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Ethan McGuire

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*Or, 15 of My First Writings at 15 Years
of Age*

A Chapbook of Poetry, Fiction, & Essays
By Ethan McGuire

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Part One: Poetry

"Milking Time"

In she comes at a charge.
"Don't get in the way! She will barge!"
In the stanchion she goes.
We want milk... and have it she does.

Splish! Splash! comes the milk.
Persuaded to come from its fountain it flows,
As, in the bucket, the quantity grows!
The tasty stuff that looks like silk.

Sweep! Sweep! We clean up fallen milk,
For, mingling with dirt, it has gathered.
In the house, Mom filters good milk
And cleans up where children have gathered.

“THE WARRIORS”

THE WOODSMAN SQUATS BY CAMPFIRE DIM,
A DEER OF WOOD IN HUMAN FORM.
HE EXPECTS THE INDIANS TO ATTACK TONIGHT,
HIS HORSES PRECIOUS RUBIES IN THEIR EYES.

LO... WHAT LURKS DOWN THERE?
NAUGHT BUT A CREATURE IN THE DARK OF NIGHT.
HE HEARKENS TO THE SOUNDS CAST ROUND HIM
NONETHELESS,
FOR SKIN-CLAD GHOSTS ARE CREEPING UP THE HILL.

THE TIME HAS COME; THE COUGARS NOW ATTACK.
THEIR HAIL OF ARROWS FALL 'ROUND HIM IN A STORM.
AND WHEN THE SAVAGE WARRIORS COME IN SIGHT,
HIS WEAPON SPURTS FIRE O'R AND O'R AGAIN.

AND WHEN THE THUNDER IS ALL QUIETED DOWN
THE PAINTED WARRIORS ARE ALL DEAD.

THE WHITE WARRIOR , HAIR BRUSHING BUCKSKIN GARB,
GETS UP FROM HIS POSITION WHEN THE FIGHTING'S
DONE,
LOOKS TOWARD THE INDIAN CHIEF AND MUCH REGRETS
THAT HE SENT OUT THE SHIP THAT BORE THIS WARRIOR
HOME.

THIS IS THE LIFE THAT THIS MAN DID ONCE CHOOSE.
AND BEFORE HE CAN GO BACK WHERE OTHERS ARE,
A FEW MORE BATTLES MUST BE SAFELY WON.

This poem won First Place in a BJU Press Inscriptions writing contest.

"Snow"

Snow is wonderful as it falls around;
'Tis like autumn leaves as they glide to the ground.

Snow cloaks the earth in a furry gown;
White-woven water falling down.

Fast it's descent into an earthy pit.
Steady it fell into an empty shell.

A mother sweeps the snow. Swoosh! Swoosh!
A child speeds down a hill. Whoosh! Whoosh!

"Sir George of the Dragon"

Sir George was brave and kind,
And often nobles with him dined;
But George wished people in need to help.

One day when looking at the land,
George feared that something had gone wrong.
And so George left his prosp'rous band,
And sat out whilst he sang a song.

George journeyed many days and nights,
And traveled thro' many plain and wood,
And met him many maids and knights
Who bade him share in their feast food.

One day fair lady George did meet,
And noted he that she did cry.
Said George, "My dear, this is not meet."
The lady answered with a sigh.

"A dragon shall come very soon,
"For he wants me to devour.
"He said that he would come at noon,
"And he'll arrive this very hour."

George answered her with brave mien
And said "This beast I will o'rtake.
"If you should lead me to his den,
"This dragon, you, he shall not take."

The lady, sobbing, led him on,
Though she thought he could not win.
She thought their lives were ver'ly done...
And then they heard a monstrous din.

The brute emerged from blackened hole
And charged the seated knight real quick.
The fiend's breath made armor black and dull;
The beastly heat 'most made George sick.

George, sore afraid when dragon's breath he saw,
Raised high his shield and charged the ugly beast,
And waited 'till a chance he glimpsed;
He would not be this dragon's feast.

When the dragon almost knight devoured,
George raised his lance and split that brutish throat.
The dragon drew back like a coward,
Then flew and fell into the lady's castle moat.

George, with the maiden, to her castle went;
Her father thanked him o'r and o'r.
Back to home castle George he sent
With the prize that George most wished for.

When the gentry of his home country
Heard of the noble deeds that George had done
They dubbed him Sir George of the Dragon.

"Robin Hood and the Freedom Fighters"

He dwelt in Sherwood with his men:
 One-Hundred forest'rs deep in a glen.
 And there they tried the Sheriff to shun,
 But this job was rarely eas'ly done.

Robin Hood

The Sheriff wanted Robin to seize,
 For oft Robin escaped with gracious ease.
 The Sheriff's charges were sore untrue,
 But peasants not question what he do.

For the Sheriff was cruel

Among Robin's men, his right-hand man
 Was by far the tallest in all his band.
 Among all the men, John's might was most.
 Of his Herculean strength did minstrels boast.

Little John, the lofty forester

Will Stutely, Scarlett, and Alan too
 Were, all of them, to Robin true.
 The Tinker, Miller, and others many
 The peasants held were better than any.

Robin and his merry men

Marion was Robin's maid,
 And she would help him how'er he bade.
 She was to Hood an immense help,
 And seldom thought much of herself.
A kindly lass was she

Friar Tuck was another one
 Through whom important jobs were done.
 But he was fat and loved to eat
 And did not like to use his feet.
The fattest friar in Nottingham shire

Robin and his outlaw band
 Were true, courageous, and full of sand.
 They watched o'r their people 'till Richard came back,
 So that their lands the Sheriff not sack.
That God-fearing band

Often the Sheriff they engaged,
 Though that Sheriff was sore enraged.
 The woods as their base, against oppression they fought,
 And some with blood their freedom bought.
Their legend lives on

“The Scientist Who Sees”

The scientist who sees
Creation as a truth
Marvels at God's magnificence:
His nature and His Word.

The scientist who sees
Evolution as a truth,
Ignoring the many proven Laws,
Abandons them for thoughts.

Both scientists may see
The many facts, and all the same.
But one will finally ignore the Truth
And argue with the other.

"My Biggest Buck"

When heading out to brushy wood,
I took a gun for the deer's sake.
Deer season was in its first stint
And I hoped a buck to take.

I settled in my little blind
And waited, as the sun went down.
Soon, suddenly, I was alert
As from behind I heard a sound.

I thought at first t'was just a squirrel,
But soon found out that it was not!
I quickly turned without a sound.
What happened then I've not forgot!

Then through my scope I sighted deer,
Turned off safety, gun's trigger squeezed.
The gun went BANG! the deer crashed down.
The shot swept Buck right off his feet.

The deer was big, a TEN-POINT BUCK!
Boy! I was glad that deer I'd killed.
We'd mount his head up on the wall,
And there he'd gaze into our field.

“While Hunting in a Field of White”

'Twas winter and the sun was bright.
While hunting in a field of white,
I saw a beast come out of wood,
Sun gleaming off his antlers wide.

I froze stock still, my gun in hand.
I watched as he did lead his band,
Across the field, across the snow;
This tranquil scene I could not spoil.
I stood and watched.

“God’s Magnificence in Nature”

God's magnificence in nature
Presents itself in much
Of the use of mathematic principles:
Spirals, shapes, and more.

The mathematician learning now
Has very much to learn,
For, outside his musty, classroom
Those laws are used for sure.

“Working Together”

When all the bird's feathers come into play,
All of these feathers will fly away.

Part Two: Essays

"THE~BATTLE~OF~WILSON'S~CREEK"

The date was August 10, 1861. General Lyon was leading his Union troops, engaging the enemy on an oak covered ridge close to Wilson's Creek, about 10 miles southwest of Springfield. The Confederates were now charging them. Lyon and his men were getting the worst of it. Lyon was among them: cheering them, encouraging them, pressing them to keep heart, to fight. He was a grand example of bravery: sitting in the saddle, blood pouring from his three wounds to the head, thigh, and heel. Then, out of the mob of Rebel soldiers, one took careful aim, knowing the man he was aiming at to be important to the Union. The Confederate fired, hitting Lyon in the heart. Lyon fell. The soldiers lost heart, seeing their leader fall. The battle: The Battle of Wilson's Creek.

1

In the beginning of the Civil War, Missouri declared themselves "armed neutral." However, this "armed neutrality" was to be tested greatly in the days to come.

The testing began in a larger sense on May 10, 1861. Union Captain Nathaniel Lyon, leading a group of Northern troops and home guards, captured a small group of Missouri Militia whom he feared were attempting to capture the Federal, St. Louis arsenal. As Lyon and his men were parading these captured Missourians, a crowd of citizens tried to stop them. Lyon ordered his men to fire on them. Twenty-four were killed. This incident became known as the "St. Louis Massacre."

2

The next day, the Missouri General Assembly established the Missouri State Guard. This army was designed to defend Missouri from any attack, from any enemy. Governor Clairborne F. Jackson appointed Sterling Price to be its general.

William S. Harney, one of the leading Generals in Missouri at that time, created the Price-Harney Truce on May 12, 1861. This truce affirmed Missouri's neutrality. (Later, Lyon replaced Harney.) After that, Abraham Lincoln specifically requested that Missouri troops enter the Federal service. They did, and Missouri Governor Jackson withdrew his support. Lyon and Jackson met June 12, 1861 to resolve this matter. Lyon ended the meeting saying: "This means war." (Wikipedia) This did mean war.

Lyon then went on a chase after Price, Jackson, and the state government. First came the Battle of Booneville (a skirmish) on June 17, 1861. Then, on July 5, another skirmish: the Battle of Carthage. After that, Lyon captured Jefferson City, the state capitol.

