Vivian went upstairs to Sheryl and Skip’s bedroom.

Harold sat in the parlor with his arms stretched over the sofa’s back.

He thought about how grand the house was.

He said, “I wish I had met Shirley.”

Vivian was upstairs laying out Sheryl’s clothes for a few weeks.

She arranged the clothes in underwear, petticoats, dresses, gowns and robes and shawls.

Vivian went into the closet and stood for a long time.

She turned and walked down the stairs.

Harold had poured him a big glass of scotch and was enjoying the expensive brand, when Vivian caught him unawares.

She was still deep in thought and looking to her right with Sheryl toiletry bag in her hand.

Harold jumped from the sofa and hid the big glass of scotch behind his back.

Vivian said, “Honey how are we to get Sheryl’s clothes to her?”

Harold sipped a big gulp of scotch and nearly strangled.

He looked at Vivian who was still deep in thought.

Harold thought, ”Damn. We have to ride and take them to her. No one is in command because the rest of them are attending the trials and executions this week.”

Vivian turned and walked out the parlor to go up the stairs.

Harold took another swallow of the scotch and let his eyes followed Vivian’s derriere.

He walked to the foyer to watch her.

Vivian went into Sheryl and Skip’s bedroom and finished packing two bags of Sheryl’s clothes.

She looked around and closed windows and secured doors.

She secured the house.

Vivian looked in the kitchen, cabinets and iceboxes.

There was no food in the iceboxes because she and Sheryl had to go to the grocer on the next day.

Harold finished the scotch and tried to slip the glass in the kitchen to wash.

Vivian said, “Give me the glass...”

Harold could not possibly know how Vivian knew he had the glass.

He said, “Yes wash that glass, so I can put it back in the cabinet. I don’t want that damn Andrew to say anything.”

Vivian looked at her husband and thought and said, “Are you really afraid of your nephew?”

Harold said, “Nephew by marriage.”

Vivian shook her head and said, “Marriage or blood?”

Harold said, “Skip personally trained a handful of soldiers. They can lie around like snakes and don’t move, they can hide where there is covering, swing from trees and shoot at the same time, use a knife as well as a gun at the same and do hand to hand combat, jump out of windows and scale walls. That small group can take out a nation by themselves.”

Vivian said, “Are you saying Bruce and Andrew is a part of that group?”

Harold said, “I know they are not.”

Vivian looked in wonderment and said, “How are you sure?”

Harold said, “That damn Andrew and Bruce could not be trusted.”

Vivian was shocked and bucked her eyes.

Harold said, “Skip could not keep up with them. They are the biggest whores that ever lived. The second a training or practice was over, they disappeared.”

Vivian started drying the glass and said, “How could you possibly know that?”

Harold cut his eyes at Vivian and said, “That was during the period time we were separated. I was …”

Harold cleared his throat and cut his eyes at Vivian and said, “…heavily dating.”

Vivian finished drying the crystal glass and held it up in the air and said, “Look at sparkle and shine.”

Harold watched Vivian.

She dropped the glass.

Harold dived on the floor and caught it.

He said, “Why you do that?”

Vivian did not say anything but stepped over Harold and walked out the kitchen.

Harold sat on the floor for a minute and walked out the kitchen and watched Vivian’s behind go up the stairs.

Vivian said, “What that glass back and come and get these bags.”

Harold said, “Who are you addressing like that woman?”

Vivian walked back to the staircase and said, “You”

Harold did not trust Vivian so he turned and took the crystal glass back to the cabinet in the parlor.

Vivian walked to the parlor and looked around.

Harold passed her and went upstairs and got the two bags and brought them downstairs.

He was looking at Vivian’s derriere.

Vivian said, “Why put the bags there? Take them to the wagon.”

Harold said, “I wanted another look at pure perfection.”

Vivian patted his face and he leaned to kiss her.

Vivian said, “No more ass for a long time.”

Harold yelled and said, “That’s not the deal.”

Vivian said, “Andrew is not at headquarters anymore.”

Harold was puzzled and said, “And?”

Vivian said, “Remember hubby it was for you to leave him alone until Skip came back. But since Andrew is not there, there is no need to leave him alone.”

Harold became angry and stared at Vivian and said, “I want it woman.”

