The lead commander visited Jake Jameson for hours.

Marc stood guard outside he heard much of the talk and laughter.

He thought he heard some noise and he walked around the house and was met by the horses and the locked gate.

He patted the horses and his eyes fell on the wagon in the back of Jake’s yard.

He remembered Jake said it was Mellissa and Raymond’s.

Marc stared at the wagon, after a long time he went in the back and gave the horses water and he saw the hay and gave the horses enough hay for the next few days.

He walked to the wagon and he examined the wagon and saw it was in good shape.

Marc went to the outhouse and checked it and closed the door.

He looked around the backyard.

Jake and Skip were in the kitchen getting coffee they watched Marc.

Marc turned and saw them in the kitchen window looking at him.

They startled him but he thought, “Thank GOD I did not jump. What to do?”

A thought came to him to salute.

Marc saluted and went back around the front of the house and stood on the front porch.

Skip poured a cup of coffee and returned to the living room.

Jake stood and thought.

Skip called, “Jake.”

Jake turned and walked in the living room.

They talked about the fighting where they received the medals on the wall.

Skip was counting the wagons and soldiers passing by Jake’s house.

Jake said, “You’re watching the wagons and counting the soldiers. Have they all passed?”

Skip said, “One is left carrying the woman who went undercover. She is injured. I am concerned about her safety. I sent some riders with her.”

Jake was bent over looking out the opened door.

Skip said, “I know the soldiers, if they don’t pass in thirty minutes I am going to the new settlement to see what is wrong.”

Jake said, “Tell me about this new settlement.”

They heard the wagon.

Skip and Jake counted the soldiers.

Skip said, “I trust those soldiers. Those six and six more escaped the capital with the governor and his wife and brought them to the new settlement. There is a doctor there the governor and his wife trust.”

Jake said, “So this is what all of this about. Trying to kill the governor for power?”

Skip said,”And his children.”

Jake said, “His children! That’s personal, his children have nothing to do with anything. That’s a woman behind that part. She is either a woman scorned or an angered woman because she was not able to get control over the governor and his house through his children.”

Marc thought, “Whoa. Jake.”

Skip sat and thought.

Jake started back the talk about those wild and wonderful days.

Skip said, “Dangerous and harrowing. Bruce was shot three days ago. We were on the way here because many of the subordinate commanders were involved in the assassination plot against the governor.”

Jake, “What!!”

Skip shocked his head for yes.

Skip stood and closed the door.

Marc leaned his head against the house to hear.

Jake said, “Any we trained?”

Skip said, “Two, Towers and London.”

Jake said, “I told you about London.”

Skip said, “I told you about Towers.”

Jake said, “Those two wagons with thirty soldiers surrounding them were the assassins. How many?”

Skip leaned forward and his voice shock and said, “Half of the commanders.”

Jake said, “You did not see that number?”

Skip said, “I was watching the number of devil worshippers swelling the ranks of commander.”

Marc frowned and turned his head towards the door and thought, “That’s why so many deaths.”

Jake said, “That many huh?”

Skip and Jake were talking about the time they accidentally shot several of them in practice.

They got several weeks disciplinary action and how they rode across country drinking and picking up women.

They hollered.

Skip said, “When we got back the three devil worshippers we shot were discharged from the military. The commander pointed his finger at us…”

Skip and Jake in unison said, “…That should teach you a lesson.”

They hollered.

March shock his head and laughed.

Jake sat and was quiet.

Skip watched his best friend.

Jake said, “How’s that Bruce?”

Skip said, “The doctor attending him said, the surgery was fine. The healing is going to take time, like with the governor and his wife. The doctor keep them sedated. He uses herbs instead of morphine…”

Jake said, “That’s good. They won’t get addicted. How’s the scamp?”

Skip hollered.

Skip said, “He finished college and joined the academy and has been in headquarters ever since. I sent him back to headquarters today.”

Jake said, “Yeah since you out in the field you need someone there to watch your back.”

Skip said, “Yes. If you want back Jake I will put back at your rank.”

Marc’s mouth flew opened.

Joseph drove up to see Marc’s mouth open.

Jake said,”Man I miss you and the fellows.”

Joseph was in the wagon peeping at Marc and mouthing, “What?”

Skip said, “You get healthy quickly and I will put you back. I am getting tired and my heart is weak. I want Bruce to follow me. I trust him, but now he has to bounce back. You have to bounce back Jake.”

Jake said, “Brother I will for you and for you sons.”

Skip said, “Where’s Aaron? His name has not come across my desk. So I know he has not enlisted.”

Jake said, “Thank you brother for looking out for him.”

Jake sniffled.

Skip reached over and shook his arm.

They sat for a moment in quiet.

Jake took another swallow of coffee.

Skip watched him.

Jake said, “Tell me about this doctor and the new settlement.”

Skip said, “You have been out of living for a year. I know something happen and lightning stroke the entire town and killed all the people and the entire town burned for a month and a half, then the smoke lasted over two weeks and then the rain came. It’s a funny thing the fire was contained to the boundaries of the town.”

Jake said, “The wrath of GOD. That must have been terrible. And no survivors.”

Skip said, “Bruce said a little girl that was going through the town telling people to repent and accept JESUS. They set the dogs on her to eat her to death, but a man rescued her and took care of her until this doctor who was camping out in this town came through going to the big city hospital. He and another doctor.”

Jake said, “The town tried to kill GOD’s anointed one and HE killed them.”

Skip said, “Yeap.”

Skip sit up in the chair and said, “I have to go brother and check on the troop assigned to do the mass burial I want that completed today. And I have to check on the troop at the beginning of this evil town.”

Jake struggled to get out his chair.

He looked at Skip.

Skip looked at him.

Skip said, “I tore down a satanic temple today a few streets over, so they are mad. I saw some of my subordinate commanders who were angry. So I know to kick them out. I remembered the name of the soldiers and made them take the building materials out to the house the soldiers burned yesterday.”

Jake stood and said, “You got a full day.”

Skip put his hand on the doorknob.

Jake said, “Where is Priscilla?”

Skip said, “She wants out.”

Jake said, “Divorce at this time?”

Skip said, “She told me months ago. I don’t think she knows about Bruce. I have to send her a telegram.”

Jake said, “How is Bruce taking the divorce?”

Skip took his hand off the doorknob, “The woman he been involved with since college he met in the new settlement and Andrew told me the doctor put her out from Bruce because he said she has mental problems.”

Jake said, “Bruce.”

Skip said, “He can get through.”

Jake held his head down.

Skip said, “You get healthy.”

Skip motioned to Jake that Marc was listening.

Jake smiled.

Skip quickly opened the door and saw Joseph saying something to Marc.

Marc turned his head and looked at the commander.

Joseph looked at the commander.

Skip said, “What is it?”

Marc looked at Joseph.

Skip very fiercely said, “Now soldier?”

Jake looked at Skip.

Joseph said, “Sir the lady that helped out wanted to know what else Mr. Jake wanted from town or whether he wanted to go with them?”

Skip stepped a little to the left for Jake to answer.

Jake said, “I told her to pick up a few things.”

Joseph had the torch from William’s campsite in his hand.

Jake said, “What is that?”

Joseph said, “A light for your yard. If you don’t want it. I will take it back.”

Joseph was angry at Skip and Jake about their tones.

Marc looked at Joseph to calm down.

Jake looked at Marc.

Jake said, “You can put it in the yard and light.

Joseph stuck the torch in the yard and lit it and saluted and pulled the wagon around and drove fast back to Ida.

Marc watched Skip and Jake.

He looked at Joseph.

The commander looked at Marc and said, “Come I am going to check on the troops.”

Marc would have thought that was an honor, but he did not like Skip nor Jake anymore.

Jake snickered and stood in his door and waved his hand.

Skip and Marc rode to the end of town and saw the devil worshipper soldiers putting the debris from the building on the burned little house.

Skip stopped and looked at the house and the debris.

He rode to the sergeant over the burial and saw they dig a very deep whole and had placed most of the three hundred bodies.

The bodies had started to decompose and the soldiers were trying to hurry and bury the bodies.

Skip dismounted from his horse and walked and looked at the bodies.

He covered his nose with his handkerchief.

He commander said, “How many more hands do you need?”

The sergeant said, “About five.”

The commander yelled for the five soldiers throwing the debris on the house to come and help.

He stood and watched them.

They each got a body and pulled it across the dirt to the mass grave.

He commander turned to the sergeant and said, “Good job.”

He looked at the sergeant’s name tag ad said, “Pearson.”

Skip looked around and said, “Such a beautiful place for this type of evil to take place.”

Sergeant Pearson said, “GOD restores all things.”

The commander said, “Clean up this area for you and your men to rest here. Send a man to the post and tell them I said for them to cook and send you dinner today and breakfast tomorrow.”

The sergeant saluted and said, “Yes sir.”

He looked at Marc.

Marc anger was dissipating.

The commander mounted his horse.

Marc mounted his horse.

They rode to the fifty men stationed at the beginning of the town.

The man who had all the horses he and Newsom had placed in his fence.

The commander sat on his horse and watched the man.

The captain over the troop said, “He’s been out there all day with those horses.”

The commander said, “Those horses are from the assassins.”

The captain said, “Sir, how do you know that?”

Marc sat up in his saddle and watched.

The commander said, “The horses have the saddles of the assassins. These people grabbed the horses that were running the streets.”

The lead looked at the captain and said, “Go and get…”

Marc nearly passed out until he heard the commander finish his order.

The commander said, “Get the saddles and go through the saddles for any no let me say it this way, Get all the papers and everything and leave them in the saddles and take the saddles to the command post.”

The captain was looking.

Marc said to himself, “Move.”

The commander looked and said, “Corporal did you hear me!!!”

The captain looked at the commander and said, “Yes sir.”

The commander rolled his eyes at the captain.

The captain rode back to his men and said, “I need ten of you to go and get the saddles off those horses and find an empty wagon or empty a wagon and put the saddles in the wagon and take them to the post.”

The commander rode by the captain and stared at him.

The troop saluted him.

Marc followed and watched the captain and the troop.

They turned on the main street to the city and stopped by Ida.

Joseph saw them and acted like he did not.

He was feeding the horses and giving them water and cleaning up the backyard.

The commander dismounted his horse and walked to the backyard and stood and watched Joseph clean up the backyard.

Marc dismounted his horse and walked to hear the commander.

The commander said, “Soldier Smith.”

Skip looked and saw Marc standing.

Joseph walked over to the commander and said, “Sir.”

The commander said, “You and soldier Reynolds will be rotated back to the command post in two days.”

Marc and Joseph had become friendly with Ida and Mellissa and William.

They looked at each other.

The commander said, “You are not happy? You want to stay here after much fighting?”

Joseph looked at Marc.

Marc said, “We know some of the players around here. Like the telegram shop owner there and the banker and his wife and the mayor and his wife.”

The commander said, “You have to serve your time in the new settlement.”

Joseph turned his head.

The commander looked at Joseph and said, “I will give the two of you two days off, Then you go to the iceberg for your three days and then I will decide if you come back here or stay at the command post.”

Marc said, “Sir can the two days start tomorrow?”

The commander stood and thought and said, “I will write the order for your two days to start tomorrow. And after those two days you report to the new settlement.”

Ida had the window opened I the grandmother’s room.

She was sitting on her bed and talking to Joseph.

She saw the commander and Marc she wondered if he was going to stop.

She saw him when he stopped.

She pulled the window shut and locked it and ran into the dining room and sat with the children because she cooked dinner earlier.

She was looking at the front door and saw the image of the commander walked on the front porch, he was looking around the house to see there was no signs of the assassins.

After he finished assessing the yard and the house he walked on the front porch and knocked.