After the capture of the capitol, a convention was called to decide on Missouri secession. The convention decided to keep Missouri in the Union. However, Jackson was thrown out of office. On July 27, 1861, the convention replaced Jackson with Hamilton Rowan Gamble.

Lyon and his Army of the West were encamped at Springfield, Missouri by July 13, 1861. The Army of the West was 5,431 men strong (Piston & Hatcher) and was composed of the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 5th Missouri infantry; 1st Iowa Infantry; 1st and 2nd Kansas Infantry; several regular army infantry and cavalry; and three batteries of artillery (Wikipedia).

3

The Missouri State Guard was encamped approximately 75 miles southwest of Springfield, Missouri by the end of July. Price was then reinforced by Confederate Brigadier General Benjamin McCulloch's Confederate Brigade and Nathaniel Barlett Pearce's Arkansas State Troops. Together this force, now led by McCulloch, was 12,125 men strong (Piston and Hatcher).

The Confederates planned to attack Springfield, but in an effort to surprise McCulloch, Lyon marched out of Springfield. The two armies skirmished on August 2, 1861 at Dry Springs. Lyon won; however, he found that he was out numbered 2-1 (3-1 he thought). He retreated to Springfield. McCulloch followed him, and by August 6, McCulloch's forces were encamped at Wilson's Creek, ten miles southwest of Springfield, Missouri.

It was not as bad against Lyon as he thought. He was outnumbered, however, not as badly as he thought. Most of the Confederate force were using 1812-style flintlocks, old shotguns, and other similar, ancient weapons. Also, in place of cannonballs, smooth rocks, steel rods, rusty chains, and other such projectiles had been gathered to fire out of their ancient cannons (Foote 92). (McCulloch's men were somewhat better equipped.) However, in the end numbers would tell.

The Union soldiers spent August 7 and 8 doing next to nothing, except for routine chores. Both days there were reports of large Confederate divisions headed their way, but they both turned out to be false. Also, on both days, there were skirmishes between mounted scouts. None of these amounted to much.

4

In the nightly officers' meeting on the seventh, Lyon decided to hold his position.

On the 8th, Lyon presented their situation at that night's officer's meeting. They were faced by McCulloch, not sure of Price's position, and were in danger of Hardee cutting them off from St. Louis. They could either retreat to Rolla, and be hindered all the way along their line of retreat because of pursuit by McCulloch, or fight before retreat. Lyon favored the latter. He thought they should use the strategy of throwing their whole force upon the Confederates. Colonel Franz Sigel suggested a modification. He suggested that the enemy should be attacked with two separate groups: one led Lyon, the other by himself. Due to the heavy objections of the majority, Lyon did not yet to decide to use this strategy.

General Lyon's plan was to attack that very night. However, officers who had gone on a chase after nothing that day objected. They argued their men were tired and hungry. They decided to march out the next night: the 9th of August.

The next morning, after an aggravating letter from Fremont and a private talk with Sigel, Lyon decided to adopt Sigel's plan. He told no one about this decision until later.

Lyon held a council of war that afternoon in which he told his officers of his adoption of Sigel's plan and the fact that Price was certainly joined with McCulloch. The officers once again expressed their opinions against Sigel's plan. Nevertheless, Lyon stuck to his decision. The officers, for the main part, apparently had no objections about going ahead and attacking that night. The time to march was set to 6:00 p.m.

5

McCulloch was also planning an attack on Lyon and Springfield. He also planned his attack to be on the 9th of August. He started the march, but called it off because of a heavy rain. The army returned to camp and, as it was night, most of them went to sleep. It is surprising that no pickets were put out, but, apparently, they thought they had no reason to fear an attack from Lyon.

On the afternoon of the 9th, Lyon distributed newly arrived shoes from Rolla and, in spite of the nasty weather, began the march at the prescheduled time (6:00 p.m.), leaving 1,000 men at Springfield to guard the city and supplies. Not long after midnight, Lyon and his men were close enough to attack the enemy at any time.

As was before decided, Sigel split away from the main body, taking 1,100 men with him. His division was made up of two regiments of infantry, two troops of cavalry, and a six-gun battery of artillery (Foote 92). These men swung around to hit the Confederates in the rear. Lyon then sent out a regiment of regulars to go beyond the creek and handle any of the enemy encamped there.

About dawn (approx. 5:00 a.m.), Sigel began his attack, starting from the south and west and moving up.

When Lyon heard Sigel begin in the distance, he began his move. "Lyon ordered the main body forward, east and west of the creek, closing the upper jaw of his tactical vise" (Foote 92).

The Confederate camps were quickly routed. Many ran, most returned, some did not run. Soon, McCulloch, with Price's help, had the men ready to receive the attack.

Sigel and his men started out being successful, but ended out not. They routed the Missouri Calvary, but soon collapsed when they were counterattacked by McCulloch's force.

Because there were yet no standard uniforms, McCulloch's men had uniforms very similar to the uniforms Sigel's men were wearing. As a result, Sigel and his men thought the enemy troops coming toward them were Union reinforcements. It was not until they were fired on that they

learned the truth. Sigel's division was quickly and greatly routed. Sigel and his men fled the field without giving much of a resistance.

The division of regulars had already been cleared off the field. The main body of Union troops was holding up well, but soon the Confederates were reinforced and began clustering, causing Lyons men "to look back over their shoulder, apprehensive" (Foote 94).

Lyon bravely tried to rally his men, shouting encouragements while riding among them. While doing this, he was hit thrice. One bullet grazed his head, one hit his thigh, one his ankle. Then, his horse was shot out from under him. The stunned Lyon walked toward the back of the line, expressing his fear that the day was lost. But Lyon soon recovered from his shock and got back on another horse. He rode to a place in the line that was about to break. Rallying the men, he called to them to follow him forward. While thus leading them bravely, a bullet hit his heart. He fell, the first Union general to fall in the Civil War. His life ended at approximately 9:30 a.m.

At approximately 11:00 a.m., the Union men had already taken three charges. The men had taken the battle like men, but now their ammunition was low and the men worn out.

Major Sturgis, who was now in charge (being second in command), ordered the men to retreat... Numbers had told.

Conclusion

The fighting was bloody at Wilson's Creek. 1,236 Union soldiers and 1,095 Confederate and Missourian soldiers were killed. A large amount of dead men in so short an amount of time, yet the fighting was not as bloody and not as many men were killed in this battle as in other battles yet to come.

The Union forces retreated the field, went through Springfield, and marched on to Rolla. The Confederates, though victors, were too crushed to pursue.

Missouri ended up staying in the Union throughout the Civil War, though at times it seemed as if they would secede.

The Battle of Wilson's Creek can be rightly called the "Second Battle of the Civil War." Though, when it is compared to other battles, it almost seems as if it were but a skirmish, this battle was actually a very crucial event in keeping Missouri in the Union.

"On the Theories of Spontaneous Generation and Biological Evolution"

Spontaneous generation is the theory that certain life forms can develop from nonliving matter. This belief dates back thousands of years and was at that time believed by masses of people, including scientists. It was often questioned, but it was not until the coming of advancements in technology that it was proved wrong.

In 1668, Francesco Redi performed an experiment that proved that flies do not spontaneously generate from decayed meat. Various experiments by other scientists showed the spontaneous generation theory to be wrong, but, because of experiments that supposedly proved spontaneous generation was fact, many people still believed the theory.

Then, in the mid-1800's, Louis Pasteur discovered that, contrary to the theory of spontaneous generation, microorganisms would grow in sterilized broth only if it was exposed to air that contained these spores. As a result, the theory was practically abandoned.

However, is this ridiculous idea really now extinct? Many modern scientists would say yes. However, please consider the following.

In 1859, Charles Darwin wrote a book called *The Origin of Species*. This book presented the now widely believed theory of evolution. Evolutionary scientists believe that all living things evolved from some sort of non-living matter.

Is not this a larger version of the theory of spontaneous generation? Is it not true that a modern version of spontaneous generation is still believed by the masses today?

"The Wait"

At five-o'clock at night on the 27th of October, 2007, I could be found, rifle in hand, in my deer blind on an approximately thirty-foot-high cliff overlooking a dry creek bottom that funneled deer past me. I was thinking about going back to Dad's blind, but decided to stay. I might see a deer.

It seemed I could almost smell a deer. Seems crazy, but it sure seemed like I could smell a buck, heavily in the rut. I tipped over my estrus-doe-bleat can-call. Maybe if a buck was in the vicinity he would come. Maybe.

I heard something jump the fence which runs along beside me in the path of a deer trail. *A deer?! No... settle down... just one of the gazillion squirrels I've been seeing all evening long!*

I stuck my head out just enough to see the squirrel. *Oh my lands! A deer!*

I stuck my rifle barrel out of the blind window, got my scope on him.

I was shaking. *No!* I told myself, *settle down.*

My scope was on him, my grunt call in my teeth, ready to grunt. I centered my scope on my shooting lane.

I got nervous. *I should put my scope on him. Should I shoot now? He was a large-bodied, eight-point buck, so don't let him get away! Don't shoot now; he's in the brush. Wait 'till he gets in my cleared shooting lane.*

Finally he was in the clear, walking, slow. I took a deep breath in. *Shoot now!* I grunted to stop him. WHOOM! My .308 went off.

He jumped, then ran, tried to go up the creek bed, then fell back, dead. The wait had been worth it!

“A Classic Christmas”

Sometimes my family's Christmases are different; sometimes they are similar to another. Whatever our Christmas is like, however our Christmas is celebrated, whoever we celebrate our Christmas with, Christmas is a special time. It is a time of celebration, a time to rejoice, to give, to receive, to love, to forgive (if the offender will ask), to reach out to a person in need, and, most of all, to celebrate the birth of Christ, God on earth.