Vivian begin to fake a cry and wiped her eyes and looked at Harold.

Harold walked over to the etagere and rested his left arm on the etagere and put his right hand on his hip and stared at Vivian.

He was trying to figure out what she was up to.

Vivian said, “I would not want to tell Andrew how you hurt me during anal sex.”

Vivian became theatric and flung her body against the front doorway.

Harold looked at her and said, “Vivian you better not. I will tell Sheryl you screwed Skip a number of times while we were married. I got tired and introduced Sheryl to Skip. And I will tell her you were screwing Skip into her marriage with him. That’s the reason why you love Andrew and Bruce.”

Vivian was stunned and her breath was taken away.

Harold picked up the two bags and walked to Vivian and said, “Open the door Vivian.”

Vivian was so stunned and mumbled something and opened the door.

Harold whispered in her ear, “I saved that until now. I knew you would pull your hold card which was Skip. I pulled mines. I want your ass everyday for now on. Have I made myself understood?”

Vivian was stunned and stood still.

Harold said in a low and growling voice, “Do you understand?”

Vivian jumped and said, “Yes sir.”

He walked out the house with the bags.

Vivian walked out the house and locked the door.

Harold put the bags in the buggy and helped a shocked Vivian into the buggy.

He said, “It will take us three days to get to the big city hospital. You may have to see a doctor when we get there.”

Vivian turned her head.

She thought all the way home, “Is this the weight of sin? Is this the weight of adultery? It was good and fun, but now is the payback. I just can’t do what Harold wants everyday. I love him. How can I get out of this. He held this all of this time. What else does he know? I think I better start trying to pray because I need some help.”

Harold thought, “Wages of sin is death. The death to her ass, because it belongs to me forever.”

Harold looked over at Vivian.

Vivian was sitting straight and looking at Harold in fear.

They arrived home and he helped her out he buggy.

Vivian stood at the front door and waited for Harold.

Harold walked up behind Vivian, she closed her eyes.

He said, “You have the key.”

He opened the front door.

They walked in the house.

Harold looked around at his house and this is nice.

Harold thought to himself, “Once I asked GOD for HIS forgiveness, HE moved me up in the military and allowed me to buy a nicer house for Vivian. I know she was out in the street running behind men and Skip because of me. I vowed I would never say that to her but she pushed me.”

Vivian walked in the house and thought, “We can take the buggy and he won’t have a good opportunity…”

Vivian said, “I want a divorce.”

Harold said, “Fine. No house. No allotment. No lump sum benefits.”

Vivian said, “What?”

She looked into Harold’s eyes and saw he meant it. She had nothing but what he gave to her.

She went into the parlor and bent over the sofa and said, “Damn.”

A few neighbors rushed to their windows and pushed them up because they heard some screaming.

The neighbors did not see any movement on the streets and were surprise.

After a while the neighbors pushed the windows down and went back to bed.

Early the next morning.

Harold was up and loaded the wagon and put the buggy around the back and checked his house and secured all the doors.

He was whistling and walked in the foyer and looked over at a distraught Vivian.

Harold said, “I will give you fifteen minutes to go upstairs and washed and put on a clean dress so we can go.”

Vivian barley was able to walk.

Harold said, “I packed already.”

Harold was whistling and dusting his stairwell when there was a knock on his door.

He was startled and stop dusting and walked to the door and peeped out,

Several of his neighbors were standing at his porch and said, “Good morning sir.”

Vivian had started cursing because of the pain.

Harold walked out the house and held the door open with his left hand and had the dust feather in his right.

The men looked at Harold.

Harold put the dust feather behind his back.

One of the neighbors said, “Too late. If my wife sees that a high ranking military man is dusting she will try to make me.”

Harold looked at the man and said, “Why are you here?”

The man who knocked on the door said, “We heard a lady’s scream last night and wondered if you or your wife heard anything.”

Harold stood and looked at the neighbors.

He turned and walked in the house.

He finished dusting the stairwell.

Vivian was walking down the stairwell and said, “Ouch.ouch.”

Harold was putting up the dust feather.

The male neighbors were still standing outside the front of his door.

Harold looked and said, “They better leave.”

Vivian saw the men through the window as she walked down the stairwell.

