he would get anger and hate, but he did not know how Al would react.

Reginald said, “Albert I am sorry that I kept you and Beverly from having children. God did not allow me and Marlene to have children also.”

Al’s was smug and said, “That is what you say God did to you and your wife. What happened to me and Beverly you did. We won’t ever see one another again.”

Beverly slowly looked at Al.

Then she looked at Marlene who was scared and was silently crying.

Jerome was standing behind Reginald and heard everything that Beverly said.

He and Mae walked Mae and Reginald to their carriage.

Jerome noticed the carriage was loaded with their bags.

They had no intentions of staying in town.

The black ‘boy’ stood in the door of the church and watched them leave.

Reginald and Marlene left the church.

They rode all night to get out of Philadelphia and stopped late that night at a rooming house to rest their horses and feed them.

They did not speak for hours as they rode to their destination on the other side of the state.

They slightly slept and woke early the next morning and feed the horses and left and continued their weeks journey to the other side of the state.

Mae and Jerome returned to the church and saw people standing outside of the church and in the yard.

Mae looked at Jerome.

Jerome was silent.

He said nothing.

He walked back in church and went to Beverly and hugged her.

He, Beverly and Al sat in the sanctuary and talked for a long time.

Mae walked them and said, “Yall the fried chicken is hot.”

Beverly said, “Not now Mae.”

Mae looked at the pain they were in.

She saw movement and looked and saw the five year old.

Mae reached her hand to the five year old and said, “You like fried chicken?”

The five year old said, “Yes.”

She looked at Beverly and Al.

Beverly smiled.

Al said, “Shirley you can go and eat and play with the other children.”

Shirley ran pass Al and Beverly and took Mae’s hand and walked with her to the lower level.

Mae opened the door and Al and Beverly and Jerome heard the screaming children.

Jerome told them about Monica.

He said, “I saw some letters on her table. I read them to find out what happened to her.”

They talked about Monica for a good time.

Beverly said, “I don’t know anything about the trains. I know Brenda did not want any trains going to the south, but Eleanor did it and Patrick supported Eleanor’s decision. That railroad is generating a lot of money for them.”

Jerome said, “The thing that was meant to destroy them is now making them a lot of money.”

Beverly said, “I have no money for Monica, but I will telegram Eleanor for her to work out how to get Monica there and back and to give Monica a personal loan to have money on her. I will see Shirley today and send the telegrams while I am there. I know Monica wanted to spend Christmas and New Years here.”

Jerome said, “What I saw today she is not strong enough to go by herself. I’ll go with her. I don’t want to spend Christmas that holy day in the south either.”

Mae walked back in the sanctuary with a plate for Jerome covered with a napkin and a fork.

Jerome looked at the plate and said, “That looks like it is piled up.

The black ‘boy’ had walked in and was sitting with the black wife and they were eating because they had to start travelling back home.

Jerome uncovered his plate.

He looked at Mae and said, “Mae.”

Mae bucked her eyes and looked at Jerome.

Jerome said, “This is much too much.”

Mae said, “I heard you say you had a sick friend take some to her. Bring the plate back when you come back to the church service.”

Jerome said, “That is an idea.”

Al was peeping at Jerome’s plate.

He shook his head.

Mae looked at Al and said, “I don’t know you. I saw you sitting with this pretty well dressed woman.”

Beverly blushed.

She slightly held her head down and grinned.

Jerome looked at Beverly and smiled.

He said, “I’m going to leave and take this plate to Monica. So she can eat.”

Al said, “That’s if she is awake. That was too much Jerome.”

Mae said, “Al and Beverly welcome to our church. We are proud that it is the largest black church on this side of town. My husband and his sons ND COUSINS built this church, brick by brick. Do you two want something to eat? We have enough food to feed an army.”

Shirley walked back to Al and Beverly with a greasy mouth.

Beverly went in her bag and pulled out the beautiful handkerchief.

Mae said, “Oh Harold’s. I love that store. Come on and let us go downstairs and wash that mouth. You save that handkerchief.”

Beverly stood and walked with Mae and Shirley downstairs.

Al, Jerome, the black ‘boy’ and the pastor sat and talked for a long time.

The black wife and her husband spoke to everyone and hugged Jerome.

The black ‘boy’ and his wife and children hugged Jerome and left.

Jerome stood and shook Al’s hand and spoke to the pastor and left.

Mae and Beverly were walking back in the sanctuary with Shirley.

The pastor looked at Mae and said, “Any of Miss Trough’s banana pudding left?”

Mae looked at her husband and looked around the sanctuary and said, “You will not get anything else to eat. You ate five pieces of chicken, two servings of green beans and macaroni and cheese. You went back and got speckle butter beans, yams and potato salad with pen’s feet. Then you sat up here and ate that large amount of banana pudding. Charles you are not getting anything else to eat today nor tomorrow.”

The pastor was turned sideways and leaning all the way back in the pew.

He stared at Mae.

He said, “Mae you actually counted the chicken?”

Mae had put a large amount of fried chicken, in a basket and put a large amount of green beans and potato salad in a bucket for Beverly to feed her former slave children.

Al was standing and putting on his coat and top hat.

He saw the men bring the food.

Beverly was putting on her coat.

Mae looked at Beverly in admiration of how she was dressed.

She turned to the pastor and said, “Charles, they have taken in some former slave children.”

Charles looked at this wife.

Mae said, “How many Beverly?”

Beverly said, “We have twelve left.”

The pastor said, “God bless you. You all let us know if you need any help.”

Al smiled and shook the pastor’s hand.

The very stiff Al reached his hand out to shake Mae’s hand.

She hugged Al.

Mae hugged Beverly and Little Shirley.

Al walked out the church with the men who had the food.

Mae and the pastor walked out with Beverly and little Shirley.

The pastor stayed in the church because he did not like the cold weather.

Al, Beverly and Shirley got in the carriage and rode home.

The fried chicken kept disturbing Al’s sense of direction.

Beverly laughed.

Little Shirley laughed, but she did not know what Al and Beverly were laughing about.

They rode home.

Mabel had just finished plaiting the other girls’ to get them ready for the week of school.

Curtis had cut the boys’ hair.

The children ran outside and helped Al and Beverly and Little Shirley out the carriage.

The children smelled the fried chicken and started saying, “We’re hungry.”

Al grinned and said, “You are hungry because you think you smell fried chicken.”

Little Shirley said, “It is fried chicken. I ate some.”

Al said, “You little spoiler.”
Beverly grinned and pass Al and touched his arm.

She went into the house.

Mabel ran into the house and put the tablecloths on the tables.

Beverly and Al got the old wooden picnic benches from the city.

They fixed up the tables and benches and used them so they all can sit.

Beverly walked through the house and took inventory.

The boys brought in the buckets of green beans and potato salad.

The two older girls brought in the basket of Fried chicken, which was still hot.

The other two middle girls ran and got the plates, forks and glasses.

There was plenty of biscuits left from breakfast.

The boys knew to put the bucket of green beans on the hot stove.

Mabel and the girls got the bowls and platters.

They had enough potato salad to fill two large bowls.

They placed the biscuits on two platters.

The chicken was a lot and Beverly divided it up and they placed a platter on each end of the table.

They sat and said grace.

Beverly was leaving to go and see Shirley and send the telegrams.

Al said, “Beverly you got to eat something.”

Beverly walked and took a napkin and placed a chicken leg and biscuit in and kissed Al and said, “I’ll be back later.”

Al walked Beverly outside to the carriage.

He helped her in the carriage.

Beverly turned the horses around and rode fast to get to Shirley.

Al said, “God we need some more horses.”

Little Shirley ran outside with a chicken leg,

Al turned and was about to say she had eaten. He remembered that Beverly did not like him to say anything to the children about food.

Al looked up to see Beverly but she was out of sight.

Beverly made the ride in thirty five minutes.

Because she wanted to leave in time to get home before dark.

She pulled in the hospital and jumped out the carriage.

She walked into the hospital and saw the Christmas tree and grinned.

She spoke to the nurses.

Beverly said, “Can you tell me…”

Shirley heard Beverly and said, “I’m here Aunt Bev.”

Beverly smiled at the nurses and was about to walk to Shirley when she saw the little black boy and girl in wheelchairs.

Beverly bucked her eyes.

Dr. Woodson was walking behind the little boy and little girl.

He saw Beverly’s facial expression.

He walked to her and said, “These are our two newest patients. They are going to see Sally.”

Beverly said, “The child that spits.”

Beverly turned and watched the little boy and little girl enter Sally’s room.

Dr. Woodson pointed to Shirley’s room.

Beverly looked at Dr. Woodson and waked to Shirley’s room and closed the door.

Beverly asked Shirley, “How are you feeling?”

Shirley said, “it’s pain. I don’t feel any better.”

Beverly said, “What are you doing?”

Shirley grinned and said, “I just finished one of my papers. I have the easiest one to do next.”

Beverly said, “Sometimes we think something is the easiest and it is not.”

Shirley was printing her name on each sheet of paper.

Beverly said, “You turn the papers in this week?”

Shirley said, “I want Monica to turn this paper in today. I wonder where she is.”

Beverly stood and looked at Shirley.

She said, “Shirley I need to send your momma and grandparents some telegrams. Can I send them from here?”

Shirley was still printing her name and said, “Yes. You can aaske Dr. Woodson to unlock the door and let you send the telegrams.

Dr. Woodson knocked on Shirley’s door and opened it.

Beverly looked at Dr. Woodson.

Dr. Woodson looked at Beverly and she saw the little black boy and the little black girl in the hallway.

Shirley looked up from her papers and saw Dr. Woodson and the little black boy and the little black girl.

Shirley grinned.

Dr. Woodson loved Shirley’s grin.

He looked down at the little black boy and the little black girl.

Shirley said, “Hello. I am Shirley.”

Dr. Woodson stepped aside and the little black boy said, “I am Charles Jr. and this is my sister…”

The little girl said, “I am Betty. He thinks he is older than me that he has to talk for me.”

Shirley laughed.

Leon heard the children and he laughed.

Dr. Woodson heard Leon laughed.

He never heard Leon laughed.

Beverly said, “Dr. Woodson may I use the telegram machine?”

Dr. Woodson looked at Beverly.

Beverly turned her head and looked at Shirley.

Dr. Woodson said, “Sure you can. Not to offend you…”

Beverly said, “Yes I know how to use it.”

Dr. Woodson looked at Shirley and said, “Where is Monica?”

Shirley looked at Beverly.

Beverly turned her head.

Shirley said, “Aunt Bev where is Monica?’

Dr. Woodson said, “Beverly where is Monica?”

Beverly said, “Shirley you have guests. I need to send these telegrams. When I finish I will you where Monica is.”

Beverly looked at the little children and stooped down and said, “Charles Jr and Betty where are your momma and daddy?”

Charles Jr said, “In heaven.”

Betty nodded her head and said, “They took our brothers and sister with them.”

Beverly woke in the hospital administrator’s office.

Hutch and Dr. Ralph were standing and looking at her as Dr. Woodson slapped her face.

Charles Jr said, “Is she ok? She’s not going to die is she?’

Betty was peeping around in the door.

The nurses looked back at the children.

Hutch saw Beverly become conscious.

Dr. Ralph turned to Charles Jr and Betty and said, “Aren’t you two suppose to be visiting the young lady who owns this hospital?”

Betty said, “My leg hurt.”

Dr. Woodson looked back at her.

Betty began to cry.

Shirley leaned on her bed and said, “Betty you want to come in here?’

Betty said, “Yes.”

Dr. Ralph said, “Shirley I am going to take Betty and Charles Jr back to their room for now.”

Dr. Ralph picked up Betty and said, “Charles Jr can you push Betty wheelchair?”

Charles Jr said, “I think so.”

Dr. Ralph let Charles Jr turn around in his wheelchair and pushed Betty’s wheelchair.

Charles Jr grinned and Dr. Ralph walked behind him.

Charles Jr could not pull Betty’s wheelchair in the door.

Dr. Ralph said, “Charles Jr, I will bring the wheelchair in.”

Charles Jr held his head down.

Dr. Ralph said, “You did a good job.”

Charles Jr smiled.

Dr. Ralph massaged Betty’s legs.

Hutch had walked down to check on the children and went to the kitchen and got a bowl of soup and sat in the employee area and heard betty screamed.

Hutch finished his soup and went back up front to check on Beverly.

Beverly just completed sending the telegrams.

Dr. Charles heard the telegram machine.

He rushed to the door and peeped in and said, “Hello.”

Beverly looked and said, “Yes.”

Charles ran in and said, “Can you send a telegram for me?’

Beverly said, “Yes.”

Charles told Beverly what to say in the telegram.

Beverly got the address of the telegram and sent it.

Dr. Felipe and Dr. Woodson completed rounds.

Charles was sitting in the hall next to the hospital administrator’s office.

Beverly walked out the office and was closing the door.

Charles said, “Leave it open please.”

Beverly looked at him and walked to Shirley’s room.

She sat and looked at Shirley’s bed.

Beverly stood and said, “Shirley what are you finished with. I’ll take it with me.”

Shirley said, “Monica knows what to do.”

Beverly said, “I told you I would tell you about Monica.”

Charles sat and listened.

Dr. Woodson, Hutch and Dr. Felipe were talking about Charles Jr and Betty.”

Dr. Woodson said, “Because Betty hurts that is good for us.”

Shirley said, “Shush Aunt Bev.”

Beverly was annoyed with Shirley’s nosiness and said, “Shirley.”

Shirley said, “I want to hear.”

Dr. Woodson looked at Charles.

Dr. Charles closed Shirley’s door.

Beverly said, “Where’s Dr. Greene?”

Shirley said, “He starts back tomorrow. I know he brought the two little kids here the night of my Christmas Celebration for the handicapped. Aunt Bev again thank you and Mabel.”

Beverly said, “What about his thieving wife?’

Shirley said, “I believe she is ok.”

Beverly smirked.

Shirley said, “Aunt Bev what is taking place. Don’t hold back on me.”

Beverly told Shirley of her nervous breakdown on Saturday and why she felt it happened and that morning the true love of her life walked in the church.

She told Shirley about Monica’s breakdown. She believed because Monica was not drinking herself down her mind finally had a chance to bring all the pain and hurt back to her remembrance for her to solve it.

Beverly said, “I want your mother to give Monica the tickets to ride the train and go home to resolve her problems and decide if she wants to stay, come back or go back on the street.”

Shirley said, “Monica has nothing but the few clothes and boots she bought here. She will need money.”

Beverly said, “I asked your mother to give Monica a personal loan until she is able to pay it back.”

Shirley was thinking.

Beverly said, “Shirley, what happened to the little children’s family?”

Shirley looked at the door and told Beverly what Mr. Hall told them what happened to the children’s parents.

Beverly said, “I don’t know why I passed out?”

Shirley laughed.

Beverly looked at Shirley and said, “What?”

Shirley threw her hands up in the air.

Beverly said, “I looked like that?”

Shirley was laughing.

Beverly said, “I know these people must think I am a lune. I scared the little children.”

Shirley was laughing.

Beverly said, “Did I hit the floor?”

Shirley nodded for yes.

Leon said, “Yeah you hit the floor.”

Shirley was laughing.

Beverly said, “You mean to tell me Dr. Woodson let me hit the floor?’

Shirley was laughing and could not talk.

Leon was laughing.

Dr. Charles was listening for the telegram machine.

Dr. Ralph returned from Betty and Charles Jr.

He heard Leon and said, “Is that Leon?”

Dr. Woodson said, “Yes.”

They continued to discuss Charles Jr and Betty.

Hutch said, “Ryan has decided to re-set their bones the same day so the one won’t scare the other one. They will be in the north hospital.”

Dr. Woodson said, “That’s closer to Dr. Greene. I’ll ask him to stop by check on them until they come back here.”

Beverly put her hands to her mouth.

Shirley handed Beverly all the papers, books to take to her apartment.

Beverly said, “I’ll take this paper to the university in the morning, then I will go and check on Monica. I will come here and see if there is a response to my telegrams. Then I will go and check on Lorraine and go home to Al.”

Shirley said, “How was the church honor program today?”

Beverly told Shirley all the doctors and nurses and dentist that Jerome helped.

Dr, Ralph heard the name Jerome.

He walked to Shirley’s door and opened it.

Beverly said, “You’ll don’t knock.”

Dr. Ralph looked at Beverly.

Shirley smiled and said, “No they don’t.”

Dr. Ralph said, “Did you say Jerome?”

Beverly said, “It depends if you are a friend or foe.”

Dr. Ralph said, “I am a friend of Dr. Jerome Watkins. He helped me to decide on a career and profession. al. He tutored me to take the medical school entrance test. He paid for my medical school. I owe him much.”

Beverly was sitting and watching Dr. Ralph and said, “I will see him again soon. The state established a scholarship in his name. The state medical school re-maned the surgical building after him and he was appointed to the medical license board, effective in January.”

Dr. Ralph was overcome and said, “He deserve all of that.”

The other doctors were listening.

Shirley said, “Aunt Bev who is with Monica?”

Shirley looked confused and mouth ‘who’?

Beverly said, “Jerome.”

Dr. Ralph said, “Please tell him I want to see him.”

The telegram machine started.

Beverly was staring at Dr. Ralph.

Shirley heard the telegram and said, “Aunt Bev.”

Charles was still sitting in the chair at the hallway and said, “Aunt Bev.”

Vivienne and Nurse Sharon was going to drink their tea.

Vivienne saw Beverly and said, “Hello Beverly.”

Beverly grinned at Vivienne and said, “Hey Vivienne.”

Vivienne pointed at Charles.

Charles was looking at Vivienne and was grinning.

He looked up at the attractive Beverly and grinned.

Beverly looked at him and said, “Hello Charles.”

She walked into the hospital administrator’s office and went to the telegram machine.

Brenda sent Beverly a telegram they were entraining three ambassadors and a United States senator with a prime rib and veal dinner. She said, she hated that type of pain for her. But she should have some kind of relief and peace.

Brenda said, “Eleanor received your telegram and said she will review it tonight when our guests are gone.”

Beverly tore the telegram and was walking out the office and up in Charles big brown eyes.

She looked back and said, “This was the only telegram.”

Beverly went to Shirley’s room and said, “Your grandmother said, “They are entertaining three United States ambassadors and a United States senator. Eleanor will review, I guess the trains and will contact by telegram. “

Shirley said, “What about Lorraine?”

Beverly said, “What?”

Dr. Ralph said, “I’m going to spend the night at the hospital with Lorraine.”

Beverly looked at Shirley and continued to pack her papers and books in the bag.

Shirley said, “My back hurts really bad.”

Dr. Charles stepped back in her room.

Dr. Ralph looked at Shirley’s door.

Aunt Bev grabbed her stuff and ran out Shirley’s room and out the hospital.

Dr. Woodson was walking from checking on some patients on the other side and he heard Shirley.

Leon said, “Door. Door please. D O O R!”

The nurse jumped from the desk and closed Leon’s door.

She was the nurse that would be taking over Leon’s case while Meredith was on maternity leave.

Felipe was happy and cheery since Meredith was at home.

Everyone noticed Felipe’s change in attitude.

Felipe said, “Dr. Woodson I am across from the north hospital I will check on Charles Jr and Betty each day until they come back here.”

Dr. Woodson said, “Ok Felipe. But you won’t have long before you need to be home with Meredith.”

Dr. Felipe grinned big.

The nurses looked at Dr. Felipe and they grinned.

Beverly went home and took the bag out the wagon and looked at the horses.

She petted the horses.

Al looked out the window and walked and unlocked the door.

He walked on the porch and watched Beverly pet the horses.

He walked and took the horses around back and gave them feed and water and put them in the stables.

Beverly waited for Al and when she saw him, slowly turned and walked in the house.

Al caught up with her and they walked in the house together.

He looked the door and put the bar across it.

Beverly walked through the house and laughed and played with the children.

She wet downstairs and changed her clothes and dressed for bed.

Al was sitting in the sitting area looking at the fireplace.

He thought they did not do Reginald right at the church, but no one saw but Mae.

Al thought, “Eventually I send him a note. I don’t know if he is dying and told a lie he is preaching so no one would look for him or if he really has moved across the state. The medical license board office would know his address. They would have to send him his money. I’ll message them tomorrow.”

Al was listening t Beverly putting her clothes up.

He walked into their bedroom and closed the door.

As the door was closing Beverly looked up at Al and grinned.

Monica was sleep when Jerome arrived.

Jerome pulled his carriage into the drive area.

He tied up his horses and looked around he needed water and feed for them.

He took the plate out the carriage and the two blankets he had for Monica, his saddle bag and medical bag.

He walked to Monica’s apartment and knocked on her door.

Mrs. Locket ran to the door and unlocked it and peeped and saw Jerome.

She opened the door and ran out.

Jerome looked at her and walked in the house.

He looked around and went into the kitchen and placed the plate on the stove.

He walked out the house and went and knocked on the apartment manager’s door.

Mr. Locket opened the door. As he was putting on his coat.

Jerome said, “Sir, do you have feed and water for the horses? I will pay you.”

Mr. Locket said, “Fifty cents.”

Mrs. Locket was running to the door.

Jerome went in his pocket and gave Mr. Locket fifty cents.

Mr. Locket was locking his front door and nodded by Monica’s apartment.

Jerome saw the bundle of hay and went and feed the horses and went into Shirley’s apartmen and came out with a bowl and gave the horses water.

Jerome went back in the apartment and put coal in the stove and the fireplace.

He poured water ij the pitcher.

He washed his face and hands and sat at the table and read his bible until Monica woke late that afternoon.

Jerome saw her moving in the bed.

He thought about her and stood and walked to the bedroom and knocked on the door.

He walked and sat on her bed.

She was sitting up and rubbing her face and said, “Jerome. You are here early.”
Jerome said, “No I am not. It is late afternoon.”

He told her everything that happened to her that day.

Monica laid in the bed and cried.

Jerome said, “You have medicine in your stomach you need to eat. I’ll set the table out here/ You stand up and wash your face. I’ll bring you water.”

Jerome brought Monica hot water to wash.

He closed her door and wondered if she had enough strength of mind to get up and start moving.

He set the table.

He heard Monica’s door opened.

She walked out with her maid’s uniform on.

He walked to her and took her by her hand and walked her to the table and sat he.

Jerome said the grace and they sat and ate in quietness.

Jerome looked back and thought about the front door.

He went and looked out at the horses who were sleep.

He locked the front door and put the bar across the door.

He checked the back door and put the bar across it.

Jerome washed the dishes and Monica dried the dishes.

They sat in the sitting area and talked most of the night.

Monica fell asleep.

Jerome pulled off his boots and vest.

He realized he would be uncomfortable all night because the sofa was not large for the two of them.

He carried Monica to her bedroom and covered her up.

Jerome walked in the sitting area and stretched out on the sofa and covered up with the two blankets he brought.

He could not think anymore so he closed his eyes to sleep.

Ryan was at the south hospital at seven am.

He and the doctors complete their rounds.

They were standing at the nurses’ desk.

Ryan was pleased with Myriah and said, “We will let her medicine wear off of her this week. She should be awake by Friday or Saturday. She needs to go to the bone hospital for at least a week for them to give her therapy.”

Dr. Jim said, “I need to go.”

Ryan looked at Dr. Jim and thought, “All those women.”

Ryan was working at the south hospital.

Dennis was working at the north hospital.

Alice, Ryan Jr and Beverly went to their church downtown and came back home.

They wanted to complete their decorations that afternoon.

Ryan Jr. was running and having a great time running through his mother and grandmother.

Dennis worked his normal time at the north hospital.

Ryan worked until four pm.

He left and went home.

 He was arriving at the same time Dennis was arriving.

They rode their horses into the stables.

The stable men took the horses and feed them and gave the horses water.

Ryan and Dennis walked in the house.

They were tired that evening.

They went in the house and heard Ryan Jr. laughing and running and having a great time.

Dennis ad Ryan looked at the butler he nodded his head letting them know Alice did not have any episodes that day.

Ryan saw his daddy and ran to him.

They all sat for Sunday dinner.

They had a delightful time.

Dennis said, “Beverly Albert’s pension has been cut off. Do you know anything about that?”

Beverly touched her chest and said, “My God no. How could that happen?’

Ryan looked at his father.

Dennis said, “Beverly checked in to that. He needs his money. I want him to work at the smallest hospital. Those people need help out there.”

The butler was listening and nodded his head to himself that those people on that side of town needed medical help.

He was hoping whoever the retired doctor was they were talking about would go out there once per week and work.

Robert, the butler, thought, “I would switch my off day and go out there and help him.”

Robert was in the parlor looking at the mantel and the decorations that Beverly and Alice placed on the mantel, he was about to change the position of the ornaments and Dennis and Ryan walked into the parlor holding Ryan Jr.’s hands.

Dennis cleared his throat at Robert.

Robert took his hands down.

Dennis and Ryan thought he was listening to their conversation.

Robert heard Alice and Beverly walking into the sitting room, he walked out the other door.

Dennis looked at the mantel and said, “That is a mess.”

Ryan looked at the mantel and then down at Ryan Jr. Who was twisting to get loose.

Ryan turned Ryan Jr. loose and he ran straight to the fireplace.

Dennis snatched Ryan Jr. quicker than Ryan.

Alice and Beverly stood in shock.

Dennis yelled, “Beverly!!!”

Beverly stood and looked at Dennis.

Robert and the maids stopped and peeped in the parlor.

Ryan saw his father was beyond angry.

Ryan was scared.

He had never seen his father that angry even when he and his classmates burned down his father’s stables with the horses in it.

The stable men were able to get the horses and most of the saddles, wagons, carriages and tools out.

Dennis sent his workers to the six boys’ houses for their parents.

Ryan’s classmates’ parents arrived and were shocked.

His father and mother were outside talking to his classmates’ parents.

His classmates told Ryan they got spankings.

One said he got a beating.

He would not set foot on Ryan’s property but would call him from the road.

Ryan would run to the road and tell him to wait.

Ryan would run to the new stables and get his horse and ride out to the street and meet Joe.

Dennis and Beverly would stand in the window and watch them.

Dennis would laugh and tell Beverly, “His father put a beating on him he won’t ever forget.”

Ryan’s thoughts came back to him about Joe and said, “Mom have you heard from Joe?”

Beverly was so shocked at Dennis.

She was in shock and then for Ryan to ask her about Joe, she slowly turned and stared at Ryan.

Ryan shrugged his shoulders.

Dennis yelled, “Robert!!!”

Everyone was standing and looking at Dennis.

Robert walked pass his wife, who touched his arm.

He walked to Dennis and said, “Sir!”

Robert yelled back at Dennis.

Dennis was so mad he heard Robert but did not react.

Robert was ready to retire so he could travel this great country.

Ryan looked at Robert who first came to work for them when he and his classmates set the stables on fire.

Dennis moved the new stables further from the house and the fields.

Ryan thought, “It has been twenty years Robert. So long. You better check on your pension first.”

Dennis looked at Robert and said, “Do not make a fire in this fireplace for the rest of the winter.”

Beverly yelled, “What? This is the centerpiece of this house. This grand fireplace Dennis!!”

Ryan was holding Ryan Jr.’s hand.

Ryan Jr. was trying to climb up in Ryan’s arm.

Ryan did not want to miss any action.

He kept his eyes on his mother and picked up Ryan Jr.

Robert said, “Very well sir. Anything else?”

Robert wanted to stop keeping the furnace hot also.

Robert looked at the hysterical Beverly and walked out the parlor and winked at his wife and staff.

The staff stood and listened as they were clearing the table and putting up the food.

Robert was standing and watching the family.

Dennis walked to the grand fireplace and put his arm on the mantle and wailed.

Ryan was shocked at his stately and strong father.

Alice was in her happy place.

Ryan Jr. was crying.

Beverly was angry with her husband.

She knew something was terribly wrong with him.

Robert and the staff eased to the parlor door.

Ryan saw the staff and did not say anything because they were as shocked as he and his mother were.

Alice was humming and walked to Ryan.

Ryan looked at Alice and said, “Alice, I have to put you away after the holidays.”

Robert and the staff peeped around at Alice who showed no sign she heard Ryan.

Beverly heard Ryan talking to Alice, she kept her eyes on her husband.

Beverly was so angry at Dennis she did not want to comfort him.

Ryan gave a reluctant Ryan Jr to Alice and walked to his father.

Ryan knew it was something terrible.

Ryan walked to his grieving father. And patted his back.

Dennis was wailing.

Dennis turned and held Ryan.

Ryan began to cry and held his father.

Robert and the staff eased pass Beverly.

She blinked as the staff walked into the parlor.

Ryan thought, “GOD I can’t do this by myself.”

Ryan said, “Daddy what is wrong?”

Dennis was crying.

He muttered, “The children.”

Robert was sitting on the sofa and heard ‘children’.

Ryan said, “Daddy.”

Beverly heard Ryan and knew he was hurting.

He never call Dennis ‘daddy’ unless it is something that would destroy Ryan.

Beverly’s anger was great at Dennis.

She saw him holding onto his Ryan for his life.

She ran to Dennis and leaned her head on his back and held him by his shoulders.

The staff was waiting to hear what caused Dennis to breakdown.

Dennis said, “Children burned up today.”

Beverly said, “Dennis?”

Dennis said, “Five children. Five children.”

One of the workers had five children and she stood and looked at Dennis.

Robert looked up at the worker.

The worker was staring at Dennis.

Robert’s heart sunk.

His wife looked at the worker then at her husband, Robert.

Robert looked at his wife and stood.

He said, “Dennis where?

Dennis was still sobbing.

Ryan looked up at Robert and saw the female worker with concern on her face.

Ryan said, “Daddy where?

Dennis shock his head.

Beverly held her head up and looked at Robert and the female worker.

She whispered in Dennis ear and said, “Baby where the children were from?”

Dennis stomped and said, “Marshall.”

The female worker held her chest.

Robert looked at the female worker.

She breathed a breath of release.

Ryan looked at Dennis.

Ryan nodded to the hall and said, “Robert.”

Robert walked out the parlor and walked into the hall and poured a big glass of scotch and drank it.

Ryan yelled, “Robert.”

Robert thought, “He could not have seen me from his standing point in the parlor. I have studied that parlor for twenty years and know every angle. Who is he yelling at.”

Robert took a tray and poured ten glasses of scotch and one with double amount than the rest of the glasses.

He returned to the parlor and started with Ryan.

Dennis said, “They were trying to stay warm.”

Robert gave Beverly a glass.

She drank at once without stopping and reached for another glass as she put the glass back on the tray.

Robert walked away.

Ryan said, “Don’t give Alice nothing.”

Ryan Jr. was reaching for a glass.

Ryan frowned up and thought about Michael and said, “Him too.”

Robert walked to the workers and handed them a glass of scotch.

Robert took the large glass of scotch.

He sat on the sofa and had the glass of scotch in one hand and the tray in another hand.

The cook shook his head.

He walked to the kitchen and wrote a note that he was quitting and walked back and handed it to Robert.

Robert read the note and said, “Nall hell!”

Ryan and Beverly looked at Robert and the cook.

The cook was standing in front of Robert with his refreshed glass of scotch.

Robert’s wife said, “What?”

Robert said, “Steve wants to quit now.”

Robert’s wife Helen turned her head and looked at the window and said, “Me too.”

Beverly looked at the workers.

Ryan looked at Robert and walked Dennis to the sofa and sat him next to Robert.

Beverly ran to go to the dining room and a worker standing in the doorway with the tray of linens in one hand and her glass of scotch in the other hand.

Beverly grabbed a napkin from the tray and ran to Dennis.

She stood and saw her husband hurting.

She did not know he could hurt like that.

Over the years he became tough and would not break down.

He promised her he would become strong, but she figured his grandchild changed his heart towards other children.

Beverly sat next to him and wiped his face.

Ryan stood in front of his father and handed him the glass of scotch.

Dennis took the glass of scotch and stared in front of him at the grand fireplace.

Ryan looked at the grand fireplace and put and snuffed out the fireplace.

Beverly sat next to Dennis and held his hand and took her other hand and held Dennis’ neck.

Ryan looked at his parents.

He looked at Alice holding Ryan Jr. and shook his head.

The worker who held her chest because she thought the five children were hers said, “Add my name to that note.”

Robert looked at her and said, “Hell no. I am not doing any laundry.”

Beverly said, “If I say so.”

Robert stood and reached for his wife’s hand and said, “Go pack. I told her never to threaten me again. This man is going through this and all of you want to leave because he has up setted you because he is human and like each of us he can be weak. Look at all of you. You are weak now and want to run away. I can see Clara because she does have five children and no one to help her.”

Robert looked at Clara who was getting drunk.

Ryan looked at Clara and took her glass of scotch and drank it.

Clara looked at Ryan and said, “Pissy tail boy.”

Ryan remembered each time she went out and got drunk. Each time she came back pregnant.

Clara and Dennis and Beverly would argue each time.

Ryan ‘s twisted his face from the strength of the scotch and said to Clara, “You are too old. No more children. I can fix that.”

The cook looked at Clara lustfully and sipped his scotch.

Ryan looked at him and tried to snatch his glass of scotch, but the cook was faster than Ryan and moved his scotch.

Ryan was shocked at the fastness of the cook.

He thought, “I am a surgeon. I need to be faster.”

Robert said, “Steve put is wrong with you?”

Steve said, “They had me to bake a hundred dozens of gingerbread men.”

Ryan said, “Who?”

Steve slightly moved his scotch glass but not that far from his mouth so Ryan could not snatch it.

Steve pointed and said, “Those two.”

Ryan knew he was talking about Alice and Beverly.

Ryan knew Dennis took a box of ginger bread men to Shirley’s Christmas celebration for the handicapped.

Ryan looked at Alice who was patting Ryan Jr. and his mother who was patting his father.

Ryan said, “Father what is the condition of the children” Are they dead?”

Dennis took the glass of scotch and lifted it to his mouth.”

Dennis said, “They will be dead by the morning. Their lungs and heart and brains are melted.”

Ryan turned and looked at Robert and said, “Robert can you help us through this holiday. Then you can leave. I need you to help me.”

Robert knew Ryan was thinking about something.

He stood for a minute and looked at his wife who stared at her husband and turned her head.

Helen knew it was time for Beverly to go through her armoire and get rid of some of the dresses she had made through the year to make room for her holiday clothes.

Robert was looking at his wife.

She turned and nodded her head at her husband.

Robert thought, “You so and so. You knew Beverly will be clearing out her closet this week and you want her clothes.”

Robert looked at the cook and said, “Steve, I need you to work through this holiday, at least do dinner and special events.”

Steve was still lusting behind Clara.

Ryan stared at Steve.

Steve said, “Ok. We will talk later. But no more damn gingerbread cookies.”

Alice lifted up her head and said, “Why?”

Ryan did not look at Alice and said, “Ignore her. She and mother makes no more decisions around this house about anything.”

Beverly jumped off the sofa and said, “Ryan you are my child. You don’t tell me what I can do or not do in my house!”

Dennis reached and grabbed Beverly’s hand and held it.

She sat down next to Dennis.

Dennis took Beverly’s hand and kissed it.

Beverly laid her chin on Dennis shoulder.

Ryan said, “I’ll give you and Alice a room next to each other so Ryan Jr. want have far to walk.”

Beverly said, “Ryan I am going to kick you’re a\*\*.”

Dennis kissed Beverly’s hand again.

She smiled and turned to Dennis and continued to pat him and brush his hair from his forehead.

She loved his thick blond hair.

Dennis hair reminds her of Eleanor’s two younger boys.

She thought Ryan Jr. is just as cute, but his blonde hair is not so thick.

She thought about her and Dennis being the best looking mixed couple at all of their functions through school. He had blond hair and blue eyes and she was burnet with green eyes and slight freckles.

She though John Jr. and Betty were the best looking blond couple.

She thought about Arnette and Ralph being the best looking burnet couple with brown eyes.

Dennis looked at Beverly.

Beverly looked at Dennis and caught herself day dreaming in the midst of Dennis crisis.

Dennis looked at Ryan and said, “Make sure she has a window.”

Robert and Ryan laughed.

Beverly kissed Dennis hard and held him for a long time.

Ryan said, “Robert I am very tired, can you see if there is anyone who can take me to the north hospital to see about the children.”

Robert said, “I’ll take you myself.”

Dennis turned from kissing Beverly and said, “Wait Ryan I’m going with you.”

Every yelled, “No.”

Dennis jumped and looked at his staff and Ryan.

Ryan yelled the “No!”

Dennis said, “Those dying children are my responsibility.”

Ryan said, “Dr. Felipe and Meredith live across the street from the hospital I need Felipe. He is an expert in lungs and heart.”

Ryan turned to Robert.

Robert said, “I’ll go and ask him to come to the hospital and wait for him or his response.”

Beverly was kissing Dennis and Dennis tried to get up and Beverly would not let him up and finally said, “Meredith. That’ the pregnant one. He might not come and leave his wife.”

Dennis said, “Then you can go and see about her.”

Beverly jumped up from the sofa and said, “I told you’re a\*\* about that years ago.”

Beverly stomped pass Ryan Jr.

Ryan Jr. was holding his arms out to Beverly.

She stepped back and grabbed Ryan Jr. out of Alice’s arms and stomped up the stairs to her bedroom and slammed the door.

Dennis walked out the parlor and peeped up the stairs and said, “I thought she would never leave.”

Ryan frowned and cut his eyes at his father how devious he was towards his mother.

Ryan and Dennis walked into the family dining room and took their medical bags and began to go through them.

Clara walked through the dining room.

Dennis looked at Clara and said, “Clara.”

Robert was about to walk out the door and stopped and listened.

Dennis said, “Take off until after New Years. Robert will pay you as usual. Leave now and go home with your children.”

Clara was surprised and said, “Thank you sir.”

Dennis said, “That is an early Christmas gift.”

Clara turned and took the dishes into the kitchen.

She went downstairs and packed her bags.

Dennis looked at Ryan and said, “Don’t look at me like I mistreat your mother. You don’t you’re your mother. You are beginning to get to know your wife. You are talking about putting her away and your mother who I have power of attorney over.”

Ryan did not look at his father but kept checking his medical bag.

Dennis said, “In sickness and in health, Ryan.”

Ryan turned his head from his father and put ion his coat and scarf and hat.

Helen cleaned the parlor and walked out the room and put out the light.

Ryan was thinking, “I did not know Alice had all of these problems. I fell in love with a arm and gentle souled woman. Not this monster.”

Dennis stood at the table and said, “The smallest hospital.”

Ryan heard his father and slowly turned to face Dennis.

Dennis walked next to Ryan and looked him in his face and said, “For emotional and mental cases.”

Ryan thought and said, “Dad that is great.”

Dennis said, “there are ten rooms and really no need for medication but sedatives and pain medication.”

Ryan said, “We have to get staff who are worked with people who have all sorts of emotional and mental problems.”

Dennis turned his head and heard Robert pulling up.

He said, “I now wished I had listened in that class.”

Ryan stopped walking and looked at his father because that was the same thing he said.

Clara was running up the stairs with her bags.

Dennis and Ryan stopped to let her pass them.

They went to the carriage.

Clara ran to the kitchen and took the remaining of the roast and potatoes and put it in her bags and ran and jumped in the carriage with Dennis and Ryan.

Dennis whiffed his nose.

Robert cut his eyes at Clara,

Clara cut her eyes at Robert.

Dennis said, “Clara I know you got the beef roast. You know I always eat the left over.”

Ryan looked at his father then Clara.

Clara turned around and peeped back at Dennis and said, “Sir I am sorry and apologize. I know you understand I can’t go home without something for my kiddies.”

Ryan was quiet because he remembered he and Clara had a summer long affair.

When he returned home from the military academy for the Christmas holiday Clara was pregnant and his daddy and mother thought it was for someone at the house.

Ryan tried to get Clara to answer him over the years and she would not.

Ryan thought, “I know the child is a boy and blond. He is ten years old.”

Ryan never said anything about Clara.

His parents would watch him watching Clara all the time.

They never said anything to Ryan about Clara and her blond son.

Robert pass Marshalls and they saw the burnt house.

People were going through the rubbish and trying to get stuff.

Clara looked at the house and cried.

Robert took Ryan and Dennis to the north hospital.

Ryan pointed across the street.

Ryan gave Robert Dr. Felipe’s address, which was down a street from the hospital.

Robert went to Dr. Felipe’s house and knocked on the door.

Dr. Felipe was sitting with Meredith reading in front of the fire.

Meredith sat up from his lap.

He walked to the front door and unlocked the front door and removed the bar.

He unlocked the door and peeped out.

Robert reached Dr. Felipe the note from Ryan.

He said, “Drs. Wade ask for you to come to the hospital to help them.”

Meredith was sitting on the sofa listening.

Dr. Felipe read the note from Ryan.

Ryan’s note said, “We need your help with children from a fire that may not be able to live much longer.”

Felipe walked back to Meredith and reached her the note.

She read it and said, “Go Felipe.”

Felipe walked over to the coat stand and got his coat and walked to Meredith who was on her knees on the sofa and Felipe walked and kissed the grinning Meredith.

He said, “I’ll be back.”

Meredith grinned.

Felipe said, “At sometime.”

They both laughed.

Felipe said, “Meredith come and lock the door and put the bar behind.

He helped her off the sofa and they walked to the door hand in hand.

They kissed.

Dr. Felipe walked to his horse with his medical bag and untied his horse and rode away.

Robert looked at Meredith who was peeping at Felipe as he disappeared.

Robert said, “Ma am please lock the door as your husband said.”

Meredith looked at the voice from the carriage and stepped in the house and locked the door and was about to walk away and put the bar of the door.

She went back in the house and laid on the sofa and read her favorite book until she went to sleep.

Robert took Clara home.

Clara jumped out the carriage.

Robert looked at the broken down house.

He tied the horse and carriage and got Clara bags and walked them to the door.

Clara knocked on the door.

The oldest child ran to the door and yelled, “Yes.”

Clara said, “It’s mommie that is the ‘yes’.

The children gathered at the door.

The oldest child unlocked the door and looked at her mother.

The children were shocked.

The blond boy saw Robert and said, “You’ve been fired?’

Clara looked back at Robert and said, “No.”

Robert laughed.

Clara said, “This is my boss.”

The children were standing at the front door and Clara could not step in.

Robert saw the children were raggedy and poor looking.

Clara said, “Can I step inside my own house?”

The children stepped back in synchronized steps from the door.

Robert smiled.

Clara tried to stop Robert from coming inside.

Robert pushed by Clara with her bags so he could see her house.

He quickly looked around and assessed Clara’s house.

Robert looked at her children and said, “I am Robert. Our boss gave your mother Christmas off so she can be here with you. Isn’t that great?’

The blond hair boy said, again, “She is not fired?’

Robert looked at the good looking boy and laughed and said, “No sir.”

Clara nervously laughed.

An attractive thirteen year old said, “I am Elizabeth, I am the eldest I am thirteen. I will soon be working with mommie.”

Robert looked from the girl to Clara.

He rolled his eyes at Clara.

He reached Clara her bags.

Robert said, “Good evening.”

The blond boy exclaimed, “Meat.”

Robert closed his eyes as he walked out the door.

Robert thought, “Meat!”

He thought about Clara and her five children all the way.

Robert rode to the house and the house was dark.

He rode to the stables and saw his wife and Steve sitting on the back porch smoking and drinking.

Robert thought, “Those two lushes are good and drunk by now. I have been gone three hours. I have to talk to them in the morning. Mine’s is off tomorrow. I don’t know what time she will be getting up. I know she will go and see her parents and clean and fix up their house.”