Christ Jesus was born in a manger, a place that held food for animals, in a barn, a place to keep livestock. He was the King of Kings, but he was born in a place where a poor man might be born: a stable. He came down to earth. He was a king, but still He came for the poor, the rich, the middle-class. He came for all men alike. He is the Christ. He is Jesus. He is the reason we celebrate Christmas.

I remember a Christmas past, a classic Christmas; I think it was the Christmas of 2007. We had just bought a cow that past summer, a Jersey, to milk. Therefore, before we opened presents, we had to milk her. I got up that morning and used my LED flashlight to make some coffee. The stockings were stuffed, the presents sat under the tree waiting to be opened. The lights were strung around the tree, and they glowed with a white light that lit up the surrounding wall, the presents, the floor. It was Christmas morning. It was an exciting time.

Dad got out of bed, and, when we got around, Dad and I went out into the frosty cold to milk the cow. The milked foamed up in the bucket as, with each squirt, the liquid was stirred up even more. The propane lantern's light glowed orange as Nana, our Jersey, munched her grain.

After we were done milking, we walked up to get some hay for our cow. It was as exciting time, a time of suspense, made much worse for my siblings in the house. They were doing little to while away the time: watching Mom cook breakfast, looking at the stockings, at the presents, guessing, wondering.

Finally, we all sat down in the living room, gathered around the tree. Dad read the Christmas story from the Bible, if I remember right. Then, we opened presents. Paper was flung all over

the living room floor. Shouts and laughter rang out. It was a joyous time, a time of gladness, a time of celebration. It was a happy time.

We did other things to celebrate Christmas that day. We all had a good time. You know what, come to think of it, I don't remember any year we didn't have a good time on Christmas day.

Part Three: A Short Story

“Jack McKinley”

BUFFALO HUNTING WAS AN EXCELLENT ENTERPRISE FOR ME BACK IN THE DAYS WHEN BUFFALO WERE NO SCARCE THAN FLIES ON A HOT SUMMER'S DAY. I LIKED THE WORK FOR SEVERAL REASONS. FIRST OFF, I COULD MAKE A FAIR AMOUNT OF MONEY, USUALLY \$3 A HIDE (EVEN UP TO \$50 FOR A NICE, THICK HIDE) DOING THIS, WHICH IS MORE THAN I EVER COULD HAVE MADE HERDING CATTLE. SECONDLY, I MADE FRIENDS WITH MANY OF THE INDIANS BY TRADING MEAT FOR VARIOUS ARTICLES I NEEDED WHEN I WAS NOT NEAR A TOWN. IT WAS ALSO A LOT OF FUN TAKING MY .45-70 SHARPS AND SEEING HOW FAR OUT THERE I COULD GET AND STILL KILL A BUFFALO. BOY, THOSE WERE THE DAYS... THAT IS UNTIL SOME WARRING INDIAN YOUNGSTERS TRIED TO RAISE MY HAIR!

I WAS OUT HUNTING ONE MORNING AND HAD KILLED A BUFFALO AT A CONSIDERABLE LONG DISTANCE, SOME 300 YARDS, WHEN ALL OF A SUDDEN I HEARD A WHOOPING UP ON A GRASSY SLOPE. IT WAS AN INDIAN RAIDING PARTY ALL DRESSED FOR WAR AND SET TO GET MY HAIR AND THE BUFFALO I HAD JUST KILLED!

SOME PEOPLE MIGHT HAVE THE IDEA THAT THOSE RIDING BOOTS I WAS WEARING ARE HARD TO RUN IN; WELL BROTHER, I CAN TELL YOU ONE THING: THOSE BOOTS DIDN'T HINDER ME AT ALL THAT DAY! AS GUNSHOTS ECHOED AND BULLETS THUDDING INTO THE SURROUNDING TURF, I CLEARED THE SIXTY FEET TO MY HORSE IN ABOUT ONE SECOND. I HAD TRAINED THAT ROAN SO WELL, HE HADN'T EVER NEEDED TO BE TIED UP TO STAY SOME PLACE, SO I JUST UP AND JUMPED INTO THE SADDLE AND TOOK OFF LIKE MY PANTS WERE ON FIRE!

WHEN I HAD TAKEN OFF, I WAS STILL A GOOD 100 YARDS AHEAD OF THOSE INDIANS, SO WHEN I REACHED THE TOP OF ANOTHER SIZEABLE HILL, I JUMPED OUT OF THE SADDLE AS IF I WERE SHOT AND SNAKED UP TO THE CREST WITH MY LOADED SHARPS IN HAND. THE INDIANS WERE DOWN IN THE VALLEY BETWEEN THE TWO HILLS, AND I WAS SURPRISED THEY HAD EXPOSED THEMSELVES SO. HOWEVER, THEY WERE YOUNG AND UNLEARNED IN THE WAYS OF FIGHTING, THAT IS, MORE UNLEARNED THAN ME.

I GOT INTO A GOOD FIRING POSITION AND EASED BACK THE HAMMER ON MY .45-70. I SIGHTED ON A RIDING INDIAN, LED HIM, AND FIRED. HE FELL OUT OF THE SADDLE AND THE OTHER NINE HIT THE GROUND, FLATTENED OUT, AND DISAPPEARED INTO THE PRAIRIE GRASS.

I JUMPED ON MY HORSE AND TOOK OUT OF THERE AS FAST AS I COULD. I NEVER DID LIKE KILLING MEN, STILL DON'T. NEVERTHELESS, IT WAS THEM OR ME, AND THEY WERE GOING TO TRY TO KILL ME FOR SURE, FOR JACK MCKINLEY WAS A

NAME SPOKEN IN REVERENCE IN THEIR LODGES. I WAS A VERY GOOD SHOT, AND THEY WOULD BE RESPECTED IN THEIR TRIBE IF THEY KILLED ME. HOWEVER, IT SADDENED ME SOME THAT THERE WOULD BE MOURNING IN THAT DEAD INDIAN'S LODGE TONIGHT.

NOW WAS NOT A TIME FOR SADNESS, THOUGH; I STILL HAD NINE INDIANS ON MY TRAIL. I KNEW THERE WAS A TOWN SOME TWENTY MILES TO THE NORTH. ALTHOUGH I HAD NEVER SEEN IT, THE DIRECTIONS I HAD WERE GOOD AND I KNEW THE WAY ALMOST AS IF I HAD SEEN IT MYSELF. SO THAT'S WHERE I HEADED AS FAST AS MY STRAWBERRY ROAN COULD GO, AND THAT WAS FAST.

I SURE WAS GLAD I HAD THAT UGLY OLD HORSE. HE WASN'T ONE FOR LOOKS, BUT HE WAS FAST AND MORE IMPORTANTLY, HE HAD ENDURANCE. RIGHT NOW I NEEDED BOTH.

IT WAS ALREADY EARLY AFTERNOON WHEN I CAME UP ON A RISE ABOVE THE TOWN. THE INDIANS HAD STOPPED PURSUING ME A FEW MILES OUT OF TOWN. THEY HAD A GOOD CHIEF WHO, ALTHOUGH AN OLDER MAN, WAS NOT ONE TO TANGLE WITH. HE WOULD NOT WANT MUCH TROUBLE WITH THE WHITES; THEREFORE, I FIGURED I WOULDN'T HAVE ANY MORE TROUBLE WITH THOSE YOUNGSTERS. SO I TOOK THE TIME TO LOOK AROUND. THE SETTLEMENT LAY IN A LUSH VALLEY WITH A CLEAR STREAM FLOWING THROUGH IT AND VARIOUS TREES SCATTERED THROUGHOUT. FROM UP ON THE HILL LOOKING DOWN, I COULD SEE HORSES AND MEN GOING TO AND FRO IN THE STREET.

I CIROLED AND FOUND A PLACE TO COME DOWN OFF THE BLUFF. I FOLLOWED THE CREEK FURTHER UPSTREAM FROM THE TOWN AND FOUND A LARGE, CLEAR POOL. AFTER DRINKING OUT OF IT, I LET MY HORSE DRINK, SWUNG BACK INTO THE SADDLE AND FOLLOWED THE TRAIL TO THE TOWN.

I LOOKED AROUND AS I RODE IN. IT WAS THE AVERAGE WESTERN TOWN. A SINGLE STREET, WHICH WAS ALSO THE MAIN TRAIL, RAN BETWEEN TWO ROWS OF FALSE FRONTED BUILDINGS, FEW OF THEM PAINTED, THE UNPAINTED ONES WEATHERED AND GRAYED BY THE SUN AND THE WIND.

AS YOU CAME INTO TOWN FROM THE NORTHERN SIDE THERE WAS A NEWLY BUILT CHURCH, A FEW YARDS OFF THE MAIN TRAIL. ANOTHER HUNDRED YARDS AND YOU ENTERED THE TOWN, WHICH CONSISTED OF A BLACKSMITH'S SHOP, A LIVERY STABLE, AND A SALOON ON THE RIGHT; A RESTAURANT, ANOTHER SALOON, A STORE AND A MARSHAL'S OFFICE, STOUTLY BUILT OF NATIVE STONE AND STRONG OAK BEAMS, SAT ON THE LEFT SIDE OF TOWN. A CORRAL, TACK SHED AND SEVERAL HOUSES WERE SCATTERED OUTSIDE OF THE TOWN.

I WAS HUNGRY, SO I RODE UP TO THE RESTAURANT AND TIED MY ROAN AT THE HITCHING RAIL. I STEPPED UP ON THE BOARDWALK AND OPENED THE DOOR. A SIGN INFORMED ME THAT TODAY'S SPECIAL WAS COFFEE, BEEFSTEAK AND BEANS.