She said, “What did they want?”

Harold said, “They heard you last night.”

Vivian stared at Harold.

Harold looked at her and said, “Keep it down from now on.”

Vivian threw her bag at Harold he leaned back and her bag fel on the floor.

He picked it up and handed it to her.

They walked out the front door.

Vivian stood and looked at the men.

Harold turned his back and locked his door.

He caught Vivian’s hand and they walked down the front steps.

Harold helped Vivian into the covered wagon.

Harold waked to get in the driver’s seat and said, “Look out for my house.”

Harold pulled off.

Vivian looked back at the male neighbors who were dis-banding.

She said, “Harold you said you pack.”

Harold said, “That’s right.”

Vivian said, “All my bloomers were upstairs.”

Harold said, “Right.”

Vivian said, “Why?”

Harold said, “You want ever need them again.”

Vivian turned slowly and looked at her aging husband.

She was angry and said, “What am I to do with this pair I have on?”

Harold said, “Stuff your mouth so the neighbors won’t come back.”

Vivian started beating Harold throughout the neighbor until they reached the main road to take them out the capitol.

Harold tried to cover his head.

When they reached the main street to the capitol, Vivian sat down and straighten her clothes.

Harold tried wiping the blood from his busted lips.

He hoped he did not have a black eye as they passed judges, state representatives and businessmen.

Vivian sat and nodded and smiled at the leaders as they passed them to get to the main road.

Vivian and Harold fought all the way to the big city.

The three day trip took four days.

Sheryl got a room at the hotel and a room for Vivian and Harold.

Most of the commanders were at another hotel.

Sheryl had never been around them.

They were honorable and respectful.

Andrew was with Skip everyday.

The commanders were standing in the ward.

A few slept in the ward with Skip.

Malcolm accompanied Skip to the hospital.

Dr. Obersteen spent three days he and his heart specialist running all known tests on Skip’s heart.

Dr. Obersteen would send Wes a daily telegram on Skip’s condition and tests that were done.

Everyone was waiting for the test results.

Sheryl did not know where Harold and Vivian were.

Vivian and Harold arrived at the big city hospital.

They were fist fighting and cussing all down the hall.

Samuel and Zachary were down on the floor to watch the head commanders come and go.

Samuel and Zachery saw Vivian and Harold fist fighting and cussing as they entered the hospital.

Vivian very dignified stood and waited for Harold to ask where Commander Skip was located.

The nurses pointed to the ward.

The nurses bent over the desk and watched Vivian and Harold fight.

Samuel and Zachery did not know who Vivian and Harold were.

They ran to the second floor where Dr. Obersteen was concluding his rounds.

Dr. Obersteen looked at them.

Samuel and Zachery looked at each other to determine who should tell Dr. Obersteen.

The secretary looked at them.

The secretary and her husband would entertain many of the select commanders at their home each evening.

The secretary would leave at lunch and go and order dinner for that night.

She would invite Nurse Watson and Jordan to dinner, so they could mingle with the head commanders.

The nurses would bring their dresses with them to work and change clothes.

A few days they walked with the commanders to the dinner buffet.

Dr. Obersteen looked at them.

Zachery said, “Dr. Obersteen there are two visitors that came in the hospital fighting and cursing.

Dr. Obersteen’s heart sank.

He knew it was Emma and Mattie.

Dr. Obersteen said, “What you think I suppose to do?”

Samuel said, “Do you want us to stop them?”

Dr. Obersteen said, “Let them fight until they wear themselves out.”

Samuel said, “Dr. Obersteen!”

Dr. Obersteen started looking back over his chart.

Dr. Obersteen said, “Let the two women fight it out or go and get several orderlies to stop the women.”

Zachery said, “Women.”

Dr. Obersteen looked at Zachery.

Zachery said, “One is a woman and one is a man.”

Dr. Obersteen held his chest and exhaled.

He said, “I thought it was…Never mind. Where were they?”

Samuel on the first floor.

Dr. Obersteen said, “I’ll be there later. I have to finish with my patients’ charts.

Samuel and Zachery looked at the secretary who smiled at Samuel and Zachery.

She stood from her desk and gathered her coat and bag to leave for the day.

