Shirley was needlepointing all the way there.

Michael laid on the floor and his book to Shirley as he sucked on a sucker.

They could hear the trains and all the nose from the train station.

Michael jumped off the floor and seat on the seat and he looked at the window and saw the trainyard.

He waved at the workers’

Shirley was grinning and she waved at the smiling people on her side of the buggy.

Shirley and Michael finally arrive at the railroad train station.

They were excited.

Shirley thought, “I haven’t seen my family going on three years.”

Michael begin to cry.

The buggy driver stopped the buggy.

He got out the buggy and looked at Michael and said, “Hey are you alright?”

Shirley patted the space next to her and said, “Here Michael.”

Michael slid over to Shirley and put his head on her lap.

Shirley patted Michael’s head and said, “Why are you crying? You were happy a minute ago.”

Michael said, “The last time I saw Eleanor I knew she got on the train. Dad would try to get me to come to work with him I would not.”

The driver said, “You want me to continue? It is a short ride to the entrance.”

Shirley said, “We have been planning this for the past year Michael. Now shush and sit up.”

Michael sit up.

Shirley said dry your face.

Shirley looked out the window and screamed as the man was about to step in the buggy.

He jumped down and ran to her and said, “Ma am what is it?”

Shirley was pointing and shaking furiously.

Michael leaned out of her window and looked and he said, “What?”

Shirley shaking her finger said, “There!!”

The driver turned and looked.

He saw three well dressed lads standing on the porch of the train station.

The man pointed and said, “Them?”

Shirley was shaking her legs, which she could not do her life long.

She shook her head for yes.

Michael finally saw Bruce, Percy and Thomas.

He jumped out the buggy and started to run.

Shirley yelled, “Michael you promised.”

Michael was running in place because he was excited to see his brothers.

Percy saw Michael and he could not say a word but started walking like a cripple from excitement.

He was pointing at Michael.

Bruce and Thomas were peeping in every buggy that passed them.

They were excited to see Shirley and Michael after nearly two and a half years.

Eleanor was walking along the porch with her head down looking in her bag.

She lifted her head.

Eleanor was very elegant.

People were stopping looking at her.

She was an attractive person, but she now has a type of refinement.

Bruce sat and watched from his buggy.

His eyes filed with tears when he saw his children planned their escape from him.

He saw bad Percy happy to see his brother.

Then his eyes fell on his Eleanor.

Bruce looked at men and women following Eleanor.

He knew they were her servants, but he did not see a nanny with her two year old.

His thoughts froze.

He saw the man at the buggy with Shirley walked to the back of the buggy and pulled her wheelchair down.

Bruce saw Shirley’s petite hands hitting the window of the buggy.

He thought she was in pain and jumped out his buggy.

Shirley said, “Sir please help me out.

The man looked at Shirley and said, “Ma am your wheelchair?”

Shirley said, “Later.”

The man walked to the buggy and lifted Shirley out the wagon.

Shirley studied herself on the buggy.

The man stood back, because he remembered he picked her up from the bone hospital.

He knew this was important to Shirley to stand, so he moved back from her.

Shirley was nervous and scared.

Bruce began to run to Shirley.

Shirley yelled, “Eleanor!!!!!”

Eleanor recognized the voice and she was bewildered.

She looked up and down the porch and then around to the street.

She saw Shirley standing.

Bruce and Thomas saw Michael, they ran passed Percy and grabbed Michael.

They heard Shirley but did not see her on the other side of the buggy.

Eleanor fell to her knees.

Shirley was screaming, “Eleanor!!!!”

Bruce saw the buggy driver was very protective of Shirley and Michael.

He walked behind Shirley and waved to the buggy driver that it was alright.

Bruce’s buggy driver stepped out of Bruce’s buggy and watched the buggy driver and the seen that was unfolding in front of him.

Shirley’s buggy driver watched the big muscular guy.

Eleanor tried to crawl to Shirley.

People stopped walking and working and watched this elegant woman on the floor.

Then looked and saw Shirley standing.

Eleanor’s servants ran to her and helped her up.

She pushed away from them and stumbled to Shirley.

She looked at Shirley and grabbed her baby.

She and Shirley wailed.

Michael and the boys ran to the other side of the buggy.

Michael gabbed Eleanor’s waist.

Eleanor remembered the touch of her baby.

She mumbled, “Michael.”

Michael looked up at Eleanor.

The crowds of people watched this reunion.

Eleanor’s servants ran behind her.

Bruce watched his family and his heart was overwhelmed. He realized he made the biggest mistake of his life to throw away his family.

His buggy driver watched Bruce.

Steve and Roderick ran to Eleanor.

Percy looked at the two well dressed men and said, “This is our sister and baby brother.”

The men stepped back.

Eleanor hardly spoke of them.