Robert walked into the stables and unhooked the horses and led them to water and feed.

Robert locked the stables door.

He unhooked the horses from the carriage.

Robert swore he would never do what he did before, which was not to lock the stables and the horses got loose. He had to run all over town and catch them before Dennis got home.

The other workers would get the horses and tie them in the stables.

Some of the neighbors tried to keep the horses.

Robert pulled his gun out on them and pointed and called the people horse thieves.

They gave Robert the horses.

Robert has to watch those neighbors to this day.

Robert petted the horses and walked and locked the stable door.

He walked back to the house in the freezing cold and thought, “I wondered if they are still sitting out there?”

Robert walked back to the house and didn’t not see them.

He entered the house and locked the door and put the bar behind the kitchen door.

He walked through the main floor of the house and saw the house was secure.

He looked up stairs and saw the doors closed.

He went and check on the furnace, which he hated.

Robert walked to his bedroom and his wife was laying across the bed and reading.

Robert undressed and dressed for bed.

He fell to his knees.

His wife looked at him.

Robert said, “God I don’t know You as I should.”

His wife listened.

Robert said, “I know to ask for forgiveness of sins. My sins. I know I can’t ask for anyone else.”

Helen listened.

Robert said, “I saw a man this evening fall apart because he thought five children would be dead by the morning. But you put the Spirit of Life in Ryan and his father. Ryan said, “I’m going to the hospital. Ryan never said, to see if the children could live. He said, “Go and get the other doctor to help with their hearts and lungs. I thank You God for letting me see that. I thank You for putting life in Ryan’s heart and mouth he only sees life. He says if the person has an iota of breath and at the persons last breath he can snatch their breath in put it back in them. No one thinks like that but You dear God. I watched Ryan since he was a six year old he did that with the butterflies and candle flies. He would catch fish with his father and when the fish was about to die he would release the fish to live. Dennis was mad but You made him realize that Ryan was created by You to snatch life and put it back in the creature. Do that tonight oh GOD. I want to know You. Do that for the children. Let Dennis ad Ryan save the children and heal the children and make them whole. You know life is very hard and unfair to anyone that is not normal…”

Helen slid off the bed and crawled next to her husband and held his hand.

Robert squeezed his wife’s hand.

He continued, ”Help that doctor help their hearts and lungs. Their house had nothing left, but that maybe Your way of moving them from that area of town to something better. Help Clara. Her blond son look exactly like Ryan. I know if that is Ryan’s son he will do right by him. She is extremely poor. Don’t let her small children become workers but send them to school to become nurses, doctors, teachers and preachers. Help them oh God. Help me and my wife stop drinking.””

Helen said, “So much.”

Robert said, ”God show us what is wrong with Alice. She is a good person because You would not have let her marry Your servant Ryan. Show him how to help her and not stop loving her.”

Helen shook Robert’s hand and kissed his hand.

Robert said, “I know to say In JESUS’ name.”

Helen and Robert were on their knees and they held each other and kissed for a long time.

Helen thought about how she would be out in the street running behind any man trat would have her.

Robert was thinking about the time she would d be in the street running behind every woman and spend all his money on the women and leave his sons without food and shoes.

He shook his head and buried his face’s in Helens hair.

Robert cried and said, “HOLY GOD forgive me for all the times I committed adultery and took food from my wife and sons and gave it to women. Forgive me for neglecting my duties to my wife and family.

Robert was agonizing over his sins.

Helen held Robert as he fell into her.

Helen rubbed his head and said, “God forgive me also. For all the adultery I committed and withheld myself from being a wife and mother. Forgive me and make me a better person. Please I desire to be better.”

Robert and Helen went to bed and held each other as they slept during the night.

Felipe made it to the hospital and walked in.

He saw Ryan and Dennis walking down the hall.

The nurses ran to Felipe and took his coat, has and wrap and gloves.

Ryan and Dennis greeted Felipe.

They washed their hands.

They worked on the five children all night until early in the morning.

They got the children stable through the night.

The burns were not as bad as they looked.

Dennis was so afraid he had to amputate the children legs and arms, fingers and toes.

Felipe looked at Dennis and said, “Dennis don’t be afraid. You believe in GOD let HIM guide you.”

Ryan did not look at Dennis but went from one child to the next.

They had two or three nurses working with each child.

Ryan was not speaking at all.

He went from child to child.

The mother of the children was taken by neighbors from the hospital so she can bury the five children.

Ryan went behind Dennis and Felipe and worked on the children again and again.

Ryan would not let one child slip.

The nurses watched Ryan.

Felipe went with Ryan and worked with him side by side on each child.

Ryan started the IVs for the children.

He did not want to amputate any part of the boys.

He looked at the nurses and said. “We have to keep them sleep until they start healing. Part of the problem of this trauma when people see the medicines, needles and experience the pain. I saw that all the time in the civil war. Let’s keep them sleep for thirty days. That is my goal. They may have another. You know the medication they need. You know to change their bandages daily and remove the dead skin every other day or when the body releases it.”

Ryan looked around and said, “Where are the parents?”

Dr. Barnes said, “If you are talking about the five children’s mother.”

Ryan said, “Yes.”

Dr. Barnes said, “She left to get their burial started.”

Ryan said, “She won’t need to.”

The other doctors were arriving at work and saw Ryan, Dennis and Felipe and there was a problem.

Dennis said, “Great job Ryan and Felipe. Dr. Barnes assigned a doctor and three nurses to the children on each shift.”

Dr. Barnes said, “Yes sir.”

Felipe said, “I am going home and get ready for work.”

Dennis and Ryan shook Felipe’s hand.

Ryan said, “I forgot.”

Dr. Barnes looked at Ryan.

Dennis looked and saw Hutch bringing Betty and Charles Jr. into the hospital with Nurse Sharon.

Betty had started crying.

Ryan walked to Betty and stooped down and said, “Good morning Betty. It won’t be as bad.”

Nurse Sharon rolled her eyes at Ryan.

She and Ryan argued all the time about his stiffness.

Charles Jr. said, “What about me?’

Ryan looked at him and grinned he said, “No it won’t be.”

Ryan stood up.

Hutch was looking at all the doctors standing around looking.

He saw the nurses bring Felipe his coat, wrap and hats.

Hutch walked away from Betty and Charles Jr.

He looked at the doctors.

The doctors looked at him.

Hutch said, “Felipe.”

Felipe pointed and said, “He, Ryan and Dennis worked on the burned children from around eight pm until then. The children went from death to life.”

Hutch looked at Felipe.

Dr. Barnes looked at Hutch and he wanted Hutch to work at the north hospital with him.

Hutch looked at the children, he walked from child to child.

Dennis looked at Hutch.

Hutch walked to Felipe and said, “Felipe you go home and sleep and rest. I need you back here tonight to be with Betty and Charles Jr. Then I will come in the morning and be with them.”

Felipe looked at the crying Betty and the scared Charles Jr.

Hutch said, “I will send Dr. Woodson a telegram this morning of my decision.”

Felipe said, “You don’t want to delay the children’s surgery?’

Dr. Barnes walked over to Felipe and Hutch.

Hutch said, “No.”

Hutch looked at a tired Dennis and said, “Good morning Dr. Wade. I see you have worked through the night. Can you send a telegram to Dr. Woodson, that I required Felipe to go home and not come to work today because he will be with Betty and Charles Jr tonight.”

Dennis said “Sure.”

Head Nurse Lillian was walking in and saw all the doctors and looked at Betty and Charles Jr.

She saw the surgery schedule on Sunday and set up the surgery rooms for them.

She went upstairs and put up her coat and bags.

She went and re-checked the surgery rooms.

Dennis saw his secretary walking in with a frown on her face.

She looked up and saw all the doctors and knew something happened.

Dennis called her.

She walked to him and he told her to send Dr. Woodson a telegram of what Dr. Hutch said.

She looked at Hutch and smiled and said, “Good morning Dr. Hutch.”

Dennis looked at his secretary.

Hutch looked up and saw head Nurse Lillian going from surgery room to surgery room.

He carried Betty upstairs.

Ryan carried the crying Charles Jr. upstairs.

Beverly talked to Al about the little black children that were to have their bones broken and re-set

by Ryan at the north hospital that morning.

Beverly was nervous and upset.

Her stomach was messed up.

Albert got up earlier.

He put coal in the furnaces and fireplaces.

He was thinking.

He brought in more water than Curtis and the big boys brought in yesterday.

Albert went and washed and shaved.

He was thinking.

Beverly was laying on the sofa to be quiet and settle her stomach before the children get up.

Al walked out their bedroom and leaned down and kissed Beverly on her lips.

Beverly smelled toothpaste.

She opened her eyes and saw a washed, shaven and dressed Al.

She turned her head and looked at him.

Al said, “I’m going to the north hospital and check on Betty and Charles Jr.”

Beverly looked at her husband with true love.

He saw it in her eyes.

He picked up his coat, hat, gloves and scarves.

He said, “Bev it is really cold outside. Bundle the children up and you bundle well to ride to the school and drop off Shirley’s paper which is important then you can go and see Monica. Because Jerome is taking care of her. You might just go and see Monica last. Go and Shirley first and see if any telegrams have come in. Then Lorraine.”

Beverly laid on the sofa and thought.

Al said, “I wish I was there with Patrick and Brenda.”

Beverly held her stomach and said, “Brenda had to flaunt who they were entertaining.”

Beverly and Al both said at the same time, “Three United States Ambassadors.”

Al Laughed.

Beverly giggled.

Al said, “I bet after dinner they played billiards and drank whiskey.”

Beverly shook her head for no.

Al said, “Uh huh.”

Beverly said, “You forgot they are international. They played darts and drank brandy.”

Al shook his head to the side and said, “That is a thought.”

Beverly said, “I’m going to ask Bren.”

They heard the children jumping out the beds and started their loud talking.

Al pointed t Beverly and said, “Your day has started.”

He grabbed and shook Beverly’s foot and said, “You’re alright Beverly.”

Al walked out the door and rode the short distance to the north hospital.

Ryan and Hutch were set to go in and start the surgery on Betty first and then Charles Jr.

Hutch was super clean.

He went behind Head Nurse Lillian and cleaned all the instruments.

Dennis was walking from his office and saw Albert looking up to the second floor.

Dennis looked up and saw Ryan.

Dennis walked to Albert and said, “Albert.”

Albert looked at Dennis and said, “Dennis.”

Dennis said, “You come about your money?”

Albert said, “Nurse.”

He began to pull off his coat, scarves, hat and gloves and suit coat.

He reached it to the nurse.

He looked at Dennis and said, “Part of why I am here. But the main part is two little black children. Betty and Charles Jr.”

Dennis looked at Albert and looked upstairs and said, “Ryan and Hutch are about to start the surgery on them now.”

Albert said, “I have complete confidence in those two young surgeons, but I want to look at them before the surgeries.”

The nurses looked at Albert.

Dennis said, “Why. We are not prejudice.”

Albert said, “Dennis I had to see through Reginald Lawrence yesterday. I don’t have the energy to do you.”

Dennis said, “Reginald is here. He did n’t stop by.”

Albert looked at the nurse.

The nurse ran and got him a coat and brought it back.

She looked at Dennis.

Dennis nodded his head.

She reached it to Albert.

Albert said, “He came to a program honoring Jerome Watkins.”

Dennis said, “Is Jerome here?”

Albert looked at Dennis and started walking upstairs to the surgery rooms.

Dennis say Dr. Barnes and said, “Take over I am going up to surgery.”

Dr. Barnes said, “Yes sir.”

Dennis ran and caught Albert they called Ryan and Hutch outside the surgery rooms.

Albert was reading Betty and Charles Jr.’s charts.

He said, “This accident was less than a month and they had no medical treatment.”

Hutch said, “What?”

Ryan looked back at the squirming Charles Jr. “Putting him to sleep maybe a problem.”

They all turned and saw Charles jr. fighting going to sleep.

Hutch said, “He fells he is the man and have to watch his sister.”

Albert said, “Let me examine the children.

Ryan and Hutch were ready for surgery.

The four doctors went to Betty and Albert examined her arms and fingers and hands.

He looked at Hutch.

Hutch said, “No surgery.”

Ryan walked up and looked and Albert pointed out they weren’t broken.

Ryan looked at Dennis.

Dennis shrugged his shoulders and nodded his head.

Albert examined Betty’s legs and went to her hip.

He said, “Hutch.”

Hutch stepped up and manipulated Betty’s hip and they heard her bones cracking.

Betty was sleep but the pain shot there the sleep medicine and cause her to wake.

She woke screaming.

Dennis rushed to the bed and looked at Betty.

Albert continued to exam her ankles, foot, bottom of foot and toes.

Albert looked at Ryan.

Ryan said, “No broken bones.”

Albert said, “Put her in a cast from her hips down to her ankles. She should be well in about four to six weeks when the swelling is down.”

Ryan said, “I’m sorry.”

Albert said, “The swelling was the joker.”

Dennis stepped and told the nurse to go and tell Dr. Barnes to put the little girl in a caste from hips to ankles.

The nurse ran out the surgery room.

She found Dr. Barnes talking to the other doctors.

He ran upstairs to the surgery and saw the four doctors talking.

Albert said, “Give her an IV with pain medication or a shot.”

Betty heard shot and covered her mouth.

Nurse Lillian saw her and gave her a shot that was faster.

Dr. Barnes and Dr. Moore worked on Betty’s caste.

Nurse Sharon ran upstairs and stood back and saw the doctors work on Betty.

Albert went to Charles Jr.

He examined Charles Jr.’s head and neck.

He looked at Hutch.

Hutch manipulated Charles Jr.’s neck that sent him into a fit.

He woke screaming in pain.

Nurse Lillian rushed and got the shot ready for Charles Jr.

Albert worked on Charles Jr.’s back and shoulders.

Dr. Barnes and Dr Moore walked over to the operating room and looked at Dr. Albert examining Charles Jr.

Hutch said, “That arm is broken.”

Albert said, “It is not a bad break. No surgery.”

Albert went to Charles Jr. hips and thighs.

He shook his head and looked at Ryan.

Ryan said, “a break.”

Albert looked at Dennis and said, “Get your doctors ready for a caste.”

Dennis looked back and saw Nurse Lillian, Nurse Sharon, Drs. Moore and Barnes.

They walked to the door.

Albert examined Charles Jr.’s feet and ankle and toes and bottom of his feet and his knees.

He told Ryan to wrap the knees and toes and put his left arm and wrist in a caste and his left thigh.

Hutch breathed and thought, “GOD thank You. I did not want to break these children bones because they were still growing. I took Ryan’s word.”

Ryan said, “Give the children IVs with the pain medication in them.”

Dr. Barnes and Moore stepped in the room and made the caste to put on Charles Jr.

The caste for Betty was easy.

Hutch looked at Nurse Sharon.

She stayed upstairs with the children.

Hutch said, “We can take them back to the Stith.”

Albert was walking and looking at the five burned children.

He said, “Long recovery.”

Dennis said, “I gave up on them yesterday. Ryan came last night, and I came with him. We sent for Dr. Felipe.”

Albert did not learn the name of the French doctors and said, “The one that is married to Meredith?”

Dennis said, “Yes.”

Dennis said, “We have been here every since.”

Ryan was looking over the doctors and nurses assigned to the five burned children.

He walked to Nurse Lillian and they talked.

They walked to Dennis and pointed to a name.

Albert looked at them and the piece of paper.

Dennis said, “What is the problem?”

Ryan said, “I don’t like her. She is the one that was giving Meredith the problem about Spencer.”

Dennis said, “Take her off and what another nurse.”

He looked at Head Nurse Lillian and said, “If the mother comes back talk to her about her children. I am going to my office and take a nap.”

Ryan said, “Which room is vacant?”

Nurse Lillian watched the nurse they don’t like go in one of the children’s room.

Dennis turned and walked to her and said, “What are you doing in here?’

The nurse said, “To check the child’s vitals.”

Dennis said, “You don’t need to do that. It is written in their charts what to do and what not to do.”

Ryan pointed to the labs.

Head Nurse Lillian said, “Nurse Beatrice take all of those tests to the labs.”

Nurse Beatrice looked at the sleeping boy and stomped out of his room.

Dennis looked at her.

Albert looked at the nurse and she brought his coat and scarves and hat and gloves to put on.

Albert saw Hutch walking down the stairs.

Albert said, “Hutch why don’t you and the children stay tonight and leave in the morning and take them back to the Stith.”

Hutch said, “I feel bad. I don’t know how I missed this. Betty kept crying and saying her legs hurt. We did not test Charles Jr.’s spine. GOD I feel bad.”

Ryan said, “I messed this up.”

Dennis looked at the three doctors and said, “I thank GOD for sending you Albert. How did you know the children were here?”

Albert said, “My wife was at the Stith yesterday and heard the children were to have surgery to break and re-set their bones. That’s what happen to her niece and she fainted. Hutch why didn’t you catch my wife?”

Hutch shook his head and said, “I was at the nurses’ desk.”

Nurse Sharon grinned, but was still watching upstairs.

Albert said, “My wife was so upset last night and this morning. I know over the years for her to be that upset I needed to look into the matter.”

Dennis said, “I’m glad you did.”

Hutch said, “Nurse Lillian.”

She stepped up and he said, “Ryan keep Betty and Charles Jr. sleep until tomorrow?”

Ryan said, “At least twenty four hours.”

Hutch looked at Nurse Sharon and said, “We can go back to the Stith and come back in the morning to get Betty and Charles Jr.”

Hutch looked at Nurse Lillian and said, “Whatever that Nurse Beatrice problem is you keep her away from our two patients they should sleep until in the morning.”

Dennis said, “What her on the third floor.”

Nurse Lillian re-wrote the scheduling and put Nurse Beatrice on the third floor.

Ryan shook Hutch and Albert’s hands and went to a vacant room next to the last burned child.

Hutch and Nurse Sharon left in the wagon and went back to the Stith.

Nurse Sharon was quiet.

She looked at Hutch,

Hutch knew she was looking at him.

He thought she wanted to be flirted.

He said, “What Sharon?”

She said, “I don’t feel right about leaving Betty and Charles Jr. there.”

Hutch said, “I suppose to be on call here tonight because Dr. Ralph needs to go home and to his bed to sleep.”

Nurse Sharon said, “My house is locked up. I ‘ll go and sleep at the hospital with the children. They are the only black people there.”

Hutch looked at Nurse Sharon he said, “Have Betty and Charles Jr, be placed in the same room. Don’t tell anyone you are there. Sleep on the side on the floor where you can see the door.”

Hutch helped Nurse Sharon out the wagon.

The grounds keeper came and took the wagon back around the back and feed and gave the horses water.

Nurse Sharon and Dr. Hutch told Charles, Dr. Greene, Dr. Ralph and Dr. Woodson everything that happened and how Dr. Albert came in and saved the children.

The doctors were so embarrassed.

Hutch told Dr. Woodson that Nurse Sharon was to stay at the hospital overnight with the children because he was on call tonight and would get up and take the wagon to pick the children up and bring the m to the Stith.

Dr. Woodson said, “We need to order milk for Betty and Charles Jr.

Shirley was laying in her room with her back to the door listening.

Aunt Bev sent the children to school by Mabel and Curtis.

She dressed.

She wanted to look nice and put on the green dress she wore to lunch on Saturday.

She took the carriage and one horse because Al took the other horse that morning to go to the hospital.

She arrived at Shirley’s school thirty minutes later.

Beverly pulled in front of the building that house the president’s office.

She remembered she had to find his office to find out where to set up for Shirley’s Christmas celebration for the handicapped students and their families.

She pulled in front of the president’s office and sat a minute and reviewe d Shirley’s paper and stepped out the carriage and walked to the president’s office.

The president was standing and looking out his window and watched Beverly step out the carriage and walked towards his office.

He was thinking trying to remember her.

Beverly walked in the president’s office and said, “Good morning. I am here to leave a paper of Shirley Stith Simmon for the class of Economics.

The secretaries just looked at Beverly.

Beverly took a firm step.

The president’s door was cracked and he was reading letters.

He did not like what he did not hear.

He stood and walked out his office and walked and greeted Beverly.

He said, “Good morning Beverly. I remembered you from the holiday decorations for Shirley’s Christmas party rather celebration. How are you?”

Beverly smiled and said, “Great Mr. President.”

She reached the president Shirley’s paper and said, “She requested that I deliver this paper. If you would tell me where the professor is located and point me to his office I will deliver Miss Simmon paper to him.”

The president looked at Shirley’s name and the name of the professor.

He flipped through Shirley’s paper.

He said, “I will give it to the professor this afternoon at our faculty meeting.”

Beverly said, “Thank you sir.”

She turned and did not look at the two secretaries and the president rushed to the door and opened it to let Beverly out the room.

Beverly said, “Thank you sir.”

She walked out his office and to her carriage.

Beverly began her hour ride to see Shirley.

She thought about her many problems and most of them evolved around money.

Beverly thought, “If I knew it was going to be this hard I could not have taken the former slave children.”

She sat and thought about little Shirley and said, “God forgive me. They have been through so much. What I said, was selfish.”

Beverly rode to the Stith covered in two blankets and sitting on a quilt.

Albert made it home after Mabel and Curtis.

The three of them cleaned the house and got everything ready for that evening.

Curtis and Mabel cut up the vegetables to make the vegetable soup that evening.

Al went and undressed and put his work clothes on.

He sat in the sitting area and thought about Betty and Charles Jr.

He could not understand why all those good doctors missed the diagnosis.

Al thought, “I put that telegram in Beverly’s bag to send to the medical license board for Reginald’s address. Did she see it?”

Al read his medical books.

Mabel went outside and worked in the yard for a little time.

Al heard noise out back of the housing.

He stood and walked to the kitchen and peeped.

He saw Mabel working in the backyard.

Al thought, “Why is she out there? It is freezing cold.”

She had on a quilt and worked for about two hours in the back.

Al wanted her to come in the house and sit.

He did not know if that was part of the slave mind condition that she had to be busy. He thought bout Little Shirley and the others and said, “GOD help them please. We probably have to take Betty and Charles Jr. Don’t let Beverly become angry. YOU know she won’ be angry about helping children she will be angry for not having the money to provide for them. She wants to travel with Brenda and Patrick, but we can’t leave these children for a year or two. I want to take my wife over the world before I die or get sick and can’t travel. GOD YOU know I love her. I have n-o-t been a good provider for her. We lived off a bare minimum for decades but YOU know I love being a doctor and I would not give that up for more money. Let us be comforter GOD. In JESUS name. And let me write Reginald and ask him for his forgiveness for my bitterness against him for scaring Beverly so I could not have children with her. I have seen YOU perform miracles. I realized yesterday if YOU wanted me and Beverly to have children YOU would have overruled the scar tissue and given us children or a child…”

Al stopped for a moment and tears formed in his eyes as he stood and looked out the window at Mabel.

He held his head down and muttered, “…they would have been poor also. If one child would have been poor.”

Al sniffed.

He said, “LORD please Betty and Charles and those five children that were burnt in the fire. Don’t let them die and don’t let them deformed and amputees. Amen.”

Al went back in the sitting area and continued to read his medical books.

He picked up his note paper and pen.

He walked to the table and sat and wrote detail notes from that morning with Betty and Charles Jr.

Al looked at the time and it was time for Mabel and Curtis to pick the children up from school.

Al turned to stand.

Curtis was running down the stairs with his coat and Mabel’s coat.

He said, “I’m going Mr. Al.”

Al smiled and walked to the back door.

Curtis said, “Mabel?’

Mabel turned and saw Curtis with her new coat and stood.

She wondered, “How did he get my new coat. I’ve been wearing blankets. I didn’t want to wear anything new until I left this week.”

Al saw how Mabel was looking at Curtis and he stared.

Mabel walked to Curtis and snatched her new coat out of his hand and went upstairs to her room and locked the door.

Al stood and looked at Mabel then at Curtis.

Curtis stepped back and looked up the stairs at Mabel.

Mabel went under her bed and pulled out her bag of new clothes.

She saw the neatly packed clothes were slightly out of shape.

She sat on her knees and thought.

She told Beverly she would not touch her new clothes until Saturday when she and Shirley will meet the boys on the train to ride to Cedartown.

Mabel looked around and saw her secret place to hide her money.

She and Shirley talked about some of her money disappearing.

Shirley told her to find another place to hide her money, especially the money from her grandma and tell no one not even Aunt Bev.

Shirley said, “That way you can eliminate down to the thief.”

Mabel stood and walked to her secret place and found the two hundred dollars.

She put the money in a new secret place she thought about all last night.

Al stood and stared at Curtis.

Curtis was too busy staring up the stairs for Mabel that he did not see Al staring at him.

Mabel walked down the stairs and out the house to the stables and got in the wagon.

Curtis was nervous and turned and followed Mabel with his eyes.

He walked out the house and closed the door.

Al stood behind the closed door and watched Mabel and Curtis eave.

Al looked at the time and thought, “Beverly won’t be back for at least until dark.”

Beverly walked into the Stith hospital and greeted the nurses.

Dr. Charles saw her from the other side and rushed over and opened the door to the hospital administrator’s office.

Beverly looked at him and said, “Good morning Dr. Charles.”

The nurses laughed.

Nurse Sharon had just put her things in the back.

She laughed.

Dr. Charles was slightly embarrassed.

He said, “Good morning Aunt Bev. I had Dr. Woodson to unlock the door this morning in case you needed to get in.”

Shirley was laying in her bed listening.

Beverly looked at Dr. Charles and said, “Thank you Dr. Charles and call me Beverly. I am not that old to be your aunt.”

The nurses laughed.

Shirley grinned at her sassy aunt.

Beverly walked towards Shirley’s room and said, “Good morning Leon.”

Leon grunted and waved his left arm.

Beverly looked at his arm and walked into Shirley’s room.

Beverly said, “I hand your paper to your president. He said, he will give it to the professor at their faculty meeting this afternoon.”

Shirley said, “Thank You.”

Beverly looked at Shirley and said, “How are you today?”

Shirley waved her hand and said, “Just a little bit better.”

Beverly looked in her bag at the telegram that Al want her to send.

Beverly said, “I don’t now why Al want to apologize to Reginald for what he did to me. Bit I am going to send it just like he said. I don’t believe in interfering with his decisions. Once you marry Skip you will see what I am talking about.”

Shirley bucked her eyes and looked at Beverly.

Beverly turned quickly and closed the door and said, “Shirley who is he?”

Shirley turned to turn on her side and said, “I’m sleepy.”

Beverly said, “I am worst than your momma. You better not be double dipping if you told Skip you will wait. Pretend like you are sleepy now, but you better have that last paper ready tomorrow when I come back. Heifer.”

Shirley giggled.

Beverly put her coat and all her belongings in Shirley’s room and walked out Shirley’s room.

Leon said, “Aunt Bev are you married?”

Beverly said, “Unfortunately.”

Dr. Woodson looked at Beverly.

Hutch looked at Beverly.

Nurse Sharon looked at Beverly.

Dr. Charles was over on the other side working with Dr. Greene and Dr. Ralph but watching Beverly.

Hutch said, “That has to be husband and wife issues because the man is a great doctor.”.

Nurse Sharon nodded her head and said, “Yes indeed.”

The other nurses said, “Yes.”

Dr. Woodson put his head in shame and shook his head in embarrassment.

Dr. Hutch said, “I am no longer embarrassed he save two little children today.

He patted Dr. Woodson on his shoulders and said, “He can teach us. Contact him and ask if he would un-retire to come here. We need him.”

The nurses looked back at Beverly in the hospital’s administrator’s office and shook their heads for no.

Hutch said, “You all are chickens.”

Nurse Sharon said, “Cluck. Cluck.”

Hutch stared at Nurse Sharon.

The other nurses watched Hutch.

Dr. Woodson was trying to look over his charts to review them with Hutch, because Felipe would be back on Tuesday.

He looked up from his charts and Hitch was standing by him.

Dr. Woodson pointed at Shirley’s room.

The nurses heard Shirley flipping papers on her bed.

Shirley yelled, “No! Eleanor get Aunt Bev!!!”

Leon burst out laughing.

Dr. Woodson said, “What is wrong with her?”

Leon said, “Aunt Bev!!!”

Leon was laughing hard and loud.

Dr. Woodson rushed to Shirley’s room followed by Hutch.

They looked in the hospital administrator’s office at the lovely Beverly typing on the telegram machine.

She heard Shirley but was not playing with her.

Leon was laughing hard.

Dr. Woodson looked in Leon’s room and said, “Are you alright Leon?”

Leon kept laughing.

Leon’s nurse walked back to check on him since Betty and Charles Jr, weren’t at the hospital and she already attended to Laura for the day.

Dr. Woodson, Hutch and the nurse stood in Shirley’s door and saw she was frantic.

Shirley was on her knees going through her papers.

They stood and looked at her.

Leon was hollering.

Hutch looked back at Leon.

Leon’s nurse stepped back into Leon’s room and saw he was laughing and having a good time.

Beverly said, “Shirley, I’m coming.”

Shirley jumped in her bed and covered her head with her blankets pretending she was sleep.

Dr. Woodson stared at her and said, “Shirley are you in sick or in pain calling your momma’s name like that?”

Leon nearly fell out his bed.

Hutch stared at Shirley, how fast she moved to get in the bed.

Shirley covered her head and said, “Pain. Aunt Bev. Threaten me.”

Dr. Woodson shook his head and stomped out of Shirley’s room.

Some of Shirley’s papers fell on the floor.

Hutch walked and picked them up.

He stood and read them.

He said, “Shirley you need to correct this paper. It is all wrong. I hope the rest of your papers aren’t as bad as this one.”

Shirley would not move.

She said, “Aunt Bev said, “I better have it ready tomorrow when she comes. I need Eleanor.”

Hutch said, “You need to sit your butt up in the bed and read this bad paper.”

Dr. Woodson said, “Dr. Hutch.”

Hutch said, “This is simple accounting. You re-read the assignment and I’ll help you later this evening. I hope your other papers are not as bad as this one.”

Shirley was looking at Hutch and whimpered.

Shirley sat up in the bed and took the papers Hutch was reaching to her.

Hutch said, “Nurse Simon is here if you need anything.”

Nurse Simon looked at Hutch and said, “Nurse Sharon is her nurse. I am Leon’s nurse.”

Leon was laughing and said, “I want Aunt Bev as my nurse.”

Hutch walked and to Leon’s door and said. “She is a married woman.”

Shirley yelled, “Let him have her. Get her off my back.”

Aunt Bev yelled, “I hear my name. I’m coming.”

Nurse Sharon hurried and went down the hall to the other patients.

Leon said, “I think he is old.”

Hutch said, “He is a damn great doctor.”

Leon said, “I don’t want him. I want Aunt Bev.”

Hutch walked away and pass the hospital’s administrator’s office and looked at the busy Aunt Bev.

Nurse Simons closed Shirley’s door and walked and in Leon’s room and stared at him.

Leon was still laughing.

Dr. Woodson shook his head at Leon.

He and Hutch continued their rounds.

Hutch said to Dr. Woodson, “Between Aunt Bev and Eleanor who do you think will win?”

Dr. Woodson stood and stared at Hutch.

Nurse Sharon was passing them and looked in Dr. Woodson’s face she could not move fast enough.

She made it back to the nurses’ desk in one piece and told them that Hutch asked Dr. Woodson who would win between Aunt Bev and Eleanor?

The nurses looked.

Leon yelled, “Aunt Bev.”

Nurse Simons stepped and looked at Leon’s door that she closed, so they could get some relief from him laughing.

The other nurses stared at Nurse Sharon and she said, “That is the way Dr. Woodson looked at Hutch.”

She stepped back and said, “They are just now going into Mrs. Tillerson’s room.”

The nurses laughed.

Nurse Simons said, “You saw how fast Dr. Woodson ran to Shirley. You better never say anything about Eleanor.”

The nurses snickered.

They continued to work.

Aunt Bev sent Eleanor a telegram and told her what she said to Shirley and Shirley is acting like she has threaten her.

Patrick, Brenda and Eleanor were sitting in his office going over all the schedules for the next two weeks.

They were talking about Sunday and how delightful everyone was.

Brenda said, “I’m glad we went to church yesterday morning to see Gen.”

Patrick laughed and said, “She is a great actress. She can’t sing a lick and had her mouth wide open.”

Eleanor was laughing.

Patrick saw the telegram coming in and he read it and tore it off the telegram machine and reached it to Eleanor and said, “Eleanor.”

Eleanor waved her hand.

Patrick said, “It’s not about Percy. It is Beverly talking about Shirley.”

Eleanor said, “I don’t care as long as Shirley is breathing.”

Patrick shook the telegram and said, “Here.”

Patrick looked at Brenda and Brenda was trying to read the telegram from Beverly.

Patrick shook his head at Brenda.

He said, “Brenda you looked very lovely yesterday.”

Eleanor looked at her mother blushing.

Brenda said, “Thank you Patrick.”

Eleanor was reading Beverly’s telegram and said, “Joseph would say that to me.”

Brenda touched Eleanor’s face.

Eleanor said, “Daddy you did not read the whole telegram.”

Patrick said, “I didn’t need to read the whole telegram I saw one of your children’s name I knew it was trouble.”

Brenda laughed.

Patrick looked at Eleanor.

Eleanor was sitting next to Brenda and threw the telegram on her thigh and looked at Brenda.

Brenda looked at her and back to Patrick.

She said, “I was glad to see Claressa and Alvin at church. I know they don’t go to church over there.”

Eleanor said, “I was glad to see them too. I sat with them and Claressa was a bit sad that both of her parents are gone.”

Brenda said, “Why were late coming to dinner yesterday?”

Eleanor said, “They went out back of the church and put flowers on her momma and daddy graves and on Alvin’s grandparents’ graves.”

Brenda looked at Patrick and said, “I didn’t know Alvin’s grandparents attended our church. Did you Patrick?”

Patrick said, “They were members but did not attend. They had a falling out with pastor Spencer when I was a little boy and vowed never to step foot back in the church as long as he was the pastor.”

Brenda laughed and said, “They did not set foot back in the church.”

Brenda laughed.

Patrick smirked.

Patrick was watching Eleanor.

Brenda said, “We had just enough people to have a delightful Sunday supper.”

Patrick said, “It was nice.”

Eleanor read the telegram and looked up and said, “Daddy, Aunt Bev and Uncle Al has a bet.”

Patrick looked at Eleanor and said, “
A bet?”

Eleanor said, “This is silly.”

Brenda looked at Eleanor.

Eleanor said, “Al said the three ambassadors played billiards and drank whiskey. Beverly said, they played darts and drank brandy. Who is right?”

Patrick said, “She has nothing else to do with those seventeen children than to ask what we did with our Sunday supper guests?”

Eleanor said, “But to threaten my child.”

Patrick said, “Shirley can take it. She has done something that Beverly would even tell her she better have her paper ready tomorrow.”

Eleanor said, “So you did read the telegram.”

Patrick said, “Only that part.”

Brenda laughed.

Eleanor said, “They will be leaving Saturday to get here Monday.”

Brenda grinned and said, “All of my babies.”

Eleanor said, “I don’t know about Percy.”

Brenda looked at Eleanor and said, “Eleanor let him spend the holiday with his brothers and sister.”

Patrick said, “Lets get down to business.”

Brenda readied her pen and paper.

Eleanor readied her pen and paper.

Patrick turned to the telegram machine and sent Bev a telegram.

He said, “Part of the evening Gen, Brenda and U.S. senator played darts and drank brandy. The other part of the evening the three ambassadors and me played billiards and drank whiskey and scotch. How is everything else going. We heard about Al’s pensions being stopped.”

Brenda shook her head and said, “Mob.”

Patrick looked at Brenda.

He said, “Eleanor, Shirley is concerned the mob is trying to take over her hospital that is why she sent her account book for the hospital. Have you looked at it?”

Eleanor said, “I’ve have tried, but my mind has been on Percy. All I can do is see him laid out drunk in the gutter.”

Eleanor shook her head and cried.

She said, “Momma and daddy I have really tried with him. I see how you feel about Christopher, Patrick Jr and John. Like you missed something somewhere. But I still don’t want their children ever to be around my children. I have drawn the papers up to give Percy only an extremely small amount from his trust fund to live on so Bruce would not get a penny. Bruce would charge Percy for room and board and every candle or ride on a horse, etc.”

Brenda hit Eleanor’s leg and said, “Eleanor our GOD has brought us through hell all of our lives and all this evil the devil brought against you and your children I believe our GOD will end today. The three of us will pray. Patrick.”

Patrick looked from Eleanor to Brenda.

Brenda took her position of power and said., “Let’s finished sending our telegrams.”

Patrick continued and said, “I think Gen was having an especially great time with the ambassador for Sweden. She and Eleanor decorated her house with paper ornaments Gen drew and painted. We sent you and Al and your seventeen children our Christmas gift to you. You should receive your wire today. That will help to make your Christmas a little bit brighter until the new year so we can get to the bottom of this. You have the accounts at the clothing stores use them…”

Brenda said, “Tell Beverly not to be stingy. She does not have to pay those bills.”

Brenda turned to Eleanor and said, “She talks about Al being stingy.”

Eleanor tried to laugh and put her head on Brenda’s shoulders.

Patrick said, “Please use the accounts. You don’t have to pay the bills.”

Patrick said, “Eleanor what you want to say to Bev about Shirley?’

Eleanor raised her head and turned to Patrick and said, “Don’t hurt my child.”

Patrick said, “Eleanor said, don’t hurt her child.”

Beverly sent the telegram to the state medical license board for Reginald’s new address.

Several telegrams came in overnight.

Beverly put them in separate folders.

Eleanor said, “Daddy tell Bev, I put tickets for Monica to travel through to Mississippi to get home. She and a guest can go anytime.”

Brenda said, “GOD I hope it is not Beverly.”

Beverly received that telegram.

She had several telegrams for Dr. Charles.

She saw a strange telegram from the sheriff.

Beverly sat and read it.

She became scared and sent Patrick and Brenda what the telegram said.

She walked out the hospital’s administrator’s office and she had the folders in her hand.

Dr. Woodson reached for the folders.

Beverly walked to the Christmas tree and stared at the Christmas tree. She walked around the Christmas tree and stared.

Dr. Woodson looked at Beverly.

Dr. Greene looked at Beverly and said, “She is going to come up with a lovely idea of how to decorate the tree. You should how she and Mabel decorated Shirley’s Christmas celebration. It was wonderful. I only wish I had taken Barry with me.”

Dr. Woodson looked at Beverly.

Nurse Sharon watched Beverly and said, “I love her dress.”

Nurse Simons said, “Smith’s. No one else in the city carry those type clothes.”

Another nurse said, “She is married to a doctor.”

Nurse Sharon, “A retired doctor. Their income is cut in half.”

Dr. Ralph and Hutch stared at the nurses.

The nurses turned their heads and finished their work.

Dr. Greene watched Beverly.

Beverly walked to the nurses’ desk and said,
Dr. Woodson.”

She handed him his folders of telegrams and messages and letters.

Dr. Woodson said, “Beverly have you seen Monica?”

Beverly said, “I’ll see her sometime today and will let her know you asked about her welfare.”

Leon hollered.

Dr. Greene held his head down and snickered at Beverly’s very astute way to argue.

Shirley said, “Eleanor.”

Aunt Beverly said, “Shut up Shirley she told me not to hurt you.”

Shirley said, “Ok.”

Nurse Sharon’s mouth dropped open.

Shirley became happy and sat in the bed and started reading her assignment.

Dr. Greene nearly went to his knees and hollered.

Hutch looked at Dr. Greene.

Dr. Woodson looked at Dr. Greene.

Nurse Simons watched Dr. Ralph and Dr. Charles facial expressions.

They showed no emotions.

They heard Shirley humming and singing.

Leon was laughing so hard he nearly fell out the bed.

He yelled, “Help!”

They all ran to Leon.

Hutch and Dr. Greene put him back in the beed.

Leon said, “Give me that woman.”

Dr. Greene stood back and grinned.

Hutch said, “What iss wrong with you. She is a happily married woman.”

Shirley said, “Let him have her.”

Hutch walked in the hallway and said, “Shirley, you better be reading your assignment.”

Shirley was sitting in her bed and was happy and said, “Eleanor said for Aunt Bev not to hurt me.”

Hutch said, “All of yall are crazy.”

Dr. Greene was laughing.

He had not seen Shirley all day.

Shirley said, “Hey Dr. Greene.”

Tony looked at Leon and walked to Shirley’s room.

Dr. Woodson was looking and listening.

Dr. Greene said, “Hello my Shirley.”

Shirley looked at Dr. Greene and said, “I figured out why you name that room after me.”

Dr. Greene started to chuckle and say, “Why is that?”

Shirley said, “Its for the terrible and rude patients to let all the staff be on guard.”

Dr. Greene said, “Exactly. I have to go and finish my rounds.”

Shirley said, “I got Barry a Christmas gift that I left with Dr. Woodson.”

Dr. Woodson said, “I have it.”

Dr. Greene looked at Shirley and said, “Where is mine?”

Shirley said, “I gave all of you your Christmas gifts earlier.”

Dr. Greene walked to Shirley and kissed her on her forehead and said, “I know.”

Dr. Woodson smiled at his old friend.

Dr. Greene walked out Shirley’s room and closed Leon’s door.

Hutch watched Beverly walked over to Dr. Charles and hand him a folder.

Beverly walked in Sally’s room and said, “Good afternoon.

Vivienne said, “Hello Beverly. I love your dress.”

The nurses looked at Beverly’s dress.

Dr. Charles looked from his folder at Beverly’s dress.

He thought about his sisters that dress like Beverly everyday.

He missed them and wanted to see them.

He missed France.

Beverly said, “Vivienne I am going to see Lorraine for about an hour. You want to go?”

Vivienne said, “Sure.”

Beverly said, “I have an idea for the Christmas tree. I need your help. Sally you want to help decorate the Christmas tree?”

Vivienne was getting her coat and scarf and gloves and walking to Beverly.

Dr. Woodson was listening to Beverly and thought, “She’s going to decorate our tree.”

He heard Sally screamed. “I’m not decorating no god…-

Dr. Woodson ran across the hall to Sally’s room.

Dr. Charles and Dr. Ralph were standing waiting for Dr. Greene.

Dr. Charles’ mouth dropped open.

Leon heard Sally he was trying to get to his door.

He yelled, “Open this door.”

Shirley jumped out of her bed and ran and opened Leon’s door.

She was stooping down peeping pass the Christmas tree to Sally’s room.

Nurse Sharon said, “What is wrong with that child?”

Shirley was stooping to see if she could see Aunt Bev.

Leon was twisting in his bed to hear and said, “Shirley?”

Shirley said, “Wait.”

Nurse Simons turned and saw Shirley stooping and peeping.

She saw Dr. Woodson had picked up Beverly and was carrying her across the hall to the hospital’s administrator’s office.

Vivienne was standing in Sally’s doorway with her mouth opened.

Shirley stood and said, “Aunt Bev.”

Dr. Woodson put Beverly in the hospital’s administrator’s office.

She was struggling with Dr. Woodson to get to the door.

Shirley stepped back and said, “Aunt Bev calm down. She is just an eight year old little girl.

Aunt Beverly was struggling with Dr. Woodson.

Aunt Beverly was tired and said, “I am going to beat her ass. I’m going to beat her ass.”

Shirley jumped back out the door.

Vivienne realized she could not take care of Sally and adopted her as her child.

She held her head down and stood in the door.

Dr. Ralph walked to the door and stood behind Vivienne and stared at Sally.

Vivienne was heart broken.