She looked at Dr. Onersteen and said, “John, I’m leaving for the day. You can come to dinner if you want.”

He waved his hand to her and kept reading the patient’s charts.

She walked to him and said, “John.”

He did not say anything. She started to leave and turned and walked back to him and tapped on his desk.

Dr. Obersteen was muttering and slowly looked up at her.

She said, “ Bryce told me not to say anything. This may cause a divorce.”

Dr. Obersteen looked at her and said, “Annulment.”

The secretary rolled her eyes and said, “Bryce said several doctors have come to him to call a special board meeting to remove you as the city hospital’s administrator.”

Dr. Obersteen shrugged his shoulders and said, “Glad to give it up. I can spend more time with my patients.”

The secretary stood still.

Dr. Obersteen said, “It’s worst than that?”

The secretary said, “They want the board to revoke your license and run you out of state. John they want to destroy you. Because you are an excellent doctor. Me and most of the staff said if we ever got sick, you and that young doctor would be the only doctors we want. Please Dr. Obersteen fight them! The board meeting is tomorrow morning at nine am on the first floor.”

Dr. Obersteen nodded his head at the secretary.

She walked to the door and said, “Not one word.”

Dr. Obersteen said, “No.”

The secretary walked out and left for the day.

She passed the ward and kept on walking.

She winked her eyes at the nurses and left for the day.

The nurses smiled.

One of the nurses said, “I am so glad Dr. Obersteen is back. Dr. Jackson is getting on my nerves.”

Nurse Watson said, “He might be gone permanently.”

Samuel and Zachery were standing against wall watching the commanders in the ward.

Andrew saw them.

He figured they were watching all the military commanders in the hospital.

Nurse Watson said, “They are trying to fire Dr. Obersteen and strip him of his license to practice medicine anywhere.”

Samuel and Zachery looked in shock.

Andrew knew they heard something, if was about his daddy he wanted to know before it got to his daddy.

Vivian and Harold walked back to the ward.

All the commanders stared at them.

They entered the ward and spoke to everyone.

Andrew stared at them.

They looked at Andrew.

Skip looked at the three.

Skip said, “Problems at headquarters?”

Harold shook his head for no.

Vivian was nervous.

Andrew looked and said, “Vivian why are you nervous, besides the fact that you two were heard fighting and cussing.”

Harold looked down at the commanders who were watching them.

Harold said, “we weren’t fighting. Fighting.”

Andrew sit back in the chair.

Skip looked at Andrew.

Andrew said, “We all went to the door to see. We all saw you and Vivian knuckle brawling.

Harold turned his head and said, “Well yeah.”

Andrew looked at them and said, “That’s why you are late getting here. You were fighting my aunt all the way.”

Harold yelled, “She started it.”

Andrew said, “Lower your voice.”

Vivian said, “It’s true. I jumped on him.”

Andrew and Skip looked at Vivian.

Andrew kept his eyes on Harold who was seething with anger.

Vivian held her head and then up.

She whispered, “He knows everything. He already knew.”

Andrew said, “He knows what?”

Vivian said, “About me and Skip…”

Vivian turned her head and pressed her hair down and said, “And others.”

Andrew stared at Vivian.

Skip said, “Harold I am sorry. I do apologize. I asked GOD to forgive me and I repented. I ask you now to forgive me.”

Harold had his head turned and said, “Forgiven.”

Skip said, “That was quick. You did not have to think about it?”

Harold said “I thought about it for over ten years.”

Andrew looked at Harold then his aunt and his father.

Harold looked Skip in his eyes and said, “God showed me I could not point my crooked finger and blame anyone except I blame myself. He that is without sin cast the first stone. Skip I forgive you a long time ago once I forgave myself and repented.”

Andrew said, “What is that on your face Harold?”

Harold looked at Vivian and pointed and said, “Probably a bruise.”

Andrew stared at Vivian.

Vivian would not look at Andrew.

Andrew said, Vivian you are making me nervous, You said and others. Who are the others?”

Skip looked at Vivian.

Skip said, “Vivian.”

Harold pointed and said, “Get this out. We have already fought about this. If you won’t I will.”

Vivian turned her head quickly and said, “You.”

Andrew sat and looked at her.