IF THIS RESTAURANT WAS MUCH LIKE OTHER JOINTS IN THE WEST THAT I HAD BEEN TO, BEEF AND BEANS WERE ALWAYS THE SPECIAL.

I SAT DOWN AT A TABLE AND A YOUNG WOMAN CAME WITH SOME COFFEE AND TOOK MY ORDER, WHICH WAS THE NOT-SO-SPECIAL SPECIAL. AFTER SHE LEFT, I SIPPED THE COFFEE AND FOUND IT TO BE QUITE STRONG, THE WAY I LIKE IT.

A BURLY MAN, WHO LOOKED A LOT LIKE A COWBOY CAMP COOK, BROUGHT MY FOOD. HE SET IT DOWN. "YOU'RE A STRANGER, AIN'T YOU?" HE ASKED IN A GRUFF VOICE.

"YES." I REPLIED, AND THEN SAID, "I NEED TO SEE YOUR MARSHAL. I WAS OUT BUFFALO HUNTING 'BOUT TWENTY MILES NORTH A' HERE AND GOT CHASED BY A BUNCH OF INJUNS."

"WELL, THE INDIAN'S HAVEN'T RAIDED THIS TOWN FOR A WHILE. MUSTA' BEEN A YOUNG BUNCH LOOKIN' FER SCALPS." HE COMMENTED.

"YES, I BELIEVE SO." I SAID, THEN ADDED, "THIS IS GOOD FOOD."

"YEAH, THANKS. I WAS ONCE A CAMP COOK FOR A CATTLE DRIVE. I' SEEN LOTS A' COWBOYS, LOTS A' COWS AND KNOW HOW COWHANDS LIKE THEIR FOOD AND DRINK." HE RUMBLED, WITH A TOSS OF HIS GIANT HEAD.

"BY THE WAY," HE CONTINUED, "ABOUT SEEING THE MARSHAL..."

SUDDENLY, A MEXICAN WITH TWO TIED DOWN GUNS WALKED IN. HIS HARD EYES SCANNED THE ROOM AND WHEN HE SAW ME, HE STARED AT ME, STUDYING.

I GOT UP AND STARED BACK AT HIM. I WAS NOT AFRAID, THOUGH I THINK HE WANTED ME TO BE. I COULD USE A GUN, AND I COULD USE A PISTOL. I HAD A PISTOL IN A HOLSTER ON ME, AND THE MEXICAN LOOKED AT ME, NOTING THE WAY IT WAS TIED DOWN AND THE POSITION IT WAS IN. I COULD GET A GUN INTO ACTION FAST AS ANYONE I HAD EVER SEEN, BUT I NEVER PARADED THE FACT AROUND. I DID NOT WANT TO BE KNOWN AS A GUNFIGHTER.

"I'M LOOKIN' FOR THE MARSHAL." I TOLD HIM "KNOW WHERE I MAY FIND HIM?"

HE SMILED AN EVIL LITTLE SMILE. "YOU CAN FIND HIM IN THEE DESERT, FOOD FOR THEE BUZZARDS." HE SAID WITH A STRONG MEXICAN ACCENT.

"WHEN'S THERE GONNA' BE A NEW MARSHAL?" I ASKED.

"NEVER, IF BAR-TON HAS HIS WAY, AND HE WILL. TRUST ME, *SEÑOR*. HE WILL AND I WORK FOR HEEM, SEE. NO NEW MARSHAL, *SEÑOR*, NO NEW MARSHAL."

"WELL, WE'LL SEE ABOUT THAT." I SAID AS I PUSHED BY HIM AND STEPPED OUTSIDE. HE DID NOT LIKE ME; I COULD SEE THAT. NEVERTHELESS, I HAD MADE ENEMIES BEFORE.

I PULLED A CIGAR OUT OF MY SHIRT POCKET, PLACED IT IN MY MOUTH, AND LIT IT. THEN, LEANING AGAINST THE SIDE OF THE RESTAURANT, I BEGAN TO THINK. I HAD BEEN IN TOWN SCARCELY AN HOUR AND ALREADY I COULD SEE A BIG HINT THAT SOMETHING WAS WRONG HERE. STANDING OUTSIDE THAT RESTAURANT, SMOKING MY CIGAR AND STARING INTO THE DUSTY STREET, I DECIDED TO STAY UNTIL I FIGURED OUT WHAT WAS GOING ON. I WAS NOT A LAWMAN, BUT I NEVER COULD STAND TO SEE MEN OPPRESSING OTHERS, AND THAT'S WHAT IT LOOKED LIKE WAS HAPPENING.

I STRAIGHTENED UP AND WALKED DOWN THE BOARDWALK TO THE STORE. I WENT IN THE DOOR AND WALKED UP TO THE COUNTER. THE STORE WAS OUTFITTED WELL FOR SUCH A SMALL TOWN, I THOUGHT.

SUDDENLY, A MIDDLE-AGED MAN WITH A DARK, CREASED FACE POPPED UP FROM BEHIND THE COUNTER.

"WHAT KIN I DO FER YA', STRANGER?" HE ASKED.

I CHUCKLED AND SAID, "I NEED SOME JERKY, A POUND OF TOBACCO, 400 ROUNDS OF .44 AMMUNITION, AND 200 ROUNDS FOR A .45-70."

"YOU PLANNIN' ON A WAR, MISTER?" THE STOREKEEPER ASKED, A LOOK OF CONCERN ON HIS FACE.

"WELL, I'M NOT LOOKIN' FOR WAR, BUT I'VE NOTICED THAT THINGS ARE A LITTLE FISHY AROUND HERE. A MEXICAN WHO LOOKED LIKE HE FANCIED HIMSELF A GUN HAND JUST TOLD ME THE BUZZARDS WAS FLYIN' AROUND THE LAST MARSHAL'S CARCASS. WHAT IS THE SITUATION AROUND HERE, ANYHOW?"

"WELL, YOU SEE," THE MAN BEGAN, "JIM, OVER TO THE BLACKSMITH SHOP, HE WAS COMIN' OUT WEST WITH A BUNCH, INCLUDIN' ME, WHEN WE CAME TO THIS HERE STREAM. HE FIGURED THIS HERE WAS FAR ENOUGH, BEIN' IN WYOMING AND ALL, SO WE ALL STOPPED AND DECIDED TO MAKE US A TOWN. THIS IS BEAUTIFUL COUNTRY AN' WE COULD NEVER ASK FOR BETTER.

"WE SWEATED TO MAKE THE TOWN WE DID. THEN WE GOT THE TOWN GOVERNMENT RUNNIN'. WE THOUGHT WE WAS DOIN' GOOD."

"THEN THE CATTLEMAN CAME. HIS NAME'S BARTON. HIM AND HIS SONS, HIS GUN HANDS AND COWHANDS. WE THOUGHT IT INNOCENT ENOUGH; WE WANTED A TOWN AN' WE FIGURED THE BUSINESS WOULD SHORELY HELP US GROW.

"THEN, HIM AND HIS FAMILY SLOWLY GOT INTO RUNNIN' THE TOWN. IT'S A LONG STORY, BUT THE SHORT OF IT IS, HE NOW PRACTICLY OWNS THE TOWN, AND

NOBODY'S GOOD ENOUGH WITH A GUN TO STOP HIM. HIS GUN HANDS ARE FAST, BUT THE FACT IS, HIM AND HIS SONS ARE THE MEANEST OF THE LOT. EXCEPT MAYBE FOR THAT MEX.

"NOW HE'S GOT HIMSELF A BIG RANCH, HE'S TAKEN OTHER PEOPLE'S LAND THAT IS PRIME, SOMETIMES PAYING VERY LITTLE, IF AT ALL. BARTON'S GUN HANDS KILLED EACH MARSHALL WHO TRIED TO DO RIGHT. THE MAYOR, HE'S A DECENT MAN, BUT HE AIN'T NO GOOD DEAD. HE'S BEEN WATCHIN' FOR A MAN AS COULD DO THE JOB, THOUGH."

"THAT'S A SAD STORY." I SIGHED.

"YES, IT IS." HE AGREED, "WE WANTED THIS 'ERE PLACE TO BE A PLACE TO RAISE A FAMILIES, WITH A CHURCH AND A SCHOOL. WE GOT A CHURCH, AND IT ALSO SERVES AS A SCHOOL WITH THE BLACKSMITH'S DAUGHTER TEACHIN' THE FEW CHILDREN WE GOT, BUT THIS WON'T BE A GOOD PLACE TO RAISE YOUNGUNS IF SOMEBODY DOESN'T STOP BARTON."

"HOW DO I GET THE BADGE?" I ASKED.

"GO UP TO THE BLACKSMITH'S SHOP AND TELL HIM WHO YOU ARE AND THAT YOU WANT TO TRY AT BEING THE LAW."

AND THAT IS WHAT I DID.

THE SUN WAS STILL HIGH WHEN I STEPPED OUTSIDE. I LOOKED AT MY GOLD WATCH. IT WAS ONE 'O' CLOCK. I SNAPPED THE LID SHUT AND CROSSED THE DUSTY STREET. THE BLACKSMITH SHOP WAS PROBABLY CLOSED FOR LUNCH, I THOUGHT, BUT I DECIDED TO TRY ANYWAY.

THE SMALL SHOP WAS EMPTY, BUT I WENT ON IN. A DOOR THAT LED TO ADJOINING QUARTERS OPENED AND A BIG MAN WITH A FUZZY BLACK BEARD STEPPED OUT.

"HELLO, STRANGER." HE BELLOWED, "HOW MAY I HELP YOU?"

