

EPILOGUE

It was Christmas again. Cindy couldn't believe it had been a year since James had died. She often sat in her kitchen now, hoping to hear James come in one last time, searching for somethin' to eat. The funeral had been as glorious as the wedding in its own way. Nobody would go into the James wedding church through the front door anymore and the pastor had locked it closed, preferring, as did his parishioners, to use the side doors for services.

Dexter Love had been tried and locked away as insane. No one in Cindy's family could wish a man dead. But, in its own curious way contributions to his church had increased, as though his parishioners could pay off his sins. John had devoted his life to helping James' Aunt Jenny foundation. Oddly enough, the boys had gained some of James' power and were continuing his work throughout the world.

"Disciples, again," Cindy teased when they came by.

They did come by and often. Mobutu and Judy got married a month later than planned, but they did get married. Russ, Sister Genny, and Brother Francis always checked in on her, seeing they were just next door holding down the foundations headquarters. Still this Christmas was sad.

"You have any milk in there, Cindy?" yelled Katy from the front room.

"Yes, chile." Said Cindy, recovering from her reverie.

Katy came through the door.

"Now Thomas would have got that for you, girl," said Cindy, eyeing the pregnant woman in front of her. "You know the doctor don't want you on your feet too much. This child could be born anytime."

"Oh. Momma. This baby will come when it's good and ready. It's just as stubborn as James was," said Katy

"Yoo Hoo? Anyone home?" Came a voice from the front room.

"Judy, Is that you?" yelled Cindy, getting up from the chair and heading for the door. Judy popped in the kitchen just before Cindy could walk through the door.

"Chile!" squealed Cindy. "Your pregnant!"

"You bet, Momma. But not as pregnant as that one over there." Judy smiled, teasing Katy.

Judy went to Katy and gave her a hug after getting released from her momma.

"You look about ready to pop," Judy told Katy.

"Anytime, Jude. Anytime."

"Is there anything to eat?" asked Mobutu, coming through the kitchen door.

"We told you not to bother Mom, Mobutu," said Tommy as he and Pierre came through behind him.

"We'll go see what Mizz Jamison's got and let Cindy rest."

"Mizz Jamison?" Huffed Cindy. "Why I can cook better, quicker and more plentiful than she

can any day of the week. Of course there's something to eat here. The very idea! Goin' to Mizz Jamison's."

"Well, it being Christmas and all, we thought you might need a rest," said Lu Chan, bringing in some groceries.

"You know good and well we always celebrate Christmas here. Did you get my nutmeg?" Asked Cindy, rifling through the bags.

"Yes," said Ahmed, bringing in another load.

"Well then, you boys go set up the living room. Dinner will be ready in an hour. Judy run over and get your Father, Russ, Genny and Francis. Tell them to help the boys and get washed up." Cindy warmed up the oven.

"And you." Cindy said, turning to Katy, who was smiling in the corner. "Thank you. Now get peeling them potatoes."

"Yessum," Katy said grinning as she waddled to the sink.

The house was alive again by supertime. Judy had even used the foundation house to make two birthday cakes. Maggie and John had been called by Thomas and made their way over for supper along with their children. There was laughing and singing by the time the potatoes hit the table and Cindy was seated next to Thomas when the blessing was about to be said by Brother Francis. Looking around the table at the happy faces, Cindy came to light on Katy's. Katy made a gesture and Cindy noticed that there were now two empty chairs at her table, one right next to Katy.

"You never know," said Katy, and Cindy nodded.

It was fun again. Thomas looked over at Cindy and said, "I know, I know. ...but, it's Christmas!" They both shared a laugh.

Suddenly, a beautiful light entered the room. Everyone stopped and stared because they all knew who their guest would be. Suddenly, Katy shouted, "Mom it's time!"

Cindy knew. James' baby would be born on Christmas, just because He so Loved the world.

THE END