Skip slowly turned his head and looked at Andrew.

Andrew was in total shocked.

Vivian said, “You don’t remember. Two years ago at the Commanders’ masquerade ball. I was Cinderella. You were Paul Revere. You were drunk. I was drunk. We stumbled about the same time and ended up in the reflecting pond.”

Harold said, “That’s when I started adding water to the alcohol.”

Skip said, “That wasn’t Andrew.”

Harold and Vivian looked.

Andrew very dramatic said, “The evil father said I could not go to the ball. I had to stay at headquarters and man the telegram.”

Skip rolled his eyes at Andrew.

Andrew would not look at his father.

Skip said, “Guess.”

Harold said, “I don’t want to.”

Andrew turned around and called, “Commander Percy.”

Harold looked.

Vivian fainted.

Commander Percy did not move.

Sheryl was standing behind them.

They did not see Sheryl until Vivian fainted.

Sheryl said, “Somebody get her up.”

Andrew looked at Harold and said, “You’re her husband.”

Harold said, “You’re her favorite nephew. Maybe that can change now.”

Sheryl walked to Vivian and tried to get her up.

Harold turned and walked over and picked her up.

Andrew stood up and move the chair so Harold could put her in the chair.

Vivian came to.

She took several deep breaths.

Vivian saw Sheryl’s face.

Skip said, “I told Sheryl everything about us Vivian. I offered her the house in a divorce.”

Andrew said, “What house? I know not my mother’s house.”

Skip said, “Sheryl and I parted for a short period of time. I sought GOD and HE mended our marriage and gave a newness to us. We have been in complete togetherness for seven years now.”

Vivian said, “Sheryl forgive me. I can’t say anything else. There is not another word that can cover my heart.”

Sheryl was sitting at the foot of Skip’s bed.

She reached and held Vivian’s hands and said, “I forgive you and Skip along time ago. I could not live if I kept that image of the two of you. It was driving a wedge between me and JESUS. I could not allow that to happen. JESUS mended my relationship with HIM and HE helped to mend my heart with my husband to forgive him. You know I was a terrible mess after my first’ husband’s death. Skip came and helped me to come back to the land of the living. No one else bothered with me for years, not even you Vivian.”

Vivian looked around at Harold, Andrew, Vivian and Sheryl and said,”Are we a family?”

Harold said, “I rather you had Andrew. I will give you the divorce, the house and part of my pension.”

He looked at Skip and said, “I’ll stay on until you put whoever in line and then I will retire.”

Harold nodded and walked out the ward.

Vivian sat stunned.

Skip and Sheryl looked at each other and then Vivian.

Andrew walked behind Harold and followed him to the wagon.

Andrew stood and look at Harold.

Harold stood and looked at Andrew.

Harold said, “Help me with their luggage. I am going back tonight.”

Andrew picked up the heavy luggage and walked to the hotel and had the clerk to open each room.

Andrew placed the luggage in each room.

He could not tell which pieces belong to who.

Harold turned around and started his trek back home.

No marriage.

No wife.

No House.

No family.

No job.

Partial benefits.

He cried for several days until he reached the capitol.

He drove the wagon to his house, their house, now her house.

Harold unpacked the wagon and put everything in its place.

He went into the house and waked in the parlor and unlocked the cabinet.

He took the bottle of brandy upstairs.

He had a hot bath and drank the watered down alcohol.

Harold dressed for bed and slept late into the next morning.

He dressed for work.

He rode his horse to work and entered the command center.

The soldiers watched him.

Harold said nothing to the headquarters or campus about Skip.

He begin to look over the telegrams, the reports and orders.

Harold had a week’s worth of issues to resolve, he really love to do that.

Skip would tell him what he needed.

Harold would go out to bring it forth.

They worked as a team in that area.

Harold saw the report that Donovan Jr. did not show up for his trial.

He saw the report of all businessmen trials that week and the commanders’ trials.

The looked at the report they were all found guilty and their executions were from Friday until Tuesday.

The former military commanders and members were banned from being buried in a military cemetery.

Some of the families requested the bodies of their military love ones to be buried in the family crypts or cemeteries.

The civilian bodies were buried in unmarked graves.

The military dead was a problem.

Their act was treason.