Ida stood and walked to the door and peeper out the curtain.

She saw him and smiled.

She opened the door.

The governor’s children stood from the table.

He looked and saw them.

The commander said, “They have to be healed.”

He thought about Bruce’s Emma.

Marc heard his comment to Ida.

Marc thought, “This man thinks. That’s why God has him in a high position. Because he made himself to be trusted by God.”

Ida opened the door and said, “Please come in.”

She looked at Marc.

The commander hesitated for a minute and walked in the house.

He ook off his hat and he looked at the governor’s children and spoke.

The children were hesitatnt.

He said, “I have know your father ever since he was a little boy about your age.”

He pointed at the governor’s son.

The children said, “Are you good or bad?”

The commander said, “Good God they are scarred.”

Ida looked back at the children.

Marc looked at the children.

The children saw Marc.

The children said, “Hey soldier Marc.”

Marc said, “Hello.”

The commander looked at Marc.

The commander walked in and the governor’s children moved back.

Ida did not know what to do.

The commander said, “Is that dinner?”

Ida was mumbling because she had to get the children use to being around people.

Ida said, “Yes.”

The commander looked at Ida.

Ida said, “Oh. Would you join us.”

Marc was thinking, “These older people are wise.”

The commander bowed his head and “Yes, if it’s alright with the children.”

Ida turned to the children and said, “Can we have a guess for dinner?”

The children did not say anything.

The oldest girl said, “Can we invite Miss Mellissa?”

Ida said, “Not today.”

Marc peeped around the commander and said, “Sir.”

The commander looked at Marc.

Marc said, “Mellissa and Laura are sick. They were to leave and go into town this afternoon, but they were sick.”

The oldest girl said, “Can we go and visit them Ida?’

Ida said, “Maybe later for a minute.”

The boy said, “Better yet can we go into town?”

Lydia started screaming and running through the house saying, “Yes!!! Candy stores and toy shops.”

Joseph rushed in through the back door.

The governor’s son ran to Joseph and said, “We are going to town. Finally, we can get out of here for a day.”

He turned to a stunned Ida who was holding her chest.

The governor’s oldest daughter was standing by the table and holding onto the chair watching Ida.

The governor’s son ran to Ida and said, “Can we take Joshua?” I get tired of playing with girls.”

The commander looked at Ida who was lost for words.

The commander said, “That smell’s like pot roast.”

Ida walked to the kitchen and said to the governor’s oldest daughter, “Sweetie help me clear the table.”

Joseph watched Ida and the children.

The commander stood and listened to the children they were so excited.

Ida set the table and brought out the food.

She cooked a pot roast with potatoes and carrots and onions and pepper and a soda bread and rice pudding for dessert.

Marc knew the commander was not hungry but he ate small servings.

Marc and Joseph stood with heads bowed.

He said, “God I know this is suppose to be grace for food. But I thank You for sending another friend. We need friends. And help my mother and father. In JESUS name. Amen.”

The commander said, “Good prayer and a strong prayer. Who taught you to pray like that?”

The oldest girl said, “Her name is Angelica.”

The commander looked at Ida.

Lydia said, “She lives with Joshua where our parents are.”

The governor’s son made a face like he was eating something.

Marc and Joseph looked t him.

The oldest girl said, “Stop.”

The commander looked at him and said, “Why did you do that?”

The governor’s son said, “That’s how Angelica said the dogs were eating up her back.”

Ida was stunned.

Marc and Joseph looked horrified.

The commander watched Marc and Joseph.

Lydia said, “So when we go and see mommie and daddy we go into the house and play with her and Joshua.”

The oldest girl said, “They are fun.”

The governor’s son said, “I like playing with Joshua. We lost our marbles though.”

The commander looked at Marc.

Marc and Joseph walked out the door.

Marc said, “It stinks around here.”

Joseph said, “It takes a few days for the lime to work.”

Joseph looked back at the door and said, “What you think he is going to do?”

Marc said, “I don’t know, but I don’t know where he thinks I am going to get marbles from. Unless he thinks I am going to ride to the next town.”

Marc and Joseph stop ad looked at each other.

Joseph was thinking he had to get rid of his money out of Ida’s coal cellar.

They both turned their heads and looked at Mellissa’s house.

The commander spent two hours with Ida and the children.

Marc was impressed that he rule the whole military command but he stopped all of his commanding and spent time with children to let them know there was good people for them and not everyone wanted to harm them.

The commander was telling them about father attending the military school he was teaching at.

The commander reared back in his chair and said, “David was about ten…”

The governor’s son waved his hand and said, “My age.”

The commander continued, “He refused to get into the lake to swim. He had to know how to swim to get promoted. He did not care. We did everything we could. My son was there with David and tried to get him the water. But he refused to.”

The governor’s son said, “What did you do.”

The commander said, “I threw him in the water.”

The children mouths flew open.

Ida watched them for their smart mouth comments.

Lydia said, “You threw my father into a lake?”

The commander put his elbows on the table and leaned forward and looked Lydia in her blue eyes and said, “Yes ma am.”

Ida watched with tension.

Marc and Joseph were watching.

Lydia frowned up at the commander and puffed out her jaws and exhaled and said, “Did you pass him?”

The commander said, “Yes ma am I did.”

They all burst out with laughter.

Marc and Joseph exhaled because they know Lydia was a hot potato.

The governor’s oldest daughter was really having problems.

She looked at Ida and said, “Ida can we go to town. I want to get Angelica a bible and a ball for Joshua.”

Ida had her mouth opened and was about to say no.

The governor’s children tensed up.

The commander said, “Your grandmother will be back tomorrow.”

Ida said, “Yes we can go to town for a few days.”
The children went wild.

The oldest daughter, the son and Lydia ran and hugged the new friend.

Ida started flipping the forks on the table.

The commander looked at her.

The commander said, “Soldier Reynolds and Smith.”

Marc opened the door and said, “Sir.”

Joseph was standing on the porch.

The commander said, “Come in and close the door.”

Marc entered and then Joseph entered and he closed the door.

They walked to the commander.

The commander looked at Ida.

Ida was angry and did not want the grandmother back at all.

She was about to get up.

But the commander said, “Sit Ida and be still.”

Ida sat.

The commander thought for a minute and said, “When the governor’s mother-in-law returns tomorrow there are two new security soldiers that will replace Soldiers Reynolds and Smith…”

The children said, “No. They protect us.”

Ida said, “Be quiet and let the commander finish.”

The commander said, “I will let Soldiers Reynolds and Smith escort you to the next town and stay with you and bring you back here by Friday.”

The children were screaming with joy.

Joseph was thinking of getting his money and getting to the bank.

Ida said, “I can’t put that on the governor’s mansion.”

The commander said, “You put everything else. I saw your telegrams.”

Ida cleared her throat.

The commander reached into his chest pocket and counted twenty dollars for each of the children.

He said, “Buy the bible and the toy for your friends and buy you candy and me two lollipops. Grape flavor. Good evening.”

The children ran behind him to the door.

Ida said, “What do you say?”

The children in unison, “Thank Friend Skip.”

Skip looked at the governor’s son and said, “You need to be at the military school.”

The governor’s son said, “I can swim.”

The commander said, “So you won’t need to be thrown into the water.”

The governor’s son said, “No sir.”

Ida said, “Commander, you’re not staying for dessert? It’s rice pudding with raisins.”

Lydia shook her head for no and stuck out her tongue.

Marc shook his head for no.

The commander saw Marc.

The children laughed.

The commander pointed at Marc and said, “I have had sweets for today. I hope to see you la later time.

The governor’s son said, “You have to so you can get your two grape lollipops.

The commander said, “I was checking to see if you were listening.”

He walked out the house.

The children were screaming.

The commander said, “You get them there, you keep them safe and you bring them back here safe. Then you can have your two days of rest and relaxation. The executions start Friday. I want them back here in case there is any fallout. Do you two understand me. Take plenty of ammunition. Is there anything I need to repeat?”

Marc and Joseph said, “We understand sir.”

The commander looked around and said, “This town is nice.”

Joseph stared into space.

The commander mounted his horse and Marc mounted his horse and they rode to the satanic building that was demolished in that one day.

They flew to the lake area and checked on the troop and came back by Brianna.

Her children were waving at the soldiers.

Johnny said, “That’s my friend.”

Marc waved back.

He rode to the end of that street.

The commander said, “I know my way back to the post. You better be obedient and do what I said. Get Jake a few blankets and order him some coal. Here take this fifty dollars.”

Marc reached for the fifty dollars.

Marc said, “Sir, It has been an honor.”

The commander said, “Likewise.”

Marc to the end of the street and watched the commander out of sight. He knew he was at the command post.

The commander was thinking about how the pieces of the puzzle was coming together.

The little girl was sent by God to call the people of that town to repent. They did not want to repent. They sent dogs to eat her alive. She went through that hell. God sent the perfect doctor to be here at the appointed time to heal her with His herbs, and she has been teaching the governor’s children how to pray. I know that little girl Angelica is an angel that God has sent to help these people. What a great GOD I serve in my little human capacity.”

The commander inhaled God’s air and exhaled His air.

The commander thought about his best friend and brother Jake.

He wondered where Jake fit in all of this.

The commander entered the command post and looked at the disorganization.

He said, “I told Bruce he has to be more stern and leave that woman alone until he put this troop into shape. Well he did give them additional training. That’s what saved them this last time. I will check on him and Soldier Newsom.”

Marc turned to ride back to Ida he noticed how dark the street was.

He heard Jonny’s mother yelling for them to come in the house.

Johnny and Sarah had been in the street watching the commander and Marc.

Marc turned and saw them.

He waved and he could see two figures running to the ragged house.

Sarah said, “They came to save us.”

Brianna said, “Shut up and get in the house.”

Marc heard Sarah.

Marc looked around and he saw people running home.

He thought it is early evening.

Marc he started thinking about tomorrow.

He thought, “If we leave at daybreak we will get to the town late afternoon. The banks maybe closed. We don’t need to war our uniforms to the bank and the wire offices. We have to get hotel rooms. Then we have to leave at daybreak Friday to get back here by evening. I need to talk to Ida and Joseph about leaving at midnight tonight.”

He noticed he could only see shadows.

He thought about the money he had.

Marc said, “Oh God, what about Mellissa and them.”

He started riding fast back to Ida’s house.

He dismounted his horse and tied it up in the backyard.

He knocked on the back door.

Ida heard Marc ride in the yard and ran to the back door and unlocked it.

Joseph was sitting at the dining room table eating a plate of stew and soda bread and had Lydia’s portion of rice pudding.

Marc said, “We got a problem.”

Joseph wiped his mouth and picked up his glass of water and drank some.

Ida stood in fear.

Marc looked at her and said, “Not like that. We have to leave around midnight so we can get to the town Joseph to take care of business.”

Joseph watched Marc carefully.

There was a knock on the front door.

Ida said, “Who is it?”

William said, “William.”

Ida ran unlocked it and opened it for William.

Marc said, “ Good. Come in and close the door.”

Joseph looked at Marc and said, “A day with the commander has rubbed off on you.”

William said, “What?”

Ida said, “What you need William?”

I was really coming to spend a few minutes with you. It has been a few days.”

Ida said, “The commander came by and had dinner and we are leaving to go to the next town and come back by Friday.”

William said, “The executions start Friday, that’s why he said Friday.”

Marc said, “Right. That’s why we need to leave tonight and make into the next town around eight or nine in the morning. We can stay all day have dinner and rest and leave…”

March pulled out his pocket the fifty dollars and said, “the commander told me to buy Jake a few blankets and order him coal. So our one day in the town will be full. I want a hot bath and a good hot shave.”