Belinda walked up with her boy twins.

Percy grabbed the twin Tom.

Bruce grabbed the twin Steve.

Bruce saw they were used to holding the babies even though he would not let them do so.

Sheryl walked up with their baby girl.

Thomas said, “No. She’s a girl.”

Shirley’s buggy driver laughed.

Roderick and Steve looked at the buggy driver.

He stopped laughing and looked at them.

Bruce stood back and realized he was not part of his family anymore.

Eleanor pushed Shirley back a little to see her standing.

Bruce did not know Shirley was standing.

Shirley held onto Eleanor’s hands.

Michael held onto Shirley’s waist and said, “Look Eleanor.”

Eleanor looked at Michael then she felt Shirley’s hand grip her hand.

She looked at Shirley and saw her first step.

Eleanor lost her breath.

Bruce stared.

Shirley took another step.

Eleanor walked back a step.

Shirley took two more steps.

Percy ran with Tom and yelled, “Come here Shirley.”

Shirley walked to Eleanor and nearly collapsed in her arms.

The buggy driver grabbed Shirley’s wheelchair and pushed it to her and helped her in the wheelchair.

Eleanor was on her knees in front of Shirley kissing her and telling her how much she loved her.

Michael said, “I tell Shirley everyday you did not run away from us but daddy.”

Bruce had walked up and heard Michael.

Roderick, Steve and the buggy river knew Bruce had to be the daddy.

Ellen, Sheryl and Belinda did not know Bruce but figured he was Eleanor’s husband.

Michael looked up and saw Bruce.

Percy ran back with the baby Tom.

Bruce said, “Percy don’t run with the baby.”

Percy gave Tom back to Belinda.

Eleanor slowly shifted her eyes to Bruce.

Shirley said, “Mommy.”

Eleanor slowly stood and looked at Bruce.

Bruce did not know what to say.

Eleanor’s servants looked at Bruce.

Bruce gave Steve to Ellen.

He and Percy and Thomas said, “Hi dad.”

Bruce smiled and thought, “I am a stranger to my sons.”

He said, “Hello Percy, Thomas and Bruce.”

Shirley leaned her head on Eleanor’s stomach.

Eleanor held onto Shirley’s head.

Michael said, “You are back for Shirley’s birthday.”

Eleanor looked at Michael and said, “My sensible little Michael.”

Michael said, “I have grown Mommy.”

Eleanor said, “You have grown in height and in spirit.”

The train blew it whistle.

Eleanor’s mouth flew open.

She forgot about the train.

Michael yelled, “Don’t leave me again mommy.”

He ran and grabbed Eleanor around her waist and swung from her waist, nearly pulling her down.

Shirley said, “No mommy. No.”

Eleanor looked at Bruce and said, “Stop the train Bruce.”

Bruce said, “It’s on a schedule.”

Eleanor stared at Bruce.

Percy said, “You own it, why can’t you stop it for us to say good bye to Shirley and Michael.”

Michael shook his head hard and said, “no more good byes.”

Shirley said, “We moved into the new house this week and we have plenty of room. Rather daddy and Michael.”

Bruce said to his buggy driver, “Earl, go and tell the train conductor I said wait five more minutes before he leaves.”

Thomas said, “Five minutes Bruce. That’s all we are worth to you five minutes.”

Bruce was so shocked at Thomas, who was the quiet one. The one that was easy going.

Thomas walked to Shirley and kissed her cheek.

He walked to Michael and hugged him.

Thomas looked at the servants and said, “Let’s go.”

He looked back at Bruce and said, “Father take care of yourself.”

Bruce could not speak but stood and saw his three sons turn their backs to him and walk away.

Shirley’s buggy driver looked at Bruce.

Eleanor leaned down to Shirley and said, “Are you still at the hospital?”

Shirley looked into Eleanor’s eyes.

Eleanor said, “I will be back for you and Michael. Our secret.”

Michael heard Eleanor.

Eleanor kissed both Michael and Shirley.

She stood and stared at Bruce.

The train whistle blew again.

Bruce said, “Your train.”

Eleanor said, “All of them.”

Bruce thought, “Damn she is going to fight me for the trains.”

Michael rolled his eyes at Bruce.

Shirley held her head down so far it was nearly in her lap.

Eleanor touched Shirley’s head.

She looked at the buggy driver and said, “Take them back to the hospital.”

She looked at Michael.

Eleanor took her time and turned and slowly walked to the train.

Bruce stared off into space and thought, “She is going to fight me for the railroad. She is going to win. I have nothing to stand on.”

The buggy driver helped Shirley back into the buggy

He put her wheelchair on the back of the buggy.

Bruce said to Shirley’s buggy driver, “Bring her here.”

Shirley mumbled, “No.”

Bruce’s big muscular buggy driver moved to the buggy with Shirley.