"I CAME TO GET THE MARSHAL'S BADGE." I SAID.

THE SMITH TOOK A STEP BACK AND LOOKED ME OVER. "YOU LOOK LIKE AN HONEST MAN.," HE SAID SLOWLY.

"LOOKS CAN DECEIVE, MAYOR." I REPLIED, "YOU HAD BETTER TRY ME OUT BEFORE YOU GO FORMING ANY OPINIONS OF ME!"

HE LAUGHED AND SAID, "WELL, YOU MUST BE A GOOD MAN, SEEIN' AS YOU WANT THIS JOB." THEN HE BECAME SERIOUS. "THAT IS, UNLESS YOU'RE BOUGHT BY BARTON."

"I AIN'T LETTIN' NO MAN HIRE ME FOR THAT BRAND OF LAWMAN." I SAID, "IN FACT I'VE NEVER EVEN BEEN ON A POSSE. HOWEVER, IF YOU GIVE ME THE BADGE, I'LL SURE GIVE IT A TRY."

"WHAT'S YOUR NAME, SON?" THE SMITH-MAYOR ASKED ME.

"JACK MCKINLEY."

"MCKINLEY, DO YOU KNOW WHAT BRAND 'A' TROUBLE YOU'LL BE GETTING YOURSELF IN?"

"YES, I DO" I REPLIED, "THE STOREKEEPER TOLD ME. IN FACT, HE'S THE ONE AS SENT ME HERE TO GET THE BADGE.

"BESIDES, I CAN'T RIDE OUTA' HERE 'A KNOWING I LEFT GOOD PEOPLE IN TROUBLE WHEN I COULD HAVE HELPED.

"AND THEN, I DON'T HAVE A HOME. MA, SHE DIED OF THE CHOLERA WHEN I WAS JUST TEN. PA GOT THROWN BY A HORSE AND BROKE HIS NECK WHEN I WAS FIFTEEN. I'VE RODE HERD, TRAPPED, HUNTED BUFFALO, AND JUST PLAIN WORKED HARD EVER SINCE.

"BEFORE I GET MUCH OLDER, I WANT TO SETTLE DOWN, BUILD A HOME. THIS VALLEY IS LOVELY; IF YOU'LL HAVE ME, I'D LIKE TO STAY."

"OUT EAST, YOU'D PROB'LY STILL BE COUNTED A YOUNG PUP." THE OLDER MAN SAID "BUT OUT HERE, YOU ARE MEASURED BY HOW YOU ACT, AS YOU ARE EVERYWHERE REALLY. WE'LL HAVE YOU, SON, AND I THINK WE'LL ALL BE THE BETTER FOR IT. IF MARTIN SAYS YOU'LL DO, I AM SURE YOU WILL. I'LL GO GET THE BADGE."

WHEN HE CAME BACK OUT WITH THE BADGE, HE HANDED IT TO ME AND SAID "TAKE IT, I KNOW YOU'LL DO THE JOB. I'VE HEARD SOME ABOUT YOU FROM THE INDIANS AND WHITE MEN ALIKE. THE NAME'S JIM, JIM BAILEY."

THEN I SHOOK HIS HAND AND ASKED, "MR. BAILEY, HOW DOES EVERYONE STAND AROUND HERE, ON WHAT SIDE ARE THEY?"

"I DON'T KNOW HOW ANYONE COULD BE ON THE SIDE OF THAT LAND STEALING, DRY-GULCHING, MURDEROUS, EVIL CATTLEMAN WHO HIRES GUNMEN FOR COWHANDS AND STEALS LAND FROM HARD WORKING FAMILIES," HE GROWLED "BUT THERE ARE SOME. AS FOR THE ONES ON OUR SIDE: THERE'S MARTIN, THE STOREKEEPER; BLACK JACK, THE MARY ANN'S OWNER, THAT'S THE SALOON ON THE RIGHT SIDE OF TOWN; BOB HARLEY, THE OWNER OF THE CHUCK WAGON RESTAURANT, HE'LL FIGHT FOR US; THE LIVERY STABLE OWNER, HOP-A-LONG JACK, WILL FIGHT; I WILL FIGHT TOO, IF SOMEONE WILL LEAD.

"THEN THERE'S THE ONES THAT ARE NEUTRAL, THEY'RE THE FAMILIES OUTSIDE OF TOWN. THEY'VE GOT FAMILIES TO TAKE CARE OF, SO I DON'T HOLD IT AGAINST THEM.

"THERE AREN'T ANY OF THE ORIGINAL CROWD THAT FIRST CAME IN HERE THAT WILL FIGHT FOR BARTON. HE'S BEEN ACCUSED OF RUSTLING, THOUGH WE CAN'T PROVE IT TO AN OFFICIAL, HE'S GOT TOO MUCH POWER. HIS GUN HANDS ARE ALL FIGHTERS, AND HIS TWO SONS ARE ALSO. HE'S ONE OF THE MEANEST OF THE LOT HIMSELF. THE OWNER OF THE BAR-TON IS IN WITH BARTON, BUT HE'S PRETTY MUCH YELLOW."

"THANKS." I SAID, "I'LL TRY TO DO MY JOB, NOW THAT I TOOK IT ON."

HE LOOKED AT ME AND SAID, "SON, I THINK YOU WILL."

WITH THAT, WE SHOOK HANDS AND BOTH WENT TO OUR SEPARATE JOBS. HIM AS THE BLACKSMITH AND MAYOR OF THE TOWN, ME AS THE NEW MARSHALL OF THE LITTLE TOWN CALLED BAILEYSVILLE.

AS MCKINLEY CAME OUT OF THE BLACKSMITH-SHOP/MAYOR'S OFFICE, A ROUGH DRESSED MAN STANDING IN FRONT OF THE BAR-TON SALOON, STUBBLE ON HIS CHIN AND TWO TIED DOWN GUNS, LOOKED OVER A SMOKE AT THE RETREATING FIGURE OF THE NEW MARSHAL. HE SUDDENLY FLICKED HIS CIGARETTE INTO THE STREET. A DRESSED-UP DUDE ACROSS THE WAY READJUSTED HIS SOMBRERO AND STEPPED THROUGH THE BATWING DOORS OF THE MARY ANN. THE ROUGH LOOKING CHARACTER BUILT ANOTHER SMOKE, ROLLED UP HIS SLEEVES AND SLIPPED THE RAWHIDE THONGS BACK ONTO HIS TWO .44 PISTOLS; HE HAD A LONG WAIT AHEAD.

WHEN I LEFT THE MAYOR'S OFFICE, I PUT THE BADGE INTO MY POCKET. I DID NOT WANT TO GET SHOT BEFORE I HAD A CHANCE TO GET STARTED.

I CROSSED THE STREET, WALKED ALONG THE BOARDWALK TO MARTIN'S STORE, AND PICKED UP MY SUPPLIES. I TOLD MARTIN ABOUT GETTING THE MARSHALL'S POSITION. HE WAS PLEASED. HE HAD ALWAYS WANTED TO GO AFTER BARTON, BUT HE HAD NEEDED SOMEONE TO LEAD. THEY SAID I WAS THE ONE.

FOR THE REST OF THE DAY, I JUST HUNG AROUND TOWN LISTENING TO THE TALK. THAT IS ONE OF THE BEST WAYS TO LEARN INFORMATION, AND I LEARNED A LOT.

I LEARNED THAT BARTON HAD A RANCH OUTSIDE OF TOWN WHERE HE WAS BUILDING A HERD. THERE WERE FIVE OTHER RANCHES AROUND TOWN; ALL OF THEM HAD A FEW HEAD WITH BIG PLANS. IN ADDITION, I HEARD THAT ALL OF THE RANCHES HAD REPORTED THAT THEY DID NOT HAVE AS MANY CALVES AS THEY

SHOULD. THEY HAD TOLD THE SHERIFFS ABOUT IT FROM TIME TO TIME, BUT EVERY TIME AN INVESTIGATION STARTED, THE SHERIFF MYSTERIOUSLY DISAPPEARED.

I DID NOT GO TO THE MARSHALL'S OFFICE UNTIL LATER THAT EVENING. WHEN I GOT THERE, I BEGAN TO LOOK AROUND. IT WAS A STRONGLY BUILT BUILDING; ITS WALLS WERE THREE FEET THICK AND WERE MADE OF NATIVE STONE WITH A KIND OF IMPROVISED MORTAR. THE ROOF WAS MADE OF STRONG OAK BEAMS COVERED WITH SOD FOR INSULATION AND PROTECTION AGAINST FIRE.

THE BUILDING HAD THREE ROOMS. IT HAD A MAIN ROOM WITH A WOODEN BENCH AND A GUN RACK, A WINDOW FACING THE STREET AND A PILE OF WOOD AGAINST THE FAR WALL FOR THE STOVE THAT WAS LOCATED IN THE MIDDLE OF THE ROOM. OFF TO THE RIGHT A DOORWAY LED INTO THE JAIL PART OF THE OFFICE. IN IT WERE TWO CELLS WITH A SIMPLE COT, BENCH, NIGHTSTAND AND A BARRED WINDOW IN EACH CELL. TO THE LEFT A STRONG WOODEN DOOR OPENED TO A TIDY LITTLE OFFICE WITH A SWIVEL CHAIR, ORGANIZING DESK AND A SMALL WINDOW THAT OPENED TO THE STREET AND COULD BE CLOSED WITH WOODEN SHUTTERS.

THIS WAS A WELL-BUILT OFFICE, AND IT NEEDED SOMEONE TO MAKE IT THEIR BASE TO KEEP THE LAW FROM. I WOULD TRY TO BE THE ONE.