She walked across the hall and sat in a chair and stared at the Christmas tree.

Dr. Woodson said, “Beverly stop. You are threatening to hurt my patient. First Brenda and now you. Shirley at least closed the door.”

Leon was listening.

Beverly said, “That little eight year monster needs to beaten. I am the person to do it.”

Nurse Sharon was peeping at Vivienne.

Vivienne stood and walked to the hospital’s administrator’s office.

Dr. Charles was peeping around the Christmas tree at Vivienne.

He saw when she walked to the hospital’s administrator’s office.

Vivienne’s face showed all her pain.

Dr. Woodson looked at her.

Beverly said, “I have not touched your patient yet.”

Dr. Woodson said, ”You were only a claw away from her throat.”

Leon yelled, “Good girl Beverly. She is a bad ass child. She has to have evil parents on both sides to produce that little sh\*\*.”

Nurse Simons ran to close Leon’s door.

Leon had pushed his chair in his door and said, “Don’t. Yall been closing my door all day. I want to hear and have a laugh.”

Vivienne said, “Sally was not like this when I first met her. Sue. Her mother was a god fearing woman.”

Beverly said, “She knew to give up that sh\*\*.”

Shirley said, “Aunt Bev go and buy you a new dress.”

Leon said, “Here Bev go and buy you two dresses and a new pair of shoes.

Dr. Greene frowned and looked in the direction of Leon’s room.

Hutch shook his head and said, “He’s been doing that all day.”

Nurse Sharon said, “I want a new dress.”

Hutch stared at her.

The nurses looked at Hutch and put their heads down and continued to work.

Nurse Sharon walked to the back of the hospital to Mrs. Tillerson.

Hutch stared at the nurses.

Beverly walked out the hospital administrator’s office and went to Shirley’s room.

Dr. Woodson walked behind Beverly.

He was angry that Beverly was that angry that if he had not caught her she could have hurt Sally.

He had to speak to Dr. Ralph and Dr. Charles they were standing only a few feet away and did not move to intervene.

Vivienne was putting on her scarf, coat, hat and gloves.

Beverly put on her scarf and gloves.

Dr. Woodson said, “Beverly put on your coat and hat.”

Shirley was standing in the corner in her room at the head of her bed.

Away from Beverly.

She remembered one time when she was visiting them, that Christopher called her a name. Before anyone could catch Beverly she was beating him in his head and dragging him down the stairs and stomping him at the same type.

Beverly was running through the house to drag Christopher outside to a tree to lynch him.

Eleanor was screaming.

Patrick Jr. and John was were terrified and could not move.

Shirley was looking through her bed rails.

Lorraine and Stephanie were screaming.

Brenda and Patrick ran from the back of the house and saw Beverly dragging someone through the house.

They tried to run behind Beverly.

They stopped at the stairs and looked up at a screaming, Eleanor, Lorraine and Stephanie.”

Patrick and Brenda saw Patrick Jr and John terrified stiff.

They knew it had to be Christopher.

Patrick did not move. He wanted Beverly to do something to him.

Brenda did not know what her sister would do to her son.

She hit Patrick and she ran behind them and looked up and down the hall and heard thumps.

The whole staff watched Beverly beat and stomp Christopher and drag him out the house.

Brenda ran out the backdoor and saw Beverly dragging and beating Christopher towards the field.

Jessie ran and said, “Beverly!”

Beverly looked at Jessie.

He stopped and looked back and saw Brenda running behind them.

He saw Patrick slowly walking out the house.

Jessie said, “Well Pat wants Christopher to get this ass whipping.”

Brenda was running and calling, “Beverly!! Stop.”

Beverly kept dragging Christopher to the fields.

They workers were shocked and ran out the house and stables and the workers in the field ran to see what was happening.

Beverly had a rope on her left shoulder she picked off the back porch.

Eleanor, Lorraine and Stephanie ran out the house and left the four year old Shirley in her bed.

Patrick Jr and John did not move.

Patrick slowly walked behind them to the field.

He and Jessie walked to the field.

Jessie said, “Pat what is this about?”

Patrick walked and said, “I think Christopher called her a nigger. That is the only thing that can send her into a fit.”

Jessie said, “My God. Will me and my boys are going over there on the back side of the field to work today. They don’t need to see anything that will give them any ideas. I may wake with a noose around my neck.”

Patrick was watching Brenda who was almost to Beverly.

He said, “Alright Jessie.”

Patrick ran fast to Brenda.

Jessie shook his head and yelled at his four sons to keep moving to the other side of the field.

Beverly dropped Christopher at a large tree and she climbed the tree to hang the rope.

Christopher could not ove.

Brenda grabbed him and held him.

Patrick stopped and stood and watched Beverly calmly throw the rope around the tree limb and tie it and said, “Brenda pulled that piece of rope.”

Brenda could not talk.

She yelled, “Beverly get your ass down out of my tree. You are not lynching my son.”

Beverly climbed to the end of the limb to see if it could Christopher’s weight and jumped down and said, “Yes I am.”

Patrick stood and looked.

Eleanor, Lorraine, Stephanie and Robert, the butler, r ran out in the field and stood back.

Robert yelled, “Stop!”

Beverly had lost her mind.

Beverly was walking to get Christopher from Brenda.

Brenda dropped Christopher.

Patrick looked at Christopher falling.

Then he turned to his wife who stood with her battle position she pulled out the knife she always kept on her.

Beverly pulled out her hair combs that were pointed with steel blades.

Patrick knew they would kill each other in that field that day.

Patrick ran to Beverly and tackled her to the ground and took the steel teeth hair combs.

Robert ran and knocked Brenda down and took the knife out of her hands and he ran.

Eleanor, Lorraine and Stephanie ran.

Jessie knew Patrick was out numbered.

He ran and grabbed Brenda and dragged her back to the house.

He gave her to Robert and Louise (the head maid).

Several of the stablemen ran and grabbed Christopher and hid him in the stables.

Brenda said, “I don’t ever want to see her again. Pack her stuff and take her to the train station. If she has to sleep in the wagon she is never to come back here. Now.”

Jessie ran out in the field and jumped and took down the rope and ran into the field with it.

Louise ran into the house and went to Beverly’s room and packed up all of her things and ran out the backdoor and one of the stablemen was pulling out a two horse wagon.

Louise put Beverly things in the wagon and ran back in the house and searched and made sure there was nothing left.

Robert ran to Patrick.

Patrick was sitting on Beverly.

Robert said, “Mrs. Stith said to pack up everything and put it in a wagon and take her to the train station for her never to return to this house.”

Patrick was peeping towards the house.

He said, “Robert bring that wagon out here.”

Beverly was struggling to get up.

Patrick looked back at Beverly and said, “Hurry and tell Louise to come and go with you to the train station.

Robert looked scared and said, “Me?’

Patrick looked at Robert and said, “Tell Lorraine.”

He looked again at Beverly and “Stephanie to go to.”

Robert looked at Beverly.

Patrick said, “Hurry. Tell Lorraine to bring the shots.”

Robert turned and ran back to the house and nearly passed out.

Robert had to catch his breathe.

Brenda was sitting calm on the back porch.

Robert said, Louise, Lorraine and Stephanie Patrick wants you all to ride to the train station with me.

The three women stood and looked at Robert.

Then Lorraine started cussing.

Robert said, “Lorraine Patrick said, bring the shots.”

Lorraine started stomping and cussing even more.

Brenda was not listening to them.

She was thinking of how she was going to kill her sister after she tried to lynch Christopher.

Patrick could hear Lorraine all the way out in the field cursing.

He thought, “She is selfish.”

Eleanor ran upstairs to check on Shirley.

Shirley had stopped hollering and as peeping through her rails.

Patrick Jr and John had not move.

Eleanor ran back downstairs.

Shirley crawled under her blanket an only a twig of hair could be seen.

Eleanor sniffed the air and kept running.

Robert had put the three women in the wagon and ran in the house and got Lorraine’s medical bag and opened it and saw the needs.

Eleanor passed him and ran passed by Brenda to the field.

Robert jumped and ran out the house to the field.

Stephanie and Louise were scared and still.

Lorraine was still cursing.

 Robert ran pass Brenda and went and got into the wagon and rode fast out to the field.

Eleanor was still running out to the field.

Robert caught her.

But Eleanor ran and fell down by Patrick and was out of breath.

Patrick looked at Eleanor and calmly said, “Where is your mother?”

Eleanor was trying to catch her breath and said, “What?”

Patrick was still sitting on Beverly.

Lorraine saw Patrick sitting on Beverly.

Lorraine saw Beverly needed help.

She reached for her medical bag and took out the sedative and filled the needle with the sedative.

Eleanor saw the needle and a nervous Lorraine.

Eleanor could not move.

Patrick swallowed hard at the sight of the needle.

Lorraine pushed the needle in the arm of Beverly.

Beverly screamed.

Patrick closed his eyes.

He said, “Lorraine I know you don’t want to.”

Lorraine said, I’ll go home with her.”

Patrick looked at Lorraine and said, “Thank you. I will wire Al for him to get on the next train. I will have them hold the trains so he could get on the train in two days and you return in two days. You go into the owner’s suite and stay there. Don’t leave Beverly and let no one in the suite but George. The train will leave in an hour.”

Beverly started snoring.

Robert jumped out the wagon and helped put Beverly in the wagon.

Patrick stood and said, “Do any of you know what happened?”

Louise said, “Christopher called Beverly a nigger.”

Patrick stood and stareed at Louise.

He said, “Why?”

Beverly was helping Shirley with her clothes to bring her outside and have a picnic.

Christopher said, “That’s what she better do. I knew what he was saying. Patrick Jr and John joined in and grabbed their belts and started beating Beverly like they were whips.”

Patrick stood still.

Stephanie said, “We ran and tried to stop them they had beaten Beverly down. She got to the stair and pulled herself up and grabbed John and was stomping him and kicking him in his face. Patrick Jr ran up and yelling ‘turn my brother loose’ He tried to choke Beverly with his belt.”

Robert said, “That’s when I ran up the backstairs. Mrs. Stith forbid us from touching your children.”

Patrick said, “I did not know. I end that now.”

Robert said, “Beverly grabbed Patrick Jr. and bit him between his legs and took his belt and beat him and stomp John at the same time.

Then Christopher ran up and was hitting Beverly in her head. She shook herself and threw Patrick Jr into the wall and grabbed Christopher and began to choke him, stomp him and beat him in his head. You saw the rest.”

Patrick said, “Yall I am sorry for this horrible incident. Where is Christopher?”

Robert said, “The stablemen put him the stables.”

Patrick said, “Let him stay there.”

He looked at a sleep Beverly and said, “Beverly I am sorry for this terrible incident. I don’t know why my sons don’t know they are black and could be slaves also.”

Robert jumped in the wagon and pulled out the field and sped to town.

Eleanor was on her knees and turned around on her knees to look at Beverly.

She cried and pulled herself up by Patrick’s pants leg.

Shirley was walking back to the house with Patrick.

Patrick was holding Eleanor.

He saw Brenda sitting like Beverly was wrong.

Patrick said, “God I need your help.”

Eleanor said, “Daddy will Aunt Bev live?”

Patrick kissed Eleanor on her forehead and said, “Say nothing around your mother. Let me work on her.”

Eleanor got to the back porch.

She continued in the house to check on Shirley and Percy.

Patrick sat next to Brenda on the back porch.

Robert hard into town and pulled up in front of the train he saw George and told him everything that happened and that Patrick said for Lorraine to go with Beverly and stay in the owners’ suite until Al get on the train and take over and for Lorraine to turn around and ride back.

George’s eyes filled with sadness.

He reached out his hand and Robert placed the owners’ suite key in George’s hand.

Lorraine had never met George until that afternoon.

Robert and George carried Beverly to the owner’s suite followed by Lorraine with her black medical bag.

Stephanie and Louise brought Beverly’s bags on the train to the owners’ suite.

They stepped inside the owner’s suite.

Robert, Louise, Stephanie and later Lorraine stood and stared.

George passed them and took Beverly to a bedroom.

Robert turned around and around.

Louise stood still with her mouth opened.

Stephanie eyes were on the sitting room furniture.

Lorraine checked on Beverly and walked out the bedroom.

She saw Robert and looked at her black bag if he needed something.

George said, “The train is about to depart. Stay out of sight Lorraine. I will bring you three meals per day and hot water once in the morning to bathe.”

Lorraine said, “Yes sir.”

She turned to look at Robert, Stephanie and Louise and walked them to the door.

She locked the door.

Robert said, “Lorraine was not stunned…”

They heard Lorraine yelled, “Damn!!!”

Louise said, “She just saw that suite.”

Stephanie said, “Do they get rid of the furniture?”

Robert and Louise looked back at Stephanie and walked off the train.

Stephanie said, “I live down that street can you drop me off at home?’

Robert and Louise were sitting in the front of the wagon.

Robert said, “Hell no!”

Stephanie said, “Sir why did you curse me?”

Louise said, “In case we have to say what happened again. Lorraine is gone and you and I were the only other persons up there from the beginning.”

Stephanie looked at Robert and looked out the wagon.

They arrived back at the house an hour and a half later.

Brenda and Patrick were still sitting on the back porch.

Louise said, “Brenda need a shot too.”

Robert looked at Patrick.

He passed Patrick and reached him the owner’s suite key.

Brenda looked at the key and looked at Patrick.

Patrick turned and looked at Brenda.

Louise and Stephanie were walking to the back porch watching Brenda.

Brenda said, “Louise.”

Louise jumped.

Louise was the white maid that Patrick and Brenda hired to be at their house.

She accepted the job after leaving Washington DC.

She was the head maid for their United States Senator.

After his death his staff came back home.

Louise had been with Patrick and Brenda ten years.

She had it that day and was on her way to get her things to leave.

She hated Bruce and saw what he was doing to Eleanor and Patrick and Brenda acted like they did not know what Bruce’s was doing.

Louise trained all the workers that came to work for Brenda and Patrick.

Louise stopped and looked at Brenda and said, “Ma am.”

Brenda said, “Are you leaving me today?”

Louise said, “Yes ama am.”

Brenda looked up at Louise and said, “What happened?”

Louise said, “This afternoon?”

Brenda stuttered and said, “Other times?”

Louise said, “Yes. Are you talking about this afternoon with your sister Mrs. Stith?”

Patrick heard the harshness in Louise’s voice.

Brenda said, “Yes.”

They heard Christopher walking out the stables cursing.

Patrick looked and said, “Is he cursing?”

Everyone looked at Christopher.

Louise turned to Brenda and said, “Your three sons called her a nigger and took off their beats and beating her as if they were whips.”

Christopher walked to the back porch and looked at Louise and said, “What are you talking about?”

Louise looked at Brenda and said, “Have Robert to bring me my check.”

Brenda stood up and hugged and kissed Louise on her cheek.

Patrick stood and hugged Louise.

Robert opened the door for Louise.

She walked in the door and walked into her room and packed her clothes.

Stephanie stood and looked at Christopher.

Brenda looked at Stephanie and saw hatred for Christopher.

Brenda said, “Stephanie, does Eleanor need help with the children especially since I don’t see Lorraine?”

Patrick nodded his head at Stephanie.

Stephanie walked in the house.

Brenda turned and looked at Christopher.

She saw the choke ring around his neck.

Brenda said, “You called my sister a nigger. Why?”

Christopher said, “Because she is and so are you.”

Brenda hit Christopher so hard in his stomach that he was bent over and could not move nor screamed.

Patrick Jr. and John was walking down the back hall to complain about Beverly when they saw their mother hit Christopher.

They were shocked and turned and ran back upstairs to their rooms.

Robert and most of the staff were peeping out the kitchen window.

Patrick walked to the back door and opened it and let Brenda walked in.

Patrick saw Louise packed and ready to leave.

Patrick said, “Louise, It has been a n honor I will take you home.”

Patrick looked and saw his staff standing back watching them.

He said, “Robert take Louse bags to my carriage.”

Robert walked to the stables and hitched two horses to Patrick’s personal carriage and rode it to the house.

Robert walked in the house and got Louise’s bags and put them in the carriage.

Patrick walked Louise to his study and opened his safe and gave her a thousand dollars.

Brenda stood by Patrick.

Patrick said, “You have been wonderful. You have been my friend and made everything around here work right. Brenda and I was going to give it to you at Christmas but whenever you can travel to Europe.”

Louise touched her heart and said, “I can go within the month?”

Patrick said, “Of course you can. You just let us know and we will arrange everything.”

Louise fanned the thousand dollars and said, “This can cause me to travel in style.”

Robert ran and saw the wad of money Louise had.

Patrick looked at Robert and said, “Yes.”

Robert was stunned and said, “Your carriage is ready and the bags are in it.”

He looked back at Louise who had put the money up.

Patrick and Brenda walked Louise out of his study and to his carriage.

All the staff was standing on the back porch to say by to her.

Eleanor ran down the stairs and ran out the backdoor with Shirley on her hip.

Eleanor put her head on Louise’s back.

Louise turned and hugged Eleanor and she hugged Shirley.

Louise said, “Take care of Shirley. She is important to GOD. HE has something for her to do.”

Patrick looked at Louise.

Brenda said, “Robert no dinner this evening.”

Robert looked at Brenda.

Patrick and Brenda took Louise home.

Louise stayed in a room at a rooming house. She did not like being alone.

Christopher finally made it in the house.

Eleanor walked Shirley outside.

Claressa and Alvin came and told Eleanor they were leaving because Alvin was selected for the diplomatic program he was going to school in Washington DC.

Clressa said, “We had to come and see our god baby before we left.”

Eleanor told Claressa and Alvin everything that happened that day.

Alvin and Claressa were shocked.

Patrick and Brenda came back home and saw Claressa and Alvin.

Alvin told them of his great position.

Patrick and Brenda congratulated him and said, “Good bye”.

Patrick went in the house with Brenda.

He received a telegram back from Albert asking what was going on. That he was leaving to go to the train station to catch that seven pm train so he could get off and transfer to the train Beverly was on in two days.

Patrick sent h a telegram and stated the information to the best of his ability.

Albert did not respond.

Eleanor walked around the house with Claressa and Alvin.

Shirley was still scared and not crying.

Eleanor was thinking she should leave with Claressa and Alvin.

She had her own money that she could take care of Shirley and Percy.

Eleanor watched as Claressa and Alvin rode their horses home.

They loved to race with their horses.

Eleanor laughed at them.

Albert meet the train in two days which Beverly was on.

Lorraine had an hour before her train came.

She told Albert everything that happened.

Albert stood and listened.

He looked at George who was standing with Lorraine.

He said, “Where is Beverly?”

They heard Lorraine’s train whistle.

George pushed Lorraine and said, “You run over there to that platform. You have first class going back.”

Lorraine yelled, “First class.”

George looked at her.

Albert said, “Thank you young lady.”

Lorraine looked at Albert and said, “You are welcome. I like Beverly. I pray she gets better.”

Albert exhaled and shook his head.

Lorraine said, “I’m family. I suppose to ride in the owner’s suite.”

George looked at Lorraine and laughed.

He watched Lorraine board the train.

George said, “Dr. Albert. Mr. Stith has sent you a number of telegrams. I will take you to your wife. I left the door unlock because it is only one key and I had to return it to the owner.”

Albert said, “Let’s go. I don’t want Beverly to have wondered off the train.”

They rushed to the owners’ suite and Beverly was standing in the middle of the floor in a dazed.

Albert ran to her and said. “Beverly.”

Beverly stared at Albert.

George thought, “Oh damn.”

He reached in his coat pocket for the telegrams and said, “Dr. Albert here are the telegrams my boss told me to give to you.”

George turned and walked out the suite.

A week later Patrick received a message that Louise had died.

She left a note to Patrick and Brenda to use the thousand dollars for a big and expensive funeral. She had no relatives and what was left give to the orphanage and her church.

Patrick and Brenda gave all their workers the day off.

All their children attended Louise’s funeral service.

Lorraine and Stephanie stayed at the house with Eleanor’s two children.

Patrick bought Louise the most expensive casket and outfit.

He had the most expensive flowers brought in and an exclusive luncheon after the funeral.

Her memorial head stone was still in perfect condition at the cemetery.

The remaining money Patrick gave nearly all to the orphanage and a little to the church.

Patrick and Brenda began to pray together more.

They saw their children had grown into the people they did not know.

Patrick could not understand Christopher blanket hatred for Brenda and called her a nigger.

Brenda told Patrick, “Whoever our children have been around has made them hate their own color. Their own skin. They have them doing evil against themselves and other blacks.”

Patrick said, “Brenda I have been thinking about that for the past two weeks. I cannot see who they have been around. Why did you tell the staff not to touch our sons?”

Brenda held her head down in shame.

She said, “I was being overly smug like my sons were so much more precious than life itself. I have to correct this. I never intended to create this atmosphere to make them evil and ruthless people. I was wrong. I was wrong.”

Patrick said, “We have to talk with them but it seem like it is a strong root in them.”

Shirley was standing in the corner watching Beverly put on her scarf.

Dr. Woodson grabbed Beverly’s coat and put it on her.

Leon was reaching under his pillow to give Beverly some money to buy her some things.

Leon said, “Hey Aunt Bev here is some money.”

Dr. Greene frowned up and walked around the nurses’ desk as Aunt Bev was walking to Leon.

Dr. Woodson grabbed Beverly and walked her and Vivienne to the door.

Dr. Greene said, “Leon what is wrong with you?”

Leon said, “I have been in this bed for about six months. I want to have fun. She is the most lively person in this whole building besides that little devil’s child across the hall.”

Hutch had to walk away and went to the kitchen and got some soup.

Nurse Sharon walked away to keep from laughing out.

Nurse Simons walked to Leon’s room and said, “Leon I have been here with you most days. You never said anything about me.”

Dr. Greene turned and looked at Nurse Simons.

Leon said, “What are you talking about Nurse Simons.”

Shirley was standing in the window watching for Aunt Bev to leave.

Dr. Woodson was ignoring all of them.

He stood at the nurses’ desk and began to read the telegram.

He stopped at a telegram and looked back at Dr. Charles who was talking to Dr. Ralph.

They looked up and Dr. Woodson beckon for them.

They walked to Dr. Woodson.

Dr. Greene looked and saw the doctors coming to the hospital’s administrator’s office. He knew it was important.

Dr. Greene said, “Leon I will talk to you later.”

Leon said, “That’s what I am talking about. You can go to Nurse Simons.”

Dr. Greene watched Shirley peeping out her window watching Aunt Bev leave.

Shirley slightly turned and saw Dr. Greene looking at her in shame and Nurse Simons.

Shirley held her head down in shame.

Dr. Greene shook his head and walked away.

Dr. Woodson said, ‘Tony do you see Hutch?”

Nurse Simons was walking behind Dr. Greene and said, “He went to get some soup. I’ll go and get him.”

Dr. Woodson said, “Thank you.”

Shirley lifted her head up and was still peeping out the window an ducked when she thought Aunt Bev had turned around.

Dr. Greene was still standing in the hall and saw Shirley.

He said, “Shirley. What is wrong with you?”

Shirley looked at Dr. Greene and went and laid on her stomach on her bed and was trying to figure out the paper.

Nurse Simons walked to the worker area and saw Hutch and Nurse Sharon eating soup.

She fell into the wall and hollered.

Nurse Sharon said, “Leon and Shirley have been too terrible today.”

Nurse Simons said, “Hutch Bradley wants you.”

Hutch looked at Nurse Simons.

Nurse Simons said, “Shirley was peeping out the window watching Beverly and Vivienne leave. Dr. Greene watched Shirley and when Shirley saw Dr. Greene watching her she held her down but was still cutting her eyes out the window. She thought Aunt Bev was coming back she jumped and Dr. Greene jumped.”

Nurse Simons nearly fell to the floor.

Hutch looked at Nurse Simons.

Nurse Sharon was laughing.

Nurse Sharon said, “What is wrong with Leon?”

Nurse Simons said, “I told him he has not said anything to me.”

Nurse Sharon laughed.

Nurse Simons said, “I can spend his money.”

Nurse Sharon was laughing.

Laura said, “Help.”

Nurse Simons and jumped and ran to Laura.

Hutch was listening.

He said, “I will talk to Leon.”

Nurse Sharon said, “Why?”

Hutch looked at her and said, “He called Sally the devil’s child.”

Nurse Sharon began to Laughed and said, “Well she does act like that. She hurt Vivienne today.”

Hutch was drinking his soup.

Nurse Sharon said, “It was a good idea that Dr. Woodson had to keep soup here during the winter.”

Hutch was wiping his mouth and said, “Yes.”

He stood and walked to Laura and stood in her room and said, “Laura what is wrong?”

Laura said, “Can’t breathe.”

Hutch said, “Get Dr. Charles.”

Hutch started working on Laura.

Nurse Simons ran to get Dr. Charles.

Dr. Charles jumped and ran behind Nurse Simons.

Dr. Charles worked on Laura for over an hour until he found a blood clot in her lung.

He kept working until her until she started breathing better.

Nurse Simons pulled up a chair sat by Laura.

Dr. Charles said, ‘The blood clot is in a position now that should dissolve in a bout a week. I am glad the nurses and Dr. Hutch were back here. We need something.”

Laura whispered, “Bells.”

Nurse Sharon stood and took her bowl and Hutch’s cup to the kitchen staff.”

Aunt Bev and Vivienne went to see Lorraine.

Dr. Jim said he think she is doing a little better.

Vivienne and Beverly were allowed to sit in the room with Lorraine.

Beverly said, “Lorraine you have to do your hair. It is beginning to look like mine.”

Beverly started laughing and leaned into Vivienne.

Vivienne grinned.

Lorraine opened her eyes.

The nurses in the room saw her eyes opened and closed.

They looked at the laughing Beverly.

Beverly said to Vivienne, “You know how Lorraine loves her hair.”

The nurses walked to Lorraine and one of the nurses said, “Miss Wright. Open your eyes again and let your friends know you hear them.”

Vivienne and Beverly slowly turned and looked at Lorraine.

They became scared.

Beverly was ready to run.

Vivienne was ready to faint.

Lorraine’s eyelids began to flutter.

Beverly and Vivienne jumped and ran out the room and out the hospital.

Dr. Jim and Dr. Paul saw them run out the hospital.

They ran to Lorraine’s room.

Beverly made it back to the Stith in about twenty minutes.

She and Vivienne were so afraid.

Beverly pulled the horses in front of the hospital and they jumped out the carriage and ran into the hospital.

The doctors looked at them.

Beverly and Vivienne could not talk they were afraid.

Shirley saw Aunt Bev and Vivienne pulled up and run into the hospital.

She jumped off her bed because she knew they were going to see Lorraine.

Dr. Charles and Hutch were walking up the hall from treating Laura.

They saw the scared and panicked struck Beverly and Vivienne.

Dr. Charles looked at Dr. Ralph.

They all looked at Beverly and Vivienne.

Nurse Sharon was walking behind the doctors and peeped around to see Aunt Bev and Vivienne.

Shirley ra to Aunt Bev.

Dr. Ralph looked at Shirley as she ran to her Aunt Bev.

Aunt Bev nodded at Shirley.

Dr. Ralph did not know what that meant.

Shirley looked at Aunt Bev.

Beverly said, “Lorraine is awake.”

Dr. Charles said, “Why are you scared?”

Vivienne looked at Dr. Charles.

Hutch said, “I’m going there now for a few hours and come back here because I am on call tonight and tomorrow night.”

Dr. Woodson said, “Hutch we need to have a quick meeting before you leave.”

Beverly and Vivienne stood and did not move.

Shirley said, “Did she speak? Did she see you? Did she know you were there?”

Aunt Bev muttered something.

Leon was listening.

Shirley said, “What you say Aunt Bev?”

Dr. Woodson was looking at Beverly.

Beverly said, “We ran.”

Shirley sat in the chair and looked at Aunt Bev.

Dr. Charles looked at the shaken Vivienne.

Leon started laughing again.

He said, “Aunt Bev her rising from the dead scared you.”

Shirley looked at Hutch as he passed her and said, “You going to help me today?”

Leon said, “That happen to me once. They caught me the next day entering the other county line. I ran all day and night. I was not tired.”

Dr. Greene walked with Dr. Ralph and Dr. Woodson.

Hutch looked at Shirley and said, “I told I would help you.”

Dr. Charles walked out the door and said, “Buy us some bells for the patients in the back.”

Nurse Sharon said, “Are you really going to get them bells.”

Dr. Woodson looked at Nurse Sharon and said, what do you propose?”

Nurse Sharon said, “I’ll think.”

Shirley looked at Ant Bev and went to her room and fell asleep.

She heard Leon snoring.

Dr. Greene said, “Thank GOD.”

Hutch said, “I was going to give him a shot.”

Dr. Woodson looked at Hutch.

Vivienne started to go to Sally.

Beverly said, “We are going shopping.”

Beverly and Vivienne left and went to Smith’s.

Harry was happy.

He met his goal to have enough sales to take off a week at Christmas.

Harry had not been in the country for Christmas for three years.

He was so excited about going from the big city bac home to the country for a week.

He was working on a new suit.

Harry did not know if he could meet that goal before Christmas, if not then he knew he could do it by the spring.

He looked up and saw women entering the shop and rushed to them.

Then he recognized Beverly as the one that opened the store account.

Harry smiled and walked with Beverly and Vivienne through the store.

Beverly was wearing the green dress from her lunch on Saturday.

Harry ran and got a pair of earrings that made the dress sparkle.

Beverly loved the earrings and was about to tell Harry to put them back when the telegram from Brenda told her to stop being stingy.

She smiled at Harry and nodded for yes.

Harry took the earrings to the counter and gave them to his manager.

The manager looked at the earrings and peeped around at Beverly.

He remembered Vivienne as the one that was dating a doctor.

Beverly was thinking on Brenda’s words ‘stop being stingy’.

She walked to the more expensive dresses and called Vivienne over.

Vivienne looked at the dresses with Beverly and handed the plain less expensive dress to Harry and said, “No.”

Harry winked his eye at Vivienne.

Harry’s manager watched Harry.

Beverly picked out a red dress.

She handed the dress to Harry.

Harry smiled.

He waited for Vivienne to make a selection.

Vienne saw a color peeping out of the rack of dresses.

She pulled it out and fell in love with the dress and it was her size.

She looked at Harry.

He bowed his head and showed her to the dressing room.

He stood and waited for Vivienne.

Vivienne gasped.

Harry thought something was wrong.

He said, “Ma am. Let me see.”

Beverly was on her way to look at more expensive shoes.

She stopped and looked at Harry.

The manager looked at Harry.

Vivienne walked out the dressing room.

Beverly ran to Vivienne and said, “You look gorgeous.”

Harry was stunned and nodded his head in approval.

The manager looked at Vivienne and slowly turned back to his customers.

He could not think straight and kept messing up with the client’s total.

He called his assistant over.

She came and calculated the client’s total.

The manager stood back and looked at Vivienne.

Beverly said, “Come on over and get you a pair of shoes.”

Beverly turned to walk back to the expensive shoes and saw the store manager standing and staring at Vivienne with his mouth opened.

Beverly looked at him and he saw Beverly looking at him he put his head down.

Vivienne change the drtess and gave it to Harry.

Harry pointed to the shoes and ran and gave the dresses to his manager.

Harry whispered, “Sir I believe she is taken.”

The manager looked at Harry and reached for the dresses.

Harry was walking back to Beverly and Vivienne and saw the manager picking out jewelry for the client’s dresses.

Harry looked at the manager’s assistant and shook his head.

The lady looked at the manager and continued to greet her guests.

Beverly and Vivienne selected expensive boots to wear with their new expensive dresses.

Harry picked up the shoes and carried them to his manager.

The manager showed Vivienne and Beverly the jewelry he selected for their dresses.

Vivienne looked up at the jewelry and selected a hair pin.

Beverly signed for the purchase.

She and Vivienne left Smith’s.

They went around the corner to the bakery.

Beverly said, “I loved this bakery. I don’t know if it is still in busines.”

When Beverly said that she pulled in front of the bakery.

They could smell the butter and vanilla.

Beverly and Vivienne inhaled the delightful aromas.

Beverly had to count every penny she had in her purse.

Vivienne was still glowing from the purple dress.

She looked at Beverly and said, “I can pay.”

Beverly said, “No you don’t.”

Beverly continued to dig in her bag and found fifteen cents.

She looked at Vivienne and they laughed and went into the bakery.

Beverly bought Leon a cup cake.

She bought three dozen Christmas cookies for the staff and patients along with three dozen butter cookies.

Beverly had just enough money to pay for the cookies.

She and Vivienne left the bakery and went to see Monica.

They told Monica that Lorraine was awake.

Monica said, “They told you to leave?”

Vivienne said, “What?”

Monica said, “You should still be at the hospital with Lorraine.”

Beverly said, “We ran.”

Monica stood for a minute and thought about what Vivienne and Beverly said.

Monica said, “I’ll stay home today and go and see Lorraine tomorrow and spend most of the day with her. Then I will leave Thursday for home and maybe I’ll be back for Christmas. I promised Lorraine I would spend Christmas here with her.”

Beverly said, “Ok.”

Vivienne looked at Monica.

Monica cut her eyes at them.

Beverly and Vivienne stood and walked to the door.

Monica walked behind them and closed the door and put the bar behind it.

Vivienne said, “I think she think we are cowards.”

Beverly said, “She’s right. Did you see how Ryan looked at us?”

Jerome rode up while Vivienne and Beverly were leaving Monica.

He dismounted his horse and spoke to them.

He said, “Good afternoon beautiful ladies.”

Beverly spoke.

She said, “Jerome, this is Vivienne a friend of mines and Monica.”

Vivienne said, “Good meeting you sir.”

Beverly told him what happened to Lorraine their friend.

Jerome grinned and said, “You ran.”

Beverly was stunned and said, “How did you know?”

Jerome said, “A common reaction.”

Beverly said, “Do you know a Dr. Ralph.”

Jerome grinned.

Beverly said, “He works at the Stith. I told him I would see you today and tell you he wanted to see you.”

Jerome said, “I’m not familiar with that hospital.”

Beverly said, “We are going back there now.”

Jerome said, “Let me leave Monica her lunch then I will leave with you.”

Jerome knocked on Monica’s door.

She ran to the door and unlocked it and removed the bar.

Monica opened the door.

Jerome stepped inside and gave Monica her food.

He said, “I’m going with them to the Stith hospital. One of the doctors there I mentored. I’ll be back. I won’t be long.”

He turned and walked out the door and mounted his horse.

Beverly sped back to the hospital.

Jerome had to sped to keep up with Beverly.

Beverly pulled in front of the hospital.

Jerome dismounted his horse and walked over to Beverly and helped her and Vivienne out of the carriage.

Dr. Ralph looked as he heard a man’s voice that sounded familiar.

He stopped everything and walked to Jerome.

Vivienne walked to Sally’s room with her bags, paper and colored pencils.

The nurses by Sally’s room wanted to see Vivienne’s dress.

She showed them her purple dress.

They loved it.

Nurse Sharon was watching Vivienne and was leaving to go to the north hospital to spend the night with Betty and Charles Jr.

She walked to Vivienne and said, “Beautiful. Where are you going to wear that?”

Vivienne said, “Christmas. Here.”

Nurse Sharon said, “I’ll see you all tomorrow.”

She leaned and said, “I want to ask Beverly to let me her dress.”

The nurses giggled.

Nurse Sharon walked to her carriage and rode to the north hospital.

She eased in the hospital and reviewed Betty and Charles Jr. charts with Nurse Lillian.

She and Nurse Lillian and had a cup of hot tea together.

They were both very smart nurses and discussed different conditions.

Nurse Lillian‘s hip was hurting.

She told Nurse Sharon she could go months and be fine and then her hip hurts and she could be in bed for months.

 Nurse Lillian said, “I love this job. Dr. Wade is very understanding.”

Nurse Sharon said, “Nurse Lillian let Dr. Hutch look at your hip in the morning when he comes to take Betty and Charles Jr back to the Stith hospital.”

Nurse Lillian looked at Nurse Sharon.

Nurse Sharon said, “Come to Betty and Charles Jr.’s room in the morning around eight am.”

Nurse Lillian said, “I sure don’t want the nurse under me to take over for two or three months. It is something about her that I can’t figure out. She worries me.”

Nurse Sharon leaned towards Nurse Lillian and said, “Nurse Beatrice?”

Nurse Lillian was nervous and looked around and said, “Yes.”

Nurse Beatrice was walking in the rest area while Nurse Sharon was talking to Nurse Lillian.

Nurse Sharon said, “Nurse Lillian do you have a suggestion for patients who ae further away from the nurses’ station to get medical attention. One of the doctors said bells.”

Nurse Lillian said, “Oh my.”

She started thinking.

Nurse Beatrice was sitting at the next table and staring at the two nurses.

Nurse Lillian looked at Nurse Sharon and said, “Whistles.”

Nurse Sharon said, “Oh.”

Nurse Lillian was thinking and said, “That would be as bad as a bell.”

Nurse Sharon said, “All our patients have bone and muscle ailments and may not be able to blow or barely touch a bell.”

The two nurses sat and thought.

Nurse Beatrice stood and walked out.

Nurse Lillian looked at Nurse Sharon.

They turned and looked back at the table Nurse Beatrice sat.

Nurse Sharon turned and looked at Nurse Lillian and said, “Troubling.”

Nurse Lillian said, “How is your nurse rotation?”

Nurse Beatrice was standing behind the door listening.

Nurse Sharon said, “Every forty five minutes.”

Nurse Lillian said, “That’s good.”

Ryan was leaving the hospital to go home and take a hot bath and eat and go to bed.

He stopped and watched Nurse Beatrice ease dropping on the nurses.

Nurse Sharon walked in the hospital and walked to the nurses’ desk and spoke to everyone.

Ryan was at the nurses’ desk and looked up and said, “Hello Nurse Sharon.”

Nurse Lillian said, “Hello. Dr. Ryan has Betty and Charles Jr. charts. I ‘m still excited that the children did not have to have surgery today.”

Ryan said, “Me too Nurse Lillian.”

Nurse Lillian said, “We can have tea while we want for the children’s charts.:

Nurse Lillian and Nurse Sharon walked to the workers’ rest area.

Ryan knew who Nurse Beatrice was spying on.

He, Dennis and Dr. Barnes went to the burned victims and gave them a total treatment and therapy that day.

The burns were healing.

Dennis was thankful he did not have to amputate any body parts.

Dennis went to his office and fell on his knees and cried.

He could not say anything.

His heart was full of gratitude to GOD.

Beverly was outside in the front of the hospital waiting for Ryan and Dennis.

Ryan walked out the hospital and looked back passed Nurse Beatrice and saw his father walking to the front door to leave.

Dennis looked at Nurse Beatrice.

She looked at him and kept standing behind the door.

Dennis said, “Lord what is she doing and why?”

Dennis got in front of the carriage.

Ryan kissed Beverly and laid on the back seat.

Beverly took them home, where she had Robert to have hot baths for them and to have a baked hen and dressing for dinner with green beans which was both Ryan and Dennis favorite common meal.

Dr. Ralph introduced Jerome to Dr. Woodson and Dr. Greene.

Dr. Greene said, “Sir it is an honor to meet you. I have heard of you. You have a great reputation.”

Dr. Ralph introduced Jerome to Hutch who was leaving.

Dr. Ralph walked over to Dr. Charles.

 Dr. Charles was watching Vivienne.

Beverly left the cookies for everyone.

She went to Leon he was sleep.

She left his cupcake.

Beverly walked in Shirley’s room and saw she was sleep.

She kissed Shirley on her forehead and covered her with her blanket.

Vivienne put the paper and colored pencils in the room with Sally.

Dr. Charles looked at Vivienne and walked to her and touched her elbow.

Vivienne knew that meant for them to talk.

She walked out Sally’s room and walked with Charles down the hall.

Beverly said, “Good evening.”

Beverly looked at Jerome.

He was talking to Dr. Greene and Dr. Woodson.

He said, “I’m not familiar with this side of town. I need to leave with Beverly, but I may be back tomorrow with a friend.”

Beverly rushed to her carriage and sped back to the other side of town.

Jerome followed her.

Beverly stopped on the main street and pointed.

Jerome grinned and said, “I know my way from here.”

He watched Beverly speed away.

Beverly made it home at dark.

Al rushed out and got the buggy and drove it to the stables and feed the horses and gave them water.

Beverly walked in the house with the bag that had her dress.

She pulled off her clothes.

She washed and put on her nightclothes.

The children were sitting at the tables and doing their homework.

Beverly and Al do not disturb them until they are finished.

Beverly loved her red dress.

She decided to wear it on Christmas Day.

She would go to church services and wear it at their dinner.

Mabel helped the children.

Curtis brought in coal and water.

Beverly and Al closed their door.

Al told Beverly about Curtis and Mabel.

Beverly stared at Al.

She told Al about Lorraine and that she and Vivienne ran from the hospital.

Al looked at Beverly.

Beverly shrugged her shoulders.

She told Al that Jerome followed her to the Stith and met a doctor he mentored.

Al said, “Beverly.”

Beverly looked at Al.

Al was looking at the new dress and boots Beverly hung on the armoire.

Beverly turned and looked at the dress and boots.

She slowly turned and looked at Al.

Al sensed Beverly looking at him.

He thought, “Bev thinks I am going to say something to her about the dress and boots. I am but she will become extremely angry.”

He slowly turned his head and shifted it to Beverly.

Beverly was staring at Al.

She thought, “I have had it with Al always looking at not spending one single penny. When he finds out I spent our last fifteen cents on cookies for the people at the hospital. GOD I can’t live like this anymore. I won’t live like this anymore. Take me home.”

Al looked into Beverly’s eyes and saw a look he never saw before.

He wondered what the look meant.

Beverly sat and waited for Al to complain about her getting the dress.

Al did not know what to say.

He thought, “I know she got that dress and boots from Brenda or Shirley. She did not hide it from me. She deserves it but we have been poor for twenty years. Why now she wants to splurge? We don’t have a penny to our names.”

Little Shirley knocked on their door and said, “Finished. Come out.”

Beverly touched her heart.

Al looked at Beverly and stood and cracked the door and peeped and said, “Beverly no one is there.”

Mabel grinned.

Little Shirley was looking up at Al and said, “Me. Dr. Al.”

Al looked back at Beverly and said, “Beverly do you see anyone?”

Beverly started laughing and held her arms out for Little Shirley.

Al opened the door and Little Shirley ran and jumped into Beverly’s arms, knocking Beverly on the bed.

Al laughed.

Little Shirley and Beverly laid on the bed and laughed and talked.

Al leaned on the bed and laughed.

Mabel peeped in their bedroom and sat in the sitting area and started knitting.

Denise taught Mabel how to knit.

Mabel was teaching the other girls how to knit.

They were knitting everyone gloves and scarves for Christmas.

Mabel decided she wanted to complete the children’s gloves and scarves before she left Saturday.

Beverly and Al laughed with Little Shirley and the boys for a good time.

Little Shirley and the smaller boys became sleepy.

Al said, “Uh huh, somebody is sleepy.”

He carried one of the smaller boys up to the third floor to bed.

One of the bigger boys carried at seven year old to his bed.

Beverly walked Little Shirley to the second floor and put her to bed and sat and watched her go to sleep.

Al walked from the third floor and stood in Little Shirley’s doorway and watched Beverly watch her fall asleep.

Beverly stood from Little Shirley’s bed and turned and saw Al standing and watching her.

The other two small girls were running in the room and Al moved.

The girls ran and jumped in the beds.

Beverly laughed and walked to them and covered them with blankets because they slept next to the windows which had a draft.