Michael ran to Earl and pushed him away and said, “No.”

Bruce said, “Earl come on.”

The buggy driver watched Bruce and the big buggy driver leave.

He said, “Come on brave Michael.”

Michael stood on the street with the sucker in his mouth and watched them leave.

Nurse Sharon was waiting for Bruce at the hospital.

Nurse Alice and Nurse Brown did not like Nurse Sharon.

They thought she and Ryan were going to make a couple.

But Nurse Sharon ran behind Bruce from day.

Nurse Alice thought about the meeting they had when the hospital administrator asked did anyone want to go to the bone hospital.

They saw how Nurse Sharon was the first to volunteer.

Nurse Helen said, “Nurse Sharon wanted to be Shirley’s private nurse, but Eleanor already made the decision.”

Mrs. Perkins saw how Nurse Sharon was running behind Bruce and she did not like it.

Eleanor was her friend.

She did not want Sharon to disrupt a family.

Lorraine would be at the hospital nearly every day all day until the evening watching Shirley and dating Dr. Ralph.

Lorraine helped Dr. Ralph buy him a nice house, a couple of horses and a buggy.

She and Shirley would look at pictures and paints and help Dr. Ralph decorate his house.

Shirley said, “Lorraine suppose Dr. Ralph ask you to marry him.”

Lorraine held her head down and continued to look through the pages of the catalogs.

Shirley looked at Lorraine and leaned over and touched Lorraine’s hands and said, “Momma, you have to let loose and go and have your family.”

Lorraine did not say anything but exhaled.

Dr. Ralph was about to walk in but stood and listened.

He knocked on the door.

Shirley and Lorraine looked up and both smiled.

Dr. Ralph said, “Lorraine are you ready to leave?”

Lorraine stood up and pinched Shirley’s cheeks and walked out the door.

Dr. Ralph winked his eye at Shirley.

Shirley yelled, “Wait.”

She was looking at another paint color.

Dr. Ralph and Lorraine said, “Tomorrow.”

Shirley laughed.

She put the catalog down and pulled the accounts book to her.

She wrote all the employees a note to take to the bank.

Shirley paid all the hospital’s monthly bills.

She felt so good about doing that.

She looked out the window at the stars and said, “Momma Eleanor thank you for showing me I am a person and I can run a business.”

Lorraine and Dr. Ralph kept Nurse Sharon away from Shirley.

Dr. Ralph did not allow Nurse Sharon to go near Shirley.

Ryan continued at the hospital until the policeman Vince was healed.

Eleanor left the money to pay for Vince’s hospital’s bill which was Ryan’s pay.

Ryan saw that Nurse Sharon wanted Bruce.

So did everyone else at the hospital.

Ryan began to date Nurse Alice.

They decided on a Christmas wedding and they left in the spring to travel the world and would be back in two years.

Dr. Woodson moved Nurse Helen to be Shirley’s private nurse.

Nurse Helen did not say anything.

Dr. Greene and Dr. Parker looked at Nurse Helen.

Dr. Ralph and Dr. Woodson looked at her.

She smiled.

Dr. Woodson thought and said, “When?”

Nurse Helen said, “Me and Samuel will marry in the spring when he gets back from the railroad. Then I will leave with him.”

Dr. Greene said, “Congratulations.”

Nurse Helen was so excited and she did a little dance.

Dr. Woodson said, “So you can be Shirley’s private duty nurse until the spring?”

Nurse Helen said, “Yes sir. My whole family is moving with me. So I want be alone.”

Dr. Parker said, “Wonderful.”

Shirley and Lorraine gave Nurse Alice a beautiful wedding gift of nightgowns and robes.

Nurse Alice was so happy.

Ryan’s mother took over the wedding planning and had it planned to the tee.

Ryan’s father paid for their world tour.

Mrs. Perkins and Mr. Olsen became friends.

Mr. Olsen finally had a reason to get in his wheelchair and move around.

He exercised his leg and did all of his therapy.

Dr. Parker said, “I see you have a reason to get better.”

Mr. Olsen and Mrs. Perkins began to date.

After six months of therapy they were ready to leave the hospital.

Mr. Olsen did not have any family so he packed up his house and sold it to Dr. Greene.

Mr. Olsen road the train back with Mrs. Perkins, where they had a very beautiful garden wedding and tea.

Patrick and Brenda attended the beautiful wedding.

Brenda helped picked the flowers and arrange the seating.

Mrs. Perkins asked Jose to bake her a wedding cake.

Jose boarded the train with Mrs. Perkins and Mr. Olsen and baked a lemon pound cake and decorated it with fresh flowers from Mrs. Perkins garden.

Brenda helped Jose with the menu and cooking the food.

Brenda loved to cook.

She would always be in the kitchen with the cooks.