BEFORE COMING INTO THE OFFICE, I HAD PUT MY HORSE IN THE LIVERY STABLE TO BE CARED FOR. OUT OF THE SADDLEBAGS, I TOOK MY FOOD AMMUNITION AND I TOOK TWO RIFLES OUT OF THEIR BOOTS. I PUT THE GRUB IN A SMALL CABINET ALONG THE WALL CLOSE TO THE STOVE. THEN I TOOK MY SHARPS AND HENRY AND PUT THEM IN THE LOCKING GUN RACK. I TOOK OFF MY GUN-BELT AND SLUNG IT OVER THE SWIVEL CHAIR, WHICH I HAD TAKEN OUT OF THE OFFICE ROOM AND PUT IN THE MAIN ROOM. THEN, I TOOK A .38 CALIBER REVOLVER OUT OF A SHOULDER HOLSTER AND STUCK IT IN MY WAISTBAND. THAT .38 IS NOT MUCH GOOD FOR MUCH OVER A FEW YARDS, BUT IT WILL WORK AT CLOSE RANGE.

IT WAS ABOUT NINE WHEN I WENT TO BED. I HAD COOKED UP SOME GRUB ON THE STOVE, DRANK COFFEE, AND MADE SURE THE FIRE WAS LOW AND THE LAMPS OUT. THEN, I WENT INTO THE JAIL SECTION, OPENED THE HEAVY DOOR AND BEDDED DOWN BEHIND IT WITH A MATTRESS TAKEN OFF ONE OF THE JAIL'S RICKETY COTS. NOW, I WOULD AT LEAST HAVE WARNING IF THEY TRIED TO MURDER ME IN THE NIGHT.

AS I LAY DOWN ON THE MATTRESS AND PULLED OFF MY BOOTS, I BEGAN TO THINK. PERHAPS I HAD GOTTEN INTO THIS JOB TOO QUICKLY. PERHAPS I SHOULD HAVE JUST MOUNTED UP AND RIDDEN ON. PERHAPS, IN THE MORNING, I SHOULD GO BACK TO BAILEY AND TELL HIM THAT I MADE A MISTAKE, THAT I WAS NOT CUT OUT FOR THIS JOB. PERHAPS... BUT I NEEDED THE MONEY ANYWAY, FOR THE BUFFALO

WERE GETTING SCARCE ON THE LAND I HAD BEEN HUNTING AND I DID NOT WANT TO HUNT THE HUGE ANIMALS TO EXTINCTION IN THAT AREA.

I DID NOT THEN KNOW THAT EVENTS WERE COMING THAT WOULD PULL ME INTO THIS FIGHT, SO MUCH SO THAT I MUST EITHER STAY OR BE CALLED A COWARD.

I AWOKE TO THE SOUND OF BOOTS TIPTOEING ACROSS THE WOOD FLOOR. I SUDDENLY REALIZED THAT I HAD LEFT ALL MY GUNS IN THE MAIN ROOM; THAT IS, ALL MY GUNS EXCEPT THE .38 REVOLVER, WHICH I HAD HIDDEN UNDER THE MATTRESS.

"WHERE'S HE AT?" I HEARD A ROUGH VOICE SAY.

"I DO NOT KNOW." I HEARD ANOTHER SMOOTHER VOICE SAY. IT SOUNDED LIKE SOMEBODY FROM EUROPE OR SOMETHING.

"MAYBE HE AIN'T SLEEPING HERE." GRUFF GROWLED.

"HE'S SLEEPING HERE, ALL RIGHT. I WAS WATCHING." SMOOTH SAID.

AFTER THAT, I JUST HEARD WHISPERS. THEN, I HEARD THEM WALK OVER TO THE OFFICE DOOR AND SLOWLY OPEN IT. WHILE THEY WERE INTENT ON THE OFFICE SECTION, I SLOWLY GOT UP OFF THE MATTRESS AND PULLED OUT THE .38. I WALKED UP BEHIND THEM IN SOCK FEET AND AS THEY BEGAN TO TURN, I SAID, "ALRIGHT BOYS, UNBUCKLE YOUR BELTS. AFTER THEY DID THAT, I SAID, "NOW RAISE YOUR HANDS." THEY RAISED THEIR HANDS AND I FRISKED THEM FINDING A KNIFE ON GRUFF AND A DERRINGER ON SMOOTH.

I LOOKED THEM OVER. ONE WAS A ROUGH CHARACTER, DRESSED IN ROUGH CLOTHES AVERAGE OF THE WESTERN MAN. THE OTHER WAS QUITE THE DUDE. HE HAD FANCY PANTS AND A FANCY SHIRT AND VEST. HIS JACKET WAS GREEN AND HE WORE A CLEAN WHITE WIDE-BRIMMED HAT.

"WHO ARE YOU BOYS," I ASKED "SOME OF BARTON'S NO-GOOD-FOR-NOTHIN' GUNMEN?"

"YOU BLOWHARD!" GRUFF YELLED "IF YOU DIDN'T 'AVE A GUN ON ME, I'D DRIVE THEM WORDS BACK..."

HE WAS INTERRUPTED BY SMOOTH. "NOW, NOW, BROTHER, WE ARE NOT HERE ON A MISSION TO ASSAULT THIS GENTLEMAN WITH ROUGH ACCUSATIONS." THEN TO ME HE SAID "SORRY, SIR. MY BROTHER IS QUITE ROUGH. EXCUSE HIM, PLEASE.

"YOU ASKED WHO WE ARE. I WILL TELL YOU. WE WORK FOR A BOSS WHO GOES BY THE TITLE OF BARTON, WHATEVER HIS NAME IS. WE ARE PAID VERY WELL, SO WE RIDE FOR THE BRAND. BOTH OF US WORK FOR HIM, YOU SEE WE ARE BROTHERS."

"NEVER SEEN TWO BROTHERS MORE UNALIKE." I OBSERVED.

"WE ARE NOT ALIKE, SIR. I WENT TO A COLLEGE BACK EAST. THERE WAS A LITTLE COMPLICATION AND I ENDED UP COMING OUT HERE. AFTER I GOT A JOB WITH BARTON DOWN IN TEXAS, I TOLD HIM THAT I HAD A BROTHER WHO NEEDED WORK. BARTON SAID IF HE WAS AS GOOD A WORKER AS I WAS, WELL THEN, HE HAD A JOB. HE MIGHT NOT BE A SIGHT TO LOOK AT, BUT HE WORKS, AND THAT IS FOR SURE.

"OUR NAMES: HE'S HARVEY, I AM DICK JACKSON."

"WELL, MY NAME'S JACK MCKINLEY; IT'S NICE TO MEET YOU TWO." I SAID "AND SINCE YOU'VE STAYED SO LATE, YOU MIGHT AS WELL JUST SLEEP IN THE GUEST ROOM." SAYING THAT I LED THEM TO THEIR CELLS AND LOCKED THE DOOR BEHIND THEM, SLIPPING THE KEY RING INTO MY VEST POCKET.

THE NEXT MORNING, I WOKE UP JUST AS THE SUN WAS BEGINNING TO RISE OVER THE GRASSY HILLS. AS I ROLLED UP MY BLANKETS, I LOOKED OVER AT THE CELLS. MY PRISONERS WERE STILL THERE. PICKING UP THE MATTRESS, I WALKED OVER TO HARVEY'S CELL, OPENED THE DOOR, AND THREW IT IN ON TOP OF HIM. HE WOKE UP WITH A SNORT AND LOOKED AT ME, DISGUSTED LIKE.

"HOWDY BOYS!" I GREETED THEM. "HOW'D YOU SLEEP?"

"VERY WELL." DICK SAID AGREEABLY, AS HE GOT UP OUT OF BED AND STRETCHED.

DICK WALKED OVER TO THE BARS. HE LOOKED AT ME FOR A MINUTE AND ASKED "MCKINLEY, WHY DID YOU TAKE THIS JOB YOU HAVE. ARE NOT YOU AFRAID THAT YOU WILL LOSE? YOU KNOW WHAT BARTON HAS DONE TO ALL THE PREVIOUS MARSHALS."

"THAT'S A RIGHT GOOD QUESTION." I MUSED.

I WENT IN TO THE MAIN ROOM, GOT THE STOVE GOING AND STARTED A POT OF COFFEE.

"YOU SEE, IT'S LIKE THIS." I TOLD HIM WHEN I CAME BACK. "I WAS AN INDEPENDENT BUFFALO HUNTER, JUST A FEW DAYS AGO. I HAD KILLED A BUFFALO WHEN SOME INDIANS TRIED TO STEAL THE BUFFALO AND TAKE MY SCALP. I KNEW OF THIS TOWN, SO THIS IS WHERE I HEADED.

"WHEN I GOT HERE, I FOUND OUT BARTON AND HIS MEN, INCLUDING YOU, WERE OPPRESSING THE TOWNSFOLK. I JUST CAN'T STAND THAT SORT OF THING, SO WHEN I FOUND OUT THEY NEEDED A MARSHAL, I TOOK THE JOB."

"YOU COULD HAVE RIDDEN ON" DICK SAID "AND NO ONE WOULD HAVE BLAMED YOU."

"YES, I COULD HAVE, BUT MY CONSCIENCE WOULDN'T HAVE LET ME. BESIDES, I SINCERELY BELIEVE THAT PROVIDENCE SENT ME HERE; I DO NOT THINK IT WAS MERELY CHANCE THAT THOSE INJUNS CHASED ME."

"YOU LIVE BY A STRICT CODE." DICK OBSERVED.

"YES, I DO." WAS MY REPLY.

