Skip, Wallace, Porter and the armed soldiers escorted Malcolm to the headquarters office.

The office soldiers watched the commanders return with Malcolm.

Malcolm sat in the chair in front of Skip’s desk.

Arnold pulled a chair and sat next to Malcolm.

Malcolm looked at Arnold to let him know he did not intimidate him.

Arnold looked at Malcolm.

Harold puled up a chair and sat on the other side of Malcolm.

Malcolm looked at Arnold and Harold and shuddered as if he was scared.

Arnold said, “You have no room for Mistakes.”

Skip looked at Malcolm.

Commanders Greene and Adams returned from their interrogation of Commander Vincent.

Commander Adams pushed Commander Greene into Skip’s office.

Skip jumped from his desk.

Arnold jumped from his chair.

The armed soldiers stood and look.

Malcolm looked at Harold and bucked his eyes and nodded.

Harold looked at Malcolm.

Malcolm said, “You too old to move.”

Harold did not say anything but looked at Malcolm, because he was tired.

Skip looked at his commanders and said, “What is this?”

Neither commander said anything.

Skip looked at both commanders and said,”Guards! will not ask again.”

Commander Adams pointed at Commander Greene.

Commanders Wallace and Porter were walking in the office with the response from the telegram.

They stood still when Skip called the guards.

Commander Greene sat in a chair.

Skip looked at him.

Commander Adams said, “He jumped on him.”

Skip looked at Commander Adams.

All the commanders including Malcolm turned and looked at Commander Greene.

When Commander Greene saw Malcolm looking at him he looked at Malcolm and said, “It’s all your fault.”

Malcolm said, “Your height makes you aggressive.”

Commander Greene jumped up and ran to Malcolm.

Malcolm jumped in the air and kicked Greene back into the table and caused him to fall on the floor.

Commanders Arnold and Harold looked at Commander Greene.

The armed guards said, “Whoa.”

Malcolm looked at the armed guards and bowed.

He looked at Harold and said, “You are old and frail and slow. That’s why Andrew trained the guards to surround your old asses in the field.”

Commanders Wallace, Greene and Porter were fifty years old.

Commander Arnold was fifty five years old.

Skip and Harold were sixty years old.

Skip was angry.

He wondered where Andrew was. He did not give him the evening off as they were in the midst of turmoil.

Skip looked at the dismayed Commanders Wallace and Porter and reached for the telegram.

Wallace handed the telegram to Skip.

Malcolm was still standing.

Arnold was looking at Commander Greene.

Commander Greene was struggling to get up.

Commander Adam was forty years old. He was very angry with Commander Greene.

He stared at him and would not help him get up.

Skip read the telegram and held it in front of Malcolm.

Malcolm read it and said, “That’s your answer.”

Malcolm held down his head and lifted his head up and looked at Skip.

Skip told the office soldier to send a telegram to the governor’s lead security aide and give him the name in the telegram.

 Jake got the horses and hooked them to the wagon.

He locked his house and road to the command post.

He sentries would not let him in.

Jake looked at the sentries and said,”I know you don’t know. I am Skip Costner’s brother. I need to get an urgent message to him about this case he asked me to investigate. Captain Chester knows, what I am talking about.”

The sentries looked at Jake.

Jake looked at the command tent and said, “Go and get Captain Chester.”

The sentries looked at Jake and one said to another sentry, “I did see the commander at a house in the town.”

The other sentry said, “What is your message?”

 Jake stood up in the wagon and was looking in the command post.

He said, “Where is your captain?”

The sentry said, “Tell us the message and we will send the telegram.”

The sentry yelled, “Foster!!!”

Foster walked out the tent.

He saw Jake.

Jake looked at Foster and said,”Did you send Skip my message?”

Foster said, “Yes.”

Jake said, “Did you get an acknowledgement back from headquarters?”

Foster said, “No sir.”

Jake yelled, “Where is your captain?”

No one said anything.

Jake said, “This is unacceptable.”

The sentries looked at Jake sideways, like who is he.

Jake said, “Foster re send the telegram to Skip. I need to know what he wants me to do?”

Foster looked at Jake.

Jake yelled, “Now!”

The sentries looked at Jake, like he had control over them.

Foster turned and went into the office and sent the telegram to Skip that Jake wanted to know what he wanted him to do and he was asking for the captain.

The headquarters telegram machine started to run.

Everyone stood and waited.

The office soldier sent the name to the governor’s lead security aide.

The lead was in the telegram office looking over the logged telegram.

The governor’s telegram begin to run.

The telegram worker took the telegram off the machine and handed it to the lead.