Jose and Brenda planned a light fair.

The tables were decorated with the flowers from Mrs. Perkins garden.

Betty and John Jr. were not thrilled with Mr. Olsen.

Mr. Olsen only had his military pension, but he sold his house to Dr. Greene and he put that money in the bank to pay for he and Mrs. Perkins living expenses.

Betty and John Jr went to Patrick and Brenda to talk Mrs. Perkins out of marrying Mr. Olsen.

Brenda was ten years younger than Mrs. Perkins.

She and Patrick sat and listened to Betty and John Jr.

Patrick and Brenda gave them one word answer, “No.”

Brenda was having an afternoon tea at the house and Betty and John Jr. looked around and saw the beautiful tables.  
betty said, “Oh look John.”

John Jr. said, “Are we invited.”

Brenda said, “No.”

Patrick and Brenda stood and called William to escort Betty and John Jr. out.

The mayor and governor and their wives were standing and greeting each other before they entered the mansion

Betty was bracing herself to greet the mayor and governor.

Brenda looked at William the butler and he escorted them out the side of the house.

Brenda said, “Their plan is to Genevia away and they sell her house and move into her carriage house and live off of her money.

Patrick put his hands on Brenda’s shoulders and kissed the back of her head and they laughed.

Brenda said, “I can’t stand those freeloaders.”

Patrick laughed.

They heard the knock on the door.

William ran to the door and opened it and greet the guests.

Patrick and Brenda walked out the sitting room to greet their guests.

They escort them to the backyard for their afternoon tea party.

Betty was very angry with Brenda and said to John Jr., “You saw that colored woman put us out of her house and said she would not talk your mother out of this marriage. What are we going to do?”

John Jr. said, “We may to have out of city or state.”

Betty scoffed at the idea and said, “And leave our families and friends”

John Jr. said, “Our families and friends know we don not have any money and they all are tired of us living off them. We need to get either get jobs, start a business or move out of town and get a modest house and live sensibly where no one knows us.”

Betty turned her head at the thought of work.

John Jr. looked at here and said, “We are not old. We have about thirty or forty years left to live we better do something quick.”

Betty said, “You better do something quick. I only married you because you told me you were wealthy. I had other options.”

John Jr. said, “And they all are married with wives and children.”

He stared at Betty as she was angry and looking straight ahead.

John Jr. said, “What about Philadelphia? Do you think Bruce would give both of us jobs at his railroad or shipping business.”

Betty could not speak, but turned and looked at John Jr. and said, “What? Who work?”

John Jr. said, “We have to think this thing through.”

Betty said, “Think this through without me working.”

Shirley arranged for Dr. Parker, Dr. Greene and Dr Woodson to go to Mr. Olsen and Mrs. Perkins marriage.

Patrick and Brenda insisted the doctors stayed at their mansion.

Patrick and Brenda made available three buggies to the doctors.

The doctors left the hospital late that Friday morning.

Ryan stayed at the hospital with Dr, Ralph to help out with the therapies for the patients.

Shirley gave the doctors first class treatment from rooms with beds to being picked up by Randall and the staff and having a great dinner party planned by Patrick and Brenda.

Mrs. Perkins and Mr. Olsen attended the dinner party and when they entered the mansion and saw the doctors, they screamed with excitement.

Mr. Olsen said, “How did you all get away?”

They looked around and did not see Dr. Ralph.

Mrs. Perkins said, “Dr. Ralph and Ryan stayed back. But next time they will come to.”

Everyone had a beautiful time at the dinner party.

Betty was sitting in their parlor and heard horses.

She ran to the window and saw Genevia and Ben leaving for the night all dressed up.

Betty was angry and her cheeks puffed out and she turned around with folded arms and tried to figure out where they were going with their wedding in two days.

Dr. Greene walked with Mr. Olsen and said, “You seemed to be doing fine.”

Mr. Olsen grinned.

Genevia said, “I did not heard anything Ben.”

They all laughed.

Genevia was escorted into dinner by the governor and his wife and Brenda were laughing and talking as they entered into the formal dining room.

The mayor and his wife were laughing.

Everyone was seated and the butler and walked to the door and Jose and the maids brought the dinner in.

It was very impressive.

Dr. Greene saw Jose.

Brenda looked at the doctor’s face lit up when he saw Jose.

Jose was very proud of his profession.

He took his food very serious.

Jose smiled at the doctors and walked out.

He was up late that night preparing the food for two days out.

They all went into the sitting room.

Brenda was talking to the mayor’s wife and pointed said, “All of that is stuff Eleanor is sending here.”

Patrick said, “Each week.”

Brenda said, “I can’t see how she is sightseeing if all she is doing is shopping.”

The women begin to talk about when they traveled the world.

