

We Are The Light

The trees bore the word beware. The letters were burned deep. In the dimness of the woods a small girl waited. Dressed in a prim black dress and black bonnet. Her hand rested on the nose of a camel

Coy and Kay were there to find answers. Their white horses stomped their feet impatiently. Blue eyes locked, the twins needed no words. They moved forward taking the path between the A and R.

A heavy mist engulfed them. The loud jubilant creek became a sober murmur of sound. The horses clopping was absorbed by the moss leaving a silent vacuum of nothingness. Then barely audible came the plodding echo of another animal. They followed the sound deeper into the fog.

As a wet hanky held over the mouth, breathing became difficult. The dampness soaked into their clothes, filling them with coldness. They reached for the oxygen they carried in their saddlebags. Slipping on the mask breathing became easier. The yellow slickers they unrolled gave a modest protection.

The stench of gunpowder wove its way through the mist. It stung the eyes, making them water. Muted gunfire echoed through the woods. Screams drifted toward

them in eddies. Men, women's, and children's cries of agony. The howling of dogs, the shriek of animals in pain. A glimpses of the black bonnet and skirt drifted before them, moving faster. The horses were trotting now, they had to keep up.

Breaking free of the mist they emerged into a clearing. A large wooden meeting house dominated it. Strewn on the ground were broken bodies of humans and animals. The Union soldiers rained down on them a relentless rain of bullets. Two soldiers turned toward them; rifles aimed they fired. Searing pain swept through them, pain as never before felt.

Hot sun rays touched their faces, arousing the two laying on the ground. Kay's chest felt sore. She removed the oxygen mask. She reeked of spent gunpowder. A perfect hole was burnt into her shirt. Sore, stiff she managed to sit up.

Coy was stirring, a puppet whose strings were being tugged. The horses grazed on thick grass, their saddles gleaming in wetness. Kay struggled out of the slicker still moist to the touch.

Taking off his oxygen mask Coy said "The journal was right. "His voice shook as he sought the strength to sit up. His hand went to the hole in his matching shirt. He struggled out of the slicker

"We knew it could not be a made-up story." Kay said. Her legs shook as she stood, stumbling to a near by stump. Dropping down she felt tears tracing the planes of her face. So stupid and senseless. Quakers who had no guns, harmed nobody, and only sought peace.

Coy found a stump, slumped he tilted his head back to look into the blueness of a cloudless day. "Tell me, why?"

Kay said nothing. There were no answers. This massacre was without rhyme or reason. These people had not committed treason. They took no side in the conflict, knew nothing of politics.

“The camels were brought here from Texas. If the journal is correct, they came from that experiment of Jefferson Davis’s.”

Kay shuddered; would she never warm up?

“Let’s get out of here sis.”

“Do we go ahead and publish the book, based on Mary’s journal?”

“It would be viewed as fiction.”

“It needs to be told, their story for all eyes to see and know what happened here at Owen’s Crossing. Those devils marked the trees using the same torches they lit the cabins on fire with.”

“Who would believe?”

“Brother we are the light, we must share, to make others aware.”

“The door we open won’t be pleasant, the backlash could be severe.”

“Could it be any worse than what they endured?”

Kay’s hand touched the bullet hole, memories of the searing pain echoing through her... through the ages.

“You are right Kay; we are the light. We will publish.”

Kay’s eyes found the letters burned into the trees, there between the A and-R the little girl stood by her camel. Yes, they would share the horror of Owen’s crossing. Then maybe the child could finally rest.