Beverly stood at the windows each night to see how it could be fixed.

She sewed two pairs of curtains together and made a thick pair of curtains and covered the windows with the curtains.

It helped stop a lot of the wind and cold.

Beverly saw Al’s reflection in the window.

She turned and walked pass him downstairs as the other boys were running upstairs to bed.

Beverly and Al said, “Good night and sweet dreams.”

She hugged each one of them.

Mabel sat and knitted most of the night.

Al and Beverly sat at the table and went through the children’s schoolwork.

Beverly got to Little Shirley’s tablet and handed it to Al as she stood and left.

Al looked at the tablet and took it.

He looked at Beverly as she walked away.

Mabel looked back and then at Beverly.

Mabel put up her knitting and walked to the table and sat next to Al.

Al said, “Hey Mabel.”

Mabel sat and watched Al went through each of Little Shirley’s pages.

Al sat and thought.

Mabel was sitting with her hands on her thighs and leaning forward thinking.

Al stood and put all the children’s work back on the table.

He checked the doors and walked back in the sitting room and Mabel was walking upstairs to her room.

Al and Beverly would keep a low fire in the fireplace for light in the house and a little warmth.

Al stood at the fireplace and gBazed at the fire.

He thought for a long time.

Beverly was sitting in the bed and tried to read her bible but just held it up on her lap.

She was thinking.

Beverly never thought her life would be so bad. But she loved Al with all her heart but could not live a life where she is denied on every corner.

Al eventually walked in the bedroom and saw Beverly staring into space with her bible in her hands.

He sat at the foot of their bed and watched her for a long time.

He saw she was not aware of his presence he knew then she was thinking about him.

Al looked at the fire in their fireplace.

He stood and undressed for bed.

When he stood, Beverly shook herself and turned over and put her bible up and pulled off her glasses and went to sleep sitting up in the bed.

Al looked at her and knew she rarely sleep like that unless she is totally disturbed.

He sat on his side of the bed and thought.

Al thought about all the sacrifices he made his life for Beverly.

All the trouble she got in and he got her out. He knew he could have been further in his medical career if he was not married to a black woman. They never had money because he always was paid less than the white doctors who were married to white women.

Al said, “This life is unfair. But Beverly I still love you with all my heart. I can’t change the world and I won’t let it change my heart towards people. I’m sorry I did not make a prosperous life for us.”

Beverly said, “I know Al.”

Al jumped up in bed stared at Beverly because he thought she was sleep.

He peeped over in Beverly’s face and saw her eyes closed.

He did not know to trust that or not.

Beverly dreamed all night.

She woke several times during the night and she would see the twelve children’s faces all night.

Beverly tossed and turned all night.

Al just held onto his pillow and laid still.

He knew Beverly was making a decision about him and her.

Al cried and said, “GOD I thought I did right by her. Please forgive me for every decision that I made that hurt her and took food out her mouth or dresses off her back or boots off her feet. Don’t let her hate me for that. I won’t be able to bare it. I would die from this earth. Help me please GOD. JESUS”

Al laid and cried all night.

Beverly woke and laid still and looked at the fireplace.

She had decided to leave Al.

She would have to send the children to an orphanage.

Beverly thought, “Maybe I can go and stay with Brenda for a year or two or travel with them until I can begin to live again.”

Al closed his eyes and muffled his cry.

Beverly got out of bed and put coal on the fire in their fireplace.

She walked out their bedroom and put coal in the fireplace in the sitting room.

She walked to the kitchen area and started a fire in the stove and put several buckets of water on the stove to heat for the children to wash.

She opened the cupboard and saw nothing but the last amount of oats.

She covered her mouth and cried out.

She fell to the floor and leaned her back on the wall and cried and said, “GOD no food for the children. They did not ask for this.”

Al got out of bed to help Beverly get the house warm and start the day.

He put on his pants and boots and walked through the house and saw where Beverly had started the fires.

Al walked to the kitchen area and saw his love on the floor crying.

He walked to her and sat on the floor next to her and held her by her shoulders.

Beverly was trying to catch her breath and said, “No food.”

Al kissed her on the top of her head and held her.

He said, “We got a message yesterday to pick up a wire from Brenda and Patrick for our Christmas present.”

Al kissed the Beverly’s head again and felt her pain for the children.

He thought, “GOD this is a precious woman with a good heart.”

Al said, “When the children go to school. We can go and get the money and buy groceries.”

Beverly nodded her head.

She and Al sat on the floor for a moment.

They heard the children begin to stir.

Beverly stood and took the water to the wash area behind the kitchen area.

She made the last amount of oats.

She looked around and saw nothing else to make for breakfast.

Al sat on the floor and watched her.

He finally stood and went and put on his socks.

He came back and washed his face.

Mabel placed the bowls and spoons on the cabinet last night.

Beverly greeted the children and they lined up for their oats.

The seven year old boy said, “No honey?”

Al was drinking his cup of coffee.

He held his breath and looked at Beverly.

Beverly bent down in the little boy’s face and said, “Not this morning but tomorrow morning.”

The little boy gave her his big grin.

Beverly gave him her big grin.

The twelve children sat and ate their oats and laughed.

Mabel washed and changed clothes and put to the stables and hitched the horses to the wagon.

She rode to the house and went and picked up the blankets out the house for the children to cover up with.

Mabel said, “Miss Beverly.”

Al was leaning in the doorway and drinking his coffee.

He looked at Mabel.

Beverly looked at Mabel and said, “Mabel.”

Mabel said, “I don’t know much about horses but the four horses look weak to me.”

Beverly looked at Mabel and patted her shoulder and said, “Thank you Mabel. I saw that yesterday.”

Mabel said, “You can use my money to buy a horse.”

Al stood up in the door.

Beverly saw him and looked at him hard.

She turned to Mabel and said, “Mabel we serve GOD and JESUS they will make a way. Save every penny of your money and keep it secret. Go to school and start your business.”

Mabel said, “What kind of business. I don’t have a school certificate.”

Beverly said, “I can help you. You just think about that which makes you happy and do that.”

Mabel grinned and said, “Flowers.”

Beverly said, “When I was at the school last week I saw a sign that a new school was opening for people to be taught about plants and flowers.”

Mabel became excited.

Beverly said, “It is a good ways from here.”

Mabel was jumping in excitement.

Beverly grinned and said, “We will work together on it.”

Mabel grinned.

Curtis came and grabbed a bowl of oats and looked at Mabel.

Al looked at Curtis.

Beverly pinched Curtis’ cheek and said, “Good morning. You are late this morning. You are normally one of the first.”

Mabel stomped pass Al and went to her room.

Al stood and listen to Mabel.

Curtis said, “Come on let’s go.”

Beverly and Al stood on the porch and watched the children pile up in the wagon.

Mabel passed them to get in the wagon.

Beverly said, “Mabel. Me and Dr. Al will be gone most of the day. Don’t be out here working. Stay in the house and lock your room door.”

Curtis was trying to peep and listen to Beverly.

Al was wondering.

They watched them leave.

Mabel looked at Beverly and Al.

Al said, “Beverly what is that about?”
Beverly turned to rush in the house and said, “I don’t know. You hitch one horse to the buggy for me and you ride your horse because I have to help decorate the Christmas tree at the Stith. Let’s see what all we can do with the money that Patrick and Brenda sent for our Christmas gift.”

Beverly and washed and put on her old decent dress to make the nurses think it was her work dress.

Al brought the horses out the stables.

Beverly rushed out the house and was wrapped in a blanket and locked the door.

She ran to her carriage.

Al double checked the door and ran to Beverly and said, “I thought we could talk.”

Beverly said, “Where do we go?”

Al said, “Harry’s.”

Beverly sped away and Al caught her in front of the office.

They ran inside from the cold.

The clerk looked at them.

He knew Al. because Al operated on his mother.

The clerk looked at the wire and went to the vault.

Beverly bucked her eyes and stared at the clerk.

Al was looking at Beverly and he saw how she was looking.

He walked over and spoke to the owner harry.

The clerk came back and said, “Sir.”

Beverly hated that she thought, “I am standing here and my name is on that money he is going to look pass me and call the man with me.”

Al walked over and the clerk began to count the money out.

Beverly and Al looked.

The clerk gave them the money.

He pushed the receipt book for them to sign.

They both had to sign the receipt book.

Beverly wanted to scream.

Al looked at the money and said, “That’s too much.”

Beverly rolled her eyes at Al.

The clerk and the owner looked at Al.

The clerk said, “That is the amount sir.”

The owner said, “You can always leave for us.”

He laughed.

He looked at Beverly and saw it was a problem between them.

The owner said, “Sir, sometimes GOD uses people to help us and be a blessing for what we have done for others. You delivered my oldest son twenty some years ago and did not charge us a penny. I am sure over the years you have helped others. So take this as a thank you from GOD.”

Beverly was shaking with anger at Al.

She was about to scream at Al.

Beverly grabbed all the five hundred and twenty dollars and walked out the wire office.

The clerk stood and looked at Al.

The owner said, “Doctor you are too prideful that can cause you your marriage.”

Al looked out the window at Beverly.

Beverly was screaming.

They stood and heard scream as she pulled off.

Beverly speed to the livery stables and fought four horses and another wagon.

She left and went to the grocery and bought enough food to last for a month.

She put money on the book for the second month.

Beverly cried all morning.

She was passing Christmas trees.

She turned around in the street and bought a Christmas tree garlands and ribbons.

She went to the meat market and stood in line with Mrs. West and Mrs. Clay.

Beverly was crying.

Mrs. West and Mrs. Clay watched Beverly and knew it was about her husband.

Al turned around and went home.

He did not know where Beverly went.

Mrs. West walked to Beverly and hugged her.

Mrs. West said, “Your husband.”

Beverly nodded for yes.

They talked and tried to comfort each other until they got inside the meat market.

Beverly ordered her Christmas ham and the trimmings.

She hugged Mrs. West and Mrs. Clay.

They exchange addresses.

They talked about Smith’s and the holidays.

Beverly went to the bakery and ordered her cakes and pies.

Beverly ran to the coal distributor and put in a double order for coal and fuel.

Beverly went to the clothing store she opened an account for the children and bought Al a new suit, shirt and tie and underwear. She was able to buy the Curtis and the seven boys another pair of pants, shirts and ties. She went to the little girls and bought the five girls two more dresses for the holiday.

Beverly went to the toy shop and bought everyone a toy and for the big children a nice gift.

She stopped at the stationary and bought cards.

She sat in the freezing cold and wrote Christmas cards to Brenda and Patrick, Eleanor, Gen and was going to those to Shirley to take home. She wrote Christmas greetings to ten of she and Al’s friends.

The horse neighed.

Beverly petted the horse and said, “You have to eat.”

She looked around and saw the feed shop.

Beverly bought feed and water for the horse.

She bought feed for the eight horses and sent it to the house.

Beverly saw a wagon with lumber and asked the man what he was doing.

He told her he replaces wood.

She sent him to her house.

Beverly sat and counted her money.

She had not spent half of her money.

She turned and was going through another section of town with a lot of shops. She was not familiar with that side of town.

She saw quilts for sale.

She bought twenty quilts and sent them to her house.

She was pretending she was the maid for rich white people.

The salesclerks and the managers quickly loaded their wagons and sent the things to be delivered.

Beverly cried and said, “GOD it should not be.”

She saw a place with candles, lanterns and fuel.

She bought a good supply and sent them to the house.

She was trying to think and was riding out of that section of town and saw a toy shop.

She thought, “I got my twelve something.”

Then the thought of Betty and Charles Jr and Sally came to her.

She said, “Sally. Huh.”

Beverly pulled over and went inside and bought a book a piece, a doll for Sally and Betty and a ball for Charles Jr.

She left and went to the Stith.

She was surprised how close that section of town was to the Stith.

Beverly stepped out her carriage and tied the horse.

She walked into the Stith and spoke to everyone.

She walked to Leon and said, “Good morning Leon.”

Leon said, “Afternoon.”

Beverly held her head down and said, “Afternoon.”

Leon said, “Thanks for the cupcake. They would not let me eat it.”

Beverly said, “Really.”
Leon said, “Sneak it to me the next time.”

Beverly laughed and walked to Shirley.

Shirley’s papers were all over her bed.

Shirley was very nervous.

Beverly walked to Shirley and kissed her on the top of her head.

Shirley looked at Aunt Bev.

Beverly was pulling off her coat, hat, scarves and gloves.

Shirley looked at Aunt Bev.

Beverly was putting her things in the chair and caught Shirley looking at her.

She said, “What Shirley?”

Shirley looked at her bed and said, “I don’t have the paper ready.”

Beverly said, “I only told you to have that paper ready today so you would not fool around and had to rush to get it to the professor.”

Shirley looked at Aunt Bev.

Beverly walked to Shirley and rubbed her head and looked at the papers.

She said, “It looks a mess. Did that doctor help you?”

Hutch was at the nurses’ desk and said, “Yes I did.”

Beverly said, “I am here to work on the Christmas tree and then I will go and see Lorraine. If you are finished when I get ready to leave I will take the paper with me. If paper is not ready I’ll get whenever. You leave Saturday morning. I have cards for you to take your family from me and Al.”

Beverly started crying.

Shirley looked at Beverly.

Leon said, “Good!”

Hutch went to the medicine cabinet and got the sedative.

Dr. Woodson and Dr. Greene looked at Hutch.

Hutch passed Beverly walking out Shirley’s room and went into Leon’s room.

Shirley heard Leon said, “You so and so that hurts. That’s my woman.”

Shirley was staring at her door and stunned by Beverly.

 She saw Hutch walked out Leon’s room with a large needle.

Shirley back away from the door.

Hutch closed Leon’s door.

He looked at Shirley and said, “You have to finish your paper.”

Shirley rushed to her bed and started reviewing what she wrote.

Beverly went to the tree and looked at it.

She walked to Vivienne and saw Vivienne sitting on the bed holding Sally and said, “Good morning. I ‘m sorry afternoon.”

Beverly walked out Sally’s room and saw the nurses cutting out the paper ornaments.

The nurses said, “This is a great idea.”

Beverly smiled and said, “I got it from a friend of mine.”

Dr. Charles and Dr. Ralph looked at the crying Beverly.

They knew it had to do wither husband that Dr. Hutch respected.

Dr. Felipe looked at Beverly.

She walked to Sally’s room and took the paper, scissors and pens.

She sat and made musical instruments.

She threaded a needle with red thread and made hooks for the paper instruments.

D. Felipe watched Beverly and said, “Ma am that is a wonderful idea.”

Beverly smiled.

She walked to the Christmas tree and stood in a chair and started to hang the ornaments.

Dr. Ralph had a fit.

The nurses looked back and turned their heads.

Dr. Charles looked at Beverly.

Dr. Felipe sat and started making the musical paper instruments for he and Meredith’s tree.

Dr. Charles saw Felipe and said, “Felipe what are you doing?”

Felipe put down the scissors and looked away he said, “I don’t know. Meredith and I don’t have a Christmas tree.”

He nurses giggled.

Dr. Charles was watching Sally’s room.

He wanted to know how Vivienne and Sally were doing.

Dr. Greene loved the paper ornaments.

Dr. Ralph walked in the back of the hospital and came back with a step ladder.

He moved Beverly out the way and took the ornaments and hung them around the top of the tree.

Beverly was still quietly crying.

In Hutch’s eyes Al could do no wrong and Beverly and Al could work through their problems.

Beverly finished hanging the paper ornaments and everyone clapped.

Vivienne walked out Sally’s room and saw the tree.

She saw the paper musical instruments that Beverly made and said, “Bev you are talented.”

Beverly tried to smile.

Vivienne looked at Beverly.

Beverly used the treads and made strings and hung the [paper ornaments on them.

She made one for each nurses’ desk.

She walked to the black boy and black girl and asked them how they were feeling.

Charles Jr. said, “I hurt but not as bad.”

Betty said, “I can’t go to the pot and I can’t wash.”

Beverly smiled and said, “I promise, you will get better. Can I put this decoration on your door?”

Charles Jr. said, “I guess.”

Beverly hung the paper ornaments on their door.

Beverly said, “Cheery and bright.”

Laura said, “Me too.”

Beverly said, “Who is that?”

Laura said, “Laura.”

Beverly smiled at Betty and Charles Jr and walked to the next room.

Beverly said, “I’m Beverly.”

Laura said, “I’m Laura.”

Beverly said, I have some paper musical instruments or ornaments which do you prefer?”

Laura said, “Musical.”

Beverly stood and strung the paper ornaments and talked with Laura.

Dr. Woodson and Dr. Greene were seated in the workers area eating soup.

They were enjoying Beverly’s personality with their patients.

Beverly left Laura’s room and stopped and said, “Good evening to Charles Jr and Betty.”

She saw betty’s hair and was upset.

Beverly looked around and said, “Betty do you have a comb and brush?”

Betty said, “No.”

Beverly said, “When I come back can I comb and brush your hair?”

Betty said, “Yes ma am.”

Laura said, “Me too.”

Beverly said, “Laura you to. Have a good evening.”

Dr. Woodson said, “I didn’t think about the female patients need to comb and brush their hair.”

Dr. Greene said, “Maybe we can keep combs here.”

Dr. Woodson said, “We will see.”

Dr. Greene turned his head and looked in space.

He turned and looked at Dr. Woodson and said, “Thank you.”

Dr. Woodson looked at Dr. Greene and said, “You are welcome.”

The cook was walking through the hall and walked and got their bowls and spoons.

Dr. Woodson said, “Good soup.”

Dr. Greene said, “Yes.”

The cook said, “Thank you.”

He walked out and went back to the kitchen.

Dr. Woodson and Dr. Greene walked out the workers’ rest area.

They saw the paper ornaments on the doors and laughed.

Charles said, “I like ours.”

Dr. Greene laughed and said, “I like them too.”

Dr. Woodson said, “Did you and Betty get some sleep last night?”

Charles Jr. said, “Yes sir. I kept seeing momma.”

Betty looked at Charles Jr and said, “Me too.”

Dr. Greene and Dr. Woodson were stunned and stood and looked at the little children.

They smiled at Charles Jr. and Betty and said, “Rest until dinner.”

Dr. Greene smiled, because he did not know what to say.

He said, “Bradley?”

Bradley kept walking and said, “I don’t know about that type of thing. I know I prayed about them and GOD sent Al to help them.”

They saw Beverly taking a string of ornaments to Leon.

She walked to Shirley and said, “Shirley when are leaving here?”

Shirley said, “Thursday.”

Beverly said, “That paper looks a mess. I’ll get it Thursday and take it to your professor.”

Beverly sat in the chair and counted her money.

She said, “This is our Christmas gift from your grandparents and Al did not want it.”

Shirley said, “Is that’s why you are crying and sad?”

Beverly stopped counting the money and stared in space.

She said, “Mostly. We have never had anything. The hospitals never paid Al right because was married to a black woman. We got used to not having anything. Whenever I came to visit, your grand momma paid for it. I was ashamed and didn’t want her to that’s why I was not around much. Not that I didn’t want to be. I got me and Vivienne a dress and pair of boots that cost more than our usual.”

Shirley said, “I told you to.”

Beverly said, “I kept hearing your grand momma say stop being stingy.”

Shirley giggled.

Beverly said, “Al wanted to say something to me about the dress and boots. He knew it would have been a big fight. I made up my mind that was it I could no longer live so poor. We had no food in the house to feed sixteen people this morning. I don’t know how I missed that. Then he tells me a message came that your grandparents sent something. We went to the wire office and they sent five hundred and twenty five dollars.”

Shirley giggled.

Beverly said, “Al stood there and would not take the money.”

Shirley said, “Why Aunt Bev?”

Beverly said, “He said it was too much money.”

Shirley’s mouth dropped opened.

Beverly said, “Shirley you can enjoy this life with money or without money, but to get it in your heart tht you are not good enough not to be hunger. Don’t marry no man that wants to control your money and deny you meat.”

Shirley fell on the bed laughing.

She remembered how Beverly and Al would argue about her eating meat.

Shirley said, “I thought Uncle Al said that being a doctor.”

Beverly said, “He said that because he was cheap and would not buy me meat.”

Shirley was rolling over the bed hollering.

Hutch yelled, “Shirley don’t wake Leon.”

Leon said, “I been woke.”

Hutch stared at the wall.

Dr. Greene grinned.

Shirley motioned the door.

Beverly said, “He heard everything now.”

Leon said, “Bev I will buy you meat. What you want?”

Hutch was about to explode.

Nurse Sharon was laughing so hard.

Dr. Woodson looked at Hutch.

Hutch looked at the medical cabinet.

Dr. Woodson said, “No more.”

Dr. Greene looked at Hutch was laughing and said, “Out of all of this time Leon has been here, why is he now irritating you?”

Hutch exhaled and said, “I guess this is the first time I ever heard him talk.”

Nurse Simons and Nurse Sharon hollered.

Dr. Greene stared at Hutch.

Beverly said, “The owner of the shop told Al he delivered his baby twenty some years ago and did not charged them. I love it. The man said, sometimes GOD says thank You for doing things for other people.”

Shirley said, “What did you do Aunt Bev?”

Beverly said, “I took the money and ran out the door.”

Leon said, “Good girl Bev.”

Shirley was rolling all over her bed.

Beverly said, “I spent half of it on our necessities. We needed horses and another wagon. I stood there this morning and saw fourteen children in one wagon. I bought another wagon and eight horses.”

Shirley said, “Good.”

They heard the telegram machine going.

Beverly said, “Monica is leaving Thursday to go home and get her divorce from her husband that is if he is alive. He suppose to have been really, really old when she married him.”

Beverly shook her body in distaste.

Shirley grinned.

Shirley said, “I thought she was leaving with us Saturday. Momma told me to give her a hundred dollars. I have to go to the bank, but she would be gone by then.”

Beverly said, “Shirley here is a hundred dollars. Give this to Monica and you give it back to me when you get back from your Christmas holiday.”

Shirley said, “Ok,”

Beverly said, “Calm down. I am the only allowed to have an emotional breakdown.”

Shirley grinned.

Beverly said, “I think we have completed everything. Your Christmas celebration, the decorations here, the Christmas dinner here.”

Shirley said, “I paid for that already.”

Beverly said, “I bought Betty, Charles Jr. and that bad ass Sally a toy for Christmas I will bring it them Thursday When I come and pick you up after I take Monica and Jerome to the train station.”

Shirley said, “Then we can go and see Lorraine.”

Beverly said, “Yes.”

Shirley said, “Aunt Bev what else did you buy?”

Beverly began to tell Shirley what else she did with the money.

She handed the hundred dollars to Shirley.

Shirley put the money in her bag.

They continued to talk.

Leon fell back to sleep.

Dr. Woodson said, “Nurse Sharon how was your stay at the hospital last night?”

Dr. Greene was still admiring the Christmas tree.

He turned to look at Nurse Sharon.

She said, “It was fine after that Nurse Beatrice left. She kept coming in the children’s room. I could not understand why. She was lurking around the hospital two hours after her tour. So I went and got two blankets and a pillow and closed the door and slept on the other side of the wall where no one could see me. I didn’t have any problems after she left.”

Dr. Woodson looked at her.

Hutch bit his lips.

She smiled at Hutch.

Dr. Woodson said, “I was referring to medically.”

Nurse Simons held her head down.

Nurse Sharon turned her head in embarrassment.

Charles heard the telegram machine.

He rushed over to the hospital’s administrator’s office and the door was locked.

Dr. Woodson walked over and unlocked the door.

Charles ran to Beverly and said, “Ma am. Bev. Beverly the telegram machine.”

Beverly was standing and rolled her eyes at Shirley.

Shirley giggled and kept working on her paper.

Beverly went into the office and retrieved a large number of telegrams.

She sorted them out.

She gave Charles six telegrams from his wife and three from his lawyers and two from his sisters.

Charles sat and read the telegrams.

He asked Beverly to reply for him.

Charles said, “To my ex- wife six nos. To my sisters sell that property for twenty five percent more. To my lawyer yes, yes, and yes.”

Beverly stood and walked to Dr. Woodson and handed him a folder of telegrams.

Dr. Woodson looked and stood and started going through the telegrams.

He said, “Dr. Parker wants to come back.”

Every body said yes.

Dr. Ralph yelled across the hall ‘no’.

Dr. Woodson said, “I’ll let him come back in January.”

He looked for Beverly who was trying to get out the hospital and go and see Lorraine.

Dr. Woodson said, “Six telegrams from the sheriff and wants us to transport Sally back home.”

Shirley stop working on her paper and stared.

Dr. Woodson said, “We are not transporting Sally anywhere. If her family wants her then after all these years they should be able to pay and come and get her.”

Dr. Greene said, “That’s a mess.”

Leon said, “The devil’s child is leaving?”

Hutch turned his head.

Shirley said, “Dr. Woodson?”

He walked to Shirley’s door and said, “Yes.”

Shirley said, “What is the sheriff’s involvement with Sally?”

Dr. Woodson said, “The sheriff has been looking for Sally for five years. A woman stole her from the hospital. They got a tip she was in Philadelphia. So the sheriff telegrammed around until he got us. The family wants us to pay and have Sally sent to them.”

Shirley said, “No. We responsible for Sally. We don’t know if Sally is the baby. We have no proof that Sally belongs to whoever is trying to get her. Bruce has paid for all of Sally’s medical care. My family’s reputation is on this. If they want Sally they must spend their money and come and get her. Where are these people?”

Dr. Woodson said, “Iowa.”

Beverly said, “Hell nall. Sally will be grown by then.”

Leon laughed.

Beverly said, “Shirley who is the lawyer for the hospital?”

Shirley said, “We don’t have one.”

Beverly said, “They had forgotten about Sally and they only decided that they had to respond since they got an anonymous tip, which was the maid at yall house. Who else would have put the two together. The child and the not only the state but the city and family but the person who took the child or the person who knew about the child. Is there a reward?”

Leon said, “Hell no. They were glad the child was gone. Look at all the medical problems the child had.”

Dr. Woodson said, “I agree.”

Leon said, “Tell them to come and get the child and have proof she is their devil’s child and have a judge here have a hearing with them and the hospital’s lawyer and make them take the full responsibility of getting her home safe and that her medical treatment will continue in that city.”

Dr. Woodson said, “Great Leon but we have to get a lawyer.”

Leon said, “You got me. Do what I tell you to do.”

Nurse Simons stood and walked back to Leon’s room.

Nurse Sharon grinned.

Dr. Greene looked at her.

Hutch looked at her.

Dr. Charles laughed. Dr. Woodson said, “Beverly can you send these replies for me?”

Beverly said, “Yes.”

Dr. Woodson said, “We have seven request to buy this hospital.”

Shirley said, “No.”

Shirley yelled, “Aunt Bev.”

Beverly said, “I heard Shirley.”

Dr. Woodson said, “Two companies want to do our books.”

Shirley lifted up a piece of paper and said, “No.”

Dr. Woodson said, “This is a lot of junk.”

He looked at the last telegram and frowned up and said, “Tony.”

Shirley looked up at Dr. Woodson.

Dr. Greene walked to the door.

Dr. Woodson said, “Step inside.”

Dr. Woodson gave Dr. Greene the telegram.

Shirley saw Dr. Greene frowned up.

Shirley stood up because she wanted to know if that was the person Debra was working with to steal money.

Dr. Greene held the telegram at arm’s reach and looked bewildered.

Dr. Woodson said, “It seems that is the person Debra was working with to steal money from this hospital. They have not heard from her and they need the money for the holidays.”

Dr. Greene stood and was in shock.

He could not believe what he saw nor what he was hearing.

Dr. Greene said, “How did this happen? How did Debra my wife know this person. When did all of this start?”

Shirley reached for the telegram.

Dr. Greene gave Shirley the telegram.

Shirley was looking at the telegram and said, “I wanted to see the telegram address.”

Dr. Greene was perplexed.

Dr. Woodson was looking at Dr. Greene

Shirley said, “This is from Cedartown. Our home. Who does Debra know in Cedartown.”

Dr. Woodson said nothing.

Dr. Greene was sick.

He said, “Barry’s father.”

Dr. Woodson said, “It might not be him.”

Dr. Greene was all of this a lie?”

Beverly knocked on Shirley’s door and walked in.

She looked at them and said, “I sent all telegrams. I am going to see Lorraine and then home.”

Beverly picked up her things and walked out the door and said, “Good evening Leon.:

Leon said, “Tomorrow.”

Beverly smiled and walked out the hospital.

Beverly was going to the south hospital and passed Monica and Jerome going to the Stith.

She waved at them and kept going.

Monica had been there for hours with Lorraine.

Jerome was very patient and walked around the hospital and introduced himself to Ryan and Dr. Jim.

Dr. Jim heard of Jerome.

Ryan asked Jerome would he be in town through the holidays.

Jerome said, “Partially. I will be swore in January for the state medical license board.”

Ryan was impressed with Jerome and said, “Whoa.”

Beverly reached the south hospital and entered.

She looked at Lora sitting in the same spot.

Beverly realized that it wasn’t Ryan she and Vivienne ran pass but the other doctor, Dr. Jim.

Beverly went into Lorraine and spoke to the nurses.

She sat and watched Lorraine for an hour.

She stood and patted Lorraine’s hand and left.

Beverly walked out the hospital and sped home.

When she reached home it was dusk.

She saw the lantern on the porch and one by the stables.

She heard the new horses.

Beverly rode to the stables and saw the walls were repaired.

She saw the second wagon and pulled her carriage by them.

She petted the horses and feed the one she had and gave it water.

Al walked out to the stables to help her.

Beverly saw Al but continued to settle the horses in for the night.

She walked to the carriage and got her bags out.

She saw the coal was delivered.

Beverly walked on the porch and went into the house.

Al walked in after her and locked the door.

The children were sitting at the tables doing their homework.

Little Shirly looked up at Beverly and grinned.

Beverly looked at the children and said, “Good evening my loves. I won’t disturb you. But we will play after you finish...”

Beverly stopped in her speech.

She stood and cried.

Al walked to Beverly and grabbed her by her shoulders and buried his head on her neck and kissed her.

The children jumped up and laughed and ran to Beverly.

Mabel and Curtis ran to Beverly with the smaller children.

Beverly continued to cry.

The littlest children walked Beverly to the fully decorated Christmas tree.

Beverly with quivering lips mouth Beautiful”.

Little Shirley and Little Steven ran to the stairs and pointed.

Al turned Beverly and walked her to the stairs.

The children used all the garland and decorated the stairs.

Mark the eleven year old ran to the front door.

He yelled, “Look Aunt Bev.”

Al turned Beverly and walked her to the front door.

Al nodded at Mark.

Mark opened the front door and showed Beverly the big wreath they made.

Beverly dropped to her knees.

Al let her sit for a few minutes while the children jumped and circle around her and him and danced.

Al grabbed Beverly and said, “My heart I am so sorry. I need you to forgive me even if you want to move on.”

Beverly looked in Al’s eyes and looked at the lanterns that were glowing on the front porch.

Mabel walked and closed the front door and locked it and put the bar behind it.

She and Curtis shooed the children back to the tables to finish their schoolwork.

The children were so excited.

Mabel and the girls wrapped the knitted scarves and gloves and put the under the Christmas.

They used the bags from the stores and stitched each person’s name on the bags in different colors.

Al heard Beverly come out of their bedroom.

He finished washing all the dishes and drying them.

Beverly thought Al was upstairs with the boys.

She was amazed at the genius of the children and the Christmas tree.

Later that night she walked to the Christmas tree and stood and grinned.

She saw a flicker of a glitter.

Beverly stooped down and was on her knees and crawled under the Christmas tree and saw the gifts wrapped in the bags and the newspaper and the names stitched with color tread.

She touched her heart and sniffed.

Al tipped out the kitchen area and watched Beverly.

He looked up and saw Mark the eleven year old and Steven the seven year peeping at Beverly from the second floor where they had tipped down the stairs.

Al quietly shooed them back upstairs.

The boys ran on their tiptoes back to their rooms.

Al tipped to the sitting area and picked up his book and sat by the fireplace and read.

He would read a passage and then look at Beverly.

Beverly enjoyed herself.

She stood and walked back to their bedroom.

Al sat and continued to read his book.

Each year Beverly would always buy hi books for Christmas and his birthday.

Beverly was like Mabel.

She loved her garden.

She would go to the booksellers and find out the books they had and the cost.

She would work all year to get enough money to buy the books.

The book sellers knew Beverly and when they received interesting books they would hold them for Beverly.

They would sell flowers from the spring to early fall.

Most of the time she had enough money to buy Al both books, because his birthday was in November.

Al would tip around the house and search for the books.

If he found the books he would hide and begin to read the books.

He would try to wrap the books and put them back like Beverly had them.

Beverly always thought the books did not look like what she wrapped them.

Al would cut his eyes at Beverly and snicker.

One year, Beverly caught Al.

They fist fought all night.

The next day Al did not go to work but spent it with Beverly at home.

Beverly never fussed nor fought Al about his presents.

Later the book sellers started getting more books.

Beverly started decorating for banquets and dinners.

She began to make enough money to buy several books during the year.

Al enjoy reading and Beverly was determined she would give him what he enjoyed.

 Beverly knew her husband was mistreated because he was married to a black woman.

She knew he was determined not to let other’s hate destroy his loving soul that GOD gave him.

Al, as a medical doctor, treated everyone the same.

He treated everyone well.

Al understood the hell that the wicked ones were attacking Jerome with.

They bonded together through their terrible tribulations.

Shirley worked all night on her paper.

She sent Eleanor and Patrick a telegram and told them of the telegram that came from Cedartown for Debra.

She asked them what to do because Dr. Greene is devasted. He thinks his marriage is a lie for Debra to use him and the hospital to steal.

The doctors had their evening meeting and reviewed the patients’ charts.

Monica and Jerome arrived at the Stith.

They walked in the hospital.

Dr. Greene was devastated.

He was sitting in the hospital administrator’s office with the door closed.

Hutch spoke to Monica and Jerome.

He walked passed the hospital administrator’s office and saw Dr. Greene sitting in the office.

He started to stop but he knew it was something personal.

He walked to Shirley and said, “Shirley, I have a few minutes now before I go to the south hospital. Let me see your paper.”

Shirley looked shamed and held her head down.

Hutch looked at her and said, “What have you being doing all day that you don’t have this paper written? Is that why Beverly was rough with you?”

Leon did not hear Shirley respond.

Hutch looked at Shirley and said, “Where is your mind? Is it on that boy that came to see Betty and Charles Jr.?”

Shirley still did not say anything.

Hutch looked at her and said, “I’m going to let Beverly have you.”

Leon said, “No give her a chance. What subject is it?”

Hutch was annoyed at Shirley and Leon.

He said, “Basic accounting.”

Leon said, “Shirley. Shirley. That is what you do everyday. You run this hospital. What is the principle you are stuck on?”

Hutch looked at Shirley who primped her mouth.

Nurse Simons and Nurse Sharon heard Dr. Hutch was disgusted with Shirley. They were quiet.

Dr. Woodson walked to greet Monica and Jerome.

Dr. Ralph, Dr. Charles and Dr. Felipe were finishing their charts.

Dr. Woodson walked Jerome to them.

They all were talking.

Monica went to Vivienne and Sally.

Vivienne closed the door and told Monica about Sally.

Sally was quiet.

Vivienne said, “Shirley sent the sheriff a telegram for them to come and get Sally and bring proof she is of that family.”

Monica said, “Shirley did that?”

Vivienne said, “She is tough when it is business.”

Vivienne shook Sally’s legs and said, “I’ll be back.”

Vivienne and Monica walked out sally’s room.

Vivienne was about to close Sally’s door.

Sally said, “Leave it open please.”

Dr. Ralph looked away from Jerome for a minute.

Dr. Charles looked towards Sally’s room.

Dr. Woodson laughed and her whole attitude has changed since she will be going into the unknown.

Dr. Charles giggled and said, “Let her go.”

Dr. Felipe was shocked and said, “Charles. She is a child.”

Charles said, “So. I want my woman.”

Jerome turned and looked at Vivienne.

She was attractive and Jerome smiled.

The doctors continued to talk and enjoy each other companies.

Charles watched Vivienne.

Jerome caught Charles lustful eyes.

Charles said, “I am not ashamed of my lustful feelings good doctor.”

Dr. Felipe was holding the paper ornaments he made.

Dr. Woodson said, “You had time to play with paper today?”

Dr. Felipe turned his head and was mumbling as he was looking at his paper ornaments.

The nurses were giggling.

Jerome liked the atmosphere at the hospital.

Dr. Woodson said, “Dr. Felipe and Dr. Charles are specialist from France and will be leaving us at the beginning of the spring.”

Dr, Charles said, “At the first thaw.”

Jerome said, “Slavery?’

Dr. Charles said, “Yes.”

Dr. Felipe said, “I am taking my black wife and baby when he comes this month and take them where they can have peace.”

The nurses looked at Dr. Felipe, because they never heard him voice his opinion.

Jerome said, “I came back on the last ship and it was a rough ride. Are you sure you can take a new born on that first ship?”

Dr. Felipe was still looking at his paper ornaments that he was proud of and making a shoo sound and nodding his head.

The nurses fell out laughing at Dr. Felipe.

Dr. Woodson stood stunned at Felipe.

Jerome grinned and said, “I do understand, you may have to wait for the last ship to leave for the baby to be a little older.”

Dr. Felipe walked away.

Jerome looked at Felipe and said, “I’m sorry.”

Felipe was still mumbling.

The nurses fell out at their desk laughing.

Monica and Vivienne were standing in awe of the tree that Vivienne decorated.

Vivienne said, “Bev was so sad today. I think she has decided to leave Al.”

Leon was listening.

He wanted to hear more.

Monica said, “They have been together for ever.”

Hutch looked over the papers Shirley gave him.

He said, “Shirley this just fair. Not good. This is only three pages for a ten page paper. You have to turn this paper in tomorrow because Beverly said, “You had a lot to do before you leave for Christmas.”

Leon said, “Shirley, bring the paper and the book to me. Hutch ain’t helping. All he wants to do is to put people to sleep.”

Nurse Sharon fell on the floor.

Hutch handed Shirley her papers back

He stood and walked out Shirley’s room and saw Nurse Sharon on the floor and the other nurses giggling.

He kept walking and went and got his coat, scarf and hat and gloves.

He looked in on Laura and said, “Laura are you ok?”

Laura said, “Yes sir.”

Hutch stop and said, “Charles Jr are you and Betty ok?”

Betty said, “I need to potty.”

Hutch said, “I will tell one of the nurses.”

Hutch walked to the nurses’ desk and looked at the nurses assigned cases and said, “Nurse Sharon, once you get off the floor Betty needs to go to the potty.”

Nurse Sharon hurried and got off the floor and ran and got a pot.

Because Betty mess up her bed.

Nurse Sharon was not going to clean up the bed and change linens.

Hutch stood and watched Nurse Sharon.

The other nurses became quiet.

They knew something was bothering Hutch for the two years he worked there he was always calm.

He lost his temper with Leon and was disgusted with Shirley.

Hutch walked out the door and went to the south hospital for a few hours and returned to the Stith about seven thirty pm.

Dr. Hutch rode his horse around back and put him in the storage shed.

They used the extra storage shed as stables for their horses.

He feed the horse and gave it water.

He locked the storage shed and walked around the building to the front entrance.

Dr. Woodson left the hospital with Monica and Jerome and they had dinner at the Stith hotel.

Dr. Woodson said, “Monica I like this restaurant.”

Vivienne and Charles walked from the Stith to the hotel.

They joined Jerome, Dr. Woodson and Monica for a light dinner.

Monica and Jerome left and rode home forty five minutes away.

Dr. Woodson left and rode his horse to his rooming house about twenty minutes away.

He spent hours on his knees praying for all the staff and patients.

He was very sleeping and fell asleep on his knees and woke that morning refreshed and washed and changed clothes and rode to work.

He passed the restaurant in the Stith’s hotel.

He smiled and was glad he found out about the restaurant.

Dr. Felipe went to the kitchen and asked the cook for soup for Meredith.

The cook was sick of making soup and put all the soup in a small kettle for Felipe to take to Meredith.

Felipe said, “This is too much.”

The cook stared at Felipe.

Felipe turned and took the kettle and flew home nearly an hour away.

Felipe ran in the house kissed Meredith and put the kettle on the fireplace grate.

He ran pass Meredith.

He kissed her again and ran outside and feed the horses and gave them water.

Felipe brought in the water for the next few days,

He turned and ran and filled the coal buckets. He thought, “That should last for a few days.”

He ran into the house with buckets of coal.

He placed one in the kitchen and one in the bedroom..

Meredith was laughing.

Felipe would not stop until he finished those three chores.

He put water in the water pots on the stove.

He put a little coal in the stove to keep the stove warm through the night so he would not have to spend a lot of time heating the stove and water in the morning.

Meredith walked into the kitchen and got two bowls, spoons and napkins.

She was sitting on the sofa and stirring the small kettle of soup.

Felipe pulled off his coat, hat, scarf and gloves.

He took the paper ornaments of his pocket and reached them to Meredith as he tried to catch his breathe.

Meredith pointed backwards.

Felipe ran and locked the front door and put the bar across it.

Meredith looked at the time as Felipe ran and sat beside her.

Felipe said, “Well my dear.”

Meredith grinned and said, “You were slower today.”

Felipe said, “What? You are kidding?”

Felipe was laying in Meredith’s lap with one foot on the floor and the other leg thrown over the arm of the sofa.

Meredith was stirring the soup.

She tested the soup, and it was hot.

Felipe looked at Meredith and said, “Meredith you don’t look right.”

Meredith looked at Felipe.

Felipe was nervous and said, “Did you go anywhere today or move anything?”

Meredith said, “No Felipe. I feel alright.”

Felipe said, “Sometimes the person who is sick don’t feel sick.”

She stared at him and looked down at the wrinkle paper he gave her.

He continued to stand and watch her.

Meredith was getting scared and said, “JESUS.”

She looked at the wrinkle paper and held it up and said, “What is this Felipe?”

Felipe heard Meredith but was too caught up in his emotions to respond to her.

Meredith looked at Felipe.

Felipe jarred himself back to the present and ran to Meredith.

He sat next to her and stared in her face.

Meredith gave him a bowl of soup.

Felipe said, “I’m sick.”

Meredith was about to put soup in her bowl.

She sat up and said, “Felipe what is wrong?”

Felipe said, “This soup.”

Meredith laughed.

He gave Meredith his bowl and said, ”Dr. Woodson told the cook to have soup everyday during the winter. I don’t think he meant not to cook other food.”

Meredith was laughing.

Felipe was looking in front of him but he loved Meredith’s laugh.

He turned and looked at her.

They kissed.

Felipe said, “Do we have cheese?’

Meredith shook her head for no.

Felipe said, “I have to get something to eat. Bradley and Hutch act like eating soup is fine with them.”

Felipe shook for nasty.

Meredith laughed.

Felipe went into the kitchen and ate a piece of bread and jam.

Meredith as sitting and she started swooning back and forth on the sofa.

She dropped her bowl.

Felipe was warming a second piece of bread on the stove and heard the thump.

He peeped in the sitting area and thought he saw Meredith swooning.

He stepped out the kitchen and saw Meredith swooning back and forth.

He rushed to her and started taking her vitals.

He was running through the house and grabbed her coat and scarf.

He threw her scarf over her head.

He ran outside to the horses and hitched two horses to their buggy and went into the house and grabbed two blankets and took them to the carriage.

Then he heard Meredith screamed.

He yelled back, “Hold on sweet Meredith.”

People were walking home from work.