The governor’s lead security aide was sitting in a chair with his legs crossed reading the log in chart for the telegrams.

He noticed two dates of telegrams were missing.

He read the telegram from Skip and smiled.

He looked at the telegram and said, “Find these two dates of missing telegrams.”

He handed the mand the chart and stared at him.

The man said, “Sir. How?”

The lead security aide stood and walked out the door.

The telegram worker said, “Sir. You have to sign for that.”

The lead security aide turned and walked bac and signed for the telegram.

He looked at the telegram worker and said, “That is what you supposed to have said to whoever took those telegrams. So find the telegrams and find out the who.”

The security aides that were lined up and down the hall looked at the lead security aide as he left the telegram office.

They knew it was trouble.

The office soldier ripped the telegram off the machine and ran and gave it to Skip.

Skip looked around and said, “Commanders Porter and Bentley I need you to get ready to leave and investigate the saddles. I do not need for you to go alone.”

Malcolm turned and sat down.

Arnold looked at Malcolm like he was crazy.

Malcolm looked at Arnold.

Harold was still staring at Malcolm for calling him old.

Skip said, “Commander Whatley what did you learn about the horses? Where did we buy them from? And who trained the horses?”

Commander Whatley said, “We can’t follow sir.”

Skip said, “Why?’

Commander Whatley said, “Because the horses were split up and sent to different troops throughout the state.”

Skip thought and sat at his desk.

He wrote an order and gave it to the office soldier.

The office soldier ran to the telegram machine.

Skip said, “I am worried about Chester. He has no backup. Give me the rooster of the men in his troops.”

The telegram came through from Skip.

Foster, Glover, Todd ran out the office and saluted Jake.

The sentries looked at the office soldiers.

Foster handed the telegram to Jake.

Jake smiled.

He said very slowly, “Where is Captain Chester?”

Foster said, “Sir he went to the soldiers at the brook.”

Jake said, “Why?”

Foster said, “He found out that there were too many men in the troop and they…”

Jake said, “Yea, yea. They were the enemy. An old trick. Sneak in and use you for a cover. Always remember that.”

The sentries looked at Jake.

Jake stepped out the wagon.

Glover said, “Sir, you want to come in the office?”

Jake did not say anything he stood by the sentries and said, “Something just don’t feel right.”

He began to walk through the camp and said, “Come.”

The sentries did not know if Jake was talking to them or talking to the office soldiers.

Marc and Joseph walked out the dining tent and saw Jake.

Marc and Joseph were not that forgiving of Jake.

Jake saw them and said, “What are your assigned duties?”

Marc and Joseph looked at Jake.

Jake put the telegram order signed By Skip that Jake was temporarily restored to the military and to be over the troops until Chester returned.

Marc and Joseph were so shocked they stared at Jake.

Jake said, “Something is not right here.”

Jake pointed at the ground for that camp.

Foster said, “The fifteen contractors were found to be assassins and had battery guns and weapons.”

Marc and Joseph were shocked and did not know.

Jake said, “Where are they?”

Foster ran in front of Jake to lead the way.

Jake started walking and stopped and said, “You two come with me.”

They stood and looked at Jake.

Jake stared at Marc and Joseph.

They looked at Foster and then at the piece of paper in Jake’s hand.

Jake saw them looking at the piece of paper and they knew he and Skip were friends.

They slowly walk behind Jake.

Jake walked in the tent and counted twenty seven assassins.

He said to Foster, “That is too many here.”

He looked at March and Joseph and said, “You two and change and take both of your guns and gag your mouths but sit near the contractors and watch their every move.”

Marc and Joseph ran to their tents.

Jake to Foster, “Tell them to change their shoes and socks.”

He said to the sentries, “I want you sentries to move out the tent and don’t have any light in the tent.”

Jake looked around and said, “I need three of you sentries to switch the name tags of three of the false soldiers. Take the three false soldiers and run them to the tent where their weapons are. The rest of the sentries I need you to out from the camp.”

Jake walked a distance out the camp with the forty seven sentries and looked around and he said, get extra ammunition and break up in nine groups of five, here and he ran with the groups of five.”

There were two sentries left.

Jake said, “You two go to the weapons tent and have the lights off and have your ammunition ready.”

The two sentries had their weapons and ammunition ready.

Glover walked out the captain’s office and said, “Sir, the other troop is not ready.”

Jake said, “What troop?”

Glover said, “The troop in the new settlement.”

The third in command was in his tent resting because he had returned from the town.

He ran to Jake and said, “Sir.”

Jake remembered him from the church service.

Jake said, “Skip has activated me.”

He showed Richard the order.

Richard said,”Whoa.”

He saluted Jake.

