The captain sat and tried eating an early dinner.

His mind was full.

His command office was quiet.

The men knew something strange was happening.

The captain sent half his troop into the town.

He increased the number of security around the governor.

He sent for more supplies.

Two additional troops would be arriving the next day.

The state was on high alert.

An investigation revealed a mysterious cell in the military of elite assassins.

The first trial of the twelve men gave a sentence of twenty years without parole.

The vice governor, his wife and his staff are banned from the governor’s mansion, because his brother was one of the assassins.

The vice governor was bound. He could do nothing. The governor signed many bills and had them enacted before the assassination attempt.

The troop medic was missing.

No one knew anything about him. He was quiet and kept to himself reading comic books.

Now a smudge could be on the captain’s impeccable military record.

The captain would face head on all the difficulties.

The second in command was ready to go to training for a year so he can become a captain and have a troop.

Everyone is expecting much more to come.

All of the above are problems he has trained to resolve, but he must tell the three about the list.

He had not decided on whether Joshua should know or not. Maybe he should tell the three and they decide, but now or later Joshua has to know.

One of his office men walked to him.

The captain looked up.

The soldier reached a telegram.

The captain read the telegram.

The captain requested one troop of soldiers camp at the beginning of the town.

The captain telegrammed him they had arrive and would be relieving his ten soldiers, whether to send back to command or another location.

The captain said, “Telegram for them to come back to the command tonight.

The captain was sitting in his office writing reports when he heard the ten soldiers enter the command.

He put his pen down.

And went out and welcome the men back.

Soldier Bishop saluted the captain and said, “We would have like to stay sir.”

The captain knew Bishop was a Christian man and he said, “You finished your warfare there now turn it here.”

The captain turned and walked back in his office.

Bishop stood for a minute.

Then he turned and looked at the other soldiers who were trying to make out what the captain was talking about.

The ten soldiers looked around the camp and started walking through the camp,

They saw the camp was really empty besides the office soldiers and the kitchen help.

They went to the kitchen help and sat in the tent.

Bishop said, “Cap, what’s going on?”

The kitchen helped peeped around and walked quickly to the two tables and said, “We really don’t know. But one of our men is missing after the assassination attempt on the governor and his wife. An investigation found assassins in the military. Don’t come back complaining about the food!”

The escort for the governor’s children walked in for dinner.

One of the kitchen help brought four plates to the soldiers.

The other two soldiers brought plates to the other soldiers.

The escort soldier for the governor’s children turned and walked back out.

All the soldiers looked at him.

One of the kitchen soldiers went and peeped out the tent to see where he went.

He told the rest, “He went back to the captain’s office.”

He turned from the tent door and said, ”Let’s pray. There is great evil amongst us. Now there is no trust because there are secret enemies and traitors.”

The soldiers bowed their heads and prayed.

The cook told them, “You’ll back here for a reason. That troop got here early, they were not to be here until in the morning around ten am. So God is in this. Whatever He had you’ll to do in that town you must have done it well. Amen.”

The soldiers started stomping their feet and hitting the tables.

The escort soldier for the governor’s children walked in and stood.

He looked at them and said. “I’ll wait to eat in the morning.”

Bishop said, “Soldiers, Sleep with your guns and have your boots on.”

The other soldier said, “Let’s tend to the horses and get some rest or sleep.”

The ten soldiers walked out the kitchen tent and went to their area of the campsite and prepared for bed.

Two of the soldiers had sentry duty.

The escort told them the captain said to start at midnight so they can get some sleep before they start.

The two are the two the strange man was concerned about.

The new commander, the strange man and the scribe of the town watched them.

The two soldiers went to their tents and took a four hour nap.

The captain’s office was dark.

But the captain was sleep on his sleeping bag in his office.

He was dressed and had his gun pointed at the tent door.

No one knew he was there.

He was troubled.

He did not know where the enemy was anymore. Evidence pointed to his troop.

The captain thought he made many sleepless nights before. As he was thinking about the abundant problems he was facing.

The captain smiled as he found himself waking up and being refreshed after about four hours of sleep.

He laid on his back.

He was still and thinking about Mattie, Betsy and Emma.

He thought Joshua,”…your momma or my momma”.

Bruce smiled and thought that boy and he heard a step on a dried leaf by his head.

He thought and slowing turned his head to the tent wall.

He heard another cracked and he clicked his gun and raised his head.

He eased out of his sleeping bag and followed the sound of the footsteps. The foot steps ended at the his tent door.

The person was entering backwards into the tent and looking around in the dark.

The captain scooted backwards away from the door and behind his desk to see who it was and what they were doing.

The person lit a match.

Bruce saw the light reflecting off the tent wall.

He peeped and saw the face of the medic.

Bruce held his gun to shoot.

A thought came to him, “If you kill him you will not know what he is doing.”