William said, “That’s sound good.”

Ida said, “William you can’t go.”

William said, “ I think I can, because the part of town they are surveying I asked the captain and he has assigned ten soldiers, plus my three security men to be with them so they are fine and maybe through by Friday. Then all Laura has to do is write them up so I send them by telegram. And our pay.”

Marc said, “That’s the other problem. Clara wanted to use your wagon to go to town and you said yes.”

Ida said, “Huh huh”, and bite her lips.”

William said, “Everyone can’t fit into the wagon.”

The governor’s children started crying.

Ida ran and closed their bedroom door.

Willian said, “Let me think.”

Marc stood and said, “Jake has a wagon,”

He looked at Joseph and said, “Remember he said it was Ray’s Mellissa’s husband.”

Ida said, “I don’t know if you should get it.”

Joseph said,”I agree with Mellissa in the state she is in. She may never come out.”

Marc said, “OK all the children and Mellissa and Ida in the wagon. Clara and Laura drive the wagon. We can ride our horses.”

William said, “Where will all of the shopping go?”

Joseph said, “That’s going to be a tight fit.”

Marc said, “Don’t you owe them a new wagon.”

William said, “You think they have any in the next town?”

Marc said, “If we get there in time we can see.”

Joseph said, “If not then we all will be cramped.”

Ida said, “Someone needs to tell Mellissa.”

The governor’s oldest girl said, “Miss Clara.”

Marc sat to the table and looked at Joseph.

Joseph said, “They were sick today. What time did you say?”

Ida came back with a plate for William and Marc and said, “Midnight. Everything is in order here. William you said everything is in order at your camp. Can we get someone to watch Mellissa’s and keep the torch burning.”

Joseph stumped his feet and said, “Their neighbors wanted to go but the wife was sick today also.”

William said, “Asked them. We all meet at midnight. I am going to eat this stew and go and sleep. I am not packing nothing I am going to buy all new stuff.”

Marc and Joseph looked at William.

Ida said, “How can you afford that, when you have not gotten paid?”

William said, “Don’t worry. I did not get any of your money from daddy. I’ll get Melvin to check on the houses.”

Ida very sourly said, “She’ll be back tomorrow with two new security soldiers.”

William looked at Marc and Joseph.

William said, “I can come and visit at the command post. Can I ?”

Marc and Joseph shook their heads for no.

Joseph stood from the table and went out the front door.

He walked to Mellissa’s house and he knocked on the door.

He could hear Mellissa saying “Door.”

Clara ran to the door and said, “Who is it?”

Joseph said, “Joseph.”

The little boy and girl were sitting in the dining room eating and looking out the window.

They saw Joseph walk across the street.

Joesph said, “I can light your torch.”

Clara looked out and said, “Come in,” she looked at Mellissa.

Joseph stood in the door and he saw the Jason and Alice and said “Hello.”

They said hello.

Jason walked from the dining room to Joseph and said, “That old soldier that was over at your house, he was important?”

Joseph stooped down to Jason and said, “You saw him?”

Alice said, “Me too.”

Joseph said, “You sit where to see everything?”

They both pointed at the dining room window.

Joseph said, “You don’t want to be playing.”

Alice said, “We didn’t have any windows in our house.”

Clara and Laura were walking out the kitchen and stopped when they heard the children say they had no windows.

Joseph said, “The older soldier you saw was very important. He is over all the military soldiers.

Jason mouth flew open and he looked at Alice who mouth was opened.

Clara said, “Here’s the light.”

Joseph stepped back out and lit their torch.

He said, “Does your neighbor’s lights have to be lit?’

Laura went and looked out the kitchen window.

She back to the living room and said, “Yes.”

Joseph was about to turn and walked out the door.

Clara said, “Joseph why did you come over?”

Joseph looked at the light.

He said, “The commander wants us to ride to the next town and take Ida and the children and we have one wagon and if all of you go that’s going to be a tight fit for eight hours and we thought about your neighbors who wanted to go. We need to know if they still want to go because we need to leave at midnight. I got to get to the bank.”

Laura gasped.

Clara looked back at Laura.

Clara said, “I know I have to go and take Jason and Alice because they need shoes and clothes.”

Laura said, “Well me and Mellissa will stay here.”

The little girl screamed and ran and grabbed Clara’s legs and pointed to the window.

Laura said, “A tight fit it will be.”

Mellissa was sitting on the floor looking at the window.

Joseph walked to the window and let the curtains down and turned their chairs around to the table.

Laura walked to the dining room and stated clearing the table.

Joseph reached her the children’s plates.

Joseph became angry.

Laura looked at Joseph and put the dishes in the kitchen.

Clara was holding Alice and Jason.

Clara said, “Alice what did you see?”

Alice said, “The devil.”

Mellissa on was on her knees behind the sofa reading a second grade book and said, “Whoa.”

Clara said, “Don’t worry.”

Laura said, “I doubt if Doreen and Larry will go, but let’s ask them.”

Laura went and re-lit the light and gave it to Joseph.

They walked out the door and closed the door.

Joseph said, “What is it with you and that captain?”

Laura said, “Ricky. I know Clara wants to know. I don’t want to talk about it yet. I will tell everybody at one time.”

She knocked on Larry and Doreen’s door.

Larry came to the door and closed it slightly and said, “I found a hundred and fifty dollars in the saddles.”

He was so happy and said,” I didn’t tell Doreen.”

Joseph said, “Keep the money and keep your mouth shut.”

Larry took his hand and clamped his mouth shut.

Joseph light their torch light.

Doreen walked and pulled the door opened.

She stared at Laura.

Laura said, “Hey Doreen. You feel better?”

Joseph walked from lighting their lamp.

Doreen said, “Good evening.”

Joseph said, “We only have one wagon to go into town tomorrow and we will be spending the night and coming back at daybreak Friday. Because the executions start Friday and we want to be back by dark.

Doreen peeped out the door and said, “Ask Johanna and Charles if they are going?”

Larry looked at Doreen and said, “Why Doreen?”

Doreen looked and said, “I don’t want to go any place with them by ourselves.”

Laura said, “Ok Mellissa. You have had a nervous breakdown, Larry you better pray. Stay here. We don’t have enough room. We will bring you something back.”

Doreen stuck her tongue out at Laura and blew.

Larry screamed and said “What is wrong with you?”

Doreen’s eyes rolled.

Joseph turned and walked back to Ida with the light in his hand.

He went in the front door and stood with his back to the door and breathed hard.

The paper nearly burnt his hand.

He ran and threw it in the fireplace.

William walked out the door.

He looked down the street and saw Laura’s figure.

Laura said, “Larry someone has put a hex on her. You better rebuke the devil now and keep saying it until that thing is gone.”

Larry was holding onto Doreen and rocking her.

He said, “What do I say?”

He began to cry and rocking Doreen.

Larry said, “It had to be that damn Jessica.”

Laura said, “Where is your bible?”

Larry said,”The mayor said we don’t need any since there is no church.”

Laura stood in unbelief.

She said, “Did he pass a law not to have a bible?”

Laura said, Zechariah 3:2, And the LORD said unto satan, the LORD rebuke thee, O’satan.”

Larry said, “Ok.”

Laura said, “Rebuke the devil from Doreen all day and all night. Don’t be scared and don’t give up. It might be easier to break since they think you are weak and alone. JESUS is with you.”

The strange man was standing in the house next to Larry.

Laura turned and walked home.

Johanna called Laura, but Laura kept on walking.

Laura said, “I am a woman like her, but she pretends to be too scare to come out the house and her husband by her side.”

Johanna said, “I guess she did not hear me.”

She closed their front door and told her husband, “I wanted her to light our torch light.”

He looked and said, “Johanna. I can do that.”

Charles went into the kitchen and came back with a light and lit his torch light.

The two soldiers camped across the street was watching everybody.

One of the soldiers was laying on his stomach with his gun pointed at Dave and Jessica’s house.

The other soldier was eating and reading his bible by their torch light.

He said to the other soldier,”Ephesian 6:12, For we wrestle not against flesh and blood.”

The other soldier said, “That flesh and blood I won’t have to wrestle.”

The other soldier flipped the pages of the bible and began to read. He read late into the night.

The other soldier had his eyes on The evil banker and his wife.

He said to the other soldier, “Their they go.”

The other soldier was falling to sleep turned and watched them pass Johanna and Charles and they disappeared down the street in the darkness.

The other soldier started saying, “The LORD rebuke you devil.”

The other soldier turned and sat up and ate his food, he stopped the chow wagon to get when they were coming back from feeding the burial troop.

Laura walked home.

She walked in the house and fell against the back of the door.

She saw Mellissa crawling around in the middle of the floor in circles.

Clara was sitting and holding Jason and Alice.

Laura said, “We have another Mellissa.”

Clara stared at Laura.

Laura said, “Doreen.”

Clara said, “This is just the beginning. They demolished their building today.”

Alice said, “They don’t have a place to and they are mad.”

Jason started crying.

Clara was shaking them.

Laura said, “Let’s pray. No body have bibles because the mayor said, because there is no church you don’t need bibles.”

Clara said, “That’s when you need bibles when there is no Christian place of worship

Laura walked and grabbed Mellissa and said,”What’s wrong Mellissa?”

Mellissa said, “They are talking to me to run away.”

Laura said, “Run here?”

Mellissa said, “To the lake.”

Clara was looking back at them.

Laura said, “Come on Mellissa.”

Clara said, “Please help us to get rid of them.”

Alice looked at Clara.

Clara said, “Not to you my precious ones, but the ones troubling Miss Mellissa.”

Laura was holding onto Mellissa.

Clara prayed and said FATHER GOD we need help. Stop them from speaking to Mellissa in JESUS’ name. Give her mind peace and rest in JESUS’ name. Deliver Doreen and every person they are attacking. Whatever Alice saw we rebuke it in JESUS’ name. These beautiful children are not mark and they will not be hunted. Give us a prosperous trip and a fun trip. And please let us get our new wagon tomorrow. In JESUS’ name. and everybody say Amen.”

Laura and Mellissa said, “Amen.”

Alice and Jason were too scared to say anything.

They were bound not to say anything.

They tried in the past to say JESUS but the pain from their mother and father’s strap with the nails in it would hurt and sting them just as though they were being beaten with it.

Jason said, “We are devil children , we can’t say JESUS.”

Alice said, “If we say the JESUS all these scars start hurting.”

Jason lifted up his shirt and Laura turned her head.

Mellissa said, “You both said JESUS and nothing happened to you.”

Laura said, “Mellissa!!”

Clara looked at Mellissa and did not trust she was delivered.

Clara smiled and said, “Miss Mellissa is right. You both have said JESU’S name and nothing happened to you. And will not happen to you ever again. We have to fight. You are not devil children. Let’s go to bed and get some sleep because we leave tonight.

Clara said, Laura you sleep in the bed with Mellissa. I am going to sleep with Jason and Alice.”

Alice opened her mouth wide with surprise.

Jason buried his face into Clara’s chest and cried.

Clara double checked the locks on the front door.

She walked to the dining and made sure the table was clear.

Alice and Jason watched Miss Clara.

Clara put a little coal on all the fires.

She went into the kitchen and begin to wash the dishes and out away the food.

Alice and Jason wet into the kitchen and waited until Clara was finished.

Clara turned around and Alice and Jason were sitting in the chairs and scared Clara.

Alice said, “You’re scared of us.”

Jason said, “You jumped.”

Clara said, “I jumped because I didn’t hear you come in.”

Alice said, “Our mother taught us not to let anyone hears walking. She would beat us if we made any noise with the straps.”

Clara reached her hands to them and said, “We have to get some sleep tonight.”