They stopped and looked at Felipe.

Felipe spoke to them.

He ran into the house and grabbed Meredith and nearly threw her in the carriage.

The people yelled, “Lock your door.”

Felipe had to run back in the house and find the key and he ran back to the door and said, “Meredith where is the key?’

Meredith started screaming again.

Felipe thought and he ran into the kitchen and took the key off the kitchen wall.

Meredith was leaning over the carriage nearly to the ground.

The people yelling at Felipe to hurry.

Felipe locked the front door.

He ran and pushed Meredith back in the carriage and untied the horses which were uneasy with Meredith screaming.

Felipe patted the horses and said, “It gets worst from here.

He turned the carriage around and flew to the north hospital.

Felipe pulled in the hospital.

He grabbed Meredith and pulled her from the other side of the carriage.

He was running in the hospital with Meredith in his arms.

Ryan was leaving and saw Felipe and opened the door and ran behind him.

Nurse Lillian was about to leave.

She ran behind Ryan and.

Ryan yelled, “Felipe the second floor.”

Felipe turned and ran up the stairs.

He looked at Meredith and said, “Can you ran?”

Meredith looked at Felipe and screamed in his face.”

Felipe said, “I was only joking Meredith. GOD.”

Dr. Barnes and Dennis were leaving.

They stopped and looked at Ryan.

Dennis said, “Ryan who is that?”

Ryan said, “Meredith and Felipe.”

Dennis and Dr. Barnes said, “Oh and kept talking.

Ryan said, “Dad is Dr. Fletcher here?”

Dennis said, “No he is gone home or wherever.”

Dr. Barnes said, “Wherever.”

Ryan said, “Yall need to stop him from going to whorehouses during the week.”

Nurse Lillian rushed up the stairs with two nurses. One of the nurses was a mid-wife.

Dennis saw the wife and said, “There Ryan. Come eon so we can eat. And I can’t control what another doctor does when he leaves my service. Huh.”

Dennis raised his eyebrows at Ryan to indicate he was finished with that conversation.

Dr. Barnes said, “I’ll stay with Dr. Felipe. He really helped those burned children. I am so impressed and thankful for him. We need to be trained better.”

Dennis said, “Well he’ll be taking Meredith and their son home to France in the spring. If we can get him to teach us maybe for three months before he leaves. After the holidays.”

They heard Meredith screaming.

Dennis said, “That don’t sound right.”

Dr. Barnes said, “No.”

They turned and walked upstairs.

The nurses had undressed Meredith and was boiling the water and sterilizing all the instruments in case they had to use them.

Ryan and Felipe did not like what they were hearing from Meredith.

Ryan looked at Felipe, because he knew Felipe’s wife and son died fifteen years ago in childbirth.

Ryan thought, “Not again LORD.”

He and Felipe went to Meredith.

Dennis and r. Barnes put their thins in a chair and washed their hands.

They stood around Meredith’s bed.

Nurse Lillian got clean towels to put the baby in.

She was getting nervous.

She looked at how small Meredith was.

Nurse Lillian said, “LORD help her and the baby.”

Meredith lost a lot of blood and was very tired.

Three hours later she delivered she and Felipe only child a boy.

Everyone was happy the ordeal for Meredith was over.

The nurses cleaned the room.

Nurse Lillian bathe Felipe Jr and wrapped him in towels and gave him to Dr. Felipe.

Felipe cried over the baby as he held him.

Dennis and Dr. Barnes looked at Felipe.

Ryan sat next to Felipe on the stairs and watched the joy of this man who waited fifteen years for GOD to fulfil a promise that he will give him a child.

Ryan said, “Felipe you want me to send a telegram to Stith?”

Felipe was still crying and nodded his head for yes.

The baby yawned.

Ryan, Dennis and Dr. Barnes laughed.

Dr. Barnes said, “He worked tonight.”

Dr. Barnes saw Nurse Killian get her bags to leave.

He said, “Nurse Lillian wait. I will walk with you. Are you alright?”

Dennis looked at her.

Nurse Lillian said, “I am going to the Stith Friday and see Doctor Hutch.”

Ryan was standing by Felipe looking at his boy who look just like him.

Ryan turned and said, “Nurse Lillian I don’t know why I did not think about earlier. Forgive me.”

Nurse Lillian said, “We will see tomorrow.”

Dennis waited for Ryan to send the telegram.

Dennis looked in on the burned children.

Their mother was asleep in the room next to them.

Ryan walked out Dennis office and locked the door.

He walked to his father.

They said ‘Good night” to the staff and went home.

Everyone in the house was sleep.

Dennis and Ryan washed and went to bed.

Dr. Barnes took her bags and the two walked across the street.

They lived in separate apartment buildings.

Lillian’s apartment was plush.

Dr. Barnes lived down the street in another apartment building.

His apartment was very nice.

He had a butler because he was too busy at the hospital to try to run a house and work at all times of day and night.

He only could afford the apartment because Lillian gave him a huge cut in price.

Dennis gave him a loan to pay for the apartment.

Dr. Barnes apartment building housed some college presidents and businessmen.

Dr. Barnes held a Christmas party once per year.

The neighbors loved it.

They dined lavishly at Dr. Barnes Christmas dinner party.

Dr. Barnes grew up in the lavish houses in New York and Connecticut, where his mother and father were the cooks.

He loved cooking.

He goes home to his retired mother and father in Connecticut.

He stay two weeks once the year in the summer, so he could help them in their small garden.

He loved country living.

He bought a small barn and the acres it sat on and plan on retiring there soon.

He will put his apartment for rent and come and stay in the apartment in the winter to visit his friends and go home to Connecticut for Christmas and New Years.

Ryan sent the telegram to the Stith.

Shirley heard the telegram machine, but Leon was really teaching her about the principles of simple accounting.

He explained the debits and credits to Shirley and said, “You do this every day. When you count your money.”

Leon explained the processes to Shirley after three hours he said, “Shirley I hurt. I need my medicine and to go to sleep. I don’t wake until late in the morning. You are on your on. Hutch is mad about something and is not good right now.”

Shirley listened.

Leon turned his head and said, “Is Dr. Greene still in that office?”

Shirley stood and walked to the hospital administrator’s office and opened the door.

She heard the telegram machine.

She walked to the telegram machine and took the telegrams.

Patrick and Eleanor said not to say anything else about the telegram they would handle it from Cedartown.

Shirley was relieved.

Patrick said, “Brenda said, let bad ass Sally go to the people but stay from being financially bond and medically bound.”

Eleanor wanted to know if Meredith had her baby.

Shirley saw the telegram from Ryan and grinned.

She sent Eleanor a big, “Yes a few minutes ago. A boy of six pounds.”

Eleanor was walking through the house admiring the little touches that brought the house together for Christmas.

Patrick, Brenda and Eleanor invited the ambassadors and senators along with the governor and Gail and Bryson and Gen to spend the holidays with them if they care to.”

They all said they would think about the invitation.

Claressa loved to cook and wanted to bake while she was at home.

Claressa was trying to get Eleanor to be interested in the young United States Senator.

Brenda looked at Claressa and shook her head for no.

Brenda and Claressa talked later.

Brenda said, “Eleanor said, her only true love was Joseph. We wanted her to marry one of the doctors at the hospital, but she refused to think about it. Patrick and I realized Joseph was her only true love and if she let Bruce back…”

Claressa stomped and was ready to spit.

She said, “I tried to tell Eleanor when we were kids that Bruce was dirty and up to no good.”

Brenda said, “It’s my fault I was not thinking about them having sex and having all of these kids.”

Claressa said, “If Eleanor let Bruce back it will be only to be a part of the children’s lives until the children get grown and tell him no.”

Brenda stared at Claressa and said, “That’s what Natalie said, the children will tell Bruce he is not their father.”

Shirley read all the telegrams and put the telegrams in folders.

She placed the folders in the desk and locked the desk drawer.

She walked out the hospital administrator’s office and locked the door.

She went to her room and closed the door.

Shirley stayed up to dawn.

She wrote the paper over and over.

She went to sleep holding the paper on her chest and she was laid across the bed.

The doctors arrived at work and was about to start their rounds.

Hutch walked to Shirley’s room and opened the door.

He saw her sleep on the bed.

He saw the paper.

He knew it was her final paper because she was holding it with her life.

Hutch walked in and took the paper out of Shirley’s hand.

He stood and was reading it.

Dr. Woodson walked in from the hospital administrator’s office with the folders of telegrams.

He said, “Meredith had a boy last night.”

Charles grinned and said, “How is Meredith?”

Dr. Woodson said, “Ryan sent this. He assisted and said, they were good.”

Hutch said, “That’s not a real good report.”

Shirley was still sleep.

Hutch read the paper and said, “This is much better.”

Dr. Woodson looked at Hutch then the sleeping Shirley and said, “You are her financial professor?”

Hutch looked at Dr. Woodson and said, “I use to teach accounting.”

Dr. Woodson and Charles looked at Hutch.

Dr. Woodson looked at Leon’s door and said, “All of you have talents that can help out here and keep it to yourself. Why?”

Hutch said, “That was before the war. I need to grow.”

Dr. Woodson said, “I don’t think Dr. Greene will return to work here. I am glad I told Dr. Parker to come back.”

Dr. Ralph had returned from spending the night with Lorraine and washed and changed clothes.

He walked up the hall and saw the doctors at Shirley’s room.

He heard Dr. Woodson and said, “What?”

Dr. Woodson turned and looked at Dr. Ralph.

Hutch was finishing reading Shirley’s paper.

He looked at Dr. Ralph and said, “Good morning Jason.”

Dr. Ralph said, “I’m sorry. Good morning everyone.”

Shirley yelled, “Give me that damn ruby necklace and those diamond earrings of my grandma.”

Shirley sat up on the bed.

Nurse Sharon was walking to check on Leon and Shirley.

She stopped in her tracks and did not move.

She thought someone had taken a necklace from Shirley.

Hutch stood and looked at Shirley.

He said, “Amazing.”

Dr. Woodson looked back at Shirley.

Dr. Charles started laughing.

Dr. Ralph shook his head.

Shirley laid back down and smiled and said, “Emeralds please.”

Dr. Charles hit the floor laughing.

Dr. Ralph said, “Is that the reason she is always smiling while she is sleep.”

Dr. Woodson said, “It’s get worst if one of the boys pop up in her dream.”

Nurse Sharon was stunned she had never seen anything like that.

Shirley said, “Bruce I told you you ain’t getting this house. Get out.”

Shirley started kicking her legs.

Hutch looked at her legs.

Dr. Ralph said, “That’s why she be tired in the morning. She is fighting over diamonds and rubies.”

Dr. Ralph walked away.

Dr. Charles was on the floor looking at Shirley fight over the house.

He laid on the floor and hollered.

Nurse Sharon went in and checked on a sleep Leon.

Dr. Ralph was going over the patients’ charts.

Dr. Woodson said, “When we were in Europe I caught Eleanor several times trying to choke Shirley because of this.”

Hutch said, “Did she choke Shirley?”

Dr. Woodson said, “No I saw Eleanor and caught her in time.”

Dr. Charles was sitting on the floor and trying to catch his breath.

Nurse Sharon pass and looked in Shirley’s room and saw the stern Hutch looking at Shirley.

She looked at Dr. Charles trying to get off the floor.

Dr. Woodson said, “Let’s get started. We will give Shirley her therapy later.”

Dr. Charles said, “Does she need it?”

Dr. Hutch put Shirley’s paper on the dresser and looked at her and walked out of her room.

The nurses were at the nurses’ desk peeping back at Shirly giggling.

Dr. Woodson said, “Meredith had a six pound boy late last night.”

Dr. Ralph was the only doctor on the other side of the hospital.

He stopped and listened.

He put the charts down and walked across the hall.

Dr. Woodson said, “Dr. Parker will be coming back in January.”

Dr. Ralph became angry.

Shirley yelled, “Percy give me that emerald necklace!”

One of the nurses jumped to run in Shirley’s room.

Dr. Woodson said, “She’s dreaming.”

The nurse stood and looked at a calm Dr. Woodson.

Dr. Hutch looked at the nurse.

Dr. Charles was tickle that he stumbled backwards and fell on the wall.

Then they heard Shirley laughing.

Nurse Simons looked back and said, “She got those emeralds.”

Hutch looked at Nurse Simons.

Dr. Ralph looked at Nurse Simons.

Charles was still reeling from laughter.

Vivienne was going to get Sally’s water to bathe her and wash her mouth.

Vivienne saw Charles tickle and she stood and watched Charles.

The other nurse looked back at Vivienne and saw she was about to bathe Sally and said, “Shirley is having dreams of grandeur.”

Vivienne smiled.

The nurse said, “That’s the worst thing you ever seen?”

Vivienne said, “No ma am. It is to see my entire family and all of our slaves brutally brutally massacred.”

Everyone was shocked.

Nurse Sharon’s mouth dropped open.

Hutch stared at Vivienne.

Dr. Ralph slowly looked at Vivienne as she walked away.

Dr. Woodson did not know why Vivienne was so sad.

Dr. Charles was leaning his back on the wall and bent over and had his hands on his knees.

He said, “That’s why I am taking her from this country.”

Nurse Simons started crying.

Leon was awake and said, “That’s why we fought. Hutch don’t you come back here today.”

Dr. Woodson looked at Hutch.

Everyone was silent.

Dr. Woodson said., “I don’t believe Dr. Greene will be returning to work here. I hope that I am wrong.”

Hutch looked at Dr. Woodson. He knew it had to do with some stolen money.

Dr. Ralph said, “we need some more doctors. Charles and Felipe will be leaving in three months.”

Vivienne pass the staff.

Everyone watched Vivienne pass with hot water to wash Sally and to cleanse her mouth.

Dr. Charles watched Vivienne.

Dr. Woodson said, “Here.”

He reached Charles a large amount of telegrams.

Dr. Charles looked at the stack of telegrams and frowned up.

He stood and took the telegrams from Dr. Woodson as he watched Vivienne disappear into Sally’s room.

Nurse Bishop turned to walk back on the other side.

She said, “And to think they want to take Sally away from her.”

Dr. Charles said, “They need to.”

Leon said, “The demon child.”

Dr. Charles started reading his telegrams.

The staff calm down and started their day.

The cooks brought everyone’s breakfast.

Vivienne had wash Sally and washed out her mouth and clean it out with peroxide.

Dr. Ralph came I and Cleaned Sally’s mouth again and said, “Sally your mouth is healing well. You might be eating ham for Christmas dinner.”

Sally looked over at Vivienne who was standing against the wall with her hands folded in front of her.

Dr. Ralph continued his therapy on Sally.

Vivien took her wash basin and took everything to the wash area and cleaned everything and sanitized everything.

Nurse Sharon walked in and said, “Vivienne I did not know.”

Vivienne was cleaning and drying the wash basin and said, “I hid it in my heart for years. Charles started helping me to come out of death. That’s the first time I ever said anything.”

Dr. Ralph walked back to the wash area.

When he was coming out of Sally’s room he saw Nurse Sharon walked towards the back.

He slowly put up Sally’s chart and walked looking for Nurse Sharon.

He saw Betty and Charles Jr. decoration on the door.

He said, “Good morning Betty and Charles Jr.”
He saw the children were a little sad.

He thought it was because of their family.

Dr. Ralph walked in the room and said, “You seem sad.”

Betty said, “That lady don’t like us.”

Dr. Ralph heard Vivienne and Nurse Sharon talking.

Dr. Ralph said, “The lady talking now?”

Charles Jr. said, “The other lady.”

Dr. Ralph said, “What happened?”

Betty said, “I potted on my bed and she pinched me and said…”

Charles said, “Twisted Betty arm like this and covered her mouth.”

Vivienne was standing behind Dr. Ralph and heard the children she became sick.

Charles was walking across the hall to help Dr. Ralph with rounds on that sick.

He looked down the hall s his pattern was and saw Vivienne falling.

Charles Jr saw Vivienne fall.

Dr. Ralph said, “Betty let me see your arm.

Betty raised her sleeve and Dr. Ralph became angry.

He could not talk.

He turned and saw Vivienne on the floor.

Charles had ran and was at Vivienne.

Dr. Woodson and Hutch saw Charles running. They ran down the hall and saw Vivienne laying in the floor.

Nurse Sharon turned from the wash area.

She saw Betty showing Dr. Ralph the terrible bruise from her twisting her arm.

Hutch and Dr. Woodson saw Dr. Ralph looking at Nurse Sharon.

Charles brought Vivienne to.

Vivienne sat

He raised Vivienne to sat on his lap.

Charles was confused and said, “Vivienne do you feel sick?”

The nurses ran to the hall and was looking at the doctors standing around Vivienne.

Vivienne started sinking back to the day her family was massacred.

Dr. Ralph saw what was happening and said, “Vivienne don’t go back to that day.”

Charles looked at Vivienne and grabbed her and held her tight to him.

Vivienne was lifeless.

Hutch said, “What caused this?”

Nurse Sharon said, “I told her I was sorry.”

Dr. Ralph said, “You are a lie. “

Dr. Woodson and Hutch looked at Dr. Ralph.

Dr. Ralph said, “You think I am going to stand here and let you lie on Vivienne. To cover for you.”

Dr. Woodson saw Dr. Ralph’s face.

Hutch looked at Nurse Sharon and he waited for Dr. Ralph.

Dr. Charles was panicked struck.

Dr. Ralph looked back at Charles Jr. and Betty.

Dr. Woodson, “I’m sorry We need to close their door. And Laura’s.

Laura said, “No you don’t. I heard it and was waiting for my father to come so I can tell him.”

Hutch looked at Nurse Sharon.

Dr. Woodson looked towards Laura’s room and said, “Jason what?”

Dr. Ralph stepped aside and said. “Betty.”

Nurse Simons and Nurse Bishop tipped down the hall to see what was wrong with Vivienne.

They stood and heard Laura.

When Dr. Ralph said, ‘Betty’, Nurse Simons and Nurse Bishop stepped behind Dr. Woodson to see what Dr. Ralph was talking about.

Dr. Woodson stepped into the children’s room.

Betty raised her sleeve.

Charles Jr. leaned over on his broken thigh.

Dr. Woodson moved his hand for Charles Jr to be still.

Nurse Simon said, “What ids that?”

Nurse Bishop looked back at Nurse Sharon and then at Vivienne who was sitting lifeless on the floor.

Hutch was staring at Nurse Sharon.

Nurse Sharon was breathing heavily.

Nurse Bishop said, “Nurse Sharon do you know what happened to that’s child’s arm?”

Hutch walked into the room and went to betty’s bedside.

He took her arm and Betty said, “Ouch.”

Nurse Simons walked behind Dr. Hutch and saw the terrible bruise on Betty’s arm.

Hutch said, “Who did this Betty?’

Charles Jr said, “That lady.”

Leon knew something was going on.

He heard Shirley snoring and yelled, “Shirley. Shirley.”

Shirley did not say anything.

Leon said, “Stop fighting over diamonds and wake up!”

Shirley struggled and woke.

She sat up on her bed and looked around for her paper and panic.

She stood and was about to search her room.

Leon heard her and said, “Shirley!”

Shirley said, Leon I’ll be there in a minute. I’m looking for my paper.”

Leon said, “Shirley they did something to the black kids.”

Shirley walked out her room and passed the nurses and walked down the hall where she saw Vivienne on the floor and Dr. Charles holding and her and crying.

Shirley was trying to think.

Brenda always told her to be quiet and listen to everybody because somewhere the liar will be exposed.

Shirley was looking at Vivienne and becoming sick. She could only think Eleanor help.

Dr. Woodson was shocked.

Hutch took over.

Dr. Ralph was about to jump on Nurse Sharon.

Dr. Hutch touched Jason on the shoulder and said, “Jason calm down.”

Shirley looked at the always calm Dr. Ralph.

Dr. Hutch stepped in front of Dr. Ralph and said, Nurse Sharon did you twist that child skin like that?”

Charles Jr said, “And covered her mouth.”

Laura said, “Yes.”

Shirley stared at Nurse Sharon.

Nurse Sharon said, “They are mistaken.”

Mrs. Tillerson said, “I hate blacks too, but I would not hurt a child.”

Shirley rushed to Mrs. Tillerson’s door and said, “I am black. I own this hospital. You pay or leave today.”

Mrs. Tillerson laid in her bed and saw a hateful Shirley.

Dr. Woodson heard Shirley.

Nurse Bishop looked back at Shirley and thought, “Now I have to get her ready to leave today. Because she has no money to pay.”

Hutch said, “Nurse Sharon, go to the hospital administrator’s office and wait.”

Nurse Sharon looked at everyone.

She walked pass Shirley,

Shirley thought, ”I am telling Aunt Bev,”

Laura said, “That Nurse is a liar.”

Hutch stoop down and was looking at Vivienne who was in a trans.

Dr. Ralph looked down at Vivienne.

He saw Charles absolute pain.

Hutch knew Charles was not a religious man so he bowed his head and said, “LORD GOD Almighty, help Vivienne to be delivered of these demons so she can live the life you want her to live with Charles. In JSUS’ name.”

Shirley walked from Mrs. Tillerson and walked to Laura.

Shirley said, “Hi Laura what do you know what happened?”

Hutch said, “Shirley you are still a patient.”

Shirley was calm and sat in Laura’s chair.”

Shirley said, “I know Hutch, Laura.”

Laura said, “Of course I did not see anything.”

Shirley said, “Of course.”

Laura said, “That lady. That nurse was throwing around stuff and yelled at the children. I did not know which one until I heard the girl crying. The nurse said, “You better not say a word. You understand? I thought what did she do to that child? She cried all night.”

Dr. Woodson walked to Betty and examined her arm.

He told Nurse Simons what to bring to him so he could treat Betty.

Betty was crying.

Hutch walked to Laura’s room and stood and listened.

Hutch and Dr. Ralph walked back to the main hospital.

Dr. Woodson stayed and attended to Betty.

Shirley said, “Thank you Laura.”

Shirley walked to Charles Jr. and Betty and said, “Hello Charles Jr. and Betty.”

Shirley was looking at Dr. Woodson treating Betty.

Shirley said, “You are safe here. This should never happened. But we will stop it so it won’t happen to another child.”

Charles Jr, was crying and said, “Thank you.”

Shirley said, “You are welcome.”

Shirley walked out their room and saw the decorations Aunt Bev put on their door.

She sat by Vivienne and held her hand, and said, “Vivienne you have to come back or I will give Aunt Bev your purple dress. You know everybody wants that dress.”

Dr. Ralph went to his side of the hospital to continue his rounds.

Hutch went on the other side of the hospital.

His first patient was Leon since Shirley was in the back.

Hutch worked on Leon by himself that morning.

Leon watched Hutch.

He said, “What’s wrong Hutch. You have been mean to me and Shirley.”

Hutch said, “Nothing.”

Leon said, “So this mean attitude is your meanness to me and Shirley?”

Hutch said, “No. It is personal.”

Leon thought, “It is that Nurse Sharon. I’ll get to the bottom of this. Shirley can be my legs.”

Hutch completed Leon’s therapy.

Leon felt much better.

He was in terrible pain but he knew something was happening in his body.

Hutch knew Leon always said thank you. He said, nothing that morning.

Nurse Bishop saw Shirley sitting with Vivienne and said, “Miss Simons do you really mean to put Mrs. Tillerson out the hospital?”

Shirley was calm and was looking at Vivienne and said, “Yes.”

Nurse Bishop looked at Shirley and said, “But she has no one to help her.”

Laura yelled, “She said, put her out!”

Dr. Woodson said, “Laura you just got over a blood clot. Calm down. Nurse Bishop step in here.”

Nurse Bishop stepped inside Charles Jr. and Betty’s room.

Dr. Woodson did not look at Nurse Bishop and said, “You want to be fired today at this moment?”

He looked in her face.

Dr. Woodson said, “You better think quick if you need to walk away of if you need to take thirty days off without to look for a job where your racist attitude will be tolerated. “

Nurse Bishop said, “I’m sorry Dr. Woodson. I want to continue to work here. I am a Christian and I know that is an area in my heart that GOD is working on. Instead of firing me. Can I have the thirty days off so I can go before God for help. If I feel any racism in my heart then I won’t come back.”

Nurse Simons looked at Nurse Bishop.

Dr. Woodson said, “Fine leave.”

Nurse Bishop walked out the room.

Dr. Woodson turned and looked at a scared Nurse Simons and said, “You?”

Nurse Simons said, “I’m not racist.”

Dr. Woodson said, “You are the head nurse.”

Nurse Simons mouth dropped open.

Dr. Woodson said, “Go and get Mrs. Tillerson out of the hospital.

Nurse Simons said, “Yes sir.”

Nurse Simons walked out the children’s room and went to Mrs. Tillerson’s room.

She said, “Mrs. Tillerson I will help you get up and dressed, so you will be discharged today.”

Nurse Simons went and got water, washcloth and soap.

Dr. Woodson said, “I’ll see you two later.”

He walked out of the children’s room and went to Laura’s room.

He gave her therapy for bout thirty minutes.

Vivienne exhaled and shook.

Dr. Woodson looked at Vivienne.

Shirley was peeping in Vivienne’s face.

Vivienne said, “No one wears that purple dress but me.”

Dr. Charles grabbed Vivienne tight and kissed her on the forehead.

Shirley stood and left Dr. Charles and Vivienne in the floor.

She walked to see Sally.

Shirley saw a made Dr. Ralph and she saw Nurse Bishop packing her things.

The nurses were standing around watching to know what was taking place.

Shirley purposefully walked to that side of the hospital so she could see whether Nurse Bishop was packing to leave.

Shirley saw Nurse Bishop stopping to say something to her.

Shirley walked in Sally’s room and closed the door.

Dr. Ralph smirked and, “She is a young business woman and her momma has taught her well about racism and her she is black and is not going to have it.”

The nurses looked at Nurse Bishop as she walked out the hospital.

Dr. Ralph went into a patient’s room and was giving the patient therapy when the grounds keeper came in the hospital.

He stood and looked at the Christmas tree.

He said, “That’s a nice tree.”

The grounds keeper looked at the nurses’ faces and realized something was wrong.

Then he saw Nurse Bishop leaving the hospital and she smiled at everyone as she left.

Nurse Simons helped Mrs. Tillerson into the wheelchair and put her bags in her lap and pushed her to the front door.

The cooks were peeping out the kitchen.

They heard what Nurse Sharon did to the black child.

They heard Nurse Sharon when she was doing it on yesterday but was too afraid to say anything.

They saw Shirley that morning and realized Shirley was the one they need to be afraid of.

Dr. Charles held Vivienne and kissed her.

He helped her off the floor.

He said, “Vivienne, I’ll watch Sally. You go home or out with your friends.”

He held her hand and waked her to ally’s room.

They were behind Mrs. Tillerson and Nurse Simons.

Dr. Ralph was walking out a patient’s room and saw Mrs. Tillerson in the wheelchair and Nurse Simons pushing her.

Mrs. Tillerson tried to smile and wave at Dr. Ralph.

Dr. Ralph said, “Good bye Mrs. Tillerson.”

She was surprised at Dr. Ralph’s cold ‘good bye’.

Nurse Simons did not look at Dr. Ralph.

The nurses were surprised at Mrs. Tillerson’s departure.

Nurse Walker was standing going over the patients’ charts Dr. Woodson already saw.

Dr. Woodson handed Nurse Walker the charts.

Hutch saw Dr. Woodson as he turned and walked to the hospital’s administrator’s office.

Hutch knew he said good bye to Nurse Sharon about thirty minutes ago and he knew Dr. Woodson was going to tell her she was fired and whether he was going to report her to the law he did not know.

Hutch went into his next patient.

Shirley was in the room with Sally and did not saw anything but stood in the window and watched Nurse Bishop get in her buggy and leave the hospital.

Nurse Bishop looked at the hospital as she left.

She saw Shirley in the window looking at her.

Shirley closed the blinds and walked away from the window.

Nurse Bishop knew that meant not to come back.

Sally said, “Now open them back.”

Shirley said, “In a minute.”

Vivienne walked in the room with Dr. Charles and saw Shirley standing in the room by the wndow.

Sally saw Vivienne and Dr. Charles and said, “Make Shirley open the blinds back that lady is gone.”

Dr. Charles realized what Sally was talking about.

Shirley said, “I told you Sally in a minute.”

Dr. Charles said, “Nurse Bishop?”

Shirley said, “Yes. She knows not to come back.”

Shirley turned to the window and opened the blinds back.

Shirley walked to Sally and said, “Sally I will be leaving tomorrow. I wish you a Merry Christmas. If you are here when I come back I will stop by to see you.”

Shirley walked out Sally’s room.

Vivienne said, “Shirley is Aunt Bev or Monica coming here today?”

Shirley said, “I don’t know about Aunt Bev. I know will be here and then go to see Lorraine.”

Vivienne said, “Thank you.”

She looked at Sally.

Dr. Charles walked out and saw the grounds keeper taking Mrs. Tillerson outside.

He saw Dr. Woodson going to the hospital administrator’s office.

He wondered after a hour and a half why was Nurse Sharon still at the hospital. Did she think she was only going to be reprimanded and not fired and reported to the authorities.

Shirley was right behind Dr. Woodson, but she kept going to her room so she could hear.

Leon looked at Shirley.

Shirley winked her eye.

Shirley went into her room and got all her papers together. She had the paper together to give Aunt Bev for her last class.

Shirley started packing her stuff.

Hutch walked in the hospital administrator’s office and stood in front of Nurse Sharon.

He said, “You were fired from General because you did something to a black patient. They would not have fired you if you would have said something bad to a black person. Is that right?”

Nurse Sharon said, “Yes Hutch.”

Hutch said, “Sharon we committed sin together.”

Sharon said, “I can make it up to you.”

Hutch said, “Sharon, I had to put together that you did something to a person and one that needed help. I figured out that hospital was so big that you had to have done something terrible. The worst part was that you never talked to me about what you did. We can never have a marriage nor any other relations. I may have committed sin with you but my heart is pure towards the color of a person’s skin. I don’t hate. I will marry a Christian woman that has a pure heart. Someone I can trust and we can build a foundation of truth together.”

Hutch walked out the hospital administrator’s office and closed the door behind him.

Dr. Woodson stopped at Mrs. Tillerson’s room and gave her her therapy.

He told, “Mrs. Tillerson, I am not happy your therapy had to end. But maybe you can find a doctor or a hospital that can help heal your body. Maybe you can search your heart and find a god that can help your heart be healed.”

He looked at Nurse Simons and walked out the room.

Nurse Simons continued to help Mrs. Tillerson.

She went outside and found the groundskeeper and asked him to take Mrs. Tillerson, because she had no family and friends and had no money for a carriage.

The groundskeeper went and took the Stith’s wagon and hitched the horses to it and brought it to the front of the hospital.

Dr. Woodson saw Nurse Bishop leave.

He saw Nurse Simons push Mrs. Tillerson to the door.

The grounds keeper put Mrs. Tillerson in the wagon and her bags.

He wanted to take the wheelchair.

Nurse Simons said, “No.”

She took the wheelchair back in the hospital.

Dr. Woodson looked and continued to the hospital’s administrator’s office and opened the door and looked at Nurse Sharon.

The other nurses were listening.

Hutch closed his patient’s door.

The patient said, “Mr. parker said, “I want to hear.”

Hutch said, “Mr. parker let me do your therapy.”

Mr. Parker rolled his eyes at Hutch.

Hutch looked at Mr. Parker and started his therapy which was longer that morning because Hutch wanted Nurse Sharon to be gone when he came from Mr. Parker.

Mr. Parker yelled, “Go! You are too long. It’s about that racist girlfriend of yours.”

Hutch finished Mr. Parker’s therapy and walked out.

Hutch saw Nurse Sharon walking out the hospital with her bags.

Hutch thought, “Good. GOD I repent. Please send me my wife. I can’t contain.”

Shirley was listening.

Leon was trying to listen.

The nurses were trying to listen in between attending to the patients.

Dr. Woodson walked in the hospital administrator’s office and looked at Nurse Sharon.

She looked at him.

He said, “Nurse Sharon you are fired. Don’t ask for a recommendation. That was my fault when I told Eleanor to hire you. Get everything that belongs to you and leave these premises for good. Whether those patients’ relatives will go to the sheriff I will not stop them. The patients’ charts have been documented and verified.”

The nurses were asking amongst themselves what Nurse Sharon did.

Dr. Woodson opened the door and stood back against the door so Nurse Sharon could pass out the office unobstructed.

Nurse Sharon was confident she would not be fired again from a hospital.

She walked to the nurses’ desk and looked around.

She was looking for Hutch.

The nurses helped her pack her bag.

Nurse Sharon walked to the door and left.

Dr. Woodson walked out the office and said, “Nurse Simons is the current head nurse.

Nurse Simons was returning from placing the wheelchair back.

The nurses clapped and said, “Congratulations.

Nurse Walker looked at Nurse Simons.

Dr. Woodson saw how Nurse Walker looked at Nurse Simons and thought, “No more mess.”

He turned and walked back in the hospital administrator’s office and went to the telegram machine.

Charles received several more telegrams.

Debra received a telegram from her partner in crime.

Dr. Woodson walked to Shirley’s room and said, “Here is another telegram from Debra’s partner.”

Shirley reached for the telegram.

Shirley looked sad and said, “What will happen to Dr. Greene and Barry? They are my friends.”

Dr. Woodson saw the child return to Shirley and said, “I don’t know Shirley. I know Dr. Greene was extremely happy for a couple of years with Debra and he loves Barry very much. I believe he will not return to this hospital. I need him. Now I am thinking about that racist Dr. Parker.”

Shirley looked at Dr. Woodson with sadness in her eyes.

Dr. Woodson looked at Shirley and walked out her room.

He walked to Charles and gave him the telegrams.

Dr. Charles began to look down.

Dr. Woodson was watching him.

Dr. Charles got to the last telegram and shouted, “Yes.”

Dr. Woodson laughed.

Dr. Ralph was in with a patient and heard Dr. Charles and thought, “Divorce!”

Vivienne was putting on her coat to leave the hospital for the day.

Sally sat up in the bed because she heard Dr. Charles shout.

Vivienne looked at Dr. Charles.

Dr. Charles went to Vivienne and showed her the telegram.

Vivienne looked at Charles.

Sally said, “We still ain’t going to France.”

Dr. Ralph was walking out the patient’s room and heard Sally.

Dr. Woodson walked to Sally’s door and looked at her.

Shirley heard Dr. Charles and was rushing to hear the good news.

Dr. Charles was holding Vivienne and grinning.

He slightly turned to Sally and said, “You ain’t going to France because you will be eating dirt with your family from Idaho.”

Vivienne said, “Iowa.”

Dr. Charles said, “Who cares she won’t be coming with us.”

Sally started crying.

Vivienne said, “Charles! What is wrong with you?”

Charles held the telegram in his hand and balled up his fists and bent his knees.

He held his head back and said, “Finally I can be happy.”

Vivienne hit Dr. Charles.

He walked out Sally’s room.

Shirley looked and turned around.

Dr. Woodson turned around.

They were walking to the other side when Aunt Bev pulled up and parked her carriage.

Al had hooked two of the new horses to her carriage.

Aunt Bev had on her last decent dress that she was pretending she wear to do work.

She walked in the hospital with a bag.

She spoke to everyone.

She saw Shirley walking across the hospital without her robe and slippers.

Shirley cut her eyes at Aunt Bev and kept walking.

Dr. Woodson saw Aunt Bev stare at Shirley and knew what it meant.

He said, “Good morning Beverly.”

Beverly said, “Good morning Dr. Woodson.”

As her eyes followed Shirley to her room.

Nurse Walker held her head down and snickered.

Beverly said, “Dr. Woodson I am doating these coms and brushes to the hospital for your patients.

Beverly hand ed Dr. Woodson a bag and she said, “I want to Betty.”

Dr. Woodson said, “Why?”

Everyone looked at Beverly.

Beverly looked at everyone and said, “Why?”

Shirley stepped backwards out her door and looked at Aunt Bev.

Beverly said, “I told the child I would her hair since nobody has done it in a week.”

Dr. Woodson looked at Shirley who turned her head.

He looked at Beverly and exhaled.

Vivienne was walking to Beverly because Beverly was loud.

Dr. Ralph laughed.

Hutch looked over at Dr. Ralph.

Dr. Charles was laughing and giggling to himself.

Dr. Woodson said, “Go ahead Beverly.”

Beverly stood and stared at Dr. Woodson and said, “Is something wrong with that child? Did you or your staff hurt that child? Why you hesitated? DO I need to go and get the sheriff?”

Hutch turned his head.

Shirley said, “Aunt Bev I’ll go with you?”

Beverly said, “Why? Are you hiding something Shirley since this your hospital? You know I don’t care about that?”

Shirley ran in her room and grabbed her robe and stepped in her slippers.

Leon was not laughing.

He said, “Hello Beverly.”

Beverly said, “Hello Leon. I ‘ll see you when I finish this baby’s hair or can I see you?”

Leon said, “Ask Hutch!”

Hutch nearly slammed his chart on the nurses’ desk.

The nurses jumped.

Beverly said, “What is wrong here?”

Dr. Woodson said, “I’ll let Shirley and Vivienne tell you.”

Beverly shook her head and said, “They don’t work here. You are the head of this hospital Dr. Woodson.”

Beverly stomped away from them and walked down the hall.

Hutch exhaled.

Dr. Woodson stood in the hall and watched Beverly.

Beverly walk to Mrs. Tillerson’s room and stopped and looked in the empty room.

She walked to Betty and Charles Jr.’s room.

Beverly looked and grinned she said, “Hello beautiful children.”

Charles Jr. and Betty perked up and grinned and was happy to see Beverly.

Beverly said, “Hi friends how are doing this fine GOD filled morning.”

Betty held her arm and looked at Beverly.

Beverly said, “What is that Betty?”

Dr. Woodson walked away from the hall.

He went to the nurses’ desk.

The nurses were looking at Dr. Woodson.

Dr. Woodson said, “Go back to work. It will be fine. She looked in Mrs. Tillerson’s room and now she is asking the children how they are doing and what’s wrong with Betty’s arm.”

Hutch looked at Dr. Woodson.

Leon said, “You should throw Hutch to lioness because it was his fiendish girlfriend that attacked that child.”

Hutch could not say anything.

The nurses looked at Hutch.

He was quiet.

Dr. Woodson was trying to listen.

Vivienne and Shirley were standing in the hallway.

Aunt Bev took her time and sat on Betty’s bed and slowly greased her hair and combed it and brushed it.

When she finished. She plaited Betty’s hair and opened the bag and pulled out ribbons and bows.

Aunt Bev bought Betty a mirror that matched her comb and brush.

Aunt Bev gave the mirror to Betty to see her hair.

Betty was so happy and excited.

Laura said, “Me next.”

Aunt Bev said, “I hear you Miss Laura. I’m going to comb Mr. Charles Jr.’s hair, who needs a haircut.”

Aunt Bev said, “Charles Jr. I’m going to send someone to give you a haircut. So you can look spiffy.”

Charles Jr, said, “What is spiffy?”

Aunt Bev said, “That is so all the girls can like you.”

Charles Jr., Betty and Vivienne hollered.

Hutch listened.

Dr. Woodson was not counting anything out.

Aunt Bev said, “Shirley I bought some combs and brushes for the patients go and tell that Dr. Woodson to give you one set for Miss Laura.”

Laura was listening.

She heard Aunt Bev’s tone while talking about Dr. Woodson.

Aunt Bev said, “Laura I bought, white, pink, yellow and a lavender comb and brush sets. What color do you want?”

Laura said, “Pink.”

Aunt Bev said, “It’s yours.”

Laura grinned.

Shirley walked down the hall to Dr. Woodson.

He was writing in the patient’s chart and reached Shirley the bag that was on the nurses’ desk.

Shirley was down trodden and got the pink comb and brush set with the pink mirror.

Dr. Woodson said, “Why are you looking like that Shirley. You did not do anything wrong None of this is your fault. You let me handle my job. I’ll talk to Beverly.”

Shirley said, “It isn’t Aunt Bev. Why would you hate a child and hurt a child? That is what I can’t do anything about.”

Hutch said, “Shirley no of us can. We just have to pray and ask GOD to help.”

Leon yelled, “Not you Hutch. Talking about pray when you and that fiend…”

Leon stopped and Dr. Woodson walked over to see about Leon.

Shirley walked down the hall.

He gave Aunt Bev the comb and brushed set.

Aunt Bev said, “Thank you Shirley.”

Aunt Bev and Vivienne went next door and talked to Laura.

Laura told Aunt Bev what Nurse Sharon did to Betty. And somehow Dr. Ralph came back there early this morning and was talking to Betty and Charles Jr. and Betty told him.

Dr. Ralph found out which woman and it was Nurse Sharon and Dr. Woodson fired her. And Nurse Bishop he was going to fire but she told him she was a Christian and God has to help her in that part of her heart.

Shirley yelled, “She won’t be coming back.”

Aunt Bev said, “How do you know that?”
Shirley said, “I know.”

Aunt Bev continued to comb and brushed Laura’s hair.

She gave Laura the mirror to look at her hair.

Aunt Bev and Vivienne were smiling at Laura’s hair and how pretty it was.

Laura flapped the mirror on her lap.

Aunt Bev looked and said, “Laura, you don’t like it?”

Vivienne looked sad.

Laura grinned and said, “I love it. I can’t wait to show my daddy that I have a new hairstyle.”

Aunt Bev looked at Laura and turned to Vivienne and said, “Lets go and eat and then go and see Lorraine.”

Vivienne looked at Laura

Laura laughed.

Laura said, “Wait for me.”

Vivienne said, “Lets go.”

Laura burst out laughing.

Shirley, Betty and Charles Jr. laughed.

Dr. Woodson and Hutch had just walked out Leon’s room.

Dr. Woodson told Nurse Walker to sit in Leon’s room for the rest of the day.

Shirley was sitting and talking to Betty, Charles Jr. and Laura.

They were laughing and talking to lunch.

Shirley ate in the back with them and got her own hot water and walked to her room.

Shirley washed and put on clean underwear and nightgown.

Nurse Simons took Shirley’s wash basin and washcloth back to the wash area and cleaned it.

Aunt Bev and Vivienne walked to Sally’s room.

Aunt Bev said, “Hello Sally.”

Sally said, “Hi.”

Vivienne was putting on her scarf, hat and coat.

She looked at Sally.

She put on her gloves and said, “Sally, I may not come back today.”

Sally said, “Why?”

Vivienne said, “I am going to eat and then going to see Miss Lorraine and it will be late.”

Vivienne said, “Why you ask that Sally?”

Sally said, “I don’t want you going with that man.”

Dr. Charles took out his telegram and started dancing around the nurses’ desk.

Beverly looked back and saw Dr. Charles.

Dr. Woodson and Hutch watched Dr. Charles from across the hall.

Hutch said, “I am concerned and troubled about Leon.”

Dr. Woodson said, “So am I. It is nothing we can do for him. GOD ha to see him through. If he can make until the morning, he may live.”

Vivienne walked to the door and saw Charles.

He tried to stop.

Dr. Ralph kept his head down and said, “Too late.”

Charles was embarrassed.

Vivienne looked at him and she and Beverly walked out the hospital.

They went into town and ate at a fancy restaurant in that side of town.

They passed Smith’s and both women turned their heads and waved at Smith’s as they continued their day.

Vivienne told Beverly about the telegram that Charles received.

Beverly was excited for Vivienne.

Beverly said, “Are you going to marry him?”

Vivienne said, “At first I was just going to be with him.”