Bruce sat and watched.

The medic went to the telegram machine and began to send a telegram.

He stopped and waited.

An half hour later a response came back.

The two soldiers on sentry duty heard the telegram machine and eased into the tent.

They pointed their guns at the medic.

Bruce was about to get up and he could not move.

He looked around and was trying to understand why he could not move.

The strange man was holding the captain’s shoulder so he could not move.

The strange man said to the captain, “Wait and be quiet.”

The captain watched the three men.

The medic put up his hands and said, “I can give you money. Just let me get that telegram.”

One of the sentries said, “What money?”

The other said, “You are that medic they are looking for. Where did you get money from.?”

The medic said, “You don’t need to know that. I can give you money to let me get that telegram.”

The first sentry said, “Where’s the money?”

The medic said, “I can get it to you before daybreak.”

The first sentry said, “Why daybreak?”

The medic said, “You don’t need to know.”

The second sentry said, “Where do we meet you?”

The medic said, “By the lake. At daybreak.”

The second sentry said, “There are two troops there.”

The medic said, “Not for long.”

The first sentry said, “What do you mean. You better not hurt not one of those soldiers. What is all of this about?”

The second sentry said, “The governor. Why yall hate him?”

The medic said, “Nobody hates the governor. It’s all about money and who controls the railroads.”

The second sentry said,”If I am joining you, who do I work for?”

The medic said, “You don’t need to know.”

The first sentry said, “That’s all you have said. Suppose all of this is a lie you made up. Let’s shoot him and tell them we caught him reed handed with the telegram.

The second sentry said, “Where have you been hiding?”

The first sentry said, “You don’t need to know that.”

The second sentry said, “OK. You can get the telegram. You better meet us in the morning at daybreak.”

The first sentry said, “Get the telegram.”

The medic got the telegram and peeped out the tent he ran out the tent.

The two sentries said to each other, “Come on.”

Bruce was devastated.

He sat and cried.

A half hour later the telegram machine sent a message.

The telegram machines were on and everyone was getting the message.

Bruce heard the telegram.

He wiped his nose and slide over to the tent door and peeped for the two sentries.

He saw them at the end of the command post talking.

Bishop and the soldiers read the telegram and went to the captain’s tent.

They did not see the captain and did not know what to think.

The soldiers at the lake mounted and went and showed the telegram to the other soldiers at the lake.

They all met and sent a telegram to the third in command to meet them by the lake.

Bishop did not see the captain.

The soldiers decided to split and look for the captain.

They saw the two sentries talking.

Bishop ran to them followed by the cook and two soldiers.

Bishop said,”Look at this telegram we got.”

The two sentries read the telegram.

Bishop hesitantly said, “Brothers in Christ you don’t act surprised.”

The two sentries looked at each other and lifted their guns and fired on Bishop, the cook and two of the soldiers from the brook.

The captain was watching from the tent.

The other soldiers ran from their search of the captain.

They were met with gun fire from the two sentries.

The men fell back.

The two sentries ran to the horses and got on the horses and were riding out of the camp.

Bruce emerged and started shooting at them.

Bishop said,”Captain.”

The other soldiers got on their horses and pursued the two sentries.

The captain heard Bishop.

Bishop was in much pain.

The other three soldiers were dead.

They were standing with JESUS and the holy angels.

The troop that had just arrived, heard the gunfire.

A group mounted and was riding to the command post.

The third in command heard the gunfire.

They all mounted their horses and began to ride to the command post.

The captain from the troop who had arrived mounted his horse and rode behind his men.

The two sentries fired at the new soldiers and turned and went down the street to the abandoned buildings.

The devil worshippers were in the building.

They fell on the floor when they heard the gunfire.

The captain and the escort soldier went to Bishop.

The captain looked at Bishop wound.

The captain said, “JESUS.”

Bishop said, “That’s where I am going. Give all my money to my momma. Move her and my family here. JESUS loves you captain.”

Bishop opens were opened because he was looking at JESUS who was standing by the captain.

JESUS told Bishop to tell the captain HE loves him.

Bishop was bowing before JESUS.

JESUS, Bishop and the three soldiers walked into heaven.

The captain and the escort were bending on one knee to Bishop and the other three soldiers when the captain of the other troop and his men rode into the command post.

The two sentries ran into the building where the devil worshippers were hiding.

They were looking out the cracks and saw the third in command and the soldiers by the lake ride passed on the other street.

They ran out the building and jumped on their horses and ran by the lake into the woods of the next town and laid low until daybreak.

They did not talk to each other.

The other soldiers returned to the command and saw Bishop and the others dead.

The captain took the telegram out of Bishop’s hand.

He read the telegram.

He stood.

The captain of the new troop dismounted his horse and walked to Bruce.

He looked at him.

Bruce remembered him from college.

Bruce handed him the telegram.

The captain read it and gave it to his man.