I WALKED INTO THE MAIN ROOM, PICKED UP MY GUN AND STRAPPED IT ON AS I STOOD IN THE DOOR AND WATCHED THE TOWN COME TO LIFE. I STUCK THE .38 IN MY WAISTBAND AND PULLED MY SHIRT OUT A LITTLE TO COVER IT. I BEGIN TO THINK ABOUT THE QUESTION DICK HAD ASKED ME. I HAD DEFINITELY TOLD HIM THE TRUTH. HOWEVER, HE HAD NOT ASKED ME IF I FEARED FOR MY LIFE.

I THOUGHT ABOUT THAT, AND KNEW THAT, EVEN THOUGH I HAD NO WISH TO DIE, I WAS READY. BESIDES, WE WESTERN MEN OF THAT TIME LIVED HAND IN HAND WITH DANGER. WE COURTED HARDSHIP AND FOUGHT TOE TO TOE WITH THE ELEMENTS, NATURE, MAN. EVEN THOUGH WE DID NOT ENJOY PAIN AND AGONY, WE LOVED OUR LIFE FOR ITS RAW BEAUTY AND, LIVING AS I DID WITH THE KNOWLEDGE THAT THAT LIFE WAS PRECARIOUS AND PRECIOUS, EVEN WHEN I WAS DOING THIS PRESENT JOB, I DID NOT GIVE MUCH TIME TO FEAR.

SUDDENLY, I HEARD FOOTSTEPS COMING UP BEHIND ME. I BEGAN TO TURN, BUT WAS STOPPED BY A VOICE SAYING, "UNBUCKLE YOUR GUN BELT AND GET THEM UP, *SEÑOR*." IT WAS MEX!

SOMEHOW, HE MUST HAVE SNEAKED IN DURING THE NIGHT AND HID IN THE OFFICE. I DEARLY WISHED THAT I HAD BEEN MORE CAREFUL, AS I USUALLY WAS.

"OUTSIDE, *SEÑOR!*" HE SNEERED. I STEPPED OUT ON THE BOARDWALK. MEX STILL DID NOT KNOW ABOUT MY HIDEOUT HEATER.

THEN I HEARD FOOTSTEPS. THEY WERE COMING FROM BEHIND ME, THUS BEHIND MEX. I HEARD HIM SAY " *SEÑORITA*, GO AWAY!" I TURNED SLIGHTLY, MY HANDS STILL UP. A FEW STEPS BEHIND STOOD A YOUNG WOMAN, ABOUT MY AGE, WITH BLONDE HAIR AND A PRETTY BLUE DRESS.

"WHY?" SHE QUESTIONED MEX, GLANCING AT ME.

"JEST GO AWAY!", HE GROWLED. THEN HE TURNED BACK TO ME AND SAID "YOU, MOVE! THEES IS NO TIME FOR STARING AT THE LADIES!"

I WAS TURNED TOWARD HER FOR JUST AN INSTANT. IN THAT INSTANT SHE LOOKED AT ME AND RAISED A CAST-IRON SKILLET SHE WAS CARRYING. I JUST SMILED, FOR A NOD MAY HAVE ATTRACTED MEX'S ATTENTION.

I TOOK A CHANCE, AND QUICKLY JUMPED SIDWAYS INTO THE STREET AND HIT THE GROUND ON MY SHOULDER. AS I ROLLED, I HEARD MEX'S COLT FIRE AS THE SKILLET BANGED HIM ON THE HEAD. I JUMPED TO MY FEET AND PULLED OUT THE .38, BUT HAD NO NEED OF IT; MEX LAY ON THE BOARDWALK, AN ARM IN THE STREET, OUT COLD.

"I DIDN'T KILL HIM, DID I?" SHE ASKED.

"HE'S NOT DEAD," I TOLD HER "BUT HE'LL BE UNCONSCIOUS FOR A WHILE. WANT TO COME IN AND HAVE SOME COFFEE?"

"SURE!" SHE SMILED "I'D LOVE TOO."

I PULLED MEX IN TO THE JAIL ROOM AND LOCKED THE WOODEN DOOR. THEN I WENT BACK IN AND Poured SOME COFFEE FOR THE LADY, WHO SAID THAT SHE WAS ANN BAILEY, THE BLACKSMITH'S DAUGHTER. IT HAD BEEN A LONG TIME SINCE I HAD TALKED TO A LADY, AND WE SAT IN THERE, DRINK COFFEE, AND TALKED FOR A WHILE.

I WAS STILL VISITING WITH ANN WHEN THEY CAME. SHE WAS GETTING READY TO LEAVE, WHEN I HEARD THE SOUND OF HORSES' HOOVES BEATING A TATTOO ON THE PACKED DIRT OF THE SINGLE STREET. I WENT TO THE WINDOW AND GLANCED OUT; EIGHT RIDERS WERE ENTERING THE FAR END OF BAILEYSVILLE. THE RIDERS PULLED UP IN FRONT OF THE BAR-TON SALOON. I ALREADY HAD A SUSPICION ABOUT WHO THEY WERE, BUT MY SUSPICION GREW STRONGER AS I WATCHED THE RIDERS TIE THEIR HORSES TO THE HITCHING RAIL AND PULL RIFLES OUT OF BOOTS.

I TURNED TO ANN, WHO HAD GOT UP TO LOOK. "WHO ARE THESE MEN?" I ASKED HER.

SHE HAD BEEN RELAXED AND ENJOYING HERSELF WHILE WE VISITED, BUT NOW HER EYES GREW WIDER AND HER FACE TURNED SLIGHTLY PALER "THAT IS BARTON AND HIS MEN." SHE SAID. "THE STOCKY ONE WITH THE WALRUS MOUSTACHE IS BARTON, THE TWO YOUNGER MEN ARE BARTON'S SONS: BEN AND JAKE, THE FIVE OTHERS ARE HIRED GUN HANDS."

THE EIGHT MEN HAD NOW LINED UP IN THE STREET. TWO MEN SPLIT FROM THE CROWD, WENT TO OPPOSITE SIDES OF THE STREET, AND STEPPED UP ON THE BOARDWALK. "WELL," I SIGHED, "LOOKS LIKE THE ATTACK HAS BEGUN."

I LOOKED AT ANN AND SAID, "YOU'D BETTER STAY HERE, LOOKS LIKE A FIGHT IS SHAPING UP."

SHE WENT OVER TO THE GUN RACK AND TOOK DOWN THE TWO RIFLES. THE AMMUNITION WAS ON THE LOWER SHELF AND SHE GRABBED THEM TOO. SHE CAME BACK TO THE WINDOW AND HANDED ME THE HENRY AND SHELLS. SHE PUT THE

SHELLS FOR THE SHARPS ON THE WINDOW AND LOADED ONE. "WE'VE HAD INDIAN ATTACKS." SHE SAID, A GRIM LOOK OF DETERMINATION ON HER FACE.

I LOOKED AT HER AND SMILED "YOU'D DO TO RIDE THE RIVER WITH."

"THANK YOU." SHE SMILED SLIGHTLY.

I LOOKED BACK OUT AT THE STREET. THE ADVANCING LINE HAD STOPPED ABOUT 100 FEET DOWN THE STREET FROM THE OFFICE. I NOTED THAT THEY HAD STOPPED IN A PLACE WHERE THERE WAS A BUCKBOARD ON BOTH SIDES OF THE STREET. I WONDERED WHO PUT THOSE THERE.

AGAIN I CONSIDERED MY CHANCES, MY ODDS OF WINNING. I DID NOT KNOW IF THE TOWNS PEOPLE WOULD HELP ME. THE MAYOR HAD SAID THEY WOULD HELP, BUT WOULD THEY IF THE ODDS WERE ON THE SIDE OF DEATH. I WOULD JUST HAVE TO FIND OUT.

OR WOULD I? I COULD JUST LEAVE. THIS WASN'T MY PROBLEM. WHAT WAS I THINKING? I COULD JUST LEAVE THESE PEOPLE TO THEIR OWN PROBLEM. NO ONE WOULD BLAME ME, EXCEPT MAYBE THESE PEOPLE, AND I WOULDN'T BE ANYWHERE AROUND HERE ANYWAY.

I LOOKED BACK OUT THE WINDOW AND BEGAN TO TAKE OFF MY BADGE. THEN I LOOKED AT ANN. SHE WAS WATCHING THE STREET. I LOOKED BACK AT THE BADGE. WHAT WAS I THINKING? I COULDN'T LEAVE THESE PEOPLE; THEY WERE DEPENDING ON ME TO LEAD THEM OUT OF THIS MESS. I QUICKLY PINNED THE BADGE BACK ON MY SHIRT BEFORE ANN COULD NOTICE I HAD TAKEN IT OFF.

I STEPPED OUT ON THE WALK. "WHAT DO YOU BOYS WANT?" I HOLLERED.

"YOU HAVE THREE A' MY MEN IN THERE!" BARTON YELLED. "LET 'EM LOOSE, AN YOU'VE GOT FREEDOM TO RUN. IF YOU DON'T, YOU'RE GONNA' DIE!"

I LOOKED DOWN THE STREET. BEHIND BARTON'S MEN STOOD BAILEY, A SHOTGUN IN HAND. HOP-A-LONG JACK LIMPED OUT OF THE LIVERY STABLE, A WORN PISTOL IN HIS FIST. IN FRONT OF THEM, I COULD SEE MARTIN INSIDE THE DOORWAY OF HIS STORE. HE TOO CARRIED A SCATTERGUN. HORTON STEPPED OUT OF HIS RESTAURANT AND THREW OUT SOME DIRTY WATER. I NOTICED THAT HE HAD A PISTOL IN HIS WAISTBAND. BESIDE ME, ANN POKED THE SHARPS OUT THE WINDOW. I SLIPPED THE THONG OFF THE HAMMER OF MY COLT.