Harold looked at the rule book. The rule book said, “Of course no military anything. The families lost all benefits.

Harold knew these commanders had hid money, they would not have taken such a chance and had nothing if they were caught.

Harold released the bodies of the commanders to the families.

The other executed soldiers’ families did not come to request their bodies because most could not afford to bury them.

Half of the headquarters disapproved, half approved.

Harold went through the list of all the soldiers that were related to the condemn commanders and gave them letters of dismissals.

Many were angry.

But no one trusted them.

All the businesses of the executed assassins were condemned by the state. The money from those business went into the treasury to pay for the expenses the state incurred to resolve and remedy their evil.

Many of the families moved out of the state.

Harold began to think.

The papers were in his desk concerning the soldiers who were killed in the battles with the assassins.

Harold completed their papers.

He reviewed the papers over and over to make sure there were no mistakes that would cause the papers to be rejected by the panel.

He signed off on all the papers and hand carried them to the next processor so it could out time.

He told the next commander to review and sign off and walk to the next commander.

Harold worked on the personal folders of all the executed.

He closed their files.

Some of the prisoners’ bodies were not claimed by their families.

They were buried in unmarked graves.

Harold worked late into the night.

He went home and locked his doors and slept soundly until he heard noise in his kitchen.

He slept with his guns.

Vivian had learned where to put her head on the pillow.

Harold eased out of bed and did not step on the trick planks he put in the house.

He slid along the wall in the bedroom.

He stooped down and he counted four shadows.

He knew they had to have a way of escape.

Harold bent down and eased to the bedroom window and he saw two men holding the horses for the four he saw.

Harold was thinking.
He said, “I’m giving this house o Vivian, I don’t want blood in here. I don’t want dead bodies.”

Harold had a rope at the window for Vivian to escape if need be.

He decided to open the window and scale down the wall.

He hid behind the bushes.

Harold planted thick bushes.

Harold put his hand on the triggers and stooped down.

Harold could hear the four in the house running throughout his house.

The assassins ran out the house and stood.

They stood by him.

The leader said, “Donovan lied. He’s not here. We have to find him and make him an example.”

Harold slowly stood up and begin to fire.

Harold shot all six of the men.

He stepped to each one and disarmed them and used their guns to shoot them several times.

The neighbors ran out their houses with rifles and guns.

They saw the dead men.

Harold went back in the house and slept to later.

He got up and dressed for work.

He got to the office and looked at the soldier’s desk with all the folders of dead commanders and the dead prisoners.

He sent a telegram to Dr. Obersteen to give to Skip.

Harold wrote the word treason and assassins in the six soldiers files. And stamped closed.

Harold opened the saddles for their identifying papers.

He found they had one thousand dollars in each saddle.

They each had a map to the same location.

They all had a key.

The military went and retrieved the six bodies from Harold’s house.

The soldiers were looking at Harold’s house.

One of the soldiers were putting his gloves on to pick up the bodies said, “This is a nice house.”

Another said, “What you think is going on with all of those other executed commanders. He just have not been caught.”

Another soldier said, “I know all six of these soldiers, rather guys. I don’t want to give them honor by calling them soldiers.”

He pointed and said, “These two had jobs in the office in headquarters probably so they could hear and see what was going on.”

He looked and shook his head.

Another said, “No I heard he used his head and married a woman with money. That’s our problem we’re spending our money on women on the week end instead of finding out here the rich ones are.”

The four soldiers loaded the six bodies on the two wagons.

Three bodies on each wagon.

The wagons reached the headquarters.

The newspapers were waiting outside the fence.

One of the soldiers said, “Hey baby. Do you see her. I never seen a woman newspaper reporter.”

The driver of the wagon said, “Keep your head straight. Show you have dignity and class. She’ll probable try to catch one of us to give her the story.”

The soldier said, “Well I hope she catch me.”

The soldier driving the wagon slowly turned and looked at him.

When the wagons turned and followed the long path to the back and behind the building, the soldiers helped to carry the bodies into the lower part of the building and put on tables to searched.

The six bodies were search.

They each had a pentagram on it.

Harold sent a telegram to Chester stating each of the six dead soldiers had a map, key and pentagram tattoo.

Chester received the telegram.