He told him, “Find everything about this and have an answer when I get back.”

The captain looked at his pocket watch and said, “We have an hour.”

Bruce looked at his dead men.

The second in command fell down by his dad the cook and sobbed.

The captain gained his composure.

He called his men and said, took the fallen to the supply tent until we resolve this problem.

Bruce walked over to the second in command and lifted him up.

Bruce said, “Everyone to the kitchen tent.

Bruce said, “Captain. I request your assistance.”

The captain said, “Yes sir.”

Bruce thought for a minute.

He said, “We are going to give them what they want. “

He looked at the third in command and said, “Are your camps up?”

He said yes sir.

Bruce said, “Go and put on coffee and light your fires. The other two are probably hiding out near the lake to get paid. How many of you can breathe under water and not freeze?”

Several soldiers raised their hands.

The other captain smiled. This was the test he failed in training.

Bruce turned to the escort and said, “You go now and alert the soldiers at the new settlement and the ones in the back of the settlement and the ones at the entrance of the settlement.

Bruce said to the other captain, “I need your men to move now and leave their camp up and to surround the brook.”

The captain got up and walked out with his men.

Bruce turned to one of his office soldier and said, “Send an update to the new captain to stay at the front of the new settlement. The supply wagons should be here in the morning. I need soldiers in the trees here, because the new settlement does not have any trees.”

He looked at his men and said, “We have to fight for Bishop, Danny, Joe and Jason.”

The third in command said, “Sir I have to kill today. I want to pray.”

Bruce looked around at his men and said, “Go ahead.”

The third in command said, “God I know my friends are with YOU and JESUS. Let us get the head of this evil and destroy this great evil in this town and keep all of us safe. If not greet us in heaven with YOU and JESUS. Amen.”

Bruce said. “Get the ammunition ready.”

He walked to his office and told the soldier, “Send a telegram to the governor’s office with the names.”

The soldiers going to the lake saw the devil worshippers running out the vacant building.

One of the soldiers said, “It will be accidentally burned down tomorrow.”

The soldiers saw William’s campsite and wondered if they would be in danger.

The soldiers kept riding to their campsites and set up the attack.

William and the men in the campsite knew something was wrong and they were praying.

William ran to Laura and Clara’s wagon to tell them to move.

When William reached the wagon, Clara and Laura were on their knees praying.

William tipped back to the men and said Laura and Clara were praying.

William saw two figures run into the building and he saw all those with black robes on run out the building.

The new captain left his command up and the horses.

They carried the wagon with the guns with them.

The new captain and his men laid on the ground and faced the brook.

The captain heard a wagon and said, “What the hell is that?”

All the soldiers were quiet and watched the mother and the father drive home and jumped out the wagon and ran into the house with their black robes.

The soldiers turned around and held their rifles in position.

The soldiers at the entrance of the new settlement, fell back into the new settlement and hid on both

Sides of the dirt road and laid on the ground, because there were no trees.

Wes and the soldiers brought the governor and the first lady in the cute house and them on the floor.

Wes gave the governor and his wife their medications.

The older driver was awaken by the activity and crawled from underneath his wagon.

He looked around and said, “Damn.”

He put on his boots and ran to the cute house with his gun.

The soldiers disappeared.

Natalie was standing in the bedroom.

The older driver said, “Wes where is your gun?”

Wes ran out to his tent and came back with his gun.

The little girl had crawled to the living room by the door and was about to go out the door.

Natalie had broken down.

Wes said to the little girl, ”Where are you going?”

The little girl said. “To bless the soldiers.”

The older driver looked at Natalie and said, “Doc give her that herb and her too.”

The little girl said, “No.”

But she looked at Natalie and said, “Natalie.”

Wes said, “You too.”

He bent down and picked the little up.

The little girl pointed her finger and said, “JESUS.JESUS.JESUS.”

Wes closed the door.

He put her on the floor on Natalie’s mat.

The little girl looked at Natalie who was sitting on the floor in the corner with her head on head and her arms wrapped over her head.

Wes said, “Natalie I am not going to fight with you. Either take this sedative or be tied up. “

Natalie opened her mouth and Wes gave her the sedative.

Wes turned to the little girl.

The little girl looked at Wes.

Wes looked at the little girl and said, “You already has prayed. That’s what you are suppose to do.”

He gave her a capful of the sedative.

Natalie started to reel.

Wes did not want her to fall on the little girl.

He laid the little girl down and he laid Natalie to the little girl. He cracked the window open.

Wes said, “God protect, Betsy, Joshua…”

The little girl joined Wes and said, “Emma and Mattie, Shelia, Richard, Abraham Mike, Cate and Harold.”

Wes thought she was listening while she was unconscious.

Wes thought as he sat and looked out the window he said, “You missed one.”

The little girl said, “Who?”

Wes said, “Thomas.”