I STEPPED FORWARD A BIT. "IF THAT'S THE WAY IT'S GOING TO BE, LET IT BE. YOU MAY HAVE THE PRISONERS, BUT OVER MY DEAD BODY!"

AS I SAID THIS, I WAS DRAWING MY .44 AND NOW I FIRED INTO THE DIRT AT THEIR FEET. THE SIX MEN IN THE STREET SCATTERED AND DOVE FOR THE COVER OF THE BUCKBOARDS. THE TWO MEN ON THE WALK SNAPPED A FAST SHOT AT ME, BUT I WAS ALREADY INSIDE THE DOOR AND THE SHOTS SMACKED INTO THE WOODEN

FRAME, SCATTERING SPLINTERS. I JUMPED OUT AND FIRED AT THE MEN ON THE WALK, BURNING ONE AND MISSING THE OTHER AS THEY RAN FOR COVER.

THE GUNMAN ON THE STORE'S SIDE OF TOWN COULD NOT FIND CLOSE COVER, SO HE RUSHED FOR MARTIN'S. HE REACHED THE DOOR AND SAW THAT IT WAS CLOSED. HE LIFTED HIS HAND FOR THE KNOB AND MARTIN JERKED IT OPEN. "DROP YOUR GUN!" MARTIN ORDERED, COCKING THE SHOTGUN. IN A PANIC, THE GUNMAN REACHED FOR HIS COLT. HE DIDN'T EVEN HAVE A CHANCE. THE LOAD OF BUCKSHOT BLEW HIM INTO THE STREET.

I JACKED A ROUND INTO MY HENRY AND STEPPED BACK OUTSIDE AMID A HAIL OF BULLETS, THE BUTT OF THE GUN FIRMLY AGAINST MY SHOULDER. THE OTHER GUNMAN ON THE BOARDWALK STEPPED OUT FROM THE COVER OF TWO BUILDINGS. WE BOTH BROUGHT UP OUR GUNS IN THE SAME INSTANT AND FIRED SIMULTANEOUSLY. HIS BULLET MISSED; MINE DIDN'T. I TURNED BACK TOWARD THE DOOR. SUDDENLY, A GUNMAN JUMPED UP FROM BEHIND A BUCKBOARD AND FIRED. THE BULLET SLAMMED MY SIDE, BLOWING ME BACK INTO THE DOORWAY. ANN FIRED THE SHARPS, HITTING HIM IN THE CHEST.

"ARE YOU HURT?" ANN CRIED AS SHE RAN OVER AND HELPED ME IN.

"NOT SERIOUSLY, THE BULLET JUST HIT MUSCLE, I THINK." I GRUNTED AS I GOT TO MY FEET.

I GOT TO THE WINDOW AND WORKED THE LEVER ON MY RIFLE. I COULD HEAR SPORADIC FIRING OUTSIDE. "HOW MANY LEFT?" I ASKED ANN.

"BARTON, HIS SONS AND THREE GUNMEN." SHE SAID, CAUTIOUSLY LOOKING OUT THE WINDOW.

"ALRIGHT." I SAID. THEN LOOKING OUT THE WINDOW, I YELLED, "BARTON, WANNA' SURRENDER?"

"NOPE!" HE YELLED AND PUT A BULLET THROUGH THE WINDOW, MISSING ME BY A NARROW MARGIN.

ONE OF THE GUNMEN JUMPED UP AND I FIRED, HITTING HIM IN THE SHOULDER AND KNOCKING HIM BACK. HE GOT UP AND I SAW HIM RUN FOR THE MARY ANN. HE STUMBLED THROUGH THE BATWING DOORS. I HEARD A GRUFF VOICE HOLLER SOMETHING, A GUN ROARED AND THE GUNMAN CAME BACK OUT THROUGH THE DOORS, THIS TIME FLYING. HE HIT THE DIRT AND DID NOT MOVE.

SUDDENLY, THE FIRING STOPPED. "ALL RIGHT!" I HEARD BARTON YELL, "WE SURRENDER."

BARTON, HIS TWO SONS, AND THE TWO REMAINING GUNMEN THREW THEIR GUNS IN THE STREET AND CAME OUT, HANDS UP.

I WENT OUT THE DOOR AND INTO THE STREET, MY HAND PRESSED AGAINST MY SIDE.

WHEN I WAS ABOUT TEN YARDS AWAY FROM THEM, I SUDDENLY NOTICED THAT ONE OF THE GUNMEN STILL HAD A PISTOL IN HIS HOLSTER. THE MAN HAD A LEATHERY FACE AND MEAN EYES. SUDDENLY I KNEW THAT I WAS GOING TO HAVE TO DRAW FASTER THAN THIS MAN.

CRUEL FACE SMILED A WICKED LITTLE SMILE WHEN HE SAW ME NOTICE HIS REMAINING GUN. "ARE YOU FAST?" HE SNARLED. "I'VE HEARD YOU ARE." AND HE DREW HIS GUN.

HE DREW, AND THE DRAW WAS FAST. HE FIRED AS MY GUN WAS COMING UP. BUT HE MADE A MISTAKE THAT MANY A GUNMAN HAVE MADE. HE FIRED TOO FAST.

BUT I WAS NOT ONE TO FIRE AS FAST AS I COULD. I WAS VERY FAST, BUT I LEVELED THE GUN CAREFULLY BEFORE FIRING. HIS SECOND SHOT NOTCHED MY HAT BRIM. MY FIRST TOOK HIM DEAD CENTER.

I COCKED THE GUN AGAIN AND WAVED IT AT THE OTHER FOUR. "DON'T ANY OF YOU TRY ANYTHING FUNNY OR YOU'LL GET THE SAME!" I SAID.

I CHECKED THEM OVER AND FOUND NOTHING BUT A DERRINGER ON THE OTHER GUNMAN. HE TURNED IT OVER PEACEFULLY, NOT WANTING THE SAME DOSE OF LEAD THAT HIS PARTNER HAD GOTTEN. "BARTON," I SAID, "YOU'VE BEEN A TERROR AROUND HERE LONG ENOUGH. I'M GOING TO GIVE YOU BACK THE PRISONERS, AND THEN YOU GO BACK TO YOUR RANCH, LOAD UP YOUR NECESSITIES AND GET OUT OF HERE. I'LL GIVE YOU ONE DAY TO GET OUTA' HERE. AFTER THAT, IF I SEE ANY OF YOU AROUND HERE AGAIN, I'LL SHOOT ON SIGHT!"

"WHAT ABOUT THE CATTLE?" JACK PIPED UP.

"YOU WILL LEAVE THEM HERE AS A FINE FOR THE ATROCITIES YOU HAVE COMMITTED."

"BUT..."

"NO BUTS ABOUT IT. YOU HAVE TREATED THIS TOWN LIKE DIRT FOR A LONG TIME, AND FOR THAT, YOU WILL PAY. BE GLAD I'M NOT HANGING YOU!"

BEN LOOKED AT ANN, WHO WAS STANDING IN THE DOORWAY. "ARE YOU COMING WITH ME, ANN?" HE ASKED.

SHE LOOKED AT HIM AND SHOOK HER HEAD "NO, I'M NOT, BEN. I CAN'T."

THEY DID NOT LIKE THE SITUATION, BUT THEY REALIZED THAT NOT ONLY I, BUT MOST OF THE TOWNSPEOPLE ALSO, WERE READY AND WILLING TO FIGHT FOR WHAT WAS THEIRS. BESIDES, THEY WERE EVIL MEN, AND THE MAIN THING EVIL MEN

WORRY ABOUT IS THEMSELVES. THEMSELVES INCLUDED THEIR LIVES, AND THEY WERE AFRAID TO DIE.

MY WOUND WAS BEGINNING TO HURT BADLY, SO I MANAGED TO GET BACK TO THE OFFICE DOOR AND SIT DOWN IN THE SWIVEL CHAIR. I FISHED OUT THE KEYS TO THE JAIL AND HANDED THEM TO ANN. "HERE ARE THE KEYS. TAKE THE PRISONERS OUT TO BARTON. HE CAN HAVE THEM!" SHE DID IT, AND WHEN BARTON AND ALL OF HIS MEN WERE GONE, SHE CAME BACK IN AND HELPED ME FIX UP MY WOUND.

I LOOKED OUT THE WINDOW AND SAW TOWNSPEOPLE TAKING THE DEAD OUTLAWS TO BOOT- HILL. THE DUST WAS BEGINNING TO SETTLE IN THE STREET WHERE ONLY A FEW MINUTES AGO THERE HAD BEEN FIGHTING. I SAW THE OWNER OF THE BARTON SALOON RIDING OUT OF TOWN. I LOOKED UP AT ANN AS SHE BOILED SOME WATER TO CLEANSE MY WOUND. I LOOKED BACK OUTSIDE. BAILEY AND MARTIN WERE COMING UP DOWN THE WALK.

I SMILED TO MYSELF. THE TOWN WAS CLEANED UP AND I HAD A JOB. I NOW KNEW FOR SURE THAT THIS WAS WHERE I WAS GOING TO SETTLE DOWN AT LAST. THIS WOULD BE MY HOME.

IT LOOKED LIKE BAILEYSVILLE WAS GOING TO BE A RIGHT NICE TOWN AFTER ALL!

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AUTHOR'S NOTE: THERE WERE OTHER WORKS STUDIED IN THE RESEARCH FOR THIS ESSAY, BUT AS THEY WERE NOT QUOTED, THEY ARE NOT LISTED HERE. BESIDES, THE LISTED WORKS ARE ALSO THE ONES THAT WERE STUDIED THE MOST.

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