He sat at his desk and pulled the envelop out and empty the pieces on the desk.

The office soldiers were watching.

Chester put the pieces together and it was a map.

He took the position of the captain over that troop he placed a map of the state behind his head for redi reference.

He looked behind his head at the map.

He stood and overlaid the taped pieces of the map with the state’s map.

He sent a telegram back to Harold of his findings.

Chester knew how to use the telegram machine, when he doesn’t want anyone else to know what he is saying.

Harold put the six thousand dollars found in the six dead soldiers’ saddles in the state treasury.

Harold filed the six dead soldiers records away.

He put in the order for no benefits to be paid for the persons listed as their beneficiary.

He went from folder to folder looking at the beneficiaries.

Harold knew it was late and he had been working hard.

He thought he was looking at the same folder.

Therefore, he put one folder on the dead office soldier’s desk.

He put another a folder in each of the chairs in Skip’s office.

He took a note paid and wrote down each officer’s name and rank and the name of the beneficiary.

The beneficiary was the same person and the same address.

The soldiers came from all over the state, no evidence they knew each other from their past.

Harold said, the only place they met was at the military headquarters for training.

He reviewed all the dead soldiers’ beneficiaries including the commanders’ beneficiaries.

They all had the same beneficiary and the same address to pay the benefits.

Harold made all his notes.

Harold filed the folders away.

He went home and took a hot bath and went to bed.

He slept all through the night.

He thought he heard squeaking noises in the cellar.

Harold thought, “I’m not going down there tonight.”

He turned over and went back to sleep.

He next morning after he dressed.

Harold went downstairs and made his coffee.

He was drinking his coffee and looked at the lock door with the pad lock.

Harold put the coffee mug down. And took out his gun.

He unlocked the pad lock and walked down in the cellar.

He looked around and saw no disturbance.

Harold locked the cellar back and put on the padlock.

He left for work.

The headquarters were abuzz with news.

He looked at the soldiers.

They watched him but did not say anything to him.

Harold walked into the office and was about to sit in the chair because he was looking at the reports.

He looked up and saw Sheryl, Andrew and he looked at the chair and saw Skip.

Skip stood.

Skip and Harold embraced.

Skip told Harold the map was to the city where they were stationed.

He said Chester slipped into the hotel and found the key fit a room at the hotel.

Vivian waited. She was waiting at the end of the hall and Harold did not see her.

She walked in the office.

Andrew walked out the office.

Sheryl sat.

Skip looked at Sheryl.

She looked at Skip like what?

Skip walked over to her.

Harold knew it was Vivian.

Vivian said, “Please Harold.”

Harold did not respond.

He said, “How is Bruce?”

Skip laughed and said, “We came by to see him. Wes sent a telegram to Dr. Obersteen Bruce was out of the coma and responding. Dr. Obersteen was being ousted out of medicine but he continued to work on me. He gave me two more years.”

Vivian turned and walked out the office and to Andrew who was waiting at the end of the hall to take her home.

Andrew said, “Here?”

Vivian said, “I don’t have a home.”

Harold rush out the office.

He saw Vivian talking to Andrew and said, “Wait.”

Vivian stopped and Harold reached in his pocket and said, “Here.”

He reached the key to their house to Vivian.

Vivian said, “No that’s your home. You keep it.”

She walked out the headquarters building.

Andrew looked at Harold and followed Vivian.

Harold walked back in the office.

Skip said, “Harold, I don’t think she is safe. None of us are until this thing is resolved. I think the assassins are using that pentagram as a scare tactic. This thing is very deep and very organized.”

Sheryl stood and walked out.

Andrew and Vivian were standing in the yard of headquarters.

Vivian said, “Andrew take me to a hotel. Harold did not call me by name. That told me he was finished with me. He loves this building. He loves working here. I don’t want him to leave what he loves. “

Vivian started weeping, ”Including me.”

Sheryl said, “No. You go home and if Harold doesn’t want to be there. then Andrew can stay with you.”

Andrew looked at Sheryl and “I like the way you threw me in this situation.”

Sheryl said, “Andrew I have seen you operate. I trust Skip first and you second with my life. I know if anybody can keep Vivian safe and alive is you.”

Andrew said very arrogantly, “Thank you for your confidence.”

