

Short story

Shania VanNoster

2/24/11

"The town that was dead has become alive again" said my pa happily as he gave the men the food they ordered at our hotel and talked to them. The hotel is my home, now a battle zone. I am Sarah Derrick, the daughter of the owner of the Free State Hotel in Fort Scott Kansas. I am 14 and have seen war.

"Wake up Sarah" said my maw, as she usually woke me up every morning, to do my chores before breakfast. "Stop your chores Sarah", said my Pa, "We need to go to Lawrence today." My Pa is a soldier ready to fight against slavery in the war he says is coming. Sometimes he goes to Lawrence or Kansas City and other places to meet with other soldiers. He says these meetings are very important and I can never go in the meeting or know anything about it. My best friend, Patrick, and I go with my dad and the other men to cook their food on the way. Today we were going to Lawrence, Kansas to get supplies for our hotel and my dad had to go to a meeting in town. Again it was one we could not know about.

We had a long trip and arrived in the afternoon. Patrick and I had to go to the store while my pa and the other men had a meeting. As we got our supplies my pa came in the store and told us to stay in the hotel next door when we were done in the store, and that he would be back in the morning. As he walked off Patrick and I both agreed we weren't staying. "This must be really important" I said. "We're gonna have to stay out of sight."

"Let's go!" Said Patrick

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We quickly left the store without our groceries, and jumped into the bottom of the wagon, under a sheet so no one could see us. We rode there for a long time keeping very still and quiet. Not many of the men talked, but when they did it was about John Brown. I had never heard of this man before but my Pa always got excited when the men talked about him.

We were under the blanket for a long time before the wagon stopped. All the men got out, to meet with men in another wagon. I had never heard the voices of the men talking, and neither had Patrick. All we could hear were the words raid and slave men. Then they started to laugh at the man they called John Brown. Suddenly all the men grabbed guns and got back in the wagons. We had no idea what was going to happen. We were moving very quickly now, and it was almost dark.

When the wagon stopped again everyone was dead quiet. This made us very scared. We could hear faint whispers, a river or loud stream, and in the distance loud talking. Then the wagons jolted forward and the men in the wagons were shouting! Patrick and I didn't know what was going on or what we should do. We could hear guns being fired very close to us, and men yelling. A bullet hole was blown in the side of the wagon and Patrick yelled! He had been hit and was bleeding really bad. I had to help him but didn't know what to do! I had to take him to the water without anyone seeing us and without getting shot. I looked out the bullet hole to see if I could make it safely. The battle was on the other side of the water so I could make it. I quickly got out of the wagon and was covered in Patrick's blood. As the battle went on bodies dropped to the ground without ever moving again and cries of pain filled the air. I pulled

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Patrick quickly and carefully in water. He was a lot bigger than me and a lot heavier. I didn't know what to do so I tried to clean his wound with water, then a gun went off again and my world went black.