Mrs. Perkins said, “My Willie was an ambassador. We did not get the chance to travel like we wanted. We stayed in India for ten years.”

The mayor’s wife said, “That’s a place I have not been.”

Mrs. Perkins waved her hand the women laughed.

Dr. Greene said, “Mrs. Stith, I maybe out of line but how is Eleanor doing besides shopping?”  
Brenda said, “You are not out of line Dr. Greene, you all are taking wonderful care f my grand baby.”

Brenda looked down at her glass of brandy.

Mrs. Perkins looked at her heartfelt friend.

Patrick said, “We really miss her and the boys.”

Dr. Greene said, “I am sorry.”

Patrick waved his hand and said, “We are friends and it is ok to aske about Eleanor.”

He looked at Brenda and said, “We miss our baby. The house is quiet.”

Mrs. Perkins laughed and sipped some brandy.

The governor’s wife laughed.

Patrick looked at the ladies.

The governor’s wife said, “You remember the time Eleanor fell out the tree and broke her nose.”

Patrick said, “That’s not funny.”

He shook himself.

Brenda giggled and said, “That’s not funny he still have nightmares from that.”

Brenda and the mayor’s wife laugh.

Patrick said, “All of her boys are just like that.”

The governor kicked back on the sofa and laughed.

The mayor said, “Patrick how do you and Bren manage with all of that activity?”

Patrick leaned and looked in the hallway and pointed to the liquor table.

Everyone laughed.

The doctors laughed.

Patrick said, “It went from a small cart to a bar with Eleanor and her brothers, then with Eleanor’s children it went to a full table completely stock. I did not know boys could be that rambunctious.”

Mr. Olsen said, “Come on Patrick, you were not jumping out of trees when you were a kid?”

Patrick laughed and pointed at Mr. Olsen and said, “I like this fellow. He brings things back in reality.”

Mrs. Perkins laughed.

Patrick was about to sit and he looked and saw a worried Jose.

He looked at Jose.

Mrs. Perkins peeped to see who it was.

Brenda looked and saw Jose and knew it was about Genevia’s wedding.

Jose said, “Sorry. I need to speak to Mrs. Perkins.”

Mrs. Perkins said, “It’s ok Patrick.”

Patrick sat.

Jose looked at Brenda, “She said, Jose what’s wrong?”

Jose said, “I was doing the inventory and the butcher did not send the correct amount of lamb chops for the second meat and I have to prepare the meat tonight.”

Patrick sighed.

Brenda looked at Patrick.

Patrick shook his head and said, “I thought it was something earth shaking.”

He pointed at the mayor and governor and said, “Something the mayor or governor had to use their power to fix.”

Everyone laughed.

Jose did not laugh.

Mrs. Perkins stood and walked to Jose and said, “Jose I know you are very serious about giving me your best luncheon for my wedding. Look at us. We are happy being around good friends. I dare not say family.”

Everybody but the doctors laughed.

The mayor’s wife said, “May I suggest chicken salad.”

She quickly looked at Brenda and they laughed.

Brenda picked her feet off the floor laughing she was laughing so hard.

Genevia was thinking and said, “That’s not a bad idea.”

Brenda stopped laughing and said, “I know you all love my chicken salad with grapes, apples, raisins and walnuts but I will not have time to do that because I will be with Gen all tomorrow to get the flowers ready.”

Genevia said, “That’s right. Jose you make everything good. I trust you.”

Jose smiled and walked out.

Brenda peeped to make sure Jose was gone.

Patrick was sitting next to Dr. Greene and said, “Watch.”

The governor grinned.

Brenda said, “Patrick you know how sensitive Jose is about his cooking.”

Patrick said, “It’s food.”

Brenda waved her hand at Patrick they all laughed.

Patrick said, “I have never seen a person that would be upset if a meatball is not perfectly round.”

Brenda said, “Eleanor.”

Patrick pointed at Brenda and said, “Your right.”

Mrs. Perkins said, “You remember that night that Jose burned the prime rib roast?”

The mayor hit his leg and hollered.

He said could barely talk, “I could not believe the man did not run.”

Brenda was looking for Jose.

The mayor’s wife was leaning backwards watching for Jose.

Mrs. Perkins said, “Just remember he is cooking my wedding lunch.”

They continued to laugh and talk about another hour.

The carriages were waiting outside.

Patrick and Brenda walked their guests to the door.

Dr. Greene, Dr. Parker and Dr. Woodson stood and watched Mrs. Perkins and Mr. Olsen.

They were so proud of their recovery.

The next morning Dr. Greene, Dr. Woodson and Dr. Parker joined Patrick and Brenda for breakfast before she left for Mrs. Perkins.

Jose was sleep.

He prepared all the food last night.

He only had to prepare the pound cake later that day and go and picked the flower and decorate the cake the next morning.