Beverly was tickle and hollered.

Beverly said, “Girl stop.”

Vivienne said, “I thought my husband would not approve of me using my body like that. If Charles ask me to marry him, I will marry him for the legal status in France and America. I believe Charles is wealthy and I don’t want his money.”

Beverly said, “But if you need money to live.”

Vivienne said, “I promised him one child.”

Beverly said, “Not the demon girl.”

Vivienne, “I was not going to take her with us.”

Beverly was passing the Stith and nearly pulled over and out of shock yelled, “What?”

Vivienne said, “I felt God was giving me another chance at life with someone new and for him to have joy and peace in our new relationship. I knew something was happening to me because I started getting these feelings for Charles.”

Beverly nearly fell out the carriage laughing.

Vivienne stared in front of her and said, “I have not had those feelings in nearly ten years. I was shocked at first to say the very least.”

Beverly said, “I’m sure.”

Vivienne said, “I wrote a letter to my dead family one day I was at work. I wrote a letter to Charles.”

Beverly said, “He read the wrong letter.”

Vivienne said, “He actually read the right letter GOD wanted him to read.”

Charles has been a perfect gentleman and he has worked hard to get rid of that wife, I told him no as long as he was married.”

Beverly said, “That’s why he is a perfect gentleman.”

They pulled in the yard for the south hospital.

Ryan was standing at the nurses’ desk.

He saw them.

Beverly and Vivienne said, “Good afternoon.”

Ryan said, “You know Meredith had a six pound baby boy last night.”

Vivienne said, “I forgot to tell you Beverly.”

Beverly looked at Vivienne and said, “That’s great. We were in town. We could have shopped for her.”

Ryan shook his head and walked away.

Beverly said, “Ryan where is she at the north.”

Ryan looked at Beverly and said, “Yes.”

Eleanor was standing in the kitchen hall along with Patrick and Brenda said, “Great news.”

Patrick and Brenda look at Eleanor.

Eleanor said, “Shirley said, last night Meredith and a six pounds baby boy.”

Patrick and everyone clapped.

Briana looked at everybody.

Jose looked at Briana.

Brenda looked at Eleanor.

Eleanor looked at Brenda.

Brenda said, “A single baby. Not triplets. Not even twins.”

Eleanor looked at Brenda and said, “Ryan said ‘a’ not them. Momma.”

Brenda was puzzle.

She said to the staff, “I was for sure Meredith was going to have at least twins, because she was bigger than I ever seen a pregnant woman.”

Briana said, “The last time I saw Meredith I was for sure she was going to have at least twins.”

 Jose and the rest of the men looked at Brenda and Briana.

Brenda said, “Patrick and I started looking for twin things. And he told me to wait until the babies came.”

Brenda shook her head.

Brenda said, “What did you all not send Meredith?”

Mellissa said, “And the kitchen sink.”

Brenda and Patrick laughed.

Eleanor had a quick flash of the one minute she was conscious on the ocean going to Europe.

She saw her dead baby being thrown out a window.

Jose was watching Eleanor.

Patrick and Brenda were looking at the blank look in Eleanor’s eyes.

The dead baby yelled, “Eleanor!”

Eleanor jumped and threw the papers she had in the air and ran through the house to the other side of the house screaming.

Patrick and Brenda turned and looked behind and they ran behind Eleanor.

The staff dropped their mouths opened.

Mike and John said, “Damn!”

Stephen said, “I heard sometime women go crazy when giving birth.”

Mellissa said, “That was a heartfelt screamed. She is just now remembering her baby died the other year.”

Stephen said, “She’s gone for the holidays.”

He tried to laugh.

No one said anything.

Nancy said, “Stephen, it is a horrible horrible feeling that a mother cannot describe when a person on the inside of you die in you.”

Mike and John looked at Nancy.

Nancy said, “That is something you can never get over.”

Nancy walked pass Jose to the backstairs.

Stephen tried to laugh at Nancy.

Jose was picking up Eleanor’s paper and said, “Stephen, what is funny about losing life? Losing a person? Losing a baby?”

Jose said, “Stephen you need to look at this schedule. You are gone for the holidays.”

Mellissa and Briana looked at each other.

Theresa nodded her head for ‘good’.

Betty looked at Elizabeth and Rita and said, “I’m glad, I may not have to drink so much.”

John and Mike fell out laughing.

Jose pretended he heard nothing.

Dan looked at Betty ad was trying to think about how old she was and if they knew anything about her.

Mike elbowed John and nodded at Dan.

They hollered.

Dan saw Mike and John and tried to smile.

Mike said, “Too late.”

Jose said, “I’ll be picking up the turkeys and hams Monday.”

Sabrina said, “If Eleanor hear you calling her children turkeys and hams she will beat your butt.”

Jose slowly lifted his head up from the paper and said, “What in the hell is wrong with all of you. Sabrina. I am going to the butcher and the poultry shop to get all of those damn hams and turkeys Brenda ordered for Christmas like she does every Christmas.”

Sabrina was standing with her hands on the wall and humming and said, “Oh.”

Thomas nearly fell off his stool.

Dan’s mouth dropped opened.

Mike rolled off the cabinet onto the floor.

John was confused and said, “Where she come from?”

Peter was still mad with Nadine.

Nadine stood and peeped around the corner at Sabrina.

Harriet walked around the corner and looked at Sabrina.

Danielle turned towards Dan and rolled her eyes and gave a face.

Elizabeth said, “Sabrina all that corn whiskey has fried your brains. What were you thinking about?”

Sabrina shrugged her shoulders.

Mike was climbing back to the cabinet.

When he saw Sabrina shrugged her shoulders he hit the floor again.

Jose kept talking.

He said, “Nadine will be head while I am away for the holidays and Thomas will be head chef. Because Peter and Dan are off. That may change.”

He leaned backwards and looked down the hall.

He said, “This Christmas is suppose to be just the family, eight people plus Gen. But Brenda and Patrick have invited three ambassadors, a United States senator, the current governor and his wife and the past governor and his wife, Mag, Josiah and Natalie.”

Briana said, “I would love to see Natalie.”

They all grinned.

Jose said, “I heard she is large.”

Sabrina said, “From what?”

John looked at Sabrina.

Nadine said, “Jose, is Sabrina off? Both of us drunks can’t be here together.”

Mike was laid out on the floor kicking.

Thomas said, “Jose, is Brenda requesting anything special for Christmas dinner?”

Jose said, “Not yet unless those people put in a special request.”

Danielle said, “That ambassador to Sweden was talking and telling Brenda he haven’t had a rum cake in a decade.”

Sabrina said, “What!”

Jose jumped.

Briana jumped.

Mellissa shook her head.

Nadine stood up straight and said, “Is you where all that rum been going?”

Jose looked at Nadine.

Sabrina said, “Nall girl.”

Mike was on the floor screaming.

Dan was tickle at Mike.

Briana hit the floor hollering.

John said, “I am confused. Yall have rum and didn’t tell me?”

Peter pulled Nadine’s arm.

Ruth said, “Yall make it seem like all we do is get drunk and gamble.”

Tracey and Rita said, “Who gambles.”

Ruth turned her head.

John said, “Good god. I ‘ve been missing all of this.”

He peeped around and pointed and said, “And that pretty young thing there.”

Jose looked at John under eyed.

Mike was on the floor trying to see who John was pointing at.

Peter said, “Usually I want the rum to soak through for three days.”

Sabrina said, “You won’t have none for Christmas.”

John fell into the cabinet.

He was taken by Sabrina nonchalant, lazy, lackadaisical attitude.

He had never seen a person so void of feeling.

John shook his head at Sabrina and said, “Void of human feelings.”

 Harriet said, “Will they have Christmas Eve brunch this year?’

Jose said, “Shoosh.”

Harriet looked at Jose.

Thomas said, “Jose, the reason I ask was I could swish with Peter so he and Nadine can be together.”

Nadine said, “We’re fine.”

Ruth said, “What about Lorraine and Leon.”

Jose said, “Meredith was giving daily updates. Lorraine has not changed since last week. They are concerned about Leon. We must keep them in prayer. That was the telegram that came through from Shirley this afternoon. I want Leon to get better. Does anyone know anything about Leon?”

No one said anything.

Jose said, “Does anyone knows anything about Sue and Sally?”

Ruth said, “Sally?”

Jose said, “Shirley said, they received telegrams from the sheriff out in some state that someone sent Sally’s where abouts to the sheriff and the family. The sheriff said, Sally was taken from a hospital when she was three years old. The sheriff wants Shirley’s hospital to bring Sally home. Shirley told them hell no.”

Jose looed behind for Brenda and Patrick.

Jose said, “Shirley told them if they want Sally they have to bare the expense of coming to get her and the medical expense of transporting and bring the proof that she belongs to whoever they say she belongs. Shirley is mad that now the family see she is no longer lost and they have to bare the expense of taking care of Sally they want the Stith to do all of that.”

Everybody started mumbling.

Jose looked at them and said, “What?”

John said, “It seemed to me the family was fine when they that demon child was either dead or someone’s burden. Now since she is getting medical attention and a burden on someone else they still someone to bare her and the expense.”

Ruth said, “We know that little Shirley ain’t giving nobody a penny.”

The workers laughed.

Jose said, “It is terrible for Sally. All of those years of not getting medical attention. She was three years old. I think Sally should remember something about her family.”

Sabrina said, “Unless she doesn’t.”

John stood so he could get a better view of Sabrina. He wondered about her.

Theresa said “Meredith always said, “Sally was not Sue’s child. Sue was tormented over Sally.”

Mellissa said, “I always told yall that Sally was not Sue’s child. Sue was a good hearted woman. I believe Sue found Sally and ran with her to get her away from someone else.”

Mike was on the floor and said, “The story gets deeper.”

He sat on the floor and begin to think.

Jose said, “Any more schedule changes.

Nancy passed them with linens and took them downstairs.

Briana and Danielle watched Nancy.

John watched Danielle.

Dan looked at John.

John saw Dan watching him.

Brenda and Patrick ran through the house and found Eleanor running and screaming down the hall by the suites.

Brenda said, “Patrick my child.”

Patrick had never seen Eleanor lose herself as they saw.

Eleanor turned to run back up the hall screaming.

Patrick caught Eleanor and wrestle her to the floor.

Eleanor was screaming, “They throw my baby in the ocean.”

Patrick frown and said, “No Eleanor.”

Brenda was thinking and touched Patrick’s shoulder.

Patrick looked at Brenda.

Brenda nodded her head and said, “When she was on the first cruise with the boys.”

Patrick was fighting with Eleanor.

Brenda bent down and got on her knees and was patting Eleanor and said,
“Elanor, it is alright the baby is with JESUS and Joseph.”

Eleanor said, “Momma I see her round face. Her name was Brenda. She screamed my name, Eleanor, as they threw her in the that big, big ocean. All alone.”

Brenda and Patrick held Eleanor down as she screamed and hollered over Brenda.

Eleanor said, “Momma she looked like you. Your color but daddy’s eyes. Why was I sick and not able to help Brenda to live?”

Brenda and Patrick held Eleanor all the time Jose was having the staff meeting.

Once the meeting was over Jose walked through the house and saw Patrick and Brenda on the floor with Eleanor.

Jose did not know whether to continue to them or turn and run.

Patrick yelled, “Jose!”

Jose said, “Damn. He probably want me to carry her heavy but upstairs to her bedroom.”

Jose continued to walk calmly to Patrick and Brenda he looked down at Eleanor.

Eleanor was heavily crying.

Jose was looking at how heavy Eleanor was.

Then he thought, “She is not that big. It is the clothes she has on.”

Patrick said, “Help me to carry Eleanor to her room. I’ll take her top. You take her bottom.”

Jose said, “That’s not going to work. I’ll carry her upstairs to her room. You’ll give her something to sleep until tomorrow, because I don’t want to run out in the dark to catch her.”

Patrick looked at Jose.

Jose picked up Eleanor and carried her upstairs to her room.

Brenda was running to the liquor table.

Jose said, “Brenda medicine not liquor.”

Brenda was trying to think.

Patrick went into his office and sent a telegram to Dr. Woodson and told him what happen to Eleanor and not to tell Shirley and the boys will be there Saturday and he doesn’t want them to know but he hoped to have Eleanor functioning by Monday when the children arrive. He wanted to know Leon’s condition and Lorraine. Please keep us posted.

Beverly and Vivienne stayed two hours with Lorraine.

They told Lorraine of Vivienne’s purple dress that everyone wanted.

Beverly and Vivienne started laughing.

The assigned nurses to Lorraine were standing and watching Lorraine’s ever movement.

They were also watching Beverly and Vivienne who jumped and ran out the hospital on Monday.

Dr. Jim and the staff told Ryan meant to speak to Vivienne and Beverly of their scariness.

The nurses were listening to Beverly and Vivienne talking about the dresses and the jewelry that Harry selected for them.

Vivienne said, “The manager picked out some earrings they were too much. I put them back and selected a purple hair pin.”

The nurses saw Lorraine’s hand twitched.

Beverly said, “Oh Lorraine we were just talking. Meredith had a six pound baby boy last night.”

Ryan was walking into the room when Beverly was talking.

Ryan said, “I delivered him. It was tough but Meredith held on.’’

He looked at Vivienne and Beverly and said, “That’s who needs help right now.”

The nurse said, “Doctor.”

Ryan turned and looked at the nurse.

The nurses were looking at Lorraine.

Ryan looked at Lorraine.

Beverly and Vivienne stood.

Ryan bent down and said, “Hey Lorraine.”

Lorraine said, “Hey.”

One nurse covered her heart with her hand.

The other nurse started crying.

Beverly and Vivienne had eased to the door.

Ryan looked at them and said, “Don’t move.”

Beverly looked at Ryan.

Vivienne was still looking at the door.

Lorraine’s eyes were opened and on Ryan.

Dr. Jim walked in the room and bumped the door into Beverly and Vivienne.

He squeezed in the room and looked at them.

He turned quickly and looked at Ryan bending over Lorraine and talking to her.

Dr. Jim grinned and walked to Lorraine’s bed.

Ryan said, “Meredith’s baby boy made you wake up.”

Lorraine tried to smile.

Beverly started cry.

Vivienne cut her eyes back was still at the door.

Ryan said, “Lorraine don’t push yourself. I’m going to let everyone back home know you are back.”

Lorraine mouthed ‘ok’.

Dr. Jim took his stethoscope to hear Lorraine’s heart.

Ryan kissed Lorraine on top of her head.

He walked from Lorraine’s bed and his eyes were filed with tears.

Beverly saw Ryan’s tears.

She walked to Lorraine’s bed and one of the nurses stepped back.

Dr. Jim was grinning at Lorraine.

Beverly touched Lorraine’s hand and rubbed it the way she did all the time.

Lorraine turned her head and looked at Beverly.

Beverly was crying so hard and her tears were failing down on Lorraine.

Th nurse took a washcloth and dried Beverly’s tears.

Lorraine said, “Hey.”

Beverly gasped and tried to speak but could only lift Lorraine’s hand and kiss it.

Dr. Jim grinned.

He reached for Vivienne.

Vivienne held onto her coat tightly and walked out the room.

Ryan was standing outside the door boohooing.

He needed to see life. For months he had not seen people being healed and miracles.

He felt the enemies of lost and death were winning over life and wholeness. He wanted to throw his hands up and walk away but he did not want to leave his father alone.

He thought about going back to the military and making a life out of the army.

Ryan’s heart felt better.

He looked at Vivienne who went and sat on the sofa and turned her face to the wall.

Ryan heard of her great lost.

He could only think what was going through Vivienne’s mind.

He started walking to go upstairs and send a telegram to Patrick and Brenda.

He pointed at Vivienne and said, “Vivienne are you alright?”
She was dazed and nodded her head.

Ryan ran upstairs and sent Patrick, Brenda and Eleanor a one line telegram, “Lorraine is fully awake.”

Ryan ran back downstairs.

Lora watched Ryan and she turned and watched Vivienne.

Lorraine went to sleep.

Beverly and Dr. Jim walked out the room.

Ryan saw Beverly and thought about he made the most tragic diagnosis about the children the other day That GOD intervene for the children.

Ryan said, “God I need You to intervene for Myriah and the five burned children. Don’t let that happen to any other children. Horrible just horrible. God.”

Beverly walked to Vivienne and sat for a minute and then put on her coat, scarf and gloves.

She said, “Vivienne lets go and tell Shirley and Dr. Ralph. Then I need to go home and get ready for the long day tomorrow. I will go and see Meredith in the morning and take Al with me so he can see what is wrong with her.”

Vivienne stood and put her scarf, hat and coat on.

She put on her gloves as they walked out the hospital.

Lora said, “Bye.”

Beverly and Vivienne looked at Lora and said, “Bye”.

They walked to the carriage and Beverly and Vivienne were quiet all the way to the Stith.

They walked in the hospital and sat in the chairs in the lobby and did not move.

Dr. Charles and Dr. Ralph looked at the two women.

Shirley saw Beverly pulled up and was waiting to give here the accounting paper.

Dr. Woodson looked at Beverly and Vivienne and did not know what to think.

He heard the telegram machine and walked to the hospital administrator’s office and unlocked the door and went and retrieved the telegrams.

He read Patrick telegram about Eleanor.

Dr. Woodson thought and sent a telegram that said, “Allow her to talk about the experience. I knew eventually that would come up for her deliverance.”

Dr. Woodson stood and was walking out the hospital administrator’s office and saw Shirley standing in her doorway peeping for Aunt Bev.

Dr. Woodson saw Shirley and walked to Dr. Charles and gave him the several telegrams.

Dr. Charles was grinning.

Dr. Ralph started walking to Vivienne and Beverly he said, “I can’t take any more.”

Dr. Woodson ran behind Dr. Ralph.

Shirley peeped and saw Aunt Bev and Vivienne sitting in the chairs.

Hutch saw the women but did not say anything because he was concerned about Leon.

Shirley walked to Aunt Bev and Vivienne.

Dr. Ralph walked to them and Dr. Woodson.

Aunt Bev and Vivienne looked up at Shirley, Dr. Ralph and Dr. Woodson.

Aunt Bev said, “Lorraine is fully awake and talking.”

Dr. Woodson hit Dr. Ralph’s shoulder.

Shirley said, “That what made you cry?”

Beverly said, “Yes.”

Vivienne said, “Now Meredith and her baby.”

Dr Woodson stopped and said, “What is wrong with Meredith and her baby?”

Aunt Bev and Vivienne shrugged their shoulders.

Aunt Bev said, “I was going to wait until in the morning, but I am going to Meredith now.”

Shirley said, “I’ll go with you.”

Dr. Woodson and Dr. Ralph looked at Shirley.

Hutch looked at Shirley.

The president of Shirley’s college and his wife were walking in.

Hutch said, “Shirley give him your paper.”

Shirley turned and gave Hutch a stare.

Hutch said, “You need to get your therapy that you thought we forgot about and get a good nights sleep and not be fighting Bruce over the house and Percy over emeralds.”

The nurses giggled

 Shirley looked at Hutch.

She walked in her room and got the paper and walked back out and handed Hutch her paper.

He looked over the paper.

The president and his wife were admiring the tree and the festive paper ornaments.

His wife saw Aunt Bev and Vivienne sitting at the door and were about to ask them to decorate their Christmas at the college because all the gingerbread men were gone.

They saw something was wrong.

Hutch walked over to the president and spoke.

Shirley ran into her room and jumped in the bed.

Dr. Woodson smirked.

Hutch said, “Mr. President can take Shirley’s paper for the basic accounting class and pass it to her professor. The paper has the professor’s name on it.”

The president said, “Sure. Is Shirley doing better.”

Hutch smiled at the president and said, “Good evening.”

Hutch walked to Shirley’s room and gave her therapy Shirley hollered.

The presidnt’s wife ran down the hall to laura.

Steven and his father were visting Betty and Charles, Jr.

Steven saw the president and his wife and the paper he hand in his hand.

He said, “Is that Shirley’s paper?”
The president said, “Yes.”

Steven said, “Can I copy it?”

The president looked at Steven and said, “You certainly cannot.”

Mr. Hall and Steven burst out laughing.

The president went to Laura’s room.

The president said, “Laura you look good.”

Laura was sitting up in bed and grinning and said, “They don’t want me up yet because of the blood clot but look at this.”

Laura was wiggling her feet and some toes.

Her father fell in the chair next to her mother and they were silent.

Steven noticed no talking and yelled, “Yall alright over there.”

Aunt Beverly walked to Shirley’s room as Hutch started her therapy and said, “I have to tell you. I’ll be here in the morning to get you. We go and see Lorraine then to Meredith and you home.”

Shirley said, “Monica.”

Beverly said, “Someone need to be with you. I’ll stay or have Mabel stay.”

Beverly said, “I want to say to Leon but his door is closed.”

Hutch and Shirley did not say anything.

Beverly looked at them and said, “Is Leon alive. Is he in that room.”

Hutch said, “Yes and yes.”

Beverly walked to Leon’s door and touched and turned and rushed so she could go to the hospital and see Meredith.

Dr. Woodson said, “I am on call tonight and tomorrow night. I am leaving now to check on Meredith and find out what is wrong with she and her baby.”

Dr. Woodson went into the workers area and retrieved his coat, hat and gloves.

He walked to Betty and Charles Jr’s room and said, “I see you have company that keeps you laughing. I’m leaving to go to another hospital but I’ll be staying the night right back there.”

Betty reached her arms out and Dr. Woodson went to her and she hugged him and kissed him.

Charles Jr. reached his arm out and hugged Dr. Woodson.

Dr. Woodson smiled and turned and nodded his head at Steven and Mr. Hall.

Dr. Woodson walked out the hospital.

He went and got his horse and rode fast behind Beverly.

He was concerned about Meredith.

He was thinking she is trim and was so big.

Beverly made the normal hour ride in forty minutes.

She rushed in the hospital and to the nurses’ desk.

They told Beverly that Meredith was on the second floor.

Beverly saw the burned children but turned her head because she gets sick looking at sick children.

Beverly ran upstairs and went to Meredith’s room.

Meredith looked up very weak and had the baby in the bed with her.

Felipe had his head on the bed sleeping.

Meredith said, “Hi Beverly.”

Beverly said, “Hello Meredith.”

Beverly saw the baby and grinned.

Beverly said, “He’s beautiful.”

Meredith said, “I need help.”

Beverly said, “What Meredith?”

Meredith cried and said, “I don’t think I’m going to live. I need your help to help Felipe with Felipe Jr.”

Beverly said, “Meredith stop crying Baby. You are going to live and be well and raise your own son.”

Beverly was thinking. “Meredith does look bad. I need Al.”

The nurses came in to feed Felipe jr. and change Meredith’s bandages.

Felipe was still sleep.

Beverly was standing at the top of the stairs thinking.

Dr. Woodson walked in the hospital and saw a concerned Beverly at the top of the stairs.

He walked to Beverly.

Beverly told Dr. Woodson what Meredith said, and how bad Meredith looked.

Beverly said, “Felipe is so tired and sleepy he can’t move. I need Al to come and spend the night here so Felipe can get some sleep.”

Dr. Woodson was trying to understand why Meredith was so sick.

Dr. Woodson walked in Meredith’s room.

He saw the nurses changing Meredith and the feeding the baby and changing the baby.

Dr. Woodson said, “I am a doctor, where is Meredith’s chart.”

Meredith was weak and began to move her head from side to side.

She said, “Hi Dr. Woodson.”

Dr. Woodson put his hand on Meredith and said, “She has a fever. Why?”

The nurses said, “We don’t know.”

D. Woodson said, “Where is Dr. Wade?”

The nurse said, “He is still in surgery.”

Dr. Woodson said, “Get me penicillin for her now.”

The nurses ran and got penicillin.

Dr. Woodson doubled check the needle and gave Meredith penicillin.

The baby whined.

Dr. Woodson grinned at the baby.

Felipe was still asleep.

Dr. Woodson looked around and said, “Do you have an extra bed or bedding. He is a doctor and needs to rest properly?”

Nurse Lilian was not at work.

Hutch and Dr. Ralph worked on her Tuesday and she rested Wednesday and would be back on Thursday.

One of the nurses went into the storage and ran back and said, “Sir I found a spare bed in the storage area. I need help to bring up here and we have to do it quickly for anyone say anything to us.

Beverly was still standing and thinking about Al.

Dr. Woodson ran out the Meredith’s room.

He saw Beverly still pacing back and forth and said, “Go and stay with Meredith until I get back.”

Dr. Woodson and the nurse ran downstairs in the storage area and sneak the bed upstairs and two mattresses along with bedding.

Beverly ran and made up the bed.

Dr. Woodson put to Felipe and woke him and walked him to the bed.

They pushed the bed along the wall so no one passing could see the bed.

Felipe went immediately asleep.

Dr. Woodson pulled off Felipe boots and his coat and wrap and gloves.

He put his clothes in the chair.

They hid the other mattress under Meredith’s bed.

Dr. Woodson check Meredith again and the fever was going down.

Dr. Woodson said, “I can’t believe Ryan nor Dennis did this.”

He had the nurse to bring wash cloths and old water.

He told Beverly, “I’ll go to your house and talk to Al and tell him about Meredith’s condition and see if he would come and spend the night so Felipe can get a good night’s sleep. I can’t stay because I am on call at the Stith.”

Beverly said, “If Al does not come in an hour. I’ll stay the night. What do you need me to do.”

Dr. Woodson shook his head and said, “I can’t understand this. Take one end of the washcloth and put it in the water and squeeze it in Meredith’s mouth she needs water. Then put the entire wet washcloth on her head. Do it as often as you are awake.”

Beverly said, “Would Al know how to do this?”

Dr. Woodson looked at Beverly and said, “He does.”

Meredith mumbled, ”Brad.”

He looked back at Meredith and patted her head.

Dr. Woodson said, “Beverly if there are any problems with Meredith and her baby. We are going to move them to the Stith.”

Beverly was so nervous and said, “I need more water.

She ran to the nurses’ desk and got to pitchers of water and a wash basin of cold water.

She placed the linens on the bed and pushed it back under the bed.

They heard Felipe heavily snoring Dr. Woodson sat in the chair and watched Meredith and their cute baby.

Dr. Woodson stood and said, “Beverly come and sit. Where do you live so I can go and tell Al and see if he can come and then you can go home.”

Beverly told Dr. Woodson the address and how to get to their house.

Dr. Woodson made it to Beverly and Al’s house by dark and he knocked on the door.

Al went to the door and opened it and saw Dr. Woodson.

Dr. Woodson grinned and said, First thank you for saving our patients. I want to talk more to you about that. But Felipe’s wife Meredith had their baby boy last night. Something is not right. She is sick. I gave her penicillin while I was there and her fever started to break. Beverly wants to know if you can come and watch and attend to Meredith during the night.”

Al said, “Where is her husband?

Dr. Woodson shook his head and said, “Dr. Felipe does not know he is in this world.”

Al laughed.

Dr. Woodson, “I would stay but I am on call at the Stith. I want to take Meredith and the baby to the Stith if she does not improve tonight. I don’t understand how Dennis and Ryan could miss this?”

Dr. Woodson looked up and saw all the faces looking at him.

Al laughed and said.”These are our loves.”

Dr. Woodson said, “Hello. I hope all of you are studying to become doctors. That’s what we need.”

All the children said, “Hello.”

Dr. Woodson grinned.

Al had his arm folded was thinking and said, “If I have to go to the hospital and see about someone who is sick with Aunt Beverly do you promise me you would do what Mabel and Curtis tell you?”

The children nodded their heads.

Al said, “Sure you would.”

Dr. Woodson reached his hand to shake Al’s hand.

He needed to get back to the Stith.

Dr. Woodson said, “I never been in this area of the city how do I get back to the Sith from here?”

Al said, “You know you are in a better position.”

Al told Dr. Woodson how to get to the Stith.

Curtis ran outside and got one of the new horses.

Al said, “No Curtis You all use the new horses for the wagons. I am going a short distance.

Al said, “Mabel you made a delicious soup for dinner is there any left for Beverly?”

Mabel said, “Yes sir.”

She went and got the coup in a small pot.

Al put on his scarves, hat, coat and gloves.

He told the children, “We will see you in the morning. You know what to do.”

Al picked up his medical bag and the soup.

He rode the less than two miles to the north hospital.

He saw his wagon and tie his horse next to the wagon.

The horse went immediately asleep.

Al patted the horse and said, “You are old and worn and need to stay home. I do too.”

Al went in the hospital and walked to the second floor and went to Beverly.

He saw Meredith struggling.

He saw the little head next to her and he grinned.

He saw a tired Beverly and heard Felipe heavily snoring.

Beverly was sitting in the chair and was cold and tired.

Al gave her the soup and put his black medical bag under the chair and took off his scarves, coat, hat and gloves and put them in the other chair, Dr. Woodson brought into the room.

Al opened his bag and poured alcohol all over his hand and dried them.

He went to Meredith and completely examined her.

He took her vitals and used his alcohol to apply to the washcloth.

Before Beverly ate the soup she took the broth and poured a little at a time in Meredith’s mouth.

Al sat in the chair and watched Beverly.

Beverly said, “Lorraine is awake and talking.”

Al was stunned.

He looked at Beverly and sat up in the chair and said, “Fascinating.”

Beverly looked at Al and said, Al did you take a nap today? If not you can lie on this mattress.”

Beverly pulled the made up mattress from underneath the bed.

Al pulled off his boots and laid down.

Beverly sat watch for four hours.

She prayed and read her bible.

She went outside in the wagon and grabbed everything in it and ran back in the hospital.

The bible and the two blankets.

Beverly was wrapped in one blanket and put one blanket on Al.

The nurses came by every two hours and did not see Al by the bed nor Felipe in the bed.

One of the nurses said, “Oh her fever is breaking.”

Al woke after our hours of sleep he was refreshed and ready to check Meredith and Felipe Jr.

He gave them a total examined again.

He changed Meredith’s bandages and washed her and cleaned her.

Vivian turned her head.

Al gave Meredith some water that he squeezed into her mouth.

Beverly laid on the mattress and went to sleep.

Al sat in the chair and watched Meredith and the baby until day break.

Beverly was sleep on the mattress and slept all night.

Felipe woke and laid in bed for a minute and then he jumped and looked around the partially dark room and jumped off the bed.

Al looked at Felipe and said, “Good morning Felipe.”

Felipe walked over to Al and he saw Beverly on the floor sitting on the mattress.

He looked at Felipe Jr and smiled.

He looked at Meredith and walked to that side of the bed.

He looked at Meredith.

He looked at Al and said, “What has happened?”

Al said, “You were sleep and Dr. Woodson and Beverly came to see Meredith. Meredith was talking about dying. Dr. Woodson determined she had a fever and gave her penicillin. Beverly sent Dr. Woodson to get me to stay overnight and attend to Meredith and the baby. The nurses have been great. They have been in here every two hours, but I have checking her vitals every thirty minutes. The fever has broken. I can’ understand why Ryan and Dennis didn’t see this.”

Beverly stood and said, “We need to sneak that bed and mattress back to the storage area and put these linens in the washroom. I saw where everything belongs.”

Al sat and turned and stared at Beverly.

Al said, “Why? I don’t understand.”

Beverly said, “The nurses were concerned about getting this stuff Al.”

Felipe said, “They are very strict here.”

Beverly said, “Dr. Woodson said he wants Meredith and Jr at the Stith.”

Felipe was leaning over Meredith looking at her admiration and love.

He said, “I do too.”

Felipe touched Meredith’s forehead and kissed her forehead he grinned when he sw his baby yawn.

Beverly grinned and she turned and folded all the linens and ran down the back and put the liniens in the washroom.

Felipe stood and said, “Come Al and let’s move everything to the storage area.”

Al sat and mumbled.

Felipe looked at Al.

Beverly ran back in the door and said, “The workers are beginning to come.”

Felipe said, “He won’t help.”

Beverly did not look at Al but said, “Come on Felipe lets put that mattress on the bed and run down the backstairs into the storage area.”

Beverly and Felipe flipped the bed and the two mattresses on the side and ran down the hall to the backstairs.

Hey dodge a few nurses and ran into the storage area and took the bed towards the back of the storage area and ran back upstairs.

Al was watching Meredith and Jr.

He looked around the room and the sun was rising.

Felipe opened the curtains.

He walked to Felipe Jr and picked him up.

Felipe walked over to the window and said, “I have waited for you for fifteen years.”

The baby yawned.

Felipe said, “Good morning.”

Al sat and smile.

He stood and put on his scarf, hat, coat and was putting on his gloves.

Al looked at Beverly.

Beverly sat on the bed and put on her boots and pressed her clothes and got her blanket and bible and comb her hair down.

Beverly said, “Felipe what are we doing?”

Felipe turned and looked at Beverly.

Beverly said, “You need to bathe and eat. Al and I need to go home and do the same and get our twelve children off to school. Then you need to sign for Meredith and Jr to be released and have a wagon, which we have, to take them to the Stith. Shirley will be released today and I have to get her and take her to see Lorraine and back to her apartment so she can pack and then I have to Monica and Jerome to the trin station. Then back home to prepare dinner and start over tomorrow, but we would have everybody closer.”

Al was standing and grinning at Beverly.

Beverly said, “Anything else?”

Felipe said, “I don’t want to leave Meredith by herself.”

Al said, “I will stay. Felipe you are close to the hospital. You go home and bathe and eat, then you come back and stay with Meredith Until Beverly come back with our wagon to transport Meredith to the Stith. Felipe you should have the paperwork finished for Meredith and Jr.”

Beverly slowly turned and looked at Al.

Al looked at Beverly and said, “You know I need to sleep Beverly. I am not a young man anymore.”

Felipe looked between Beverly and Al and said, “I thank you and appreciate your care for me and my family.

Felipe walked to put Jr in the bed with Meredith.

The nurses walked in the room to clean Meredith and Felipe Jr.

Al wined at Felipe to leave.

Beverly took all her stuff and ran out the hospital to her carriage.

She rode home smiling in the cold and left her carriage outside the front.

The twelve children just begin to stir.

Beverly unlocked the backdoor and pulled off her coat and threw it over the sofa.

She started a fire in the stove and the fireplace in the sitting area so the children could be warm as they ate breakfast.

Beverly went and filed the water pails on the stove. She always tell Mabel and Curtis to keep the water on the stove to not do that chore in the morning.

Beverly made excellent cinnamon rolls.

She hurried and took out the flour and sugar and cinnamon.

Beverly put the oats in the pot and realized she did not have to give the children oats she bought plenty of grits and wheat.

She put the honey and raisins on the table and stuffed the cinnamon rolls in the oven.

Beverly started setting the twelve wash basins on the tables behind the kitchen.

Little Shirl, Steven and Mark rushed downstairs and ran into the area to wash.

Beverly had to rush and put the children’s clothes on the sofas in the living room.

She wondered why Mabel and Curtis did not take care of that chore also.

Beverly completed the chore and went into her bedroom and got her green dress again.

She made the bed comfortable for Al and started a fire in the fireplace.

Beverly heard the older children running down the stairs and out to the wash area.

Beverly walked out her bedroom and angry with Mabel and Curtis.

She had a good idea what they were doing that they could not do simple chores to help her and Al out.

Beverly sat in the sitting area and helped the smaller children to dress.

She stood and walked in the kitchen and the oatmeal was ready and the cinnamon rolls.

Beverly poured milk in their tin cups, because she was not going to buy drinking glasses all the time.

They used drinking glasses at Sunday’s dinner.

The children were happy with their meals.

Mabel and Curtis rushed downstairs.

Beverly slowly looked at them.

She thought, “I have to let that Mabel go along with Curtis. They have been out of slavery long enough to have ideas of what they want.”

Beverly looked at them and did not speak.

Curtis looked at Mabel and made a face and grin.

Beverly went and emptied the children’s water basins.

She put the water basins back on the table.

Beverly went outside and took her carriage to the stables and hitched two of the new horses to the old wagon because it was a bit larger than the new wagon.

Beverly heard Curtis walk in and she drove the wagon out the stables and went into the house.

She went into the armoire and get the new blankets and several quilts and lined the wagon and put two new pillows in the back.

Curtis was watching Beverly

He knew she was angry with him and Mabel.

Beverly looked out the window and saw Curtis standing in the yard with the new horses and wagon.

Mabel was standing and watching Beverly.

Beverly said, “My loves it is time for school.”

The children jumped up and ran to the new wagon.

Beverly hugged each one.

Mabel waked out with the children.

Mabel and Curtis watched Bev stand on the porch and smile and waved at the children.

Beverly walked back to the stables and feed the three horses and gave them water.

She walked back to the house and took all the hot water and made her a tub of water to bathe.

She scraped all he oatmeal in a tin platter and took it to the horses.

The horses enjoyed their breakfast.

Beverly went in the house and locked the door.

She washed the dishes and dried them.

Beverly was about to go and take her bath.

She heard knocking on the door and looked back and saw Al.

She walked to the door and unlocked.

Al’s horse was eating the oatmeal with the new horses.

Beverly said, “My GOD even the animals need something.”

Al looked at Beverly he knew she was talking about him destroying he spirit.

Beverly went into the wash area and filed the water pails and put on the beef for a stew. She was an expert at how warm the stove needed to be.

Al looked at Beverly.

Beverly took out a cast iron skillet and fried four eggs and took out the last batch of cinnamon rolls.

Beverly sat at the table and made just enough coffee for she and Al.

Al waved his hand and said, “I’m going to sleep. I’ll cut the potatoes and carrots and onions once I wake and put them in the pot.”

Beverly nodded her head.

Al knew something was wrong.

He looked around and said,
What’s wrong Beverly.”
Beverly said, “Before I say something. I am going to Mabel’s room and Curtis’ room.”

Beverly stood and stomped to Mabel’s room and stood in the door and looked around.

Al ran behind and he looked around the room.

Beverly bumped into Al and said, “Close her door back.”

Al closed the door back.

Beverly stomped upstairs to Curtis’ bedroom.

She stood in his doorway and looked around the room.

Al stood behind Beverly and shook his head and closed the door as Beverly walked away.

Beverly went and took a bath in her luke warm water.

Al washed the few dishes and dried them.

He went to their bedroom.

Beverly went into their bedroom and dressed and comb and brushed her hair.

Al said, “Is that one of your fancy dresses you are wearing to run all those errands.”

Beverly said, “Was Felipe back?”

Al said, “Yes. I would not have left unless he was back. I would not leave Meredith and Jr by themselves there. I checked on the five burned children also. They were asleep. Something is not right at that hospital. Ryan seem to have the south hospital under control. I think Dennis need more help.”

Beverly said, “I came back this morning and the bar was not on the backdoor. I unlocked the door. There was no water in the pails, the children clothes were not the sofas. I made the cinnamon rolls, oats, feed the horses, gave them water. Hitched my own wagon and dressed my wagon for Meredith and Jr. Mabel and Curtis just stared at me.”

Al said, “You’re getting rid of them too?”

Beverly took her coat and scarf and hat and put them on and said, “Yes.”

She walked out their bedroom and out the house.

Al sat on the bed and thought.

Beverly ran back in the house and pulled her bathtub to the door and emptied the tub.

She saw her wagon turning the curve and jumped and throw the tub in the bath area and ran to her wagon and pulled off before Mabel and Curtis came down the street.

She thought she had to go to the next street.

She decided to pick up Monica first.

Monica had packed up all her things.

She had a small bag with her toiletries and an extra outfit.

Beverly knocked on the door.

Monica rushed to the door and Beverly said, “I come to take you to the rain station.”

Monica smiled and said, “Jerome is on the way.”

Beverly stepped in the apartment and said, “You have everything Monica?”

Monica said, “Yes. I am only taking another outfit.”

Beverly said, “You really need another outfit Monica. Did you go to see Lorraine?”

Monic was jumping with excitement and saying, “Yes.”

Beverly said, “Did you see Shirley. She had something to give to you.”

There was a knock on the door.

Monica opened the door, and it was Jerome.

Monica said, “Come in Jerome.”

She saw Gregory and waved and said, “Good morning Gregory.”

Monica said, “Beverly I heard Monica has a baby boy. Yes Shirley gave it to me.”

Monica picked up her scarf and hat and put them on.

Jerome said, “Monica, where is your bags?”

Monica turned and said, “There.”

Jerome looked at the small bag.

He looked at Monica as he stood and was putting on her coat and gloves.

Jerome looked at Beverly.

Beverly primped her lips.

Jerome said, “Monica, how many outfits did you pack?”

Monica said, “One.”

Jerome said, “Monica we will be gone for nearly three weeks. We won’t be able to wash clothes. You need more than one outfit.”

Monica said, “I think that will be fine.”

Jerome said, “Not with me.”

He walked to the door and slammed it.

Monica said, “What?”

Beverly said, “Act like Al. You act like you are dirt poor without anything. Most men don’t want women who think of themselves as low. They want women who can flaunt their money and look great. Monica I am only going to say this one time. You need to ask God to get rid of that dirt poor I am nothing mind. Especially with Jerome. He has yravelled all over the world and sat with kings and Queens. The white doctors did not treat him right, but he always had great self esteem and always dress. If you want to go to Smith’s and pick up at least two more outfits we can go and have Gregory follow us there. So I can go and get Meredith and Jr and take them to the Stith and then get Shirley.”

Monica was so upset about Jerome and she mumbling to herself.

Beverly said, “I pray you are asking GOD to help you. I told you about that when you stayed with us. You want to let the past go. Let all of it go. I have warn you about Jerome.”

Monica said, “Will he go with me?”

Beverly said, “I don’t know. You need to go and ask him. And you better let me if you are going to Smith’s with me. Because I am going to buy me a few more outfits.”

Monica was nervous and scared and walked out the house with Beverly and locked the door.

Beverly said, “Key please.”

Monica turned and gave the key to Beverly.

Beverly walked to her wagon and watched Monica.

Jerome was angry.

Gregory was peeping around Jerome at Monica.

Monica was so scared and nervous and said, “Jerome are you going with me?”

Jerome said, “I’ll go with you Monica because this is big and it is important to you, but we are just friends.”

Monica stood and nervously walked away.

Beverly looked at Monica and Jerome.

Beverly said, “You have a little tome follow me.”

She jumped in wagon.

Monica was standing by the wagon in tears.

Beverly said, “Monica get in this wagon now.”

Monica was trying to have a nervous breakdown.

Beverly yelled, “Now.”

Monica stepped in the wagon.

Beverly sped off and made it to that side of town in twenty minutes.

Harry saw the women and ran to the door.

He looked at Beverly and smiled at the dress.

Beverly said, “I need to change dresses and we don’t have a lot of time.”

She pointed to an upset Monica and said, “She needs two to three dresses.”

Beverly saw a brown dress and a holiday skirt and blouse ensemble.

She changed into the skirt and blouse and had Harry to bag the green dress. Along with her new brown dress. Beverly saw a new arrival of really nice outfits. She selected two, a cream and red.

Harry looked at Beverly nodded.

Monica was sitting in a chair.

Beverly gave Harry her clothes.

Beverly said, “Harry she has to get on a train in less than an hour. Get her several changes of underwear and two nightgowns and some stockings. Do you have a larger bag to pack her clothes in?”

Harry said, “Yes.”

He ran through the store and got Monica three nightgowns, a robe and slippers and five pairs of stockings and four changes of underwear.

Beverly found four outfits for Monica.

She got Monica a red dress, blue dress, dark blue skirt and blouse and a black skirt and blouse.

The manger was totaling up the sale and said, “Ma am I need you to pay something on this account before we continue. It is a high balance.”

Beverly was so mad with Monica and turned and looked at the manager and said, “Really.”