Clara slept in the middle of the bed on her back and had Alice and Jason on each side.

Clara had placed enough coal on the fires to last for a few hours the house was getting cool.

Laura took Mellissa to the bedroom and tied her legs and arms.

Sher put the quilts over her and they slept until William knocked on their door.

Laura turned and jumped up and ran to the door.

She unlocked the door.

William said, “Don’t ever unlocked the door like that again.”

Laura said, “Get Mellissa. I need to put out the fires.

Laura was running through the house.

She checked the fire in Mellissa’s bedroom.

Then she ran into the living room and checked the fire.

She passed the bedroom where Clara, Alice and Jason were in and yelled, “Clara.”

Laura stopped and stepped back.

She saw Jason and Alice standing against the wall.

Clara was not moving.

Laura slowing walked in the bedroom and William followed her with Mellissa.

William looked at Alice and Jason.

He slowly looked at Clara.

Laura sat on the bed and took Clara’s hand that were cold and said, “Clara where are you.”

William was shocked.

Mellissa said, “Where is my baby?”

Alice and Jason said, “We told her we were devil children.”

William thought, “I don’t want them around the governor’s children.”

William said, “Laura take Mellissa.”

Marc walked in the house and saw all of them standing looking at a lifeless Clara.

Marc fell to his knees.

He thought Clara was stronger than that.

William pushed Laura off the bed.

He looked in Laura’s eyes and he put his ear to her mouth.

He started pressing on her heart. He continued and continued.

Marc was sitting on the floor with his back on the doorframe.

Joseph walked in the house and saw William pressing on Clara chest.

Joseph looked at the little children.

He looked at Mellissa and Laura.

Joseph yelled, “Satan out in JESUS’ name.”

William stopped pressing on Clara’s chest and put his ear to her mouth.

He started again and again.

Alice and Jason started saying, “JESUS. JESUS. JESUS.”

Ida knew something was terribly wrong.

She sat and held a sleep Lydia.

Clara took a deep breathe.

William was on top of Clara.

Clara moved.

She laid on the bed and put her hand on her forehead and she cried.

Alice and Jason ran to her side.

They said, “We said JESUS.”

Clara said, “I heard you.”

Mellissa said, “Can we go now?”

Clara laughed through cries.

William sat on the bed by Clara’s side.

Finally after thirty minutes they all walked out the house to the wagon.

William helped Jason and Alice in the wagon.

Marc said, “No let Clara lay down.”

Marc and William helped Clara into the wagon and she went to sleep an William covered her with a quilt. Alice laid down next to Clara.

Laura said, “Wait.”

She ran to the house and unlocked the door and ran into the bedroom and went underneath the bed and pulled out their bag and got a thousand dollars.

She pushed the bag back under the bed.

She was on her knees and said, “You didn’t win on at Calvary and did not win this morning. And you are not ever going to win. The LORD rebuke thee o satan.”

The living room door slammed so hard that the house foundation shook.

William was at the wagon telling his mother what happened.

Jason was sitting up front with Laura and they had a quilt.

Marc and Joseph turned and looked at the house.

William and his mother turned and looked at the house and Jason started crying and pulled the quilt over him and cried.

Laura took her time and walked out the house and locked the door.

Marc said,”Laura what was that?”

Laura said, “The devil himself. I told him didn’t win at Calvary and he didn’t win today nor ever. He got mad and left.”

She put her purse with Clara.

She checked Clara’s pulse.

Alice sat up and looked and listened.

Laura said, “It’s a long ride Alice lay down and sleep.”

Laura walked and jumped up in the front and put her shawl over her shoulders and hugged Jason.

She dove that way for hours.

Jason slept with his head in Laura’s lap.

William was riding in front and March and Joseph were riding at the back of the wagon.

They made it to the town just at daybreak.

William remembered where the hotel was.

He led them to the hotel.

Laura looked at the town and smiled.

William went in and he came back and said I got the last four rooms.

He said, “Laura all of yall. Mom all of yall. So I have to bunk with one of yall.”

He tossed a key to Marc and Joseph.

William said, “I ordered a bath for all of us. Laura remember the restaurant?”

Laura said, “Yes.”

She looked around.

Marc and Joseph looked around.

She said, “Where’s the bank?”

William pointed across the street.

Laura said, “Will we get a chance to see the team.”

William said, “No. But there is a doctor over on the next street.”

Lydia was waking and said, “Wes is a doctor.”

William said, “He is but he is busy taking care of your mother and father. We can see the doctor here.”

The governor’s son said, “I want to be a doctor.”

William said, “We need some.”

William said, “I think that is the doctor and his wife.”

Laura said, “I believe you’re right.”

Laura looked back at Clara.

Marc said, “Let’s eat and then I want to take my bath.”

Ida said, “Yeah let someone else cook. Come on children.”

The party of twelve walked into the restaurant.

The children ordered pancakes.

Laura ordered eggs, oatmeal and black coffee for she and Clara.

She ordered eggs and toast and orange juice for Mellissa.

The men ordered steak and eggs and coffee.

They all ate their breakfast.

Laura was watching the doctor and his wife.

Laura paid for their breakfast and gave the doctor and his wife a head start.

She said, “Clara we are going to the doctor, so looked presentable.”

William said, “We are going to the hotel.”

Alice and Jason looked scared and jumped up to go with Clara and Laura.

William did not want to stay.

He wanted Alice and Jason to go with Laura and Clara.

Laura rolled her eyes at William.

Alice said, “He doesn’t like us. He thinks we hurt Miss Clara.”

Laura said, “That’s just William.”

She looked at William and pointed to Mellissa.

They were sitting so Mellissa could not get by them.

As they were waking out the door Laura asked the waitress,“What’s for dinner?”

The waitress looked back at the owner and said, “Fried chicken and fried pork chop dinners.”

Laura said, “I need a wagon where can I buy one?”

The owner said up at Willie’s.

Laura said, “Where can I find it?”

The owner said, “Willie.” He nodded at Laura.

Willie heard them talking and he was watching them.

He saw Laura paying for their breakfast and leaving the waitress a tip.

Willie stood up and beckoned for Laura.

Joseph and Marc were in plain clothes they borrowed from Melvin and the older driver.

They were watching Laura.

Laura walked back to the table with Willie along with Jason and Alice.

Clara stood at the door and start swaying.

William said, “What is Clara doing?”

Joseph got up and went to Clara and caught her before she hit the floor.

Willie and his children were eating breakfast, his wife refuse to cook breakfast.

Willie children said, “Dad?”

Willie said, “Your friend is sick.”

Laura turned, Jason and Alice turned and saw Joseph catch her and sit her down.

Willie said, “Doc just left here. You better run and catch him before his office gets crowded. People be lined up waiting for him.”

Laura said, “Sir. I need a wagon. We all had to ride here together.”

Willie said, “What type of wagon.”

Laura said, “A cargo wagon.”

Willie said, “I got two.”

Laura looked back at Clara and said, “How much?”

Willie said, “A hundred dollar for each.”

Laura said. “ I need one. I am going to take her to the doctor. Can you bring the wagon there?”

Willie said, “How?”

Laura looked at him and said, “You attached your one hose to the wagon and dropped it off at the hotel. I will have one of them to attach a horse to the wagon and drive it to the doctor. I want to pay you now, but I want to see the wagon first. I got to go.”

She ran to Clara and Joseph helped walked her to the doctor’s office.

There was a line of people.

The people saw Clara holding onto Joseph and Laura, they let them go ahead of them.

Joseph went back to the restaurant and finished his cold breakfast.

Willie walked over and said, “Good morning, the lady wanted a wagon delivered to the hotel for one of you to hitch horses to it, who might that be?’

Marc raised his hand.

Willie said, “Give me an hour and I will bring it to the West.

William said, “Thank you.”

William said, “We look poor.”

Marc said, “We are.”

Joseph said, “How many banks are in this town?”

William said, “Three and two transfer offices. Now the next town has three banks and three transfer offices”

Marc looked at Joseph and said, “We can’t chance it.”

Joseph was drinking his coffee and said. “No.”

They finished eating breakfast.

They all walked across the street to the hotel.

The front desk clerk and owner said, “Your baths are ready.”

The owner looked at his clerk and said, “I thought you said twelve.”

William jumped in quick and said, “Four are at the doctor and…”

He pointed at Mellissa and said, “We have to let the women bathe her.”

Mellissa was laughing and playing with the governor’s children as a big child.

The owner said, “And a pretty child.”

Joseph who had his back to the desk turned around and looked.

The owner choked and said your baths and rooms are ready.

William said, “Do you think he was charging a bit too much for the wagon?”

Marc said, “I don’t think. But we have to check it out when he delivers it.”

Joseph as worried about his money.

Marc tossed William his key and said, “You and Jason.”

They all walked up the stairs.

Ida and the governor’s children went to the second room.

Joseph and Marc went to the first room.

Laura’s room was next and William and Jason ‘s room was last.

William did not like it, but he was not going to argued with armed soldiers.

Marc and Joseph put their saddles down and flew to the lobby to the bath are.

William followed them and then the governor’s son.

Ida brought a change of clothing.

She and the girls were coming down with Mellissa when Willie delivered the wagon.

Mellissa tried to run to the wagon, but Ida caught her.

The owner thought she was handling Mellissa rough.

Ida told willie the men had just in the bathe area.

She said, “What do you want to do? Take it back or sit and wait?”

Willie said, “I’ll sit and wait.”

Mellissa got in the tub with her clothes on.

Ida stood and looked at Mellissa and said, “Mellissa why did you get in the tub with your clothes on.”

Mellissa said, “Because I did not have a change of clothes.”

The governor’s daughters’ laughed.

Ida said, “You two sit there and watch her and keep her from running away.”

Ida went and bathe and changed her clothes and combed her hair.

Ida sent the governor’s two daughters to take their baths.

The governor’s son completed his bath and was sitting in the lobby.

William finished his bath and sat next to the governor’s son.

They went outside and saw the wagon.

William liked the wagon and he said, “Two horses have to pull this wagon.”

William was thinking.

The governor’s son said, “There’s Marc and Joseph.”

He ran to them and pointed outside.

Marc and Joseph examined the wagon.

Joseph said, “New. The wheels are new. But two horses must pull this.”

William looked at Willie.

Laura, Jason, Alice and Clara were walking back to the hotel.

Joseph walked to them and said, “How are you Clara?”

Clara said, “The doctor said I am fine”

Clara said, “This is the wagon. It will do but two horses are required.”

She walked in the hotel

Laura paid for the wagon.

She told Alice to go with Clara and Jason to take their baths and afterwards they would go shopping.

Clara just stood still.

Joseph looked and walked into the hotel.

Mellissa was completely wet and her hair.

Clara did not turn to the clerk she said, “I need towels now. Mellissa you can catch cold.”

The clerk brought Clara three towels and held out his hand.

Clara looked at him and said, “Jason go and get Laura.”

Jason ran out the hotel and said, “Miss Laura Miss Clara said for you to come.”

William continued to talk to Willie, because he did not want to be around Jason.

Jason knew William did not want him around because of his parents.

But Laura told him that was alright.

He and Alice felt so much better walking to the hotel with Clara and Laura.

They were getting to be happy.

Laura paid for the baths and towels.

She said, “Clara I know you are not will but please see about Mellissa so I can go and get our clothes and soap.”

Alice and Jason were surprise and opened their mouths.

They all were cold.

Laura gave them her shawl.

They walked to the store.

But Laura saw a transfer office and wired her twin sisters fifty dollars each.

They walked to the clothing store and Laura bought Alice several dresses, a coat and gloves and hats and two pairs of shoes and plenty of underwear.

Jason sat and waited.

Laura took him by the hand.