Brenda was taking two maids with her that would stay overnight with Mrs. Perkins to help with the decorations and setting the tables.

Brenda knew she had to take Danielle. Because they would not have anything ready between she and Jose.

Dr. Woodson said, “Did Eleanor say how they like the sail to Europe?”

Dr. Parker said, “Is that at six to eight week sail?’

Patrick and Brenda held their heads down.

Dr. Greene said, “Sir and ma am, we don’t mean to pry or bring up anything that is hurtful or cause you pain. We met Eleanor only for that short week and she was extraordinary. We like her and only ask after her welfare for that reason.”

Patrick said, “We know you are good men and honorable. Our grandchildren love you. Next time see if you bring Dr. Ralph.”

Patrick looked at Brenda who was quiet.

Patrick leaned forward and said, “Eleanor nearly died on the way to Europe.”

Dr. Woodson and Dr. Greene looked at Patrick.

Patrick painfully said, “Did you know she was pregnant?”

Dr. Greene and Dr. Woodson said, “Yes.”

Patrick said, “She was unconscious for most of the voyage. She was terribly ill and lost the baby. But a week before they landed in Europe she started to stay awake and get better. She stayed in the house they rented in Paris for a month before she was well enough to walk.”

Brenda said, “It was just horrible. We got telegrams from the workers each week. I was trying to think how to get my daughter and grandchildren. I could not think the terror they were going through. I could only think of my grandbaby thrown overboard or put in the ship’s incinerator fire.”

Patrick hugged Brenda and said, “Hush Bren. All you are doing is getting yourself upset.”

Brenda said, “Then that little slut Sharon trying to get Bruce.”

Dr. Greene said, “How did you know about that?”

Brenda said, “We got ears. I have to go and get those maids, especially Danielle. Because if she and Jose get together they will ruin Gen’s wedding tomorrow.”

The doctors grinned.

Dr. Greene said, “You truly have a beautiful home.”

Patrick said, “Thank you.”

Brenda looked at the doctors and said, “I want to thank you for how you treated Gen and got her back moving.”

Dr. Woodson said, “Did you know Michael took some of his trust money and paid us and the accounts. So he really is the hospital administrator.”

Brenda and Patrick laughed.

Dr. Woodson said, “Eleanor got the books in order and gave them to Shirley to pay everybody. At first I was not in agreement with it because Shirley had to concentrate on getting better.”

Brenda said, “How is Shirley?”

Dr. Greene said, “Spoiled little Shirley.”

Brenda said, “Isn’t she.”

They all laughed.

Dr. Greene said, “She is better than when she first came to us. She has a long way to go. If her legs had not been broken we could have her walking.”

Patrick and Brenda looked at Dr. Greene in pain.

Dr. Woodson said, “She is a smart cookie. She pays us every week. She pays the hospital’s accounts. The projects Eleanor started Shirley manages them.”

Dr. Greene said, “We don’t say anything because Shirley is getting experience at running a business and it helps her keep her mind off her pain a lot.”

Dr. Greene aid, “Michael would go and sit in the hospital administrator’s office.”

Patrick said, “And do what?”

Dr. Woodson said, “Suck his pop and swirl in the chair.”

Patrick said, “Like the rest of us executives.”

Everyone laughed.

Brenda touched Patrick’s face and rubbed her face against on his and he kissed her cheek.

The maids walked in the family dining room and spoke.

Brenda stood and told the maids she was on her way.

She said, “Doctors enjoy your day. You have made me feel better about those grandchildren I have not seen.”

Brenda walked out to the buggy and she and the two maids went to Genevia and worked all day to get everything ready for the next morning.

Betty came over and was standing around.

She started telling Danielle and Sylvia which flowers to pick.

Brenda said, “Betty why are you talking to my maids? We have discussed the flowers and the arrangements. If you are not going to help cut the flowers that will go into the arrangement then leave my maids along.”

Genevia stood and looked at Betty.

Betty turned and walked home.

Mr. Olsen left that morning and went for a shave and to have his boots polished.

Brenda knew Sylvia and Danielle they would jump on Betty.

Mrs. Perkins said, “Bren I only have that one child. But I am tired of him. I believe he is trying to find a job. He better. His money is gone from his trust his father left him. He went to the bank and was trying to get money from my account. The bank would not do it. He had the nerves to come to me and tell me he was trying to get my money.”

Brenda shook her head.

Danielle and Sylvia listened as they cut the flowers.

Mrs. Perkins said, “The workers quit this week because they were not paid. I told them I was not going to pay their bills. The coal man came here to collect his money. I told Him not to come to me, because I did not make that bill for them. If I start paying their bills that means I am taking care of them. I am not going to do it. I want this marriage to Ben to last. I am going to sell the house and stay here with Ben.”