Jake looked at his uniform and said, “What is your position?”

Ricard said, “Third in command.”

Jake said, “I forty five sentries in nine groups of five around the perimeter of the camp.

I got two sentries in the tent with the weapons and…”

He pointed to Marc and Joseph and said, “Three sentries in the tent with the prisoners and the three prisoners moved to the weapons tent. You take over here, Everyone is in place. I am going to check on the troop at the new settlement,”

Jake looked at Glover then his name tag and said, “Does the team have weapons?”

Glover said, “Yes Sir.”

Jake said, “Let’s go.”

Glover jumped on his horse.

Jake said to Foster, “Send a telegram to Skip that I will do it until Captain Chester returns.”

Foster ran into the office and sent the telegram to Skip.

The telegram was being received in headquarters.

Skip saw four of his twelve were in that troop.

He wondered if they were with the governor.

He told his office soldier to send and ask for the list of soldiers at the governor’s tent.

He read the confirmation from Jake.

Skip had peace for that troop.

Skip had not thought about the other troop or the house with Betsy.

He jumped up. And stood.

Everyone looked at him.

Skip said, “I need to hear from Chester.”

Jake flew behind Glover and he looked to his left and saw the cute house and realized that’s where the governor is.

They ran to Chester’s troop.

Jake untied his horses from the wagon.

He said, “Blow the horn and call the troop together at your gathering place.”

Glover looked at Jake.

Jake looked at Glover and said, “You don’t follow protocol?”

Jake looked around and said, “How do you gather?”

The second in command walked out the office and said, “Who are you and what are you doing and where is Captain Chester?”

Glover said,”Skip activated him and put him over all the troops until Chester comes back.”

Ferguson stood in shock and turned and looked at Jake in overalls and a thermal shirt.

Glover said, “Sir show him the telegram.”

Jake waved the telegram.

Jake looked around and said, “Get a horn and blow it now.”

Glover went into the office and grabbed the horn to blow.

Ferguson grabbed Glover’s arm and said, “You are not blowing that horn.”

Everyone in the office looked at Ferguson.

Jake put gun to Ferguson’s head.

Ferguson held up his hands.

Jake said, “Get me some sentries in here now.

Woodsen ran and got the sentries.

The sentries ra into the office with their guns pointed at Jake.

Jake said, “Not me. Him. Get the paper out of my overall pocket.”

The big sentry went into Jake’s pocket and pulled the telegram and said, “Whoa.”

Glover said, “I was there when it came through.”

The big sentry handed the telegram order to the other sentry.

They looked at Jake.

Jake said, “Arrest him. And put him in the stocks.”

The sentries looked at Jake.

Jake said, “Stocks. You don’t say that anymore?”

The sentries did not say anything.

Jake said, “Where do you put the prisoners?”

The big sentry said, “No where. The captain either immediately sent them to the capitol or terminated the soldiers.

Jake said, “Bind his hands and feet and gag his mouth”

Jake looked around and was thinking.

He said, “Put him behind that desk.”

He turned to Glover and said, “Blow that horn.”

Glover ran out the office and blew the horn.

The soldiers looked up at the office and said, “What is that.”

The cook from the cute house had been in the troop for a while playing cards.

He stood up and ran out the tent to see better.

He said, “That horn means it is an emergency. I better go.”

The cook and jumped on his horse and flew down the seven and a half miles to his station.

When he got back to his station.

He saw Wes standing on the porch.

The cook looked around at everyone and tied the horse and went back to the tent and got his gun.

The soldiers in the troop ran towards the office.

Jake introduced himself as the temporary commander until Captain Chester returns.

Jake said, “Expect trouble this evening into the morning. I don’t want anyone to die. You are a little short. Check your guns and ammunition.“

Jake said, “Is anyone here from the beginning of the settlement?”

A soldier stepped forward.

Jake said, “How many civilians are near you?”

The soldier counted and said, “Four.”

Jake said, “Tell them to take cover.”

Jake looked around at the open settlement and thought about the time he and Skip fought in the desert.

Jake said, “Form a horseshoe around this camp down to the governor’s tent. Face the brook. Understand?”

The soldiers understood what Jake was saying.

They ran and put on their boots and wrapped themselves in the blankets.

The soldiers had their guns and rifles ready.

Jake rode back and forth checking the soldiers.

He said, “Let the fires burn out.”

Jake went and got two rifles and ammunitions.

He stood by the shed that was near Shelia’s old campsite.

Jake stoop down and sat on the ground.

He left his horse at the office.

He was thinking about how strange the horses were acting that evening.

Jake said, “These are old tricks but I hope they work today.”

He waited with the troop.