She bought him several pairs of jeans, sweaters and long sleeve shirts an coat, gloves and a hat, two pair of boots and plenty of underwear.

The children were so happy.

Laura thought about how their parents would take them shopping twice a year and their mother would always buy mor underwear because she said, you can wear dirty clothes but not bloomers.

Laura did not like to wash and she did not have time for it.

She went to the ladies’ clothes and bought Mellissa underwear and a dress and a new pair of shoes and a new coat, gloves and hat.

Laura was feeling good.

She wondered about Clara, because she lost some weight.

She bought Clara underwear, stockings, a pair of much needed boots, two dresses, two new shawls and gloves and.

Laura bought underwear, stockings, two pairs of boots and two dresses, coat, gloves and a hat.

Laura noticed were quiet she walked and looked and saw a sale’s person twisting her hands and rubbing her hands at the children.

Laura walked between the salesperson and the Alice and Jason.

The salesperson jumped.

The manager turned and looked the salesperson and then at the children.

The manager reached for Laura’s haul.

Laura almost put the items back but she knew they needed the items. Especially with Mellissa acting up.

Alice and Jason ran and grabbed onto Laura’s legs.

Another patron walked to the salesperson and said, “I need your assistance.”

The salesperson walked away.

Laura stared the salesperson down.

Laura paid for the items.

She, Jason and Alice walked back to the hotel.

They passed another store and Laura walked in with both arms full of packages and said to the sales person, “Comb and brush.”

They ran and got her the combs and brushes and she bought all of them their separate brush and comb.

She saw Alice looking at some hair bows.

Laura bought Alice several bows.

Alice was delighted and happy.

They returned to the hotel.

Laura gave Mellissa her clothes and Clara her clothes.

Alice and Jason showed their new clothes to Mellissa and Clara.

Clara said, “William said, Marc told him to let Jason stay with him.”

Laura said, “No you stay with William. I will stay with Mellissa and the children. You are weak. You can’t handle Mellissa. Do you want to go and take your bath and take Alice and Jason with you. Because we still have some shopping to do.”

Clara said, “I like these dresses Laura. I hope they fit. I want to wear the maroon dress today. I really needed a new pair of boots.”

Clara said, “What shopping do we have to do?”

Laura turned and looked at Clara very hard and said, “You said you had to buy something for that old man.”

Clara said, “That’s right. Come my precious so we can take a bath and put on our new things and go and shop.”

Mellissa said, “Laura where did you get money from?”

Laura said, “Mellissa just like you sit around and say stuff you knew not to get your butt in that water and make a mess. I am tired and I am not going to put up with your mess any longer.”

Mellissa said, “I asked where you got money from not about your feelings.”

Laura balled her fists.

Clara said, “Laura no.”

Laura was tired of Mellissa and she did not know how much more she could take of this in and out of reality.”

Clara said, “Come on Alice and Jason. Laura I washed her private area and dried her hair and put her clothes over there to dry. That’s why she is sitting with a blanket on.”

Clara looked at Laura and she and Alice and Jason went to the bath area.

They bathe and dressed they all looked well taken care of.

Laura put on Mellissa’s underwear and stockings and dress and her new boots.

Mellissa said, “Why did you get me only one dress and you and Clara two dresses?”

Laura did not respond.

Laura held out the combs and brushes and Mellissa picked out he one she wanted.

Mellissa looked at Laura and picked out the color she wanted.

Laura combed and brushed Mellissa’s hair and pinned it up.

Mellissa looked very nice.

Clara, Alice and Jason walked in the hotel room when Laura was finishing Mellissa’s hair.

Clara said, “What happened?”

Mellissa said, “I asked Laura why she bought me one dress and you and Laura two dresses.”

Clara said, “Laura did you answer Mellissa.”

Mellissa looked at Laura.

Laura got her clothes and went to the bath area.

Alice said, “Miss Mellissa, Miss Laura said, she did not know what size dress you wear. She would let you pick your dress.”

Jason said, “She said you needed something for right now.”

Clara said, “Mellissa does that answer your question?”

Mellissa sat back in the chair and said, “She could have said that.”

Marc and Joseph knocked on Clara’s door.

Clara opened the door.

Marc said, “Whoa looked at all of you. You really look nice.”

Alice and Jason grinned.

Joseph said, “Clara you looked so much better than this morning.”

Clara said, “Thank you. I have been thanking GOD all day.”

Marc said, “the commander told me to order Jake some coal and buy him a few blankets. What did Jake tell you to buy him?”

Clara said, “Thermals and blankets.”

Marc said, “William, Ida and children are gone shopping for the children friends. We are going to …”

The door opened and Laura walked in and said, “Hello.”

Joseph said, “You looked good Laura.”

Laura said, “Thank you.”

She combed and brushed hair and let it stay down.

Joseph looked at Marc and then at Laura.

Joseph said, “Laura where is the other bank? We could not find it.”

Laura said, “It’s over three streets.”

Marc said, “We went over two streets.”

Laura put on her coat and gloves.

Alice and Jason got a hold of each of Laura’s hand and they walked out the room and downstairs and out the door.

Marc stayed with Clara and Mellissa.

Marc, Clara and Mellissa walked and found the clothing store

Marc said, “Clara what happened to you this morning?”

Clara said, “I believe I was gone. It was still and quiet. I felt someone once my hands. I could only hear JESUS, JESUS, JESUS. That was all that I could hear. Like GOD was saying that is WHO and the Only One we have and depend on JESUS alone. I accepted that and when I did that’s when I felt William.”

Mellissa said, “What did the doctor say?”
Clara said, “He said I was fine. My heart and lungs were fine. He did not see anything in my eyes and ears.”

Mellissa said, “That’s good.”

They walked to the clothing store and Clara bought Jake several pairs of thermal underwear, socks, towel and washcloths.

They went to a general merchandise store and bought Jake some curtains and sheets. She bought him some candles to be in his house and some dishes and a coffee pot and dishpan and dish clothes.

Marc thought and said, “I would like to buy some torches for different yards can you carry them back win you’re wagon”

Clara said, “I’m sure you can.”

Mellissa said, “You better ask Laura.”

Marc said, “I’m sure it will be fine.”

Mellissa said, “Laura hates me.”

Marc and Clara said, “No she doesn’t.”

Laura went to the bank with Joseph.

She and Joseph put a hundred dollars in bank.

They passed a transfer offer and Laura wired her twin sisters another fifty dollars each.

Joseph, Laura, Alice and Jason went into a general store and Laura bought five bibles, several towels and washcloths. She bought soap.

They saw Marc, Clara and Mellissa walk in the general store.

Jason and Alice ran to them.

Laura said to Joseph, “I need to order coal for Mellissa.”

Joseph looked around and said, “We ordered the coal from here.”

Laura passed Mellissa, Clara and Marc and went to the desk and ordered a lot of coal and paid for it to go to Mellissa.

Mellissa said, “Laura got a lot of money and she won’t tell me where she got it. Did she tell you. Any of you?”

Clara stared at Mellissa.

Marc looked at Mellissa.

Joseph was standing with Laura and he heard Mellissa and he turned and looked at Mellissa.

Laura heard Mellissa and said, “I don’t understand it.”

Joseph said, “We don’t need her talking.”

Laura said, “I need to replace food in her house. Not that she had a lot.”

Joseph looked at Laura and said, “You’re leaving?”

Laura looked at Joseph and said, “Yes.”

Joseph said, “What about Clara? Whatever that was this morning can attack her again. The children are helpless. Mellissa can’t help.”

Laura said, “Sorry.”

The clerk handed her the receipts for everything and said it would be two weeks for her coal to be delivered.

Laura said, “Thank you.”

She and Joseph passed Mellissa, Clara and Marc.

The children ran to Laura.

Mellissa said, “Laura do you hate me?”

Laura said, “Yes.”

Mellissa, Marc and Clara looked as Laura walked out the general store.

They went to a food supply store.

Joseph said, “Let me go and get the wagon.

He took their packages and carried them with him.

He put the packages in the covered wagon.

And attached his horse and went back to the food supply store.

Laura bought Larry and Mellissa, flour, sugar, lard, corn meal, different kind of beans, beef and pork and apples.

They packed the wagon and still had space for the riders to lie down and stretch out.

Joseph, Laura, Jason and Alice got in the wagon and drove to the restaurant.

They party of twelve sat for dinner.

Mellissa said, “Laura you didn’t buy me another dress.”

Laura said, “What time is it.”

Laura turned to Joseph and said, “Order me the smothered pork chops mashed potatoes and a green vegetable.

Alice and Jason left the restaurant with Laura.

The three made it to the store just about closing.

Laura told Jason and Alice, “I will fight the witch in the store. You say JESUS. OK?”

Jason and Alice were skipping and saying Jesus as they entered the store.

The manager remembered them from that morning.

The witch was watching the children.

Laura held their hands and went looking for Mellissa a dress.

Laura started just to grab a dress, but she stopped.

Laura said, “God I want to leave on good terms. Which dress?”

Alice and Jason sat on the floor and was saying JESUS between the two like a children’s song.

The witch walked back to Laura and stared at the children and said, “It’s time for us to close.”

Laura picked the yellow dress and looked at Jason and Alice and said, “Get up babies so we can go.”

Laura looked at the witch and said, “JESUS.”

The thought came to her what to say.

Laura said, “JESUS loves but, but not over these children.”

The witch started walking in front of Laura.

Laura said, “I like Matthew 19: and Laura said, But JESUS said, Suffer little children and forbid them not to come unto me for of such is the kingdom of heaven. “

Laura reached the dress to the manager.

The manger snatched the dress with strength.

Laura looked at he.

The manager looked at Alice and Jason.

Alice and Jason continued saying,” JESUS. JESUS. JESUS.”

The two women became nervous.

Laura looked at the main witch and said, “You may have heard Lue 17:2, where JESUS said, “It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones.”

The manager totaled the cost of the dress and before she could Laura told her the exact amount of the dress.

Laura said, “Maybe you two heard of Matthew 18:6, “Where JESUS said, But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea.”

The manger pushed the package to Laura.

Laura looked at the two and said, “I especially like that last six words of that scripture. It is the number six. The number of man.”

Laura saw Jason moved.

She looked and saw a man come from the back that passed the Alice and Jason very close.

The man went to the door and locked it.

Laura said, “Unlock that door now! The LORD rebuke you o’ satan.”

Alice looked up at Laura.

Jason was watching the man.

Marc walked to the door.

The man waved his hand at Marc to go away.

Marc showed his gun and pointed at Laura.

The salesperson witch pointed and the man unlocked the door.

The man witch looked at Marc and unlocked the door.

Jason and Alice went out the door first.

Laura looked at them and walked out the door.

Marc said, “It will not be a second time.”

He stared at the three.

He saw the curtain move that lead to the back.

Jason and Alice skipped and played all the way back to the restaurant.

Marc said, “What was that back there?”

Laura said, “Witches. They were coming after the children.”

Marc said, “I told William to let Jason sleep in the room with him. But you, Alice and Jason sleep in that room and William can bunk with me and Joseph.”

Laura said, “How did you know to come at that moment?”

Marc said, “I just felt a strong feeling to find you and the food was coming out.”

Laura smiled, “I loosed the Word of GOD in that place.”

A male voice came from behind the voice and said, “You two come here.”

The man at the door became very nervous.

The two women stood in front of a desk and the male said, “Why did you attack first?”

The salesperson said, “They had the mark.”

She said it like it was a prize statement.

The man continued to stand at the door and swallowed hard and began to sweat.

The man behind the desk said, “You caused the Word of GOD to be loosed in the atmosphere against us.”

Marc, Laura, Alice and Jason walked back to the restaurant.