The little girl said, “Oh, but he’s dead.”

Wes nearly dropped his gun and was shaking his head and said, “How do you know that? Go to sleep.”

The older driver looked around and said, “Wes bullets?”

Wes said, “On fireplace mantel.”

The older driver counted the bullets and said, “Seventeen plus my six. That’s not enough.”

Wes said,”Let up the window a little.”

The captain thought of Emma. He

He said, “We are both free now but I may not be here for her. For her, Oh God watch over them and keep all them safe.”

The security aide was in the telegram when the captain’s telegram came through.

Emma’s stomach was upset for the past few days and she got up and went to the kitchen area and

got a lemon.

The older driver brought her some back from the troop’s cook.

She rolled it and cut the tip off and was sucking it when she turned and thought she heard something.

She stood still.

She learned that night her parents were killed, if you think something is out here it is.

Emma picked up her knife and walked slowing towards the her left.

She stopped because she saw a shadow low to the ground.

Emma stepped back and ran to Mattie’s tent and shook Mattie.

Emma was throwing dirt on the fire.

Mattie wake.

She saw Emma putting out the fire.

Mattie pulled her gun from underneath her mattress.

She covered Joshua and eased out of the bed.

Betsy was flipping and tossing back on the bed.

Emma and Mattie went into the tent and woke Betsy who was holding her stomach.

Emma said to Betsy, “Shush.”

Betsy sat up on the mattress. Then she eased out the bed.

Several shadows passed through their camp.

They watched the shadows of the men running their campsite and they watched a sleeping Joshua.

Joshua was asleep.

The soldiers at the back of the new settlement near Mike were angry about being in the freezing area.

The soldier who cut his face was grinning wanting to shoot because he wanted to kill somebody.

The three soldiers spread out along the back and took extra bullets.

The three soldiers laid on the freezing ground and put military quilts over them.

The soldier with the cut on his face was anxious to shoot. He smiled. He looked over at Mike’s camp and saw several figures running passed Mike.

He thought Mike keep his tent black.

The soldier just moved his knife from being straight up and laid it flat on the ground.

He wanted to shoot but he did not know how many.

Shelia was in her tent looking at her children’s picture.

She had been crying for two days.

Thomas told her he killed her children.

Thomas told her everything that happened.

Shelia was stunned and sat lifeless on her mattress.

Thomas said forgive me.

He walked out Shelia’s tent.

He went home and laid on his bed and shook his head in remorse.

He got on his knees and cried.

His lips were stammering.

He stayed on his knees for a long time.

He laid on his bed.

Cate was sleep.

Harold was sleep.

Abraham woke when heard a speeding horse.

He put on his boots and got his gun.

He put on his coat and ran to Richard when he saw the soldiers moving fast.

They did not know where to hide.

They ran back to Abraham’s homesite and hid under his wagon.

Abraham pointed his gun.

The soldiers were on each side of the dirt road, but were a distance from the road and each other that when they shoot they would not hit each other.

The security aide sent a telegram to the troop in the second city. To be on alert because of a second hit squad on the governor and his wife.

The captain of the troop was awaken and given the telegram.

The captain got up and dressed and went to his twin, the security man and shared the telegram.

The security men got up and followed him.

They got on their horses and they began to ride.

The captain and his troop, the security aide rusted,

They were the ones the security aide to get the governor and his wife and escape with them out of the city.

The two security soldiers at the governor’s children woke when they heard the shooting and the horses.

They were not leaving their post but one walked down the black street and ran into the devil worshippers running to their houses.

He tried to remember the houses.

He thought, “That’s why they keep these streets black.”

A wagon sped by him, it was the little boy and the little girl’s parents.

The soldier looked and saw Mellissa’s light in the window.

He turned and went back to Ida’s house and reported what he saw to the other soldier.

They positioned themselves on the ground on each side of the house.

The security man though of Clara and his father.

He and the three security men with him had plenty of ammunition with them.

He thought, “We might missed the action but we will be there for them.”

The security aide telegrammed a security man in another city.

The security aide sent the second security lead and several of his men to meet with the security aide he the telegram.

The security aide took Mike and Joey and went to the hospital and got the security man that was shot and brought him back to the governor’s mansion and chained him to a bed in the basement and locked the door.

Natalie was snoring.

The little girl was sleep.

The governor and his wife were resting.

The older driver looked at the resting governor and his wife. He exhaled and got on his knees and peeped out the cracked window.

The older driver determined he would defend the governor and his wife to his death.

Mattie was watching her tent with Joshua.

Men flooded their campsite.

Emma and Betsy watched to make sure they did touch Joshua or fall on their tent.

One of the men fell over the soldier with the cut on his face.

The soldier grabbed his knife and put it in the throat of the man that fell over him.

He waited.

Bruce and the rest of his troop waited in the dirt road.