Vivian said, “How did my life get in jeopardy?”

Sheryl said, “Organized crime.”

Andrew looked at Vivian and said, “I need to rest and sleep for a week. I can stay with you only for that time. Harold can stay in the house or at the dormitory.”

Vivian said, “Harold is a commander he can’t stay in the dormitory.”

Andrew said, “I’m a commander and I stay in the dormitory.”

Vivian said, “You have a family house.”

Sheryl coughed.

Andrew looked at Sheryl and said, “You will never get my mother’s house. I don’t care what Skip said.”

Sheryl looked at Andrew.

Vivian looked at Andrew then back at Sheryl.

Sheryl was trying to stare Andrew down.

She saw Andrew meant business about his mother’s house.

Andrew attitude towards Sheryl was Skip could marry who he wanted, but he and Bruce were from the upper level of society and that was a place Sheryl could never be.

Bruce had not said anything because he was chasing after his women.

But Bruce was worst than Andrew.

Skip knew his sons and he knew he could not give their mother’s house to Sherryl.

Skip knew they would burn her up in the house.

He started looking for her a nice place closer to Vivian in a well to do neighborhood.

Bruce married Priscilla and moved into an up and coming area of the city with the theatre.

Andrew had a small apartment and he was on campus a lot for training.

He did not invest in a house because he intended on moving back to his family’s house.

Vivian cried.

She looked at Andrew.

Andrew looked at Vivian and said, “I’ll go and get the key. Why you don’t have a key to your house?”

Vivian said, “Because we were leaving together.”

Andrew turned and stared at Sheryl in her eyes.

Sheryl did not know what to do.

Andrew turned from his stare of Sheryl and went into the building and into the office and reached out his hand to Harold.

Harold and Skip were watching them from the window.

Harold reached in his pocket and handed Andrew the key.

Andrew was turning to walk out the office.

Skip said, “Andrew I know that look. I have talked to Sheryl since I was in the hospital. I am going to buy her a house in the district. I know how you and Bruce feel about your heritage. I will leave the house to you and Bruce and you’ll fight it out.”

Harold was trying to leave.

Andrew moved back so Harold could leave.

Skip said, “Harold stay.”

Harold looked at Andrew.

Andrew looked at Harold.

Harold stood against the wall.

Skip said, “ When I was in the hospital I had dr. Obersteen to send a telegram to my lawyer, your uncle Michael to draw up my will. I will leave the house to you and Bruce. But the trust fund your mother left for me, I will divide it between the three of you. Your mother took her trust fund and had her brother to give you and Bruce eighty percent and me twenty percent because I had to take care of you two and she said my military pay was not enough. I want Sheryl to have more than a pension for what all I had done against her. She can live a better life, than she would have. You always leave your spouse in a better position than you found them.”

Skip began to cry.

He turned and looked up at the sky.

Harold and Andrew stood in silence and watched Skip.

Skip said, “GOD I love that woman you gave to me. Help Andrew and Bruce release any bad feelings to Sheryl.”

Andrew walked over to Skip and looked out the window with Skip.

Andrew put his hand on Skip’s shoulder, he said, “As young as I could remember Mom would be holding me. You would be holding Bruce. We all would be looking out the window on a brand new day.”

Skip just nodded his head and begin to rock.

Andrew said, “This is a brand new day.” He kissed Skip on his head.

Skip sat in the chair by the window.

Harold eyes were filled with tears.

Andrew walked pass Harold and he stopped and looked at Harold and back to a weeping Skip in the chair by the window and said, “Thank you for being my father’s true friend.”

Harold could not respond.

Andrew looked at Harold in his eyes and walked out the office.

The office soldiers watched everything.

Harold walked to the window and looked down at Vivian and Sheryl talking the headquarters yard.

Andrew walked up and grabbed Vivian and walked away from Sheryl.

Harold smirked.

Skip said, “Harold it is your decision. You are old. Forgive your wife and the two of you enjoy your time on this earth.”

Sheryl walked back into the office.

She saw they were being watched.

She said, “Oh my.”

Harold saw what Andrew was talking about, Sheryl was one level trying to make everyone think she was on a higher social level and control everything.

Harold turned and looked at Sheryl.