Laura helped Alice and Jason out their coats.

Their food just was placed on the table.

Mellissa looked at Laura.

Marc, Ida and William were watching Mellissa.

Joseph’s heart was broken over Mellissa.

He did not want Laura to abandon her and Clara.

He thought to himself, “God I know I am not right. But You know what is going on here. I don’t know what to do. I know that Mellissa has a tormenting spirit and she is tormenting Laura her care giver. I don’t want them to put Mellissa away where the devil can torment and destroy her. I know we are all together for a reason. I just can’t figure this stuff out. Something happened to Clara this morning. She looked dead to me. You brought her back to life for a reason. These children need somebody. I thought the somebodies were Clara and Laura. I need somebody. You now I have been thinking about Laura a lot. At first it was Clara. Then when I saw Laura running behind the horses and having fun with Newsom…”

Joseph thought about Newsom he said, “God, I had not thought about Newsom. Would you please heal him and make him whole. If he is suppose to be with Laura take her out of my heart and mind. And let me concentrate on being the best doctor I can. That area is good because for towns and cities there is no medical doctors. Help me understand what is wrong Mellissa and if You want me to help people with mind problems, show me oh GOD!!!.”

Joseph leaned forward and stumped his feet.

Marc saw him and said nothing.

Joseph bowed his head and his was still down when the grace was over.

Ida was watching Joseph and her eyes teared up for him.

William looked at his mother and followed her eyes to Joseph and he touched her arm.

The governor’s children had learned over the past few months to watch Ida.

The oldest girl followed Ida’s eyes to Joseph.

She moved her seat and sat on the outside by Joseph.

She bumped him and put her head on his shoulder.

Joseph smiled and kissed her on her head.

Ida looked at the girl and mouthed ‘thank you’.

Everyone was eating either fried chicken or pork chops.

The governor’s oldest daughter loved vegetables over meat.

Ida would give her a small serving of meat and more vegetable.

Lydia and her brother would wait for her to give them her meat.

Her mother would scold her all the time for not eating meat.

Her father and mother would argue all the time about trying to force her to eat meat.

David would tell Thelma there was other foods she could eat and get the same benefit from meat.

Thelma would roll her eyes at her daughter.

Her daughter tapped her father’s legs one day and he looked at his daughter who was staring her mother.

David looked at Thelma and said, “Why are you looking at your child that way?”

Thelma did not say anything.

He looked at Thelma.

She was slowing putting the fork in her mouth.

She shifted her eyes from her daughter downwards.

David was very vicious and stood from the table and threw his napkin in his plate.

All the dining room and kitchen staff saw and heard him.

The security aides standing outside the dining room turned and looked in the room at the governor.

The governor had just argued with Thelma in the garden about the way she talked to people and the way she treated people.

Thelma knew her beauty and she held David’s heart in her hand.

When David yelled at Thelma, she thought she could fix this.

Her oldest daughter sat still and stared at her mother.

Thelma looked at her daughter and had a fork full of mashed potatoes to put in

her mouth when the governor threw her out the mansion and forbid her to ever come near his children again.

Thelma had her head turned looking at the staff as David stood and commanded her to live the mansion at once and not to go to their home.

The lead security aide stood in the hallway and said to the other security aides, “It’s about time.”

Thelma dis- regarded David.

David walked out the dining room.

Thelma snarled at the staff and said, “Go back to your stations.”

Nobody moved.

The security aides walked into the dining room and forcibly carried Thelma out the dining room up to the governor’s bedroom.

The lead security aide who was a cousin to the governor that no one knew about said to Thelma,”The governor gave a command for you to leave this mansion and do not go to is house and pack all you can pack tonight because you will never be allowed back her.”

Thelma interrupted the security aide and several aides were standing the doorway and in the bedroom.

She looked at the security aides and said, “Leave my bedroom.”

The security aides did not bulge.

The lead security aide said, “I will arrest you and put you in jail. The governor said or you to leave now. Pack what you can. Don’t go to his house. Never come back here for nothing...”

Thelma interrupted the lead security man again and said, “I am taking my children.”

The lead security aide looked at two of his men and they pulled out the new handcuffs and walked towards Thelma.

The lead security aide, said, “Ma am no one is playing with you. You interrupt me again…”

Thelma opened her mouth and then looked at the security men with the handcuffs.

The lead security aide said, “…I will have you buried in prison for the rest of your life. The governor said to you and we all heard him, but you while you had your head turned say very clearly to you that you will never see your children again. Your choice jail or walk out of here.”

The security aides, Joey and Mike were standing with the new handcuffs ready to use them.

Thelma could not believe her ears.

The lead security aide said, “What is your decision?”

Thelma with a low voice said, “Pack.”

The lead security aide yelled at her and said, “What is your decision ma am?!!!”

She saw his eyes, they were filled with hate for her.

She said, “Pack.”

The lead said, “You have one hour and whatever you don’t pack we will throw it away.”

Thelma fell onto the bed.

The lead security aide left the bedroom to find David.

David was on the balcony looking out over the garden.

He was smoking.

He was thinking, “Why does she hate her own child. I had a happy life. I want my children to have a happy and well balanced life. She is not going to ruin that.”

The lead security aide stepped out on the balcony and watched David.

David finished a puff and said, “Thank you. Make sure she is out of here. I’ll be in my office.”

The governess walked the children upstairs to their bedroom.

The whole governor’s mansion was talking.

They were happy he put her out.

David went into his office and bent down in front of his safe.

He held his head down and cried.

He held his head up and unlocked his safe.

He took out the tray hat held Thelma’s jewels.

He pushed his financial papers aside which included all of his businesses and corporations.

He located the piece of paper.

The governor stood and walked to his desk.

He called for the security aide to come in.

The lead security aide had returned from upstairs watching Thelma pack.

He looked at her and he pointed to the clock.

He walked in the governor’s office and he looked around and saw the safe opened

He wondered why the safe was opened.

The lead security aide said, “The first lady asked to speak to you.”

David sat back in his chair and exhaled he looked at the security aide and said, “Why?”

The lead security aide said, “Sir. I am just delivering her message.”

The governor said, “Never give me a message from her. Send in the notary. Summon a non-state wagon and have him to take wherever she wants to go but not to my house. Pay for the wagon out of my money.”

The governor went upstairs to the children’s suite and spent time in their room.

Thelma saw him passing and ran to the doorway and called him.

The security blocked her from rushing out the room.

She tried to push the security aides, but they would not bulge.

David walked in the bedroom and stood by the security aide.

Thelma moved her hand to shoo the security aides away.

The security aides would not move.

Thelma said, had a nightgown in her hand and went to put it on the bed and turned her head and said to David, “Door David.”

David released at that moment Thelma was crazy.

Thelma stood and looked at David and thought she could get him to change his mind.

David said, “Thelma what do you want?”

Thelma walked to David and looked up in his face and said, “What do we do to get pass this?”

David held up his hand.

David said, “A divorce and you giving up all parental rights to the children forever. Then you may get a small stipend. But as of now out of my house.”

Thelma could not believe David was finished with her.”

She sat on the bed and he stared at her.

Thelma said, “Can I stay through the holidays and the inauguration. I have family and friends coming the day after tomorrow. I don’t want to be embarrassed anymore.”

Joey rolled his eyes.

Mike felt for his handcuffs.

Thelma said, “You at least owe me that much.”

David ran to Thelma.

She thought he was going to hold her and kiss her and take her back.

Joey saw the governor’s balled fist.

In joey’s mind he was saying, “Punch that bitch. Hit her for me.”

The lead security aide rushed in and caught the governor’s hand as it went into the air.

Then Thelma realized her life was forever over with David as it was with Dr. Obersteen.

Joey was looking with such disappointment.

The governor said, “You and your guess spend the holidays and the inauguration in the guess house. None of you ever set foot on the grounds around the house, use the servants’ entrance. None of you including your drunk parents come near and my children and do not send any messages by anyone. The moment the inauguration ball is over have all your wagons outside back gate and if you leave anything it will be burned. You and your guess will not sit at meals with me and my children.”

Thelma was so shocked and stood and looked at David.

She was trying to figure out what she could say or do.

Thelma said, “Can I wear my jewelry for the holidays and inauguration?”

David said, “You will not wear anything. Joey.”

The lead security aide said to the first lady, “Continue to pack.”

Joey ran downstairs and ran into the governor’s office and got the divorce papers and danced all the way up the stairs saying, “Get rid of that bitch. Da. Da. Da.”

Joey stopped running and pressed his clothes and straighten up.

The lead security aide heard Joey.

Joey walked into the bedroom and handed the governor the papers and an ink pen.

The governor looked at Joey who looked at the top of the ceiling.

The lead security aide stared at Joey.

The governor said, “Sign it.”

The first lady said, “What is that?”

The governor said, “The divorce papers.”

Thelma was surprised she said, “No. I ‘ll fight you in court.”

The governor said, “From jail. Security.”

Mike pulled out his handcuffs.

Thelma said, “Ok. Alright.”

Thelma signed the divorce and several security aides signed the papers along with the governess and the butler.

Thelma said, “Do I get anything?”

David said, “A small stipend as long as I am alive.”

David handed the divorce papers to Joey.

Joey walked out the bedroom and slid down the stairwell.

He landed on the floor and danced all the way to the governor’s office.

Joey was singing, “Da Da Da the bitch is gone.”

He was standing in front of each of the security aides and sang.

The governor and the lead security aide were standing at the top of the stairwell looking at Joey.

Bass the second lead security man saw the governor and the lead security mand and said, “Joey, “ and nodded at the stairwell.”

Joey was tired and out of breath said, “Huh.”

The governor walked down the stairwell followed by the lead security aide.

All the security aides were standing at attention.

Joey could not catch his breath.

The governor was a nice and kind person but he was very stern.

He never played with his employees.

The lead security aide said, “I know it is none of my business but what are those papers?”

The governor looked at the lead security aide, “You are right, it is not your business…”

He stared at the lead security aide.

The lead security aide stared at David.

The governor said, “These papers are my divorce papers. I had the papers drawn up over a year ago. I give her nothing. I worked hard for fifteen years to build my money and the faster I got a dime she was spending. Nearly put me into bankruptcy. I worked hard over the past six years and build my money back up. I put all of my money in a separate bank account and have a bank account for our daily living. I don’t like her nastiness towards people. She has finished school, but no formal education. She thinks her looks rule the world. I can’t tolerate her anymore. Get me the notary to sign these papers and file before the holidays.”

The lead security aide said, “Yes sir.”

The lead security aide looked around the governor’s office and at the opened safe.

He walked to the notary’s office David placed in the governor’s mansion for his easy assess.

The lead security aide knocked on the opened door and told the notary the governor wanted him now.

The notary looked at the overbearing lead security aide and opened his desk drawer and picked up his bag with his notary credentials and stood .

The notary public walked to the door and closed it.

The lead security aide shook the doorknob to make sure the door was locked.

The notary public heard the lead security aide and he exhaled and closed his eyes and kept walking down the hall to the governor’s office.

The telegram office was across the hall from the notary’s office.

The governor placed everything he needed on the same floor with his office.

He had an employee staffing the offices twenty four hours per day.

He had them to log in every transaction.

David would get up early and walked the hall and check the offices to see if his employees were sleep or absent.

He hired additional security aides that lined his hallway twenty four hours per day.

When David walk down his stairwell he wanted to see security aides lined the hallway.

David would go to the telegram office around four am and stay and read the telegrams and respond.

He would have an idea how to start his day.

He liked to walk out on the balcony and take in God’s quietness and stillness before he start his busy day.

After he would be on his balcony for at least thirty minutes.

He would turn and go into the dining room and sit.