Brenda said, “I will agree with that.”

Mrs. Perkins had one housekeeper, who did the difficult chores such as laundry and scouring around her house.

Mrs. Perkins told Brenda that she and Ben could live fine off what she had left from her husband and his navy retirement.

She told Brenda Ben sold his house to Dr. Greene.

The four women stood at the tables and arranged the flowers.

They were pleasantly surprised at Mrs. Perkins housekeeper Olivia who brought them watercress sandwiches and tea.

The women sat on the ground and enjoyed their lunch.

Danielle, Sylvia and Olivia sat separate from Brenda and Mrs. Perkins.

T was a beautiful breezy day and the sun’s heat was light upon their faces.

Mrs. Perkins told Brenda, “Guess who arranged the sale of Ben’s house and did the loan for the house?”

Brenda was baffled and leaned forward to try and think.

Brenda said, “And I know the person?”

Mrs. Perkins sipped some tea and looked at Brenda over her tea and grinned and said, “You know the person quite well.”

Brenda thought for a moment.

Mrs. Perkins said, “You give up?”

Brenda thought, “I don’t know anyone in Philadelphia but Bruce and Bruce won’t help no one.”

Brenda said, “Who?”

Mrs. Perkins laughed, “Shirley.”

Brenda was so confused and said, “Shirley?”

Mrs. Perkins said, “Your Shirley.”

Brenda was mumbling Shirley and then the shock wore off and Brenda mouth dropped open and she held her hand over her mouth and screamed, “Shirley. My Shirley?”

Brenda and Mrs. Perkins laughed.

The maids looked at the two old women laughing and enjoying each other company.

Olivia said, “I hope to have fun and friends I can have fun with when I am old.”

Danielle nodded, because she was thinking about Jose.

Sylvia was sipping her tea and watching Brenda and Mrs. Perkins and said, “Me too.”

Ben rode to the house and dismounted his horse.

He took the horse around back and walked around to the front of the house.

He spoke to the maids and nodded and said, “Good afternoon young ladies. You look quite lovely letting the sun so delicately shine upon you.”

The maids giggled.

Mrs. Perkins and Brenda listened to Ben and the maids’ giggles.

Mrs. Perkins said, “I’m not concern about another woman, because they all know he does not have any money.

Mrs. Perkins lifted her head up to see Ben.

Ben walked over and got on one knee and kissed Mrs. Perkins on her lips.

Brenda grinned and was happy that her old friend had found a late life love after ten years of being alone.

Mrs. Perkins and Ben grinned in each other’s face.

Brenda was satisfied that they would be happy.

Mrs. Perkins said, “Ben I was just telling Bren about who did your sell of your house to Dr. Greene.”

Ben was so excited.

He looked at Brenda and said, “Your baby.”

Brenda was still shocked.

Ben waved his hand and said, “From start to finish was calm. She knew the papers to get and had the notary there and she even backed the sale with her own money.”

Brenda said, “What?”

Ben said, “I went with Dr. Greene that day to the bank and the banker kept going over the papers. Dr. Greene and I looked at each other each time the banker went over the papers…”

Ben put his hand on his hip and said the banker,” Then finally he exclaimed. ‘These papers are perfect. I never seen an unflawed document before.’ He refused to give Dr. Greene the loan for the mortgage.”

Mrs. Perkins said, “Ben?”

Ben waved his hand and looked at Brenda.

Brenda looked at Gen because she saw her distress.

Ben said, “We got back to the hospital and told Shirley how great her papers were and the banker was very impressed. She just grinned. That little Michael was there and you know what that little boy said Brenda?”

Brenda shook her head for no.

Ben said, “Dr. Greene where’s your mortgage? I nearly passed out. Dr. Greene was so shocked he was speechless. Then Shirley looked at Michael and she slowly turned and looked shocked Dr. Greene.”

Patrick had come and was standing behind the three listening to Ben.

Patrick over with a picnic basket in his hand and said, “Good afternoon. I see all of you are eating lunch.”

Ben said, “Not me.”

Patrick was hesitant and sat down next to Brenda and spread out the tablecloth over the ladies’ legs.

Patrick said, “Ben, you were talking about Dr. Greene did not get the mortgage from the bank…”

Patrick saw Mrs. Perkins was distraught and he saw the concern on Brenda’s face.

He was worried that Ben did not have any money to help support Mrs. Perkins.

Patrick said, “Ladies do you care for lunch?”

Brenda and Genevia said, “No.”

Ben said, “I want some lunch.”

Ben reached for a sandwich and tea.

Patrick looked over at the maids and offered them the picnic basket.

Danielle walked over and got the picnic basket and said, “Thank you.”

She was ready to get back to the mansion to see Jose.

Patrick looked at Ben who was enjoying his sandwich of roast beef with olives and pickles.