Harry looked at the manager because he never heard that before.

Monica was still mumbling to herself.

Beverly walked to the counter and said, “What is the balance sir?”

The manager said, “I need at least fifty dollars.”

Beverly smiled and said, “What is the balance?’

The manger said, “Twenty three hundred is the total amount> You got some expensive things.’

Beverly said, “No need to explain what we got sir.”

Harry was nervous and looked at Beverly and all the customer who were looking and smirking at Beverly.

Beverly hear them and saw them.

Jerome walked in the store.

The women turned and looked at Jerome.

Jerome greeted the ladies and the workers.

He walked to Beverly and said, “Where is Monica?”

Beverly pointed in the corner sitting and mumbling.

Jerome looked and saw the bag that Harry was attending to.

Beverly was digging in her bag.

She pulled out a hundred and twenty five dollars.

She said, “The account is paid in full. I need a receipt sir.”

Harry said to Beverly as Jerome walked to Monica, “He looks so distinguish.”

Beverly said, “He is a world renown doctor.”

Harry said, “Oh my.”

Jerome helped Monica to her feet.

Beverly was waiting for her receipt for Shirley.

The manger counted the money and handed Beverly a few dollars.

Beverly was angry and shook her head and pointed to some earrings that would match her holiday outfit she had on.

The manager knew she was angry with him and he added the earrings to the account and Beverly still had a few dollars left.

Beverly put on the earrings while she waited for her receipt.

The manager told his assistant to settle with the other customers.

Jerome put Monica in the carriage with Gregory and walked back in the store.

He picked up the bag and said, “Is the account settled and you have your receipt?”

The manager said, “I’m finishing now sir.”

Jerome kissed Beverly on the cheek.

The manager handed her the receipt and she and Jerome walked out the store.

Jerome looked back at the store manager as he let Beverly out.

Jerome walked Beverly her to wagon and saw and placed her bag in the wagon.

He said, “What is this Bev?”

Beverly said, “Meredith had her baby the other night and she did not look well last night. I and Al spent the night at the hospital with she, her husband and baby. They want her to go to the Stith. I want her to go also. Al and Dr. Woodson said, something went wrong. They want her out of that hospital. So I am going to get her and the baby and carry them to the Stith and get Shirley and take her to see Lorraine and probably spend the night with her.”

Jerome said, “Bev rest. You have a lot to do today. “

Jerome helped Beverly in the wagon and watched as she turned and went down the street.

Jerome jumped in the carriage and said, “Sped Gregory.”

Monica was sitting in the back mumbling.

Jerome turned and looked at Monica and said, “Monica, we went through your nervous breakdown with you earlier this week. You are not allowed another one. You have to do like the rest of us pray and resolve your problems. I don’t hate people. I love people, but I hate people who do not want to grow and let the pain of yesterday die. We will talk more on the train.”

They had to run to the train.

Patrick sent a message to Peter to make sure Monica and guess got on the train.

Monica ran and Gregory and Jerome got the bags and ran.

Jerome gave Gregory two dollars and said, “Maybe I ‘ll see you at Christmas. Have a Merry Christmas if not.”

Gregory grinned and said, “Thank you”.

He put the two dollars up.

Gregory rode people all over town for nearly two months.

Monica was gone and Shirley was leaving Saturday.

Gregory was counting his money and started a bank account.

He let go his girlfriend who worked at the bakery because she wanted to spend every penny Gregory made.

Gregory stopped telling her how much he made everyday.

Gregory stopped going to the bakery.

Gregory stopped picking up she and friends and momma from work.

He realized what Jerome was saying about poor people they don’t want to do better.

She spent all of Gregory’s wage and she was still poor and did not have a horse and buggy nor a good coat that he saw the women wearing at Smith’s.

He made a decision he did not want that type of life.

He went to Shirley’s college and talked to the president of the school about going.

The president asked Gregory what he wanted to become.

Gregory said, “Not poor.”

The president let him in the school.

Gregory liked the handicapped students.

He started dating Laura.

The president was please with Gregory because he saw he loved his daughter.

Laura’s mother tried to belittle Gregory and the president gave her one warning and if she did anything else he would divorce her and send her back to her former life.

Monica and Jerome were greeted by Peter.

He said, “Mr. Stith told us not to move this train until and her guess was on it. If we hurry you won’t miss your connecting trains.”

Peter helped Monica on the train with her bag and Jerome jumped on the train with his bag and black medical bag.

The patrons turned and looked at Jerome.

Monica started coming out of her low state mind set when people were looking at her to see if she fit with him.

Monica straighten up her back and walked with her head up.

Jerome greeted the people in the first-class car.

Peter walked them to a suite.

Peter said, “The first class sections were full. Mr. Stith does not mind if we put you in one of his suites.”

Peter unlocked the suite.

Monica was overwhelmed with the luxurious suite.

Jerome looked at her and said, ”Monica, you work for these people and cried at how wonderful the suite is. You did not look at their furniture and items in their house. You did not notice how they dress or what they ate or what they ate on?”

Peter looked at Monica and then at Jerome and said, “Excuse me here is your key.”

He handed the key to Monica.

Monica was looking for peter to give the key to Jerome.

Jerome looked at Monica.

Peter said, “Monica, you are the Stith’s employees not Dr. Jerome. I cannot give him the key to him.”

Jerome walked onto the balcony and looked out.

Peter looked at Monica and thought, “You are really a stupid person. He is already sick of you and you have not left the station.”

Monica swallowed and reached for the key.

Peter placed the suite key in her hand and walked out the door.

Within a minute the train whistle blew.

Peter ran and double check and saw no other passengers and he secured the train and the train pulled out.

Monica was hesitant to turn to look at Jerome.

She knew he was not pleased with her.

She thought being with Lorraine and Vivienne she was not bad of a person.

Monica slowly turned and looked out the door at Dr. Jerome leaning over the rail thinking about her.

Monica knew she could not drink because that would add to her problems.

She knew Dr. Jerome already told her to shut up and because she has already her emotional breakdown.

Monica sat on the sofa and brushed her hair back with her hand.

She thought, “I can get off this train and run away.”

The train started rolling faster.

She knew she could not jump off the train she could truly die. And there would be no reason to go and get a divorce.

Monica sat on the sofa for a long time.

Dr. Jerome walked into the suite and closed the balcony door and locked it.

He stared at Monica.

He walked to his bags and picked up and he walked to the bedrooms and selected the smaller bedroom.

He put his bags on the luggage stand and opened them.

He took out his outfits and hang them in the armoire.

He put the bags under his bed and doubled check his black doctor bag.

Monica was sitting on the sofa and her head was blank.

She was just sitting.

Jerome was thinking as he hung his nice clothes.

He walked out his bedroom and looked across the parlor at Monica sitting lifeless on the sofa.

He picked up Monica’s bag and carried it into the other bedroom.

He walked to her bedroom door and stared at her.

He walked into the parlor and stood in front of her and said, “Monica.”

Monica did not look at Jerome but was still sitting sideways with one hand on her face, looking blankly at the space in front of her.

She jerked a little and said, “Huh.”

Jerome said, “Hang up your clothes. We can go to dinner or order in.”

Monica jerked a little and said, “Huh.”

Jerome walked in his bedroom and picked up his shoe shine kit.

He walked out into the parlor and sat next to Monica on the sofa.

Jerome pulled off his boots and began to shine them.

His boots were dusty from earlier that day.

He was on the inside of the train and would be on the train for three days.

Monica was jarred by Jerome’s brushing motion of polishing his boots.

Monica removed her hand from her face and put both hands on the sofa.

She did not look at Jerome but pushed herself from the sofa.

She slowly walked to the bedroom with the open door and sat on the bed for a little time and stared.

Jerome finished shining his shoes.

Jerome stood and walked to his bedroom and put his boot shing kit on the dresser.

Monica turned her head slightly when she saw motion from the parlor.

Jerome looked around and said, “I need to wash my face and hands and shave,”

He saw the cord to pull for the porter.

He pulled the cord and stood and waited.

The porter ran to the suite and knocked on the door.

Jerome walked to the door and opened it.

The porter said, “Sir.”

Jerome said, “Sir, I need hot water to wash my face and hands and shave.”

The porter said, “We are bringing the hot water now.”

Jerome grinned and said, “Thank you.”

The porter looked down the hall and the other porter was approaching with a cart of water basins and hot water and washcloths and towels.

Jerome leaned out the door and peeped down the hall and saw the other porter.

The porter walked to the first porter and Jerome with a pail of hot water.

He said, “Excuse me.”

The first porter and Jerome stepped back for the porter to bring the hot water inside the suite.

Jerome looked at him a bit confused.

The other porter grinned and pointed.

Jerome looked at the porter.

The porter said, “This suite has its own bath and toilet.”

Jerome was embarrassed and grinned.

He thought, “I was thinking ill towards Monica about being ignorant and unlearned.”

He shook his head at himself.

The porter laughed.

Monica listened and huffed and thought, “Me. No you too.”

Jerome stepped in the suite and saw the nicely tucked away bath area.

The porter walked out the suite and the first porter stepped and said, “Sir, take this note pad and here on the outside of this suite, you place B for breakfast, L for lunch and D for dinner and write on the note what you prefer for each meal an hour before you want it.”

Jerome peeped out the suite and grinned.

The porter said, “HW is for hot water.”

Jerome grinned and took the notepad and pencil and stepped in the suite.

He grinned to himself.

He loved the suite and its luxurious state.

He walked to Monica’s room and looked at her.

She cut her eyes at him.

He said, “I scolded you, but I did not know about the wash area.”

Monica huff and continued to stare in front of her.

Jerome said, “The note pad is for us to leave notes for the porters.”

Monica did not look at Jerome and said, “I know.”

Jerome looked at Monica and smiled because she was letting him know she had some knowledge.

Monica said, “I noticed Mr. and Mrs. Stiths used that system around their grand house.”

Jerome laughed and said, “Monica, you have to come out of this darkness. Come to dinner with me.”

Monica slightly turned her head and looked at Jerome.

She huffed and stared in front of her.

Jerome laughed.

Monica continued to sit and stared.

Jerome said, “At least you said a sentence.”

He turned and walked to the wash area.

He walked back to his room and picked up his toiletries bag and Monica was in the wash area and closed it off.

Jerome grinned and sat on the sofa.

He waited fir about thirty minutes.

He said, “Monica how much longer?”

Monica said, “Until you put ‘HW’ on the wall.”

Jerome laughed and said to himself, “Now she is challenging me.”

He stood and wrote ‘HW’ on a note pad.

Before he opened the door to place the ‘HW’ note Monica walked out the wash area.

She took the note pad from Jerome ‘TE’.

Jerome said, “What does that mean., Monica?”

Monica said, “Empty the toilet.”

Jerome turned around to look in the wash area.

Monica said, “Use the powder in there to keep the odor down.”

Jerome looked back at Monica and grinned.

He placed the note outside the door.

Monica went into her bedroom and unpacked her five new outfits.

She held the blouse in her hand and pressed her face into it.

Jerome walked to her door and watched her for a minute.

He knew Beverly was very upset with Monica because of her behavior.

He saw Monica was grieved and he walked into the parlor.

The porters were coming back around and knocked on the door.

Jerome walked to the door and opened it.

The porter said, “Sir I have to go and get some more hot water.”

Jerome looked and said, “That’s enough for me.”

The porter walked in the suite with the hot water pail while the other took out the toilet to empty it.

Jerome was very impressed with the porters and how organized they were and well trained.

Jerome went into the wash area and washed his face and shaved and washed his hands and combed and brushed his hair.

Monica was drifting back and forth in realty.

She hung the blouse in the armoire.

She combed and brushed her hair and straighten out her dress.

Monica walked to Jerome’s room and stood in his door.

Jerome looked at Monica.

Monica lifted her boot up.

Jerome thought for a minute what she meant.

He grinned and reached for his shine kit and wiped the dust from her boots”

Jerome stood and looked Monica in her eyes.

Monica said, “Thank you.”

Jerome said, “You are welcome Monica.”

He put the shine kit on the dresser.

The porter knocked on the door.

Jerome walked and opened the door and looked back at Monica.

Monica was watching Jerome.

The porter walked in with an empty and clean toilet.

Jerome kept the door opened and said, “Dinner Monica.”

Monic ran to the table and picked up the suite key and walk to the first class dining car.

People were watching the distinguish couple.

Monica was afraid she would mess up.

Jerome was walking behind Monica and saw she began to breathe heavily.

He leaned forward and whispered in Monica’s ear, “Be calm.”

They walked in the dining room and was seated.

Another came and asked if they could dine with them.

Monica did not want them to.

Jerome said, “Sure.”

Monica ordered fish.

Jerome ordered fish.

The couple ordered liver and onions.

They enjoyed each other company.

They four went to the car that served the alcohol.

They sat and met two other couples and had a great time.

Monica and Jerome walked back to their suite.

They sat and talked to early in the morning.

Monica fell asleep on Jerome lap.

He fell asleep sitting with his arms folded.

Monica and Jerome woke before daybreak and went to their bedrooms.

They slept until late morning.

The porter knocked on the suite door.

Jerome was stretching and was about to roll out of bed when he heard Monica running to the door.

He thought, “That is part of her training to hear and rush to do the task. Good. I need a few more minutes of sleep.”

Monica rushed to the door and opened it.

Jared and Eric were standing at the door.

Monica said, “Good morning.”

They said, “Good morning.”

Before they could say anything Monica said, “What are your names?”

Jared said, “I’m Jared and this is Eric.”

Monica said, “I’m Monica, I work for Mr. and Mrs. Stith at their house. I’m on assignment to help some of their other employees.”

Jerome was laying on his side with his back to the door.

He said, “Monica, I’m sure they knew who you were.”

Monica looked at Jared and Eric.

They smiled and nodded at her.

Monica said, “Embarrassing. Come in.”

Jared and Eric walked in the suite.

Eric said, “Breakfast has ended, and lunch will be served in an hour. Do you care to go to the dining car or take lunch in your suite?”

Monica said, “Can we have lunch on the balcony?”

Jerome did not move and said, “By yourself.”

Jared and Eric peeped around at Jerome through his opened door.

Jared said, “Ma am it is freezing cold outside. If you insist. We can bring your lunch in the suite and you can take it out on the balcony.”

Jerome sighed.

Monica said, “Jared.”

Jared cut off Monica and said, “Ma am.”

Jerome said, “Monica, leave those men alone and go to the dining car to eat lunch.”

Monica said, “I was just going to say…”

Jerome said, “You would do what you were told to do, but this is a moving train, and it is not safe for dishes and glasses to be out on the balcony.”

Jerome was getting up out the bed.

He put on his robe and slippers and walked out in the parlor and looked at Monica.

Eric looked at Jared.

Jared said, “Sir what do you want?”

Jerome said, “I’ll have lunch and dinner in the dining car. I want hot bath water in the morning going and coming. I want a bucket of coal so I can put the coal in the fireplace. I want the toilet to be emptied once a day around lunch and tea around two pm.”

Jared said, “Yes sir.”

They all looked at Monica who huff and said, “Fine.”

Eric said, “Fine what?”

Monica said, “I’ll have the same thing.”

Jared and Eric opened the door and brought the hot water into the suite and poured it in the bathtub and wash basin.

Eric took the coal bucket and was walking down the hall when the man Jerome and Monica had dinner with looked out his suite and said, “Sir, I need coal also.”

Jerome heard the man and looked out his suite door.

Jerome said, “Good morning Earle.”

Earle looked up the hall and saw Jerome.

He had his robe and slipper on also.

He said, “Good morning Jerome. Will you and Monica be eating in or going to the dining car?”

Jerome said, “We are going to the dining car in about an hour for lunch.”

Earle said, “Good. Do you care if I and Lydia join you and Monica?”

Jerome said, “We would love the company.”

Jerome stepped back in the suite door and Monica was standing staring at Jerome.

Jared walked between Monica and Jerome and cut his eyes at Monica who was angry.

Jared walked out the door and helped Eric with the buckets of coal.

He brought Jerome and Monica’s suite a full bucket of coal.

He placed it by the fireplace and put a few coals on the fire.

He was listening for Jerome and Monica to argue.

Jared stood and left the suite.

Jerome looked at Monica and went into the wash area.

He bathed and shaved.

Monica determined that she would like nice and play the distinguished doctor’s girlfriend.

She looked at the skirt and blouse Beverly selected for her and decided that would be her outfit for that day.

She did not care about the south she could repeat the outfit but on that train she wanted to look nice.

The train ‘s whistle blew as they hurried through the small city and not stopping.

The next train will stop.

Morgan was standing out at the train station waving at peter and the engineer.

Peter yelled, “Have you talked to Patrick?”

Morgan pointed at Peter, because he had not asked Patrick about Peter being the manager at that train stop.

When the train passed Morgan turned and ran fast to the office.

Mattie was seated in her wagon and yelled at Morgan and pointed, “The train didn’t stop!”

Morgan was running to the officer and said, “Tomorrow Mattie.”

Mattie puffed her mouth and was turning the wagon around and said, “I got children.”

Morgan was unlocking the office door and said, “That’s strange. How she used correct grammar and put things together.

Morgan sent Patrick a detail telegram that Peter to be the manager at the little city. He wanted to move there with his wife as soon as possible. Even during the holidays.

Patrick received the telegram at the house and read it.

He sat and thought and thought.

Eleanor and Brenda were sitting in his office with him and was waiting for him to tell them what the problem was.

Another telegram came through.

Patrick was sitting sideways thinking.

He looked back and saw the telegram.

He said, “Brenda, Mike said, all the mail was delivered in New York and Philadelphia’s post.”

Brenda sat and was mumbling.

She was calculating the time.

She looked at Patrick and grinned.

Patrick looked at Brenda.

Brenda said, “That decreased the mail time by four weeks.”

Eleanor clapped for Brenda.

Patrick looked at Brenda and grinned.

He said, “How are you going to use the railroad to deliver the mail to the major cities post?”

Brenda said, “Part time workers. They go to the train stations and picked up the mail and sort it out and put it in separate bags with the major cities’ name on it.”

Patrick grinned and looked at Eleanor.

He said, “How are you going to charge for that?”

Eleanor was sitting with her clipboard and pen looking from her mother to her father.

She said, “I’m thinking. We don’t want to drive away customers for charging to high prices. The part time workers need to be paid from the mail system not from the railroad.”

Brenda said, “Right.”

Patrick said, “Honest men and women. Women who might need to supplement their income or their families and men who need income or additional income.”

Patrick stared at Eleanor.

Brenda looked at Patrick then she slowly looked at Eleanor.

Eleanor was writing on her clip board about the part time workers not being a part of their railroad.

She finished writing and looked up,

She looked directly in the eyes of Patrick.

Brenda watched Eleanor’s facial expression of wonder.

Patrick said, “Eleanor, you are my love.”

Brenda smiled.

Eleanor swallowed.

Patrick said, “You scared me the other day. I thought I had lost you and would have to put you away for the rest of my life.”

Eleanor sat and stared into the eyes of her loving father.

He said, “I believe in me that when I die and your mother pass that Percy will be your right hand. I know you think of him as gone beyond rescue. Give him another chance Eleanor. Look beyond what you see and ask GOD to show you who you are and who Percy is and let you help him to help you. Bruce, I believe will go to college and into the military to become an ambassador. He will try to keep his nose clean. He will get into trouble because he has his father’s name, but he has your soul.”

Brenda was crying.

This was the first time of thirty five years she has been with Patrick that he has been a prophet.

She listened because this may be her husband’s final words.

She did not know but she was quiet.

She looked at her beloved daughter who was completely absorbed into her father’s every word.

Patrick said, “Shirley will live for about fifteen years. She will marry Skip and have two wonderful boys.”

Patrick was very tickle and he laughed out.

Brenda eyes were wide with amazement.

Eleanor was not blinking an eye but listening to her father’s every word.

Patrick said, “Eleanor you think Michael and Thomas think they cute and run the women. You will be here to see Shirley’s two boys.”

Patrick was laughing out but he kept his eyes in Eleanor’s eyes.

Brenda was about to be upset because this is her eternal love prophesying. She did not want him to leave her on this earth alone.

Patrick said, Hutch already told Shirley this in front of all of us.”

Eleanor was listening.

Patrick said, “I asked GOD to show me my posterity before I die.”

Brenda smiled.

Eleanor’s eyes were in her father’s eyes.

Patrick said, “Michael will stop gambling, especially when he sees it is eating up his money and he will be a great lawyer. Thomas, your favorite.”

Eleanor smiled.

Patrick said, “He will make himself smart and he will study to be an accountant. He will have a nice life.”

Patrick said, “Eleanor, you will build the empire that your mother and I desired and dreamed to build. Your sons will maintain it for generations.”

Brenda smiled at Patrick and then turned to Eleanor and squeezed her hands.

Eleanor turned to her mother.

Brenda said, “Eleanor, what your father is saying is for you to enjoy your life. Love all your children and be happy. GOD has heard all of our prayers and HE has answered Y E S!! Baby Brenda is with HIM>”

Eleanor began to cry.

She reached out her right hand and sobering said, “But I could not help her. Bruce made me not want her. Can I be forgiven for not wanting my own child and letting her die?”

Brenda looked at Patrick.

Patrick never turned his eyes from Eleanor and said, “Baby Brenda is with JESUS. She is there with HIM because we have accepted HIM as our SAVIOR and LORD. It is a wonderful, beautiful, spectacular place she is in. She has forgiven you. She knew you were sick physically and mentally. She wants you to forgive yourself and accept JESUS as your SAVIOR and LORD so you can be with all of us for eternity. Baby Brenda is living life. What you do on this earth for JESUS she will credit for it to. You live her life and do the things in this life that Baby Brenda would have done for GOD and JESUS. She is with Joseph.”

Eleanor stop crying and stared at Patrick.

Brenda stared at Patrick.

Patrick said, “I believe Baby Brenda is praying for you every day. I believe she is praying for all of us every day. Be happy Eleanor and love all your children. You have good children they are not bad.”

Brenda was weeping.

Patrick eyes turned to the love of his life.

He said, “My love Brenda, who would have thought in a world full of hatred that we found each other and have fought outside forces and within ourselves to be together and grow in our love for each other through GOD and JESUS. I love you Brenda.”

Brenda grinned and said, “I love you Patrick.”

Eleanor grinned and shook her mother’s hand.

Patrick looked at Eleanor.

Eleanor stood and went to Patrick and sat in his lap and hugged his neck and kissed him on his cheek.

Brenda’s tears were flowing down her cheeks.

Patrick said, “Peter, the second train conductor, wants to be the manager at the little city train station. He wants to move immediately there with his wife.”

Brenda said, “Let him. So Morgan can go and get himself together. Give him the other Peter’s retirement money. So we can be free of him. Let the first Peter go and live his life.”

Eleanor was looking back at Brenda.

Eleanor said, “I agree daddy.”

Patrick said, “I am hesitant because that Peter is racist too. He is not as bad as the first Peter.”

Brenda said, “I believe Mattie and the rest of the blacks can put him under their feet. He is just the train station manager not the mayor.”

Patrick looked at Eleanor.

She grinned.

Brenda said, “I want to see Mattie as the mayor of that little city.”

Eleanor grinned.

Patrick looked at Eleanor and said, “That will be something that GOD can take a brain damage person and put them at the top of a city.”

Brenda said, “That’s just like HIM.”

Patrick said, “That’s another prayer time.”

Brenda said, “Meet with Peter and tell him what you expect.”

Patrick said, “When that train comes back. I will ride to the little city and talk with Peter. Eleanor get the contract ready. They will be here tomorrow and go to the south, that is another day and turn around and get back here Wednesday.”

Patrick thought and said, “Let me think. I will catch the train tomorrow with Peter and have him sign the contract and talk to him about not inciting racial strife. When the train turns around from the south I will be back here Monday. The children should be arriving that morning. I want to be at the train station to greet them. I will have Peter to speed up the return to Cedartown.”

Patrick looked at Brenda.

Brenda looked at Patrick and said, “Patrick, I can’t go to the south.”

Patrick said, “You don’t have to get off the train. This will e the last time I will ask you to accompany me to the south.”

Brenda looked into her husband’s eyes.

Eleanor was still sitting in her father’s lap and looking at her mother.

Brenda nodded for yes.

Eleanor stood up and was standing by Patrick.

Patrick knew Brenda was thinking about her last mission to the biggest slave plantation in Mississippi.

He said, “I’m leaving in about thirty minutes to go to the capitol to spend the afternoon with Lillie her two boys and girl. I will return at dark.”

Brenda was thinking about the last mission to the south.

Patrick looked at Brenda and said, “Eleanor go and get the contract and bring it here and leave it on my desk for me to review it. Brenda.”

Brenda looked at Patrick.

He looked at her to get her mind back to the present and for her to think about all the good missions she went on.

Eleanor looked at her mother.

Patrick said, “Pack us an overnight case.”

Eleanor said, “Monica and her beau…”

Brenda looked at Eleanor.

Eleanor was grinning.

Patrick said, “What?”

Eleanor cut her eyes at Brenda and said, “He is a friend of Aunt Bev and she said he is a famous medical doctor.”

Brenda grinned.

Eleanor said, “I checked and they did make the train. Aunt Bev was mad with Monica, because she did not carry but one outfit or the three week trip. They went to the store and Aunt Bev got Monica five outfits and underwear. Because the doctor was about to be finished with Monica.”

Patrick said, “She has that mind that she can’t be better nor do better. A world class doctor will not tolerate that.”

Eleanor said, “Nor Aunt Bev.”

Eleanor walked out the office to go to her office and get the contract.

Brenda walked to Patrick’s windows looked out over her garden.

She planted her garden over on that side of the house so it can get the most sun.

It represents all the slaves that were murdered on that last unsuccessful mission.

Patrick was looking in his drawer and said, “Brenda they knew they would be killed. The attempt to be free was living for them. They had no regrets. I saw it even in the little children’s eyes. They grinned and embraced their deaths. That is what destroyed slavery. The freedom that GOD gave man and once you embraced the gift of GOD death is only a process to get to this GREAT KING and GOD.”

Brenda was weeping and held her head down.

She said, “Thank you Patrick.”

Patrick said, “You are welcome.”

He continued to count his money.

He stood up and put on his gun and walked to Brenda.

She heard him walking to her and leaned her head to touch him as he got to her.

She smiled.

They hugged and Patrick walked out his office.

Brenda wrapped her arms around herself and thought about every detail of that mission. She thought about how diligent they worked for a year and every possible problem they could encounter they worked out solutions.

She never knew how the slave master knew the exact day they would come to get the slaves.

Brenda continued to think about every detail.

She remembered the beautiful little children who were happy to be running away.

Brenda thought about what Patrick.

They were ready to die for what they believe freedom was.

Brenda prayed for their souls before the mission, during the mission and after the mission.

Especially as she saw the slaves’ bodies in the swamps.

She remembered some of the slaves had smiles on their faces.

She thought, “They are free.”

Brenda looked at the area of begonias that represented the sixteen little children who were murdered.

She did not allow Mabel to help with those.

The little girl Rose, love purple.

She was blind in one eye and when Brenda was showing her the flowers she exclaimed with delight and joy at the color.

Rose had never seen a flower.

Brenda’s heart cracked and told Patrick if they made it out she wanted Rose.

Patrick was sitting on the ground and Brenda was sitting in Patrick’s lap.

Patrick said, “Brenda, Rose has a family.”

Brenda said, “They are her caretakers. Her mother and three brothers were murdered as they fled over the bridge. Her brothers tossed Rose over the bridge to keep her from being shot to death. As she screamed her head and her right eye hit a pile of rocks. When the masters and overseers were looking for the dead they saw her and made one of the Uncle Toms with them to carry her back to the plantation and he gave the unconscious Rose to Mae and other murdered slaves children. Mae has had Rose for two years. Rose does not remember a lot because she was unconscious for two days.”

Patrick sat and thought.

Brenda said, “How is it that the TRUE and IVING GOD created people with such humble spirits and put…”

Patrick said, “Allowed.”

Brenda said, “Them in such an evil and wicked system of slavery that wants to destroy everything of GOD out of people who are made in his image and after his kind?”

Patrick said, “Brenda I don’t know, but we are doing our part. I am only here to help you with your last mission. I do not want Eleanor to grow up without a mother. You promised me four children. I have only one. This will be bloody. I am determined you will live.”

Patrick was riding his horse the hour away to the capitol and he was thinking about Brenda and that last mission.

As Brenda was standing in his window thinking about that last mission.

Eleanor brought the contract to Patrick’s office and saw her mother still standing in her father’s window thinking about the past.

Eleanor felt lighter.

She turned out her father’s office and walked down the hall.

Each step she took she thought about her six children.

She went to the paper room and wrote each of her six children a special message.

Brenda walked to their suite and packed one overnight bag for she and Patrick to share.

Brenda was leaning over their bed packing the bag.

She slowly stood with a pair of Patrick’s socks in her hand.

Brenda finished packing and took a blanket and quilt and opened the patio door and sat out on the balcony and worshipped GOD and cried for the slaves.

Patrick had a nice time with Lillie and her three children.

They had lunch and Patrick took them to the toy store for them to pick out what they want Santa to bring to them.

Patrick and Lillie had the store manager to wrap the gifts and to deliver them Christmas Eve.

Lillie said she and her three children were living in the next town which was small and she and her children were not scolded by the locals.

She asked Patrick for some money to help her.

Patrick was staring at her and said, “Lillie, Patrick Jr. had guns and horses that you could sell for money. Patrick Jr. had a fortune that was lost but he had collected things that if they were sold you and your child could live comfortable in a small town.”

Patrick took out an envelope from his coat pocket and gave it to Lillie.

He said, “That’s a hundred dollars that can get you through to the spring.”

Lillie said, “My name is on the envelope. You knew I was going to ask for some money?”

Patrick said, “Yes. You survived until now. You are young and can re-marry.”

Lillie looked at Patrick.

Patrick said, “No.”

Lillie looked back at her three young children and said, “I want them to know their family.”

Patrick said, “Not this year.”

Lillie said, “The children needs some shoes and things. Can you buy them?”

[Patrick said, “I just gave you a hundred dollars.”

Lillie held the envelope and said, “This has to last until the spring.”

Patrick said, “I’ll buy the children shoes.”

Patrick called the children to him and told them to go and pick out some shoes.

Lillie went and started shopping for herself.

Patrick watched her and left and went to the children.

They begin to tell Patrick a lot their life in the capitol.

Patrick knew Lillie was lying but he did not want to address her.

Patrick bought his grandchildren several pairs of boots, coats, hats, scarves and gloves and underwear.

Lillie got several pairs of boots and dresses along with a new coat, scarf and gloves.

The total was a hundred dollars and Patrick paid the bill.

He hugged the children and left.

He thought about the day with Lillie and her three children,

As he was riding out of town, Natalie and Mag were entering the capitol.

They stopped and talked.

Patrick asked why they were in the capitol.

Natalie said, to buy Mattie’s children a Christmas toy because the general store did not have any more toys.

Patrick continued home.

Mag and Natalie bought Mattie’s six children a toy a piece and a pair of boots and socks.

Mag said, “I’m going to take these to her next week and leave and come back by Thursday to attend the groundbreaking and reception.”

Natalie was grinning and said, “A hospital. That’s is great.”

Mag said, “I’ll get a chance to see Morgan and spend a day there.”

Natalie grinned.

They were turning around in the wagon and they heard a strong male voice yelling, “Stop!!”

Natalie looked back and saw Josiah running to catch them.

She stopped the wagon in the middle of the street and Mag was grinning.

Josiah ran to the wagon and jumped on it and looked at the grinning Natalie and calmly said, “Hi.”

Natalie laughed.

They kissed.

Mag grinned.

Josiah said, “I got a promotion. I don’t want to move to the little city. I have to get another teacher to go into the wilderness.”

Natalie laughed.

Mag said, “Josiah.”

Josiah said, “Mother I am second to the superintendent over schools. My salary has nearly double. Ill in the new year.”

Natalie mouth dropped open.

Josiah said, “I have to live here in the capitol.”

Josiah looked around and saw people leaving the capitol to go back home.

He said, “You two go home. I’ll be home next week.”

He and Natalie kissed.

Mag said, “Natalie, let me. You will be going so slow thinking about Josiah.”

Mag sped up the wagon and caught the different groups of people leaving out the capitol.

They sped all the way home.

It was dark when they reached their house.

But they pulled the wagon into the stables.

Mag helped Natalie out the wagon and carried the packages in the house.

Mag came back out and unhitched the horses and feed them and gave them water.

Natalie lit candles and lanterns and started the fires in the fireplace and the stove.

She and Mag sat and had a little tea and sweet biscuits, as their routine and dressed for bed.

They went to bed.

Natalie grinned and smiled all night over seeing Josiah.

Mag was happy to have seen Josiah.

She was also thinking about Morgan.

She was planning her schedule in her head to ride to the little city and spend the night and turn around the next day to get back for the Christmas socials.

Natalie grinned and said, “This house would be a fine lovebird cottage for Mag and Morgan.”

Patrick, Brenda and Eleanor ate dinner.

They had a lamb stew with a lot of vegetables that Thomas cooked.

Patrick and Brenda talked through the night.

Patrick thought about what Brenda shared with him as she recalled that last mission.

Patrick and Brenda held each other and went to sleep.

Monica and Jerome had a great day with their new friends.

They talked for a long time that night in the parlor.

Monica and Jerome went to their bedrooms.

Monica undressed for bed and thought about the conversations they had with Earle and Lydia.

Monica thought, “They never said where they headed to.”

She went to bed and grinned.

Monica said, “Bev forgive me. I love you. I will be in Cedartown tomorrow for one hour. Pray for me.”

Beverly was sitting up in her bed reading a book.

She grinned as she thought about Felipe Jr. and Meredith.

She was so glad she left Monica yesterday and flew through the streets of Philadelphia and got to the north hospital before Dennis Wade made his round to Meredith.

Beverly pulled in front of the hospital.

Felipe was standing at the top of the stairs with the two day old Felipe Jr.

Beverly entered the hospital and looked down the hall and saw a group of doctors making rounds on the first floor.

Felipe looked at Beverly and turned his head and looked down the hall but he could not see.

He looked back at Meredith’s room.

He had washed her and dressed her while Beverly was gone.

He washed Baby Felipe and put him on an outfit Lorraine bought him.

Felipe walked down the stairs and handed Felipe Jr to Beverly.

Beverly grinned and teared up and began to cry.

Felipe looked at Beverly and saw her heart of love.

He nodded his head and thought, “God I thank You that You put good people in our lives now that has extended to our baby.”

Beverly turned to walk down the stairs.

Felipe held her arm for a few steps while she walked to the wagon with the baby.

Dennis looked up and saw Felipe and Beverly.

He and Dr. Barnes instinctively walked down hall to the stairs.

Felipe was standing on the stairs and smiling at his baby.

Felipe saw movement and he knew it was Dennis.

He thought, “God what to do? I got to work with these doctors.”

Felipe turned and smiled at the doctors.

He said, “Good morning doctors.”

Dennis and Dr. Barnes looked at the grinning Felipe and said, “Good morning.”

Dennis looked at Felipe and said, “What are you doing?”

Felipe was still grinning and looked at Dennis and Dr. Barnes and said, “Huh?’

Dr. Barnes held his head down and snickered.

Dennis heard Dr. Barnes.

Felipe said, “I came looking for you this morning Dr. Wade to thank you and your staff for all of your help.”

Dennis looked at Felipe.

Felipe said, “I gave a thank you note to your secretary as she was coming to work.”

Dennis remembered his secretary gave him a note.

He was rushing to start rounds and took the note and did not read it.

He pulled it out of his pants pocket.

The note paper had a big ‘Thank You’ with a drawing of three stick people he, Meredith and baby Felipe.

Dr. Barnes looked over at the note and laughed.

Dennis exhaled and said, “It did not look like this.”

Felipe stood and looked at Dennis and thought, “He is quick.”

Dr. Barnes looked at a stunned Felipe.

Felipe shook his head and said, “Dr. Wade what else can me taking my wife and baby out of the hospital after two days.”

Dr. Barnes looked at Felipe perplexed facial expressions.

Dr. Barnes always thought Felipe was simple minded but a great doctor and was shocked that he had a baby on the way.

Dr. Barnes smiled at Felipe as he thought about how dense he was and then he looked at Dennis with the note in his hand.

Felipe said, “I signed all the papers and paid the bill.”

Felipe stared at Dennis and said, “Sir, you thought I was sneaking out. Not to pay the bill?”

Dr. Barnes grinned.

A nurse ran and said, “Doctors the boys.”

Dr. Barnes and Dennis turn to run to the burned boys.

Dr. Barnes yelled back at Felipe, “Felipe Aligot for Christmas Eve.”

Felipe nodded.

Dennis looked at Dr. Barnes as they ran into the room after the nurse.

Dr. Barnes was embarrassed.

He held the door for Dennis and looked at Felipe and said, “Rum baba too.”

Felipe exhaled and walked up the stairs to get Meredith.

Meredith still had a high fever and infection.

Felipe knew he to eventually tell Meredith.

He looked around the room and saw there as nothing left in the room.

He put everything in their carriage when he left earlier that morning.

He wrapped Meredith in two blankets and picked up the semi conscious Meredith and looked back over the room and begin to walk out.

The nurse ran up the stairs and caught Dr. Felipe at the top of thestairs as he looked upon Meredith and was about to start descending the stairs.

She looked at him and then Meredith.

She said, “I’m sorry Dr. Felipe, but Dr. Wade and Dr. Barnes said come and help with the burned victims.”

Dr. Felipe had no question in his mind.

He handed Meredith to the nurse and said, “Take her to that wagon.”

The nurse grabbed Meredith and looked out the door, as they fell to the floor.

Another nurse was walking down the hall and saw Dr. Felipe running.

The nurse that was on the floor with Meredith saw the nurse and angrily said, “Help.”

The nurse ran to grabbed Meredith’s feet to help take her back to her room.

The nurse on the floor with Meredith looked at the nurse and said, “No. She is dismissed.”

She nodded at the wagon.

The nurse touched Meredith’s forehead and said, “She has a fever.”

The nurse on the floor said, “Yes. We do as we are told. You get her feet and walk backwards down the stairs.”

The nurse said, “Call an orderly.”

The nurse was getting up from the floor and grabbed Meredith’s shoulder.

She looked at the nurse and said, “Get!!down!!the!!stairs!!”

The nurse picked up Meredith’s feet and carried her to the wagon.

Beverly was holding Baby Felipe.

She had a picnic basket she padded and made fancy and as she saw the nurses coming to the door with Meredith.

Beverly was stunned.

She eased out the wagon and put Baby Felipe in the picnic basket and stood and looked at the nurses.

The nurse who was carrying Meredith by her feet looked at a confused Beverly and said, “It’s stupid.”

The other nurse said, “Dr. Felipe said to bring her to this wagon.”

Beverly had to shake her head to understand what was taking place.

Beverly slowly walked to the wagon and pulled the covering back.

The nurse with Meredith’s feet looked in the wagon and said, “Nice.”

The other nurse said, “Move! Put her feet inside. She is tiny but still has weight to her.”

The nurses put Meredith in the wagon and covered her up.

They turned and walked into the hospital and fussed all the way back to their positions.

Felipe ran down the stairs and yelled, “Dr. Barnes”

Dr. Barnes ran and opened the door.

Felipe ran into the room and immediately started working on the boys.

He went from one boy to the other boy.

The one nurse tat came and got Felipe walked in the room with Dr. Felipe and Dr. Barnes.

Felipe looked at the nurse and said, “You took my wife to the wagon?”

The nurse sourly answered, “Yes.”

Dr. Barnes looked at the nurse and then put his eyes back on what Felipe was doing.

Dr. Felipe looked at the nurse and said, “Thank you.”

The nurse was still huffing and said, “You welcome.”

She began to clean up the soiled bandages and put them in the garbage and rolled out new bandages for the doctors.

Dr. Felipe liked the way the nurse worked.

She was by the doctors’ side and watched everything they did and anticipated what they needed.

The nurse brought the IVs for the boys.

Felipe continued to work on the boys until after noon.

He walked out the room and went and sat on the stairs and breathed for a moment.

He was not concerned about Meredith nor Baby Felipe.

Felipe knew Beverly would get them to the Stith and Dr. Woodson would take over.

Dr. Barnes peeped in the room where Dennis was and saw he was changing the bandages.

He helped Dennis.

He walked out and saw Felipe sitting on the stairs.

He walked over and sat on the stairs with Felipe.

The nurse walked over and sat on the bottom stair.

They looked exhausted.

Ryan walked in the hospital.

He saw them sitting on the stairs.

They stared at Ryan.

Ryan left the south hospital at noon to come and perform two schedule surgeries at the north hospital.

He was delighted at Lorraine’s and Myriah’s recovery.

Ryan saw Lora coming out of her darkness and he was happy.

He thought about them as he rode to the north hospital.

He stood in the door and looked at the doctors and the nurse.

He did not know what to think but they looked exhausted.

Ryan said, “Felipe, James and Loretta good afternoon.”

They said, “Hi”.

Ryan said, “You three look whipped.”

They did not say anything.

Ryan said, “Felipe I want to see Baby Felipe and Meredith.”

Felipe said, “Gone.”

Dennis saw them sitting on the stairs.

He walked over.

Ryan looked at Dennis and said, “Hey daddy. They look whipped.”

Dennis looked at his staff.

Ryan said, “Felipe you are tired. I asked about your new baby and wife you gave a one word answer ‘gone’.

Felipe was sitting with his left elbow under his chin.

Dr. Barnes was sitting leaning in the rail and the nurse was sitting leaning forward.”

Ryan said, “You all have a good afternoon. I have a two pm surgery. I will double and triple check these patients out myself before I perform surgery.”

He walked away.

Dennis looked at the three and walked away.

Nurse Lillian was at the Stith and Dr. Ralph was giving her therapy.

He told her she could walk seventy percent better with monthly therapy.

She was to spend the night at the Stith and be discharged the next morning after an additional therapy.

Nurse Lillian heard the patients screaming and hollering all over the hospital she was baffled.

Then she found herself joining them.

She looked at Dr. Ralph who was not bothered by her screaming but was calm and continued his therapy.

She did not know the therapy would be that painful.

The nurses were there immediately with her hot coals and pain medication if she wanted it.

Nurse Lillian took the pain medication and slept the whole night.

They put her in Shirley’s old room across from Leon.

Leon was doing much better.

Dr. Woodson and Hutch closed his door and talked to him.

Shirley was out of the room and had everything.

Nurse Simons went in Shirley’s room and cleaned and disinfected the room.

She put clean linen and blankets on the bed.

Shirley was trying to eaves drop what Dr. Woodson and Hutch were saying to Leon.

The nurses saw her but did not say anything since she owned the hospital.

Nurse Simons did not care as she was shaking the clean sheet to put of the bed said, “Shirley…”

Dr. Woodson opened the door.

A Shirley turned and was looking at Nurse Simons.

Dr. Woodson opened the door and caught Shirley trying to eaves drop.

Shirley was embarrassed and did not know what to do.

Eleanor said to grin or smile and nod and walk away or stand still.

Dr. Woodson said, “Shirley go and sit down until Beverly get her.”

Shirley pointed at Leon’s room.

Hutch walked out the door and looked at Shirley.

He looked at Nurse Simons.

She turned her head and looked out the window.

She saw the wagon pulled up and stop in front of the hospital.

Nurse Simons threw the pillow on the bed and ran out the room to the front door.

Hutch stepped back and looked out the window.