The cooks would have his soft boiled egg and dry toast and black coffee waiting for him.

The cook, when putting his tray before him and removing his breakfast would whisper and say, “Sir, we got fresh blue berries.

He would say, “Very good. A muffin please.”

The staff would be very pleased.

The cook prepared the blueberry muffin and sent it by the butler to the governor.

The butler would bring him the newspaper and he would read the paper and especially the financial section.

He would sit there for a minute and take a deep breath.

David would go upstairs and bathed and shaved and get dressed.

He would go and stay in his children’s suite for at thirty minutes and walk downstairs to his office.

He spoke to all his staff.

He respected these people who have put their lives on the line for him and for those who put their living on hold for him.

The twelve were eating their dinner.

Mellissa said, “Laura did you buy me another dress so I can have two new dresses also?”

Marc looked at Mellissa and thought, “They need to put you away. If you got enough sense to keep up mess.”

Ida looked at Mellissa and said, “Mellissa why are you trying to torment Laura about a dress when you have clothes?”

Mellissa turned to say something to Ida, she stopped and stared at the governor’s daughter that sat next to Joseph.

Everyone turned and looked at the governor’s daughter.

Joseph turned and looked at her.

The girl sat and looked at Mellissa.

Laura and Clara watched Mellissa.

Marc and Joseph were watching everybody.

The governor’s said, “Why are you looking at me Mellissa?”

Laura reached Mellissa the package.

Mellissa said, “I hope you got blue.”

Laura looked at Mellissa and said, “You can resist the devil if you want to. For whatever the benefit you think you are going to get by trying to torment. I speak now no weapon formed against me shall prosper. Come out of her and never return in JESUS’ name.”

Marc looked.

William was watching Jason and Alice.

He was not confident they were not in the occult.

Mellissa looked at the end of the table at the governor’s daughter looking at her.

The governor’s daughter said, “I asked you why are you looking at me Mellissa?”

Joseph looked at the governor’s daughter and was surprise she was challenging the spirit that was attacking Mellissa.

He watched Mellissa.

Mellissa turned her head back to the package and opened it part of the way and saw yellow.

She said, “I want blue.”

Mellissa tried to throw the dress, but Marc caught her hand and she only knocked over her water.

Clara cleaned it up.

The governor’s oldest daughter stared at Mellissa.

William wondered what was going on in the governor’s daughter’s head.

Laura was ignoring Clara also.

She turned to Jason and Alice and said, “Want desert?”

Laura called the waitress and whispered something in her ear.

The waitress grinned and came back fifteen minutes with twelve ice creams.

Everyone was delighted.

They all enjoyed their dinner.

Laura payed for the dinner.

Mellissa said, “Laura where did you get money from those dead killers?”

The governor’s daughter stood and walked to the end of the table where Mellissa was sitting between Clara and Marc.

Joseph watched the girl.

She said, “You evil spirit of torment in Mellissa I call you out forever in JESUS’ name. I recognize you. You know I recognize you. You have no power over the blood of JESUS. You come out of Mellissa. Shut up and don’t say another word.”

The governor’s son said, “Don’t say another word come out and never come back. In JESUS’ name.”

Lydia joined in and said, “Miss Ida can I have another ice cream.?”

Alice and Jason shook their heads in agreement.

Ida said, “No.”

Lydia looked at Mellissa and said, “Don’t say another word…”

She raised her hand towards Mellissa and said, “ You have no power over the blood of JESUS.”

Mellissa was quiet for the rest of the evening and the night.

Clara said, “Where did you learn that?”

Lydia said, “Angelica taught us, when we would to visit mommie and daddy. She said that’s what to do with evil spirits.”

Clara said, “One day I have to meet this Angelica. She can teach me things.”

Lydia said, “She said she will be coming to us soon.”

The governor’s son said, “Angelica said we have to be prepared against the on slaught of evil spirits...”

He looked at Marc and Joseph and said, “Just you’ll had to fight to protect us. We have to fight to protect everybody else. That’s why they could not kill us because we are here to fight for others.”

Lydia nodded her head and said, “Right.”

Joseph looked around and no one was in their part of the restaurant.

He thought, “Thank you.”

The party of twelve stood to leave and the doctor and his wife were entering.

The doctor held the door for them.

Joseph went and paid for the doctor and his wife’s dinner.

The waitress smiled, because Laura left her a big tip.

They went back to the hotel.

Clara slept in the room with William.

Willian was uncomfortable with a woman in his hotel room so he went and slept with Marc and Joseph.

Laura said, “Alice and Jason sleep with miss Clara. Miss Melissa and I will sleep in this room.”

They woke the next morning.

Laura slept on the floor at the door to keep Mellissa from running out.

Laura woke and looked at the bed and did not see Mellissa.

She raised her head and saw Mellissa sitting in the window and looking out the window at the sunrise.

Laura thought, “Damn. I did not think of the window.”

Mellissa said, “Hi Laura.”

Laura did not speak but pulled the blanket to her face.

There was a knock on the door and Laura turned and looked at the shoes from underneath the door.

She thought Marc.

Laura said, “Yes.”

Joseph said, “Get up so we can leave. Something happened at the store where you bought the clothes.”

Laura was scrambling to get up.

She caught the doorknob while she was on her knees and opened the door and her eyes were cracked open and she looked up at Joseph.

Joseph looked down at her and said, “Everyone is ready but you and Mellissa. I don’t like this let’s go now.”

Clara walked up.

And she and Jason and Alice were dressed she reached Joseph the bags.

Joseph left with the packages.

Laura jumped up and looked at Jason and Alice and said, “You have enough clothes to change everyday.”

Jason said, “And washed.”

Laura put her hand up to her mouth and said, “Shush.”

Alice looked at Laura and said, “It’s a secret.”

Clara said let us rush. Something bad has happened and Marc and Joseph want to leave now.”

Mellissa looked out the window.

Alice walked over sat in the chair and looked at Mellissa and turned to Jason and said, “It’s Miss Mellissa. She’s back.”

Laura looked and shook her head for she did not care.

Clara stopped searching the room for a minute and looked at Alice and Jason who knew something about witchcraft.

lara was looking through the room and under the bed to get everything.

Laura was rushing to put on her clothes.

Clara ran to Mellissa to get her dressed.

Mellissa looked at Alice and Jason and said, “Yes Miss Mellissa is back.”

Clara looked at Mellissa and hugged her and they cried.

Laura had thrown on her clothes and boots and her hair was loose.

Marc bammed on the door.

Laura ran and opened the door.

Before Marc could say anything he saw Mellissa and Clara hugging and crying.

Alice turned around and said, “Marc miss Mellissa is back.”

Jason shook his head for yes.

Ida was double checking the rooms.

She stood and looked at Mellissa and Clara and said, “Welcome back Mellissa.”

Laura did not care.

She walked passed Marc and Ida and went to the front desk.

Jason ran to Laura and said, “You did not get us pajamas.”

Laura thought.

The clerk said “We have pajamas, what size?”

She pointed to Alice and Jason and said, “Their size?”

The owner was walking in and said, “You leaving early?”

Laura looked at Jason and Alice and leaned and said, “Executions start today and we want to be off the road.”

The owner said, “All of that was bad.”

He looked up and saw Ida walking on side of Mellissa and Clara on the other side.

The owner said, “Is she alright?”

That word hit Laura’s ear drum.

She thought, “Let me get away from these witches.”

The front desk clerk brought out a nightgown and a pair of pajamas.

Laura paid for the night gown and pajamas and Clara and Mellissa and Ida were walking out the hotel.

Mellissa reached for Laura.

Laura turned her head.

Alice and Jason stood with Laura, they reached for Laura’s hand.

Laura shifted her bags and reached for Alice and Jason’s little hands and she glanced up to their rooms and she gasped and sped out the hotel with Alice and Jason.

She ran passed by Joseph and put Alice and Jason in the wagon.

Laura jumped in the driver’s seat.

Joseph said, “My horse. I drive. Move over.”

Joseph looked at the shaking Laura.

He said, “You’re spooked. What you saw?”

She looked back at Alice and Jason and said, “Holy Angels.”

Alice, “We saw them last night. Didn’t we Jason?”

Jason was sitting and looking out the opening by the driver.

Jason said. “Yeap. I counted seven of them. They are nice. One said they will be with us forever.”

JESUS was sitting and watching them and moving a large brown book to his side.

Joseph reached over and kissed Laura very long and hard on the lips.

Alice and Jason said, “Whoa.”

Alice said, “Look Miss Clara and Miss Mellissa.”

Ida was peeping through the wagon and saw Joseph and Laura kissing.

Laura smiled and looked back in the wagon at her small spectators.

She held her head down and grinned.

Joseph said, “My lady there is a lot more for you.”

Laura started crying.

Clara and Mellissa crawled in the wagon.

Clara sat on something she jumped and said, “What?”

Alice and Jason laughed.

Alice said, “It’s a turkey Miss Clara.”

Ida laughed and went and sit with Marc in the front.

William led them out the town back to the evil town.

Laura cried for a long time.

Clara was watching her sister cry and she felt deliverance for her.

Clara remembered most of Laura’s lost romances. She still wanted to know who Ricky was.

Laura was turned sideways and the sun rising on her face looked like the glory of GOD and HIS mercy and HIS forgiveness.

Joseph looked down at Laura and touched her hair where the sun was beaming.

Clara said,”Laura I want to know about Ricky and I will never bring it up again.”

Laura said, “Sunday at dinner.”

Clara said, “That’s three days.”

Laura looked out and said, “That’s two horses.”

Joseph reached over and kissed Laura again and said, “Marc’s horse.”

He kissed Laura again.

Jason said, “Can you two stop? We are kids.”

Joseph and Laura laughed.

Ida sat with Marc and told him that Joseph just reached over and gave Laura a long kiss.

She said, Laura said saw holy angels when we leaving the hotel with Mellissa.

She ran passed us with Alice and Jason and nearly threw them in the wagon and she got in the driver’s seat and was about to take off but Joseph stopped her.

William was on the other side by his mother.

They laughed.

I guess she thought Clara and I could not hear hr, but Joseph said, “What?”

Laura said, “Holy angels.”

Joseph did not say a word.

Alice and Jason said, there were seven.

Ida said, “Let me stop because I am getting goose bumps.

Marc said, “Me too.”

William rode up in front of them.

Marc looked at William and shook his head.

Ida said,”He has always been easy to scare.”

The governor’s daughter said, “William can’t be easy to scare now.”

The governor’s boy said, “Nope.”

Lydia was going through the bags and said, “Whose purple suckers?”

Marc and Ida hollered, “Don’t open them.”

Lydia put them back and began to cry.

Marc said, “I don’t care. Those are for the commander.”

Lydia said, “That’s all you had to say.”

Marc reached his hand back and said, “Give me those suckers.”

Lydia looked in the bag and handed Marc the two purple suckers.

She started looking through the other bags.

Ida turned around and said, “Lydia what are you looking for? You went shopping with us and the commander gave each of you twenty dollars to buy stuff.”

The governor’s oldest girl and his son watched the irritated Lydia.

Marc yelled to William, “Speed up.”

William sped up.

Marc looked back at Joseph to see if they were keeping up.

Laura and Joseph talked each other and their plans and what type of life they wanted.

Joseph said, “I was raised in the big city. I left to get adventure and see the world. Which was a few towns away.”

Laura laughed.

Joseph told Laura he was abandoned by his mother and father, because they were kids. They left him with his grandmother’s sister, who did not have children nor a husband.

Laura said, “I’m sorry.”

Joseph said, “For what? I was spoiled.”

Jason laughed.

Alice was sleep on the floor with Clara and Mellissa.