Patrick said, “Continue Ben.”

Ben was so excited.

Brenda looked at Patrick and got an olive.

She leaned her head towards him, and he kissed her forehead and said, “I put an extra olive, because I knew you would get that one.”

Genevia did not turn around but her eyes were fixed on Ben Olsen.

Ben said, “Good beef. Dr. Greene told Michael, no I did not get that mortgage. You know what that little boy said?”

Brenda was leaning on Patrick chest, she felt his heart beating fast.

Patrick said, “No.”

Ben said, “That little boy said, I’ll pay for the house and Dr. Greene you pay me back each week you get paid. I won’t charge you interest.”

Brenda and Patrick mouths dropped open.

Mrs. Perkins turned to Brenda and tapped her leg and said, “Didn’t I tell you how smart those kids are.”

Brenda was still stunned.

Ben said, “Dr. Greene declined and said, ‘Thank you.’ We left out Shirley’s room. Michael gets up and close the door. I did not think anything about it. I went and talked to Gen.”

Mrs. Perkins said, “You did not say anything.”

Patrick was still listening because he was not going to take care of Gen and Ben.

Ben said, “I went and took my therapy and slept for a few hours. I was awaken by a soft knocking on my door. It was Michael. He brought his dad and Dr. Greene. Michael said Mr. Olsen sell your house to friend, Dr. Greene and dad will take the hospital’s money and loan it to Dr. Greene and Shirley will take the money out of Dr. Greene’s pay each week to pay back the loan.”

Ben began to cry.

He held his wrist to his mouth.

Brenda clapped her hands.

Patrick felt good that his grandchildren were learning business practices and making good decisions.

Mrs. Perkins looked at Ben, her eyes swell with tears.

Ben was sniffing and said, “Those children were a God send to that hospital. They turned that hospital around. They turned lives around. I was met to meet and marry the love of my life. I never been married and I don’t have but one nephew. I don’t know him nor where he is. I made the navy my life. I retired at the end of the civil war with this bad leg. After six months at the hospital I was improved but I stayed until Gen was better.”

Mrs. Perkins hit Ben.

She said, “You scoundrel. Someone else needed that bed.”

Ben said, “I needed it more.”

Brenda laughed.

Patrick being the more practical said, “Ben if the sale of the house had not gone through?’

Ben said. “I would have married Mrs. Perkins and kept my little house and lived off my pension. I had a little farm out in the country where I let it out and the farmers would bring me vegetables and fruits each season.”

Ben looked at Mrs. Perkins and said, “Gen I would not let you go.”

Mrs. Perkins tears begin to fall off her cheek.

Brenda hit Gen’s hand.

Patrick said, “That meant we had to travel to Philadelphia for the wedding and missed this beautiful garden.”

The three maids were listening.

Sylvia and Olivia were sniffing.

Danielle was sipping her tea and thinking this afternoon with Jose.

Patrick and Ben helped with the floral decorations and sitting out the tables and chairs.

Mrs. Perkins said, “It’s going to be fifty people at the most.”

Ben said, “Oh, Gen when I was at the shoe shiner this man saw walked to me and asked if I was Mrs. Perkins going to be husband?”

Gen and Bren stopped to listen.

Ben said, “He is coming to our wedding tomorrow and it is talk of the town.”

Gen said, “Who could that be?”

Bren said, “I don’t know.”

Brenda tried to think who they invited.

Ben said, “The man said his wife broke her hip and she has been in pain for over a yea. He said people are talking about how good you look and moving around without pain. He wants to see you and see if this hospital is any good. I said, Sir you will see us dance tomorrow.”

Brenda and Genevia looked at each other and screamed.

Patrick and Ben looked at the nervous women.

Danielle jumped out of her fantasy with Jose.

Olivia was walking out the house to leave for the day.

Sylvia dropped the last basket of flowers.

Patrick was trying to figure out why the women screamed as they did.

He snapped his finger.

Ben turned and looked at him.

Patrick said, “You forgot the band. The music for tomorrow.”

Brenda said, “How could we forget that?”

Olivia ran off the porch and said, “I got a band for you.”

Genevia put her hands on her hips and said, “Look Missy it is my wedding with the governor and mayor. I don’t want no no name band.”

Olivia broke out singing.

Genevia said, “I am her manager.”

Danielle and Sylvia clapped.

Patrick said, “Damn.”

He turned to complete putting up the table.

Olivia nearly ran home.

Brenda was standing in shock and said, “Gen?”

Gen said, “I never knew.”

She looked over at Brenda’s two maids and said, “What you two do?”

Brenda waved her hand with the other hand up to her throat and said, “Nothing but whores.”

Genevia whispered, “They heard you.”

Brenda said, “I want Olivia to perform at my Fourth of July celebration.”