

CHAPTER 8

Aunt Jenny wasn't having nothing of it. That grandbaby had been born, and was going to know his family. Stubborn old fool, she thought. Jenny's bus was just about to pull into New York City. Aunt Jenny looked out the window and saw Millie waiting for her inside the terminal.

"Millie!" Jenny said as she debarked. "It's so good to see you."

"Jenny, You look wonderful." said Millie. "Did you bring me pictures of my grandbaby?"

"I shor' did. Where is that stubborn, ol' fool." said Jenny as she pulled out a handful of James' pictures for Millie to see."

"Well, I didn't tell him you were coming." said Millie. She grabbed the pictures and began looking closely at each one.

"Why not, Millie?"

"Well he is really stubborn, Jenny. You know that. And if I told him you were coming, he would have asked why. I would have told him why and then he probably would make sure he wasn't here to see you."

"Oh, he is gonna see me, all right." Said Aunt Jenny.

"Well let's get you home," said Millie. "And tell me all about my grandbaby and Cindy."

They arrived home late Saturday night. Robert Franklin was in the study working on his sermon for tomorrow morning when Jenny barged in.

"Hello, Robert." Said Aunt Jenny.

"Why, hello Jenny," said Robert. "Good to see you. How are you?" "I'm fine. Got your grandbaby down at my house."

"Are they all right?"

"Fine, except for missing their family."

"Does Cindy still hold to her beliefs?" "Yes"

"Then, she has no family here." said Robert turning to face Aunt Jenny, head on.

"I will not allow you to deny your own child and her baby, Robert. You cannot defy the Lord, forever."

"I will not listen to this in my home."

"You will listen. You have to listen. This is a great event. I witnessed it myself. Why do you deny it so?"

"She has you believing this tripe also? My Lord, Jenny you're a woman of God. How can you? No. I will not discuss this any further."

"You will."

"I won't," said Robert and pushed past Aunt Jenny and headed for the front door.

"You cannot hide from me, Robert. We will discuss this." screamed Aunt Jenny as she followed him outside.

"Jenny! No." Said Millie. She grabbed Jenny and pulled her back inside. "I told you he would try to hide. He won't discuss it. Now come on in, maybe we can figure out a way to solve this problem. Come on, I got coffee on. We'll talk."

"He will hear me out." Said Jenny as he was led back inside. "I didn't come all this way to be shut up."

"I know, Jenny. I know. Lord, you always were heard." Millie looked at Jenny with a twinkle in her eye.

Jenny laughed. "Yeah, guess I have always been heard."

They had discussed for hours and still hadn't come up with a way to have Robert talk to Jenny. They both got ready for Church the following morning and hoped some divine inspiration would show them the way to resolve this problem. They sat down in the front pew as services began. Jenny gave quite a few disapproving stares at Robert, hoping to make him fidget. After the chorus, Robert began to preach.

"Let no false idol come before me," Robert began and looked straight at Jenny. She looked, unflinching, back at Robert.

"These are the commandments of our Lord, God." Robert continued. "And we shall not be saved and be in the blessed Kingdom of our Lord if we forsake these commandments. These are not negotiable terms to be discussed or argued about. These are God's own terms. To accept less is to be damned to Hell."

Jenny could stand no more. Rising from her perch she said, "Do you condemn your own daughter to Hell? Your own grandchild?"

"Be still woman." Robert replied. "This is a house of God."

"Don't you shush me, Reverend. You chose this battleground, now don't try to stand behind the pulpit to avoid the fight."

"I don't stand behind this pulpit in fear. But I do demand you respect God's home."

The congregation was speechless at this outburst. You could hear nothing, but the verbal exchange between Jenny and Robert.

"God's home is exactly where we should discuss this," replied Jenny.

"I will not hear of this blasphemy in the house of the Lord," said Robert. "Where then, when will you discuss your child and her baby."

"Where ever and whenever she repents this horrible, horrible sin and accepts her act of depravity."

"To do that would be to deny the very God you are defending."

"I will not discuss this. Jenny, I must ask you to leave these services until you interrupt no further."

"No, you won't Robert. I won't stay in a house of God led by you. I'll not only leave these services I'm leaving your church." With that Aunt Jenny turned on her heel and headed out the door.