He saw Beverly.

Dr. Woodson said, “Shirley, Leon needs to rest for a while.”

Shirley stood and started crying.

Hutch looked at Shirley and walked to the front door.

He saw Nurse Simons getting the picnic basket tat was decorated with blue ribbon.

Hutch knew it was Felipe’s son.

He walked out the door to bring Meredith inside the hospital.

Dr. Woodson pointed at a chair and Shirley snatched away and walked to the front lobby.

Dr. Woodson looked at Shirley.

He walked behind her and went to the nurses’ station.

Shirley saw Aunt Bev.

She stood in the door and looked back at Dr. Woodson.

The nurses looked at Shirley.

Dr. Woodson said, “Shirley, I am not afraid of your Aunt Beverly.”

The nurses looked at Shirley and snickered.

Dr. Woodson turned back to Leon’s chart and started writing.

He wondered what Dr. Greene was doing.

Hutch had walked outside and picked up Meredith and brought her inside the hospital.

Shirley opened the hospital’s door and Hutch passed Shirley with Meredith.

Dr. Woodson looked and said, “Hutch, put Meredith in room seventeen.”

One of the nurses heard seventeen and knew that was her room.

She stood and ran behind Hutch.

Nurse Simon picked the picnic basket up.

She and Aunt Bev were walking in the hospital.

They were cooing and grinning at Baby Felipe.

Shirley was standing in the door and looking.

Shirley wanted to see Baby Felipe.

Dr. Woodson was writing in Leon’s chart.

He looked up as Beverly and Nurse Simons were walking in the door with the picnic basket.

Dr. Charles and Dr. Ralph looked at Nurse Simon’s carrying the blue decorated picnic basket.

Vivienne was looking out the Sally’s window and saw Beverly and Nurse Simons.

Vivienne said, “Sally, I’ll be back in a moment.”

Sally said, “OK, Momma Vivienne.”

Vivienne stopped in her tracks and looked at the rude Sally.

Dr. Charles was standing next to Dr. Ralph and jumped and looked in Sally’s room and saw Vivienne standing still.

The nurses looked at Dr. Charles.

Dr. Ralph looked at Dr. Charles.

Dr. Charles said, “Hell no!!!!”

Vivienne quickly stepped out Sally’s door and closed it.

She stood for a minute outside Sally’s room with her hand on the doorknob.

She jerked and saw Charles standing with a bewildered look on his face and his hands on top of his head.

Dr. Woodson looked over at Dr. Charles and he saw Vivienne standing outside Sally’s door.

He knew Sally had pulled her ‘nice trick’ on them.

Dr. Woodson was used to that because Shirley would do it all the time until they caught on to what she was doing.

Dr. Ralph looked at Dr. Charles and said, “Sally knows that her family is coming to get her and she rather live with you and Vivienne than with them.”

Dr. Charles was looking at Vivienne and said, “Hell no Vivienne!”

The nurses were busy.

They were rushing to see Meredith’s and Felipe’s baby boy.

The nurses looked at a stunned Vivienne.

Vivienne looked at Charles and walked to the group of nurses.

Nurse Simons uncovered the baby’s face.

The nurses said together, “Whoa.”

Dr. Woodson stared at Shirley’s face.

He thought, “She was within a second of being my daughter. God saved me from her and fighting with Eleanor.”

He shook himself out of the thought of that terror.

Dr. Woodson said, “Nurses.”

The nurses walked back to their stations.

Nurse Simons looked and saw Hutch standing outside the room.

She and Beverly walked to the room.

She took the baby out the picnic basket and placed him in the bed with a semi- conscious Meredith.

Dr. Woodson ordered Meredith penicillin and two IVs.

Hutch was waiting on the nurses to bring the medicine.

He stared at Shirley.

He saw she longed for a child.

He remembered he gave her a Word from the LORD GOD that she would marry and have two sons.

He thought about her and Eleanor fighting at the south hospital over the boys’ baby clothes.

Dr. Woodson walked back to Hutch with the tray with the medicine on it.

He looked at Hutch and then he turned to see what Hutch was looking at and saw Shirley.

Beverly saw Dr. Woodson walk in with the needles.

She bumped into Hutch running out the room.

Dr. Woodson laughed and said, “And Shirley thought I was scared of Aunt Bev.”

They all laughed.

Hutch was thinking about Shirley.

Nurse Simons set up the IVs.

Dr. Woodson gave Meredith the penicillin shot.

Meredith jerked.

Dr. Woodson and Hutch looked at her.

Hutch said, “She’s getting better.”

Nurse Simons walked out the room once she peeped again at Felipe Jr.

She thought, “He is a good looking baby. They have to keep all those French girls away.”

She walked out the room.

Dr. Woodson was looking at Meredith and Baby Felipe.

He began to write in Meredith’s chart.

He looked at Hutch and said, “Hutch what is wrong?”

Hutch said, “It’s not me. It’s Shirley.”

Dr. Woodson said, “Oh.”

Hutch laughed.

He said, “When I first meet them, God gave me a word for Shirley that she would marry and have two sons. I saw how she longed for a child as she looked at Felipe Jr. I don’t know to remind her of that word from God or let Him remind her.”

Dr. Woodson said, “Let HIM remind her.”

Hutch said, “Very well.”

He said, “Where is Felipe? I thought he was to be with them.”

Dr. Woodson continued to write in Meredith’s chart.

Everyone knew Dr. Woodson believed in detailing everything in a patients’ chart.

He said, “Probably held up at the hospital. They have a problem I don’t know what it is.”

Hutch looked at Dr. Woodson and walked out the room.

Shirley and Aunt Bev walked to Leon and said, “Good bye.”

Beverly was touching up his door Christmas decorations and said, “Leon I pray for you every day. I will be back to check on you.”

Leon said, “Thank you Beverly.”

Shirley said, “Have a Merry Christmas Leon and a Happy New Year.“

Leon said, “You too Shirley.”

Shirley and Beverly left the Stith and went to the south hospital and saw Lorraine.

Shirley cried all the time of her visit.

Lorraine smiled.

Beverly and Shirley were leaving the hospital at the same time the waitress from leaving the dining room.

Her sister went to Dennis and asked him to re-hire her.

Beverly said, “Young lady do you need a ride home?”

They smiled and offered her a ride.

Rebecca said, “Thank you, but I am waiting for my sister.”

Beverly and Shirley walked out the hospital to the wagon.

Beverly said, “That’s the young woman that Hutch has an interest in.”

 Shirley was excited and started looking at the woman.

She said, “She’s young Aunt Bev. Isn’t Hutch too old for her?”

Aunt Bev said, “Is Skip too old for you?’

Shirley sat back in the seat and said, “Skip?”

Aunt Bev looked at Shirley and said, “Have you forgotten him Shirley?”

Shirley did not say anything.

Aunt Bev took Shirley home.

She unlocked Shirley’s apartment door with the key Monica gave her.

Aunt Bev walked through the apartment and saw the apartment was secured.

She walked outside and looked at Shirley and said, “Come on Shirley.”

Beverly helped Shirley out the wagon.

The apartment proprietor was peeping out the window and watched them.

She brought in Shirley’s bag and books.

She lit the lanterns and started a fire in the fireplace and the stove.

Beverly looked in the bag from Dr. Woodson and saw Eleanor’s name on a bottle of pills and saw Shirley’s pain medication.

Monica had cleaned the house well.

Beverly stayed and packed Shirley’s clothes for the train ride home Saturday.

She put the medication in one of Shirley’s bags.

Beverly ordered Shirley a meal from Rosie’s.

The meal was delivered when she was about to leave Shirley’s apartment.

Beverly smiled and spoke to the delivery person.

When Beverly wanted something from the white merchants, she pretended she was a white person worker.

Al would get angry with Beverly and tell her she was as bad as the racist white people.

She reached in her bag and gave the delivery man fifty cents.

The man nodded at Beverly and left.

Beverly put the plate from Rosie’s on the table.

She ran into the kitchen area and poured a pitcher of water.

She brought the pitcher and the glass and put it on the table near Shirley’s beef stew and rolls dinner.

Beverly said, “Shirley come and eat. The beef stew smell good and fresh.”

She walked into the kitchen area and pulled the tub near the stove and put a water pail on the stove and filled it with water. Shirley can heat the water on Friday morning.

Beverly would be there in time to pour the hot water in the bathtub.

She kissed Shirley on the cheek and was about to walk out the door again.

Shirley said, “Aunt Bev is that new?”

Aunt Bev looked at Shirley and down at the dress and said, “You know it is new. That manager at the dress shop had me to pay the bill.”

Shirley looked at Aunt Bev.

Aunt Bev said, “Shirley lock this door now and put the bar behind it.”

Shirley said, “Alright. Good night.”

Aunt Bev stood outside and listened while Shirley locked the door and put the bar behind the door.

Shirley walked in the apartment and sat to the table and ate her dinner.

She smiled because she was finished with school and was glad Leon helped her with Sally and with her accounting.

He made accounting so clear that she believes the second semester would be better.

Aunt Bev stepped in the wagon and turned it around.

She sped home.

She was glad Shirley was not far from her.

Beverly was pulling In the yard at dark.

She stopped at the front porch and emptied the wagon of the picnic basket, blankets, and the bags from Smith’s

Beverly rode into the stables and unhitched the horses and petted them and gave them water and feed.

She closed the stables and walked to the house.

Beverly saw all the things were off the porch.

She walked to the front of the house and barely had enough light but saw the children’s wreath on the front door and grinned.

Al walked out the kitchen door and said, “Hi Beverly.”

Beverly turned and walked to the kitchen area and said, “Hi Al.”

Al noticed she did not kiss him after twenty five years of marriage.

He walked and lit the lantern on the back of the house.

Beverly walked in the house and spoke to her loves.

She went into their bedroom and undressed and put on her nightgown.

She thought, “I had a long day.”

Beverly fell asleep before Al returned to the house.

He sat at the fireplace and read and talked to the children when they finished their schoolwork.

He put them in bed and he later went to bed.

Al looked at Beverly and saw she was in a deep sleep.

He thought, “I hope it is not about me.”

He undressed and went to bed.

He slept until daybreak.

Al thought he heard some noise.

He looked at Beverly from the glow of the fire in the fireplace.

Al eased out of bed and put on his guns.

He tipped to the door and opened the door and closed the door behind him.

Al stood to listen he heard the noise again it was inside in the kitchen area.

He looked towards the stairs to see if any children were on the stairs.

He did not see anyone.

He heard the noise again.

Al took out his gun and cocked.

He tipped to the bath area and heard noises.

He pointed his gun and eased into the bath area.

Al heard the noises and said, “Who is that?”

Mabel yelled.

Beverly heard the yelled and jumped up in the bed.

She hit the bed on Al’s side and did not feel him.

Beverly jumped up and opened her door and ran out their bedroom.

She stood to listen.

Al stepped back and grabbed the lantern on the kitchen table.

He quickly lit it and held it up.

He saw Mabel and Curtis in an inappropriate act.

Al said, “Get out of here and go in the sitting room!”

Beverly heard Al’s mean and nasty tone.

She stood still.

She knew not to say anything but be still.

Al walked out the bath area and went into the sitting room.

He saw Beverly standing in front of their bedroom door.

Al lit the candles in the room and put more coal in the fireplace.

He leaned on the mantel of the fireplace.

Curtis and Mabel walked into the sitting area.

Beverly looked at them and they looked at Beverly.

Beverly walked behind them to Al in the sitting area.

Al did not look at Mabel and Curtis and said, “Sit.”

Beverly sat also.

Al turned and looked at Beverly.

He said, “I told you two not to have sex in this house with these young ones. You have disrespected me, my wife and these children. I’ll let you stay until February first. Then you will have to go. We can make it without you.”

Al walked back to the bath area and lit the stove and put water in the water pails.

Beverly at for a moment and thought, “They must have always been having sex here the reason Al said he told them not to have sex in the house.”

Beverly stood and walked to her bedroom and went back to bed and finished her sleep.

The two older boys that would be leaving in the summer to go to college with the other former slave children were sitting on the stairs watching everything.

They sneaked back upstairs to their rooms.

Al put on the oatmeal and boiled some eggs.

He had to work things out in his head by staying busy as he thought.

Beverly knew that.

She would always give him his time alone.

The children woke and started running downstairs for breakfast.

Al greeted each one.

He had sliced apples and placed them and raisins and honey on the table.

Mabel was sitting in the sitting area.

Curtis walked back upstairs and dressed.

Mabel was thinking she had no place to go.

Curtis was thinking they could live off Mabel’s money.

Beverly woke just before the children were to get in the wagon.

Al went outside and hitched two of the new horses to the wagon and gave them feed and water.

He put each child in the wagon and climbed in the wagon.

Curtis ran out the door and waved at Al.

Al did not stop.

Curtis stood for a minute and looked.

He turned and walked back in the house.

Beverly stood in the eating area and watched.

She looked at Curtis when he walked in the sitting area.

He walked to Mabel and rubbed her shoulder.

Mabel did not say anything.

Al took the children to school.

Beverly did not say anything to Curtis and Mabel.

She cleared the table and washed the dishes.

Beverly disposed of the dirty water in the wash basins.

She washed the three chickens and put them on the stove.

Beverly started the dough to make dumplings.

She wanted a special dinner for the twelve children because that was the last day of school for the Christmas holiday.

The children would return to school the first Monday of the new year.

Beverly put her pail on the stove.

She had joy in her heart.

She diced the vegetables to season the meat and put the vegetables in the pot.

She was thinking about what all he had to do that day.

She knew she had to go to Shirley’s and take her to see Lorraine.

Beverly grinned and thought, “Shirley won’t be able to see Lorraine Saturday because those rascals will be on the train.”

Beverly laughed.

Al pulled in the yard and rode into the stables.

Curtis and Mabel stood and walked out to Al.

Beverly grunted and looked at them.

She knew Al was angry with them and he told them what to do.

Al unhitched the horses and feed the other two horses ad feed them with four retired horses and gave them water.

A hooked the two new horses to Beverly’s carriage and rode them to the house.

He tied the horses at the porch.

He looked back at Mabel and Curtis.

Beverly had washed and was in her room dressing for the day.

She put on the holiday skirt and blouse she got from Smith’s on Thursday.

Beverly was combing her hair and thought about a hair pin that would have made the outfit nice.

Beverly was happy and humming.

She thought about the beautiful cream outfit she got and the other expensive dress and the brown dress she wore yesterday.

She was glad Shirley was leaving Saturday.

She did not have to go back to the hospital but to see Leon.

She could wear her coat and the nurses did not have to see her dress. She was glad she bought dresses that she could wear in the spring and summer. That would give her a chance to buy a few more dresses for the season.

Beverly gathered her coat, scarf, hat and gloves and heard talking in the sitting area.

She walked out her bedroom and she was dressed well.

Al looked at her and knew the outfit was new.

Mabel looked at the well dressed Beverly.

Curtis looked at Beverly.

Beverly looked at them.

Al said, “Beverly do you want to sit in on this conversation?”

Beverly was putting on her scarf.

Al helped her put on her coat.

Beverly put on her hat and said, “You have given your decision. I am fine with that.”

She began to hum and put on her gloves.

Beverly picked up her bag and walked out the door.

She knew Al knew how to make the dumplings.

She put the apple cider and cinnamon sticks out for the children to drink.

Al knew Beverly’s humming meant she was at peace with what he decide.

Beverly carried her blankets to the carriage and petted the horses.

She untied the horses and got in the carriage.

She prayed all the way to Shirley.

A four horse covered wagon met her with two black men sitting in front.

They nodded at her.

She nodded at them.

Her heart tugged.

Beverly slowed and looked back at the covered wagon that passed her.

Beverly went to Shirley and knocked on the door.

Shirley had the water boiling.

She knew better than to lift the heavy pails.

She put an additional pail on and slowly put water in it.

Shirley looked out the window and saw Beverly.

She went to the door and unlocked the door and remove the bar.

Shirley opened the door and grinned and said, “Good morning Aunt Bev.”

Beverly was still thinking about the wagon with the two black men. She could not see in the wagon but was sure some others were in the wagon.

Aunt Bev smiled and said, “Good morning Shirley.”

Beverly walked in and looked around.

She saw the two pails of water.

Shirley stood still.

Beverly turned and looked at Shirley.

Shirley said, “I put the pail on the stove and took my time and filled the pail. I wanted more water than one pail of water.”

Aunt Bev looked at her and said, “With your skinny self.”

Beverly walked away.

Shirley laughed.

Beverly pulled off her coat and hat and walked back in the sitting area and put them on the sofa.

She walked to the door and locked it and said, “Shirley.”

Shirley turned and looked at Beverly and said, “I was nervous you would fuss about the water and forgot.”

Beverly pulled off her scarf and gloves.

Shirley looked at Beverly and said, “You look nice.”

Beverly was still thinking about the black men and looked at Shirley.

Shirley knew something was wrong.

She said, “Aunt Bev, what’s wrong? You and Uncle Al are fighting?”

Aunt Bev said, “We always do that.”

She walked into the kitchen and took the water pails off the stove.

Shirley had her bath oils ready.

She got in the bathtub and took a long bath.

Beverly sat in the sitting area and was thinking.

Shirley got out the tub and went into her bedroom to dressed.

Beverly walked into her kitchen area and used the last egg and roll.

She scrambled the egg and put the roll in a plate.

She washed the dishes and put ‘Rosie’s dish by the door so she can take it back on their way to the hospital.

Beverly looked around and saw the apartment was nice and cleaned.

She doubled checked the backdoor at the kitchen.

She looked at Shirley’s bags.

Shirley sat and ate the scramble egg and roll.

She drank water.

There was no tea left.

Beverly said, “You planned this to a ‘T’”.

Shirley looked at Aunt Bev and said, “What?”

Aunt Bev said, “You have no food left. So it would not spoil while you are away. You can have whatever you want on the train tomorrow with your brothers.”

Shirley and continued to eat with her impeccable table manners.

Shirley said, “Aunt Bev what happened at Smith’s yesterday?”

Aunt Bev said, “I don’t know yet. I think the manager thought we servants were shopping too much and wanted you to pay down the bill in case you did not authorize it. I paid the total bill of one hundred and twenty five dollars. It was one hundred and twenty something. He was embarrassed once I paid the full amount in fron to the ‘ladies ‘ that were waiting.”

Beverly said, “Whoa.”

Shirley said, “Whoa.”

They laughed.

Shirley said, “I know Grandma and grandpa sent you and Uncle Al money for your Christmas gift. I have to pay you for the hundred dollars you gave Monica. Thank you for doing that.”

Aunt Bev said, “You are welcome.”

Shirley said, “I am going to pay you for the one hundred and twenty five dollars. We will stop by Smith’s after I leave the bank this morning. What is the other store you opened an account?”

Beverly was thinking about the two black men.

She nodded at Shirley.

Shirley looked at her.

She was thinking Beverly was concerned about the money she spent.

Shirley said, “Aunt Bev I will give you your money back.”

Aunt Bev looked at Shirley and patted her hand and smiled and said, “Baby my mind is a good distance away.”

Shirley was worried and said, “Not Uncle Al?”

Aunt Bev said, “I have to make a decision on that stingy Uncle Al.”

Shirley laughed.

She knew how her grandma and grandpa talked about how stingy Albert was. They could not stand him for that. They would pay for everything so he and Aunt Bev could participate.

Aunt Bev said, “Shirley go and get your coat so we can get this day started.”

Shirley was getting from the table and said, “I want to get Meredith’s baby a gift from the family before we leave tomorrow. I know Michael and Thomas will be angry with me if we don’t get her something.”

Aunt Bev said, “How can they be mad with you it is not your fault that everything happened so close?”

Shirley said, “They will blame me. Especially Michael. Oh my God!”

Beverly jumped.

Shirley looked at Aunt Bev and said, “Lorraine. They would want to see Lorraine.”

Aunt Bev said, “You are right. How much time between the trains that you all have?”

Shirley said, “Exactly one hour. I have to telegram momma.”

Beverly stood from the table and said, “Hurry.”

Beverly took the dishes and washed and dried the dishes and put water in the water pails.

Shirley was putting on her coat and laughed.

Beverly looked at her and said, “With your skinny self. I want two pails of bath water.”

Shirley laughed.

Beverly moved the bathtub to the door and unlocked the backdoor and poured the water out.

She stepped back in and locked the backdoor and put the bar behind it.

She and put on her coat, hat and scarf with her gloves and walked out the apartment with her bag on her wrist.

Shirley had her bank book and accounts book.

Shirley locked the apartment door.

She turned and saw the apartment proprietor and said, “Good morning.”

Mr. Locket said, “Good morning Miss Stith.”

Shirley held her breathe because she did not want to go by the name of Simmons anymore.

Beverly helped Shirley in the carriage and said, “Oh the plate to Rosie’s.”

Shirley held up the plate she had it under her books.

Beverly speed to Rosie’s and dropped off the plate.

The manager was peeping out at the blue who was sitting very proper in the carriage.

He told Beverly, “You can place an order anytime.”

Beverly thought Al’s disapproval of her using racism to get things done.

Beverly smiled and walked out.

She and Shirley sped to the bank.

She helped Shirley out the carriage and opened the bank door for her.

Beverly went to the carriage and sat covered up by the blankets.

She was thinking about Mabel and Curtis.

Then she had a flash about the two black men from the morning.

Beverly said, “JESUS what is going on. Why those two black men?”

Shirley walked out the bank to the carriage and stood.

She said, “Aunt Bev what two black men?”

Aunt Bev turned and looked at Shirley and then her sense came back to her.

She jumped out the carriage and helped Shirley in the carriage and put her blanket across her lap.

Shirley did not want to be completely covered because she liked for people to see her clothes.

Aunt Bev stepped in the carriage and said, “Shirley you are concerned about your clothes. Dr. Woodson is concerned about your health. You know your mother will go with Dr. Woodson. Have you heard anything about Dr. Greene?”

Shirley said, “No. Back to the two black men that have you worried Aunt Bev.”

Aunt Bev said, “I know those two men have something to do with me.”

Shirley became scared and said, “What?”

Aunt Bev said, “I don’t know.”

Shirley said, “Aunt Bev stop!!”

They were about to pass the good clothing store Beverly opened an account for the family.

Beverly got out the carriage and helped Shirley out.

They walked in the store and were greeted by the manager.

Shirley greeted everyone.

She said, “Sir I want to pay my account.”

The store manager recognized Beverly and he nodded at Beverly.

Beverly nodded and went to the baby’s stuff.

She selected some items for Baby Felipe.

Shirley paid the account in full.

The manager put an unlimited balance by her name.

Shirley and the manager walked out the office and saw Beverly shopping.

Shirley laughed.

Shirley walked to Beverly and helped her select baby furniture and baby blankets.

Shirley asked the manager to hold the furniture until the father comes and get.

They had the salesclerks to wrap the blankets for baby Felipe.

Beverly and Shirley laughed and went down two blocks to Smith’s.

Beverly helped Shirley out the carriage.

Harry peeped and ducked.

He ran back to the counter.

The manager looked at him.

Harry said, “The heir.”

The manager watched Harry.

Then Harry stood up and ran to the store door and opened it for Shirley and Beverly.

He winked at Beverly.

Shirley was dressed as European royalty.

Everyone turned and stared at Shirley.

Harry stood back and admired Shirley’s dress.

The salesclerks stopped waiting on their customers and wandered over to Shirley to look at the princess.

Shirley nodded at the workers.

The manager was dazzled by Shirley.

He saw her deformity but she as pretty, acute and business minded.

Shirley said, “Sir, I am Shirley Stith.”

The manager nodded.

Shirley said, “I was told there was an issue with payment for the account yesterday.”

The manager said, “The account was paid.”

Shirley looked the manager in the eyes and said, “Of course sir it was paid. Why did you ask for payment?”

Harry thought, “Damn. I like her.”

The manager stuttered and said, “I don’t know.”

Shirley said, “You embarrassed my aunt.”

The manager looked at Beverly.

Beverly waved at him.

The manager looked back at the white Shirley.

Shirley continued and said, “You shamed my worker.”

The manager swallowed and said, “I’m sorry.”

Shirley looked around at the store.

She looked back at the manager to let him know it was not the best.

He nodded at Shirley.

Shirley said, “My workers like this store. Will you attempt to block them from shopping here sir?”

The manager shook his head and said, “No.”

Shirley went into her accounts book and reached the manager two hundred dollars.

The manager said, “Miss Stith that is not necessary.”

Shirley said, “Sir it is necessary. Put it on my account and whenever they go over that amount. Tell them so I can send more. I am not here all the time and I have urgent business to attend.”

The manager reached the two hundred dollars to his assistant to put the credit on Shirley’s account.

The assistant looked at Shirley like she was daring Shirley.

Harry looked at his co-worker.

The manager looked at her and said, “Miss Ladder what is wrong with you?”

Shirley looked at Miss ladder.

Miss ladder rolled her eyes at Shirley.

Beverly walked up to the counter and stood by Shirley.

The salesclerks looked at the snooty Miss Ladder.

Shirley took her ultra rich countess stance.

Everyone looked at Shirley.

Shirley looked at the store.

The manager tried to smile, but he was nervous at Miss Ladder’s attitude.

One of the male salesclerks walked over to Harry and said, “She can buy this shop and close it to her out of a job.”

Harry turned and looked at his co-worker and then back to Shirley.

The manager took the book from his snooty assistant and stared for her to leave.

Beverly watched her.

Shirley was angry.

The manager of the store saw Shirley’s face and then he saw Harry and his other workers, including the fitting room workers and the seamstresses.

He knew what they were thinking.

The manager turned the book for Shirley to sign the receipt.

Shirley did not look at the manager, but Beverly turned around and signed it as, Mrs. Beverly Williamson.

The manager looked at his snooty worker and said, “Ma am I don’t know why she did that.”

He wrote unlimited by Shirley’s account.

He looked at Shirley’s clothes well.

The manager shook his head at the absolute finery of her clothes and her coat her name engraved on the bottoms.

He looked at her everyday pearl earrings and gasped at them.

Beverly shook her head at the manager.

The manger looked at Beverly and tried to smiled.

Beverly looked at the manager.

Mrs. West and Mrs. Clay were entering because Mrs. Clay wanted a hair pin to match her outfit for that evening event.

Mrs. West was not going to the event.

She was thinking about what she wanted to do with her life.

She had not seen her preacher husband in nearly a month.

She was enjoying the life being free with Mrs. Clay.

They would eat sweet biscuits and coffee and tea in the morning and go out to a nice restaurant for a late lunch.

Mrs. West would cook on Sundays and Mrs. Clay would cook on Saturdays.

Beverly was holding Shirley’s arm and saw the two walk in the store.

She greeted them and introduced them to Shirley.

Mrs. Clay and Mrs. West spoke to Shirley.

Mrs. Clay said, “Excuse me I need to find me a hairpin or bow that will match my outfit for tonight. I love this Christmas season of dressing up and getting out.”

She looked at Shirley from head to toe and said, “Child you are beautiful.”

Shirley grinned big.

Aunt Bev said, “Maybe we can have tea next week. The schools are out until January.”

Mrs. West said, “I miss teaching.”

Harry walked over and said, “Ladies can I help you?”

Mrs. Clay pointed at Shirley and said, “I want to look like her.”

Shirley laughed.

Harry looked at Shirley with the upmost admiration and said, “She is unique.”

Mrs. Clay looked at Shirley and said, “She surely is.”

Shirley blushed.

Mrs. West said, “You are a beautiful young lady.”

Harry said, “I can’t help anyone to be like her. She is in a world all to herself.”

Shirley blushed and then she noticed all the workers looking at her.

Mrs. Clay said, “I need a hairpin or bow to go with the red dress I bought from here several weeks ago.”

Harry said, “I remembered the dress.”

They walked away to the counter.

Harry was helping Mrs. Clay.

Mrs. West said, “I married a white man right after I graduated from teaching school. Everyone told me I was making a mistake. His first wife, a white woman had died and he was doing business on my side of town. He told me he was a preacher and he would build me this wonderful life. He did not and after all of these years I want to be free and maybe find a true husband. Not someone that wants me to be a slave plus sex.”

Ant Bev cleared her throat.

Shirley was listening to every word of Mrs. West.

Mrs. West jumped and looked at Shirley and said, “My beautiful young lady I am sorry for this conversation.”

Shirley was thinking about what she said and smiled.

Aunt Bev said, “What are you going to do?”

Mrs. West said, “I am filing for my divorce from him today and I want to leave town for a few months until it is finished. I want to work as a teacher somewhere.”

Beverly said, “Do you know where you want to go?”

Mrs. West said, Somewhere far away from here. My sister disappeared five years ago and we don’t know where she is with her six children.”

Beverly said, “Let me send you a message for tea next week at Harrison’s on fifth avenue. We have to rush.”

Mrs. West was looking sad and said, “That will be lovely.”

She waved and bowed at Shirley.

Shirley laughed.

Aunt Bev loved to hear Shirley laugh.

Mrs. Clay turned around said, “Lovely meeting you.”

Shirley said, “I loved meeting you two ladies.”

Beverly patted Mrs. West’s arm and waked to the door with Shirley and opened the door for her.

They walked to the carriage.

Beverly helped Shirley in the carriage.

Beverly was trying to cover Shirley with the blanket and Shirley swatted at Beverly.

Beverly walked around the carriage and stepped in.

People on the street and the workers in the store watched Shirley.

Shirley smiled at the people.

Beverly looked at Shirley and said, “Girl that is why your momma be on you.”

Shirley shrugged and said, “I love clothes and looking good.”

Aunt Bev said, “And getting attention.”

Shirley as they speed to see Lorraine.

Beverly looked at her carriage.

Shirley said, “What are you doing Aunt Bev?”

Beverly said, “I wanted to see if six people can fit in here.”

Shirley said, “We have to.”

Beverly said, “Oh my God!”

Shirley jumped and said, “What Aunt Bev?”

Beverly said, “I will have all of Eleanor’s five children tomorrow. “

Shirley sat back in the seat and said, “Aunt Bev you scared me.”

Beverly said, “That’s enough for you to be scared about. “

Beverly stared looking around.

Shirley started looking around too, as they rode to the hospital.

She said, “Now Aunt Bev what are you looking at or for?”

Beverly said, “Sticks for those rascals.”

Shirley laughed all the way to the south hospital.

Beverly said, “I can throw pretty good. I need four rocks.”

Shirley laughed out.

Beverly pulled into the south hospital.

She and Shirley stepped out the carriage and they got attention of people coming and leaving the hospital.

Lora was laying in her usual spot.

Ryan was staring at Lora.

Beverly opened the door for Shirley.

Beverly and Shirley walked in the hospital.

Ryan looked from Lora to Beverly and Shirley.

The nurses stopped working and was staring at Shirley.

Beverly and Shirley said, “Good morning Ryan.”

Ryan said, “Good morning.”

He saw Lora lift her head up and watched Shirley.

He noticed how the nurses were watching Shirley and Beverly.

Shirley and Beverly walked in Lorraine’s room.

Lora watched them until they disappeared in Lorraine’s room.

Lorraine was tired.

She was beginning to whisper.

They talked to Lorraine until she went to sleep.

Shirley and Beverly walked out of Lorraine’s room and out the hospital.

Ryan was walking out Myriah’s room when he saw Beverly and Shirley leaving.

He stopped and sat on the sofa with Lora.

Lora was sitting up and looking at Shirley’s clothes.

Ryan said, “Lora, in two weeks I am going to let Myriah go home…”

Lora looked at Ryan and began to cry.

Her lips were quivering.

Ryan looked at her and said, “Do you have a place for you two to stay and can you take care of Myriah?”

Lora was crying so hard.

She nodded her head for yes.

Lora said, “Thank you.”

It took her effort to say it.

Ryan nodded his head and said, “You are welcome.”

He stood and walked to the nurses’ desk and wrote detail information in Myriah’s chart.

Lora could not contain herself.

She had moved in with Mrs. Clay and Mrs. West. She and Myriah would share the room.

Lora waited until Marvin came and picked her up.

She was still crying.

He looked at her and said, “Mrs. Clay?”

Lora nodded her head for yes.

Lora arrived at Mrs. Clay and could not contain herself.

She told Mrs. Clay and Mrs. West, “Myriah will be out the hospital in two weeks.”

They clapped and were happy for Lora.

Mrs. West knew Myriah.

She said, “Lora what are you going to do about Jeremiah? He has to knew about his blood daughter.”

Mrs. Clay mouth dropped opened and she looked at Lora because she forgot about Myriah’s father.

Lora was crying and wiped her eyes.

She looked at Mrs. West and said, “I will tell Jeremiah next week about Myriah. I will send him a message to meet me at the south hospital.”

Mrs. West said, “He will tell that damn Hall.”

Lora said, “I know. I am not giving them a penny.”

Lora turned her head and looked into space.

She said, “Myriah has been in the hospital for nearly a month and Jeremiah have not found her. I know he has drunk up his part of the money. I cannot go backwards. I want to leave and start a new life with Myriah. Or I can go to my family in Boston. But I don’t want to hear them complain about me marrying Jeremiah.”

Mrs. West said, “I understand.”

Mrs. Clay looked at Mrs. West.

Lora went to bed and was laughing most of the night.

Mrs. Clay hung her dress from that evening but wanted to extend her evening by wearing the hair pin a little longer.

She sat at her dining room table and knitted for a little bit.

She thought her home would be emptied again.

But she has managed to do the things she love during the Christmas holidays and had her coal, fuel and water and a beautifully decorated house for Christmas.

She had enough change to meet her friends once a week for tea or lunch.

She said, “God thank You.”

Mrs. Clay stood and walked to her bedroom and closed the door.

She bent down at the foot of her bed and prayed for a long time.

She said, “God I am lonely/ I want a husband. One that will be with me until we both die. Let him have income so we want be beggars. Help Lora and Jeremiah and Myriah and keep the Halls from Lora and Myriah. Help Mrs. West. She is losing weight and taking care of herself and she looks better.”

Ms. Clay continued in prayer for a long time.

Bevrly and Shirley went to the Stith.

Aunt Beverly told Shirley the two black men riding the wagon looked like slaves to her.

She wondered where they were going. It was unusual for them to know where they are going without someone directing them.

Shirley looked at Aunt Bev.

Aunt Bev told Shirley about Mabel and Curtis.

Shirley said, “Mabel believe he has been stealing things from her.”

Beverly said, “Curtis knows what he is doing. He knows Mabel was bred from a little child to be the master whore. She has those feelings and she does not have real good sense. He is using her and Al and I cannot help her. They have to go.”

They stopped at the Stith.

Dr. Felipe was working at the hospital.

Beverly brought the wrapped gift to the hospital.

Dr. Felipe walked over and took the bundle.

Beverly said, “Thomas and Michael gift plus the furniture you have to pick up from the store.”

Dr. Felipe was overjoyed.

He took the bundle.

Beverly said, “The boys may come here tomorrow to see Meredith and your baby.”

Dr. Felipe laughed and said, “I’ll be here.”

Shirley grinned and spoke to the nurses and went into the hospital administrator’s office and sent a telegram to Eleanor to have the train home delayed by three hours so the boys could Lorraine and Meredith and her baby. And she bought baby furniture and plenty of blankets from the boys.

Beverly walked to see Vivienne and visit with Sally for a few minutes.

Shirley was deep in thought.

She stood and walked out the hospital administrator’s hospital office.

She looked at Leon’s room.

Dr. Woodson looked at Shirley.

Shirley turned and went and found Beverly.

The nurses were looking at Shirley’s clothes.

Shirley spoke to Vivienne and said, “Hi Sally.”

Sally said, “Hey.”

Dr. Charles was standing and listening.

He was waiting for Sally to say something rude to Shirley.

He knew Shirley was rude and come back at Sally.

Dr. Charles leaning around the nurses’ desk and stared in the Sally’s room.

Dr. Ralph laughed.

The nurses snickered.

Dr. Charles started rubbing his chin.

They laughed at him.

Because Sally was going to France with him and Vivienne.

Dr. Charles said, “Have they received anymore telegrams from Sally’s family.”

Dr. Ralph laughed and said, “No”.

He hit Dr. Charles on the arm so they could go to the next patient.

Dr. Charles looked at Dr. Felipe who was coming back from putting the bundle of blankets in Meredith’s room.

Meredith was staying await long enough to feed Felipe Jr.

The nurses were bathing him and changing him.

They were changing Meredith’s bandages.

Felipe did not like that Meredith was bleeding.

He and Dr. Woodson talked about Meredith’s delivery.

Beverly and Shirley left the hospital.

Beverly sped to the diner near Shirley’s apartment and ran in and got Shirley a dinner and a few pieces of fruit for the next morning.

Beverly looked at the time and took Shirley home.

Shirley unlocked the door and They walked in.

Shirley counted out two hundred and fifty dollars and gave it to Beverly.

Beverly said, “I’m taking this Shirley.”

Shirley laughed.

Beverly check the apartment and put coal in the stove and in the fireplace.

She moved Shirley’s bags to the sitting area.

Beverly put a pitcher of water and a glass on the table and washed the apples and place them on the table in a bowl with an orange.

Beverly lit the candles and lanterns.

Shirley was undressing.

She said, “Aunt Beverly, it is not dark.”

Beverly said, “So I want have to come back.”

Shirley laughed.

Beverly said, “Come and lock the door and put the bar on this door. I need to go home and see if those men were looking for any of my babies.”

Shirley had a scared look on her face and stood and looked at Beverly.

Beverly rushed out the door.

She stood and listened to Shirley lock the door and put the bar behind it.

Shirley looked out the window.

Beverly ran to the carriage and turned around and sped home.

Shirley stood and watched Beverly sped home.

She grinned.

Shirley turned and looked at her bags and walked into the eat in area.

She sat at the table and ate the mashed potatoes and gravy and liver and biscuit.

Shirley was so happy she finished with her papers.

She sat in the sitting area and read a read and then she read her bible.

Shirley enjoyed her evening.

She fell asleep on the sofa but had covered up in two blankets.

Shirley remembered what Dr. Woodson said for her to lay straight in the bed.

She turned on her stomach and laid flat on the sofa.

She slept until early morning.

She woke and went into the kitchen and put more coal in the stove to heat her bath water.

She washed her dishes and dried them.

She was proud of herself.

Shirley walked into her bedroom.

She grinned and thought she did not have to make her bed.

Her outfit was hanging in the armoire.

She walked in the sitting room and folded the two blankets and put them in the armoire.

She took her bath oils, wash cloth and towel into the kitchen.

Shirley touched her bath water and it was getting hot.

She said, “Where are you Aunt Bev.”

Eleanor received Shirley’s telegram.

She sent a telegram to Mike at the headquarters and told him to delay the train to Cedartown for four hours and make sure all her children were on that train.

She sent a telegram to Patrick and Brenda that the children’s train would be delayed for four hours and they did not have to have Peter speed to get back.

Eleanor was getting excited to see all five of her children.

She wrote a letter of Baby Brenda and apologized to her for not fighting to save her and her life. She for Baby Brenda’s forgiveness.

Eleanor felt lighter especially when she thought Baby Brenda was with Joseph.

Eleanor was more happy at that moment than she ever had been.

She felt free.

Eleanor turned around and went back to Patrick’s office and sent a telegram to Dr. Woodson for Shirley the train would be delayed four hours, so the boys could see Lorraine and Meredith.

Dr. Woodson checked the telegrams for the night before he went home.

He read the telegram and laughed.

He said, “Spoiled, Delaying trains and other people. “

He laughed.

Dr. Woodson went home and prayed that night.

He sat and read his bible.

He crawled on the top of his bed and went to sleep.

He hated sleeping in his boots.

He brought his legs on the bed one at a time and untied his boots and kicked them off.

Bradley was quite tired.

He did not know why.

Dr. Ralph was on call at the Stith.

Hutch went to the south hospital and worked for a few hours and Dr. Woodson heard him going to his room.

Beverly arrived home and rode the carriage into the stables.

She unhitched the horses and feed them and gave them water.

She petted all the horses and turned was walking out.

Al was standing in the doorway of the stables.

Beverly said, “What?”

Al said, “We had some visitors today.”

Beverly said, “A covered wagon with two black men driving it?”

Al said, “Yes. Did you see them?”

Beverly said, “When I first left this morning. Who were they looking for?”

Al said, “Three of the five that are in Ohio.”

Beverly looked at Al. She felt weak.”

Al walked to Beverly and held her by her waist. That’s the closest he has been to Beverly in two weeks.

They walked out the stables and Al locked the stables door.

They walked to the house.

Beverly said, “What did you do?’

Al said, “They showed me proof they were related. I gave them the address where the children were. I went and sent a telegram to the school to give to them. It will take them about a month to get there. The children will decide what they want to do.”

Beverly and Al walked in the house.

Al whispered and said, “I told Curtis and Mabel they still had to go.”

Beverly said, “Yes.”

She said, “I have t take the boys and Shirley around to see Lorraine and Meredith before they get back on the train to go home.”

Little Shirley ran to Beverly and Beverly hugged her.

Al grinned at Little Shirley and looked at Beverly and said, “That’s right. How are they going to react to Lorraine?”

Beverly said, “I don’t know. I smell something sweet.”

Little Shirley said, “Me too.”

Al said, “I bake a sheet cake. You all will love it.”

Beverly grinned and walked Little Shirley to the other children.

Beverly went into her bedroom and closed the door.

Al looked at Beverly.

Beverly undressed and put on one of her everyday work dresses.

She thought it was a special occasion and she should have kept on her holiday outfit.

She walked back out and sat with the children until Al walked in the sitting area and said, “Dinner.”

Everyone ran into the kitchen.

Beverly laughed.

They all went to the wash area and washed their hands.

They got their bowl of chicken and dumplings and sat at the table and ate.

Beverly and Al brought their tin cups and filled them with warm apple cider that was on the hearth.

Al put cinnamon sticks in the children cups.

They sat around and enjoyed dinner and each other presence.

Everyone prepared for bed.

Al was washing dishes.

The two older boys were helping Al.

The two thirteen year old boys after dinner went outside and lit the lanterns and emptied the water basins they used to wash their hands.

They brought in water for the next day.

Al said, “Why are you all helping me out. I appreciate it but tell me why.”

One of the older boys said, “We heard you tell Mabel and Curtis they had to leave.”

Al said, “That doesn’t have anything to do with you.”

The other boy said, “We want to help with the chores, so you and Aunt Bev won’t become tired and worn out.”

Al said, “Thank you all for thinking about us.”

The other older boy said, “Uncle Al if any of my relatives come looking for me when I go off to school don’t tell them where I am. My momma is dead and my two brothers. I don’t want to go with anyone.”

Al said, “I’ll get their information and save it for you.”

The older boy said, “That would be fine.”

Al and the boys doubled check the doors and windows.

They joined everybody in the sitting area.

Little Shirley and Mark ran to the Christmas tree and fell asleep under the Christmas tree.

Mabel and Curtis were sitting by themselves talking.

The two older boys carried Little Shirley and Mark upstairs to their rooms.

Beverly went up and changed Little Shirley into her nightgown.

Beverly walked downstairs and went to sleep.

Al sat by the fireplace and read little bit.

He stood and stretched.

Mabel and Curtis were still sitting and talking.

Al said, “Good night.”

They looked at Al in surprise.

They thought Al would treat them badly.

Al looked at them and said, “I will not mistreat you. You have to stand before God.”

He went to his bedroom and closed the door.

He put some coal on the fire and undressed and went to bed.

He worked hard that day and did not take his nap like he usually does.

Al heard Mabel and Curtis walking upstairs.

He yawned and went to sleep.