Laura did not fuss.

She said, “Jason you don’t want to sleep? We have a bit to go.”

Jason said, “I never seen anything but our house and the street the school was on.”

Alice popped up and yawn and looked around said, “Right.”

Jason was sitting on the food bags and looked out the wagon.

Alice laid at the foot and looked out the back of the wagon.

Joseph said, “They have sped up some. I guess they want to make it back sooner.”

Jason said, “It was a good trip. We got new clothes. Food, meet new friends. I think they are friends. We ate.”

Alice said, “Miss Mellissa is back.”

Jason and said, “We met holy angels that will always be with us. That’s the best part of this trip. We don’t have to be afraid anymore.”

Alice giggled and crawled over to Jason and whispered.

She and Jason were whispering.

Clara was laying there listening to them.

They were talking about Laura and Joseph kissing.

Clara laughed.

Laura and Joseph figured they were talking about them.

Joseph said, “I want to be a medical doctor... “

Laura looked back at Clara.

Clara laughed.

Joseph continued,”…In this great state there are only two medical schools. The one at the big city hospital or the one at the state capitol. I don’t want to go that far from my beloved aunt. So I will be working to get in the medical school at the big city hospital. Which means you have to move with me and that will be five days travel time from your home.”

Laura said, “I love our family farm.”

Joseph said, “We have to figure it out. How long is this governor’s project going to take?”

Laura stop and was thinking.

Joseph looked at her.

Laura said, “I really don’t know.”

Joseph said, “On that side of the state there are doctors. This side has one doctor, the one Clara saw, until you get to the big city.”

Clara said, “I have to jump in the doctor that is taking care of the governor.”

Joseph said, “They say he is going to the big city hospital after the governor is better.”

Mellissa woke and said, “Laura.”

Laura turned around on the seat and did not look back.

Joseph looked at Laura and did not say anything.

Mellissa began to cry.

Clara reached over and rubbed her shoulder.

Jason was looking out the front of the wagon.

Laura had made a goodie bag.

She had candies and gum.

She reached in her bag and handed Jason a piece of chewing gum.

Laura looked around for Alice.

Alice was at the edge of the wagon.

Laura said. “Clara get her.”

Joseph stopped back.

Clara grabbed Alice who was sleep.

Clara sat next to Jason and held Alice all the way back to the evil town.

They reached the evil town just before dark.

Laura was quiet the rest of the way back.

Marc pulled in front of Jake.

He ran to the wagon and got the blankets and Clara was getting Jake’s stuff together.

Joseph went to help.

Alice screamed.

Clara said, “What?’

Marc said, “I thought I saw something to.”

Mellissa said, “Baby come and lay with me. We will be home soon.”

Jason said, “We have a home?”

Mellissa said, “Yes babies.”

Marc and Joseph shook their heads.

Clara and Marc walked to Jake’s door.

Jake was standing in the door.

They did not see him because he had no light.

Clara and Marc spoke and walked in the house.

Marc said, “The commander told me to buy you a few blankets and order some coal. The soonest they will deliver the coal is two weeks.”

Jake said, “Thank you.”

Jake was looking at the wagons and said, “I heard a scream.”

Clara said, “She thought she saw something.”

Jake said, “She probably did. Some strange things being going on around here the past few days.”

Clara said, “Here. Several thermal sets, five pairs of wool socks, a few shirts and three pairs of jeans. Soap, candles, matches and curtains, a few dishes and pots and pans. And you have a few dollars left.”

Jake said, “Whoa that hundred dollars really bought a lot.”

Laura gave Joseph the food she bought for Jake.

Joseph walked up and handed Jake the can food and beans and apples.

They walked way.

Clara said,”Marc what is that in your pocket?”

Marc looked down and turned back and ran back to Jake.

Jake was in the door and looking up and down the street.

Marc handed Jake the two purple suckers.

Jake said, “The next time change back into your uniforms before you travel.”

Marc was angered and said, “We wanted you to have these supplies tonight instead of a few days. I will keep that in mind.”

Marc walked off the porch and jumped in the wagon and did not look back at Jake.

Ida was peeping around at Jake.

William pulled off and rode to his campsite.

They told William crazy stuff had been going on.

The soldiers had shot a couple times at stuff they saw running.

Jake went into his house.

He put his new clothes in the dresser.

He lit a candle and put the curtains up to his bedroom window.

He put one blanket on his bed and wrapped himself with the other.

He sat on his bed and read the bible by candlelight for a long time.

He walked to the living room and got on his knees at one of the chairs and prayed all night.

The morning light was breaking through the sky when he finished praying and repenting.

The blanket was wet where Jake was weeping for his sins and asking GOD to forgive him and establish him in a right relationship with HIM and JESUS.

Jake sense someone was watching him. He did not stop praying and talking to GOD.

Jake got up the next morning and washed his dishes and frying pan and pots and put them up.

He put his towels and washcloths in the indoor bath shed.

Jake put a candle and matches in each room.

He went outside and feed the horses and gave them water.

Jake scramble him two eggs and a piece of bread and drank black coffee.

He sat out on the back steps and watched the horses.

He thought, “Something big is about to happen here and GOD is getting his people ready for it. LORD I want to be ready. Order my footsteps in this battle and let me win. All the people I wrong let me make it right so I can be fit for the master’s use.”

Jake thought, “I need to bath and change clothes, Since GOD has given some new ones from where she stole from me.”

Jake ran water in the black pot.

He walked out in his backyard and gathered some sticks for the fire.

He walked back to his house and put the sticks down and lit them.

Jake went into the house and washed his dishes.

He heard some noise in his living room.

He finished washing his dishes and dried his hand and took his dish pan and poured the water out.

He walked in the living and said, “The LORD rebuke you satan.”

Jake opened his front door and the caregiver was walking to his house.

She was surprised he was up.

She had not been there for three days.

Jake looked at the plate of dried beans and eaten cornbread.

He reached the plate back to Lydia and said, “Don’t come back.”

Her husband was walking to meet her and to speak to Jake.

He walked and looked at his wife.

He did not know to continue to Jake with his fake friendship.

Jay turned to walk back with Lydia.

Jake called and said, “Jay you and Lydia come here I want to say something to you.”

The neighbors were looking.

Jake walked out to the street.

Jake could hear one neighbor, he would go fishing with at the brook, “Is that Jake?”

The other neighbor said, “How be? That is Jake. Good to see you Jake.”

Jake waved at the neighbors.

He walked to Jay and said, “Get your horse. Now…”

Jay was trying to flash a false grin and said, “You know I told you to keep the horse for me.”

Jake said, “You are not hiding the horse from the bank for bad loans. You are hiding the horse from your gambling fellows. I don’t want any parts of that.”

Jake started digging in his shirt pocket and said, “Here. Take this …”

He counted the money and said, “Take this seventeen dollars for the horse you went and got for me. Get your horse. Keep all of my stuff you and your wife stole from me.”

Jake turned away from them and walked away and said, “The bale of hay is mine’s.”

Jay yelled, “Jake keep the horse.”

He and his wife walked home.

Jake said, “I thought so.”

When Ida returned home she saw the wagon in front of house and the two new security soldiers standing on the front porch.

Marc jumped out the wagon and walked to the front porch and spoke to the security soldiers.

The governor’s children jumped out of the wagon.

Ida said, “You speak to the new security soldiers.”

They got all the bags out the wagon and walked to the house.

The governor’s children walked to the house and spoke to the two security soldiers.

Marc introduced the children to the security soldiers.

Ida walked up and spoke.

Marc introduced the two security officers to Ida.

The new security soldier named Marvin said, “The commander said, the children can visit their parents Sunday for a half hour.”

Ida said, “Thank you.”

She heard the children yelling and laughing.

Ida looked at Marc.

Marc looked at Ida.

Joseph was helping to unload the wagon.

Joseph looked up at Ida at the two new security soldiers.

Joseph pulled the wagon around back.

He had to figure out how to go and get his money.

Laura knew he was concerned about something.

Laura said, “Joseph I know we just started today, but why are you upset?”

Joseph said,”I got money out the saddles.”

Laura thought, “Where is it?”

Joseph said, “In the coal cellar at Ida.”

Laura stood and was thinking.

Joseph said, “Those two soldiers are new they are from headquarters.”

Laura walked into the living room.

Joseph said, “Did I run her away for taking the money?”

Laura walked hack to the kitchen and reached Joshua the very large empty coal bucket from the living room.

Joseph looked at coal bucket and then he smiled and looked at Laura.

He started kissing Laura.

Laura pushed Joseph away.

He had his lips puckered trying to kiss Laura.

Laura said, “Go get that money boy.”

She looked over at the Larry’s dark house.

Laura looked around and got the light an went and lit their light.

She went to Larry and Doreen.

She lit their outdoor light.

Laura walked to the young couple and lit their light.

The two soldiers at the vacant house called Laura and told her about the weird stuff going on.

Jessica walked out her house that early evening and started rubbing and twisting her hands and mumbling towards the soldiers.

Laura turned and looked at her.

One of the soldiers pulled his gun and pointed at Jessica.

The other soldier started twisting and rubbing his hands and threw it back at Jessica.

Jessica was trying to come off her porch and tripped and fell.

The soldier looked at his hands.

Laura said, “I guess you two will be up all night.”

The other soldier said, “You did not do that. That evil cow tripped on that ragged porch. If you did that to her then you would be as evil as she is. Look at them.”

Dave came out and helped her up and carried her in the house.

The other soldier said, “We need to take shifts sleeping.”

The soldier said, “You made her fall. I am going to sleep because said I will shoot her. I meant and I will.”

Larry was peeping out his door waiting for Laura.

Laura was walking home.

Larry saw her and said, “Laura.”

Laura walked across the street and said, “Hello. How are you and Doreen?”

Larry said, “Terrible. The soldiers came and got the three saddles. I was scared and eased the hundred dollars back in the saddle. I kept the twenty. But we don’t have any light nor food.”

Laura said, “We bought you’ll some supplies, that we were going to give to you tomorrow.”

Larry said, “We’ve been fasting. I need to break this fast.”

Laura said, “How is Doreen?”

Larry said, “She had been screaming and hollering and yesterday evening around six pm. She got quiet. She has been quiet all day.”

Laura said, “Pancakes and eggs. You can cook right?”

Larry said, “Yes.”

Laura said, “I’ll bring you that and the rest in the morning.”

She heard Joseph.

She turned and Joseph was walking with the bucket of coal.

Larry said, “Can I have some coal?”

Laura looked at Larry.

Larry said, “We don’t have anything. The bank…”

Pointing at his neighbor…”Keep adding all of these fees onto my mortgage. They are trying to force us to leave. We don’t have any place to go. We will be on the street.”

Laura said, “I don’t know about the coal.”

She and Joseph went in the house.

He went into the bath section of the house and counted his money and put it in his saddle.

Laura made fires in the fireplaces.

She and Clara cooked eggs for everyone.

She took a plate of eggs and toast and orange juice to Larry and Doreen.

Marc and Joseph decided to sleep in the covered wagon.

Clara locked the front doors and checked the windows.

They did not lock the back door, because March and Joseph were right outside the door.

Mellissa slept in her bed without restraints.

Clara did not trust anything.

She slept on a pallet in front of the door.

Laura could not sleep in front of the back door.

She slept in the bed with Alice and Jason.

Marc and Joseph went to sleep fast.

Ida put the governor’s children to bed.

She was in the dining room reading her bible and another book.

Ida fell asleep on the sofa.

One security soldier stood on the front porch and the other went to sleep in the backyard.

They took shifts sleeping.

Marc thought, “I need to get those torches and pass them out tomorrow.”

Joseph went to sleep knowing Laura was his wife.