

The Lord has Laid his Hands on Me

By

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EXT. BATTLE FIELDS OF NORTH CAROLINA -DAY 1863

The war is over and the military is still in the fields of North Carolina. Several officers and soldiers are looking to be re-assigned.

Captain Eccles Cuthbert (23) is among the officers waiting to meet with his superiors to learn of his new assignment from his superiors.

As several other men huddle around with paperwork in their hands they are being called one by one to learn of their new assignments.

FOLLOW SOLDIERS

I wonder what is in store for us
now since the war is over.

CAPTIAN CUTHBERT

I'm sure they will find something
for us.

FOLLOW SOLDIER

Where are you people from Captain
Cuthbert?

CAPTAIN CUTHBERT

My people came here from Ireland.

FOLLOW SOLDIER

Ireland! you are a long way from
home.

CAPTAIN CUTHBERT

Yeah I know, We are in America now.

FOLLOW SOLDIER

Land of opportunity!

CAPTAIN CUTHBERT

I hope I can find some line of work
I can excel in as a career.

About that time one other soldiers interview is winding up.
Captains interview is next.

INT. INTO THE TENT - DAY 1863

About that time Cuthbert is called into the tent. Eccles Cuthbert enters the tent and salutes his superiors.

He takes his place in front of the council and presents his paperwork and pronounces himself.

(CONTINUED)

He faces to counsel of several man waiting to address his paperwork. About the time one of the minute charge, allows echoes to enter.

MAJOR

Captian Eccles Cuthbert you may enter.

Eccles enters the tent and stands before his superiors.

MAJOR (cont'd)

Captain Cuthbert!

ECCLES CUTHBERT

Capt. Cuthbert reporting for duty sir!

MAJOR

We have a new assignment for you. We know you have research skills and we have a need for a correspondent to be located in the Richmond, Washington area. Your job will be to report what is going on in the Richmond area and submit findings to us as well as some other news outlets.

ECCLES CUTHBERT

Other outlets like where, Sir!

MAJOR

Well, I see here, The New York Herald, The dispatch in Richmond paper and some outlets down here in the south. I prepared your paperwork and assigned you some men. As soon as you can get saddled up you can be on your way.

ECCLES CUTHBERT

Thank you sir! right away!

MAJOR

Carry-on Captain!

Cuthbert leaves the tent with his paperwork, You can see on this face that he is excited and ready for his new assignment. You leaves the tent with a smile on his face.

EXT. MILITARY CAMP - DAY 1863

Several soldiers are at a horse stables and supply command getting orders filled and saddling their horses.

Two soldiers find their way over to Capt. Cuthbert and present themselves to him as two of them in that will be traveling with him on his journey to Richmond.

They recognize Cuthbert among The other officers and present themselves to him as Soldiers that will be traveling with him.

SOLDIER 1

Capt. Cuthbert My name is private Paul S. Jones and I'll be traveling with you on your assignment north. Here's my paperwork.

SOLDIER 2

And my name is privite Norman Simmons, And I've been assigned to your regiment as well!

CAPTAIN CUTHBERT

Welcome aboard men! I have my assignment and we can pick up our supplies. We'll move out at 0800 hrs. first thing in the morning. Get some rest this along trip.

SOLDIER 1 & 2

Yes Sir!

Cuthbert is ready to move out, headed to Richmond he eager to represent the Militaries interest. As the men leave his presence he gives them a look over as though he's sizing up their ability to travel.

FADE TO BLACK

EXT. OUTSIDE THE FRONT DOOR OF THE VANLEW MANSION- NIGHT 1863

Cuthbert and travel companions arrive in Richmond, Va. Its night time. You get the feel of Old Traditional Richmond, the Capital of the South. The streets made of cobblestones and the homes have a old colonial structure.

As the men pulled up to the mansion they get off of their horses in front of the Mansion.

(CONTINUED)

Servants welcome them, grab the horses and take them to the stable.

The men approach the house and is greeted by one of the servants.

THE SERVANTS

Welcome gentlemen, Miss Van Lew is expecting you.

The men walk toward the house taking off their gloves, wanting to be refreshed from a long horse ride.

The Butler opens the door and greets them in the name of the Vanlew Manison.

INT. THE INSIDE HALLWAY OF THE VANLEW ESTATE -NIGHT 1863

The men enter the home of Elizabeth Vanlew. Ms. Vanlew is the Matriarch of the Vanlew family.

The Vanlew's where will known for assisting in the underground railroadAs as slaves passed through Richmond Virginia.

The Mansion is Prestige and well taken care of. The men are greeted in the Foria. Cuthbert and men are welcomed in the hallway of the VanLew Mansion.

BUTLER

Good evening gentlemen. Ms. Van Lew is expecting you. Have a seat in the parlor and Miss. Van Lew will be right out.

The butler takes their wraps and guides them to the parlor.

GENTLEMEN 1

Thank you.

They hand over their wraps and take a seat. Another Servant comes in to hand them a customary glass of brandy. They all partake. Miss. Van Lew enters the room.

MISS. VAN LEW

"Oh it's so good to see y'all, how were your travels?"

GENTLEMEN 1

"Oh not to bad, the usual a little sore on the bottom, however nothing that won't heal in time.

(CONTINUED)

They all laugh!

Ms. Van Lew sits down. They begins to conversate.

MISS. VAN LEW

So Colonel Cuthbert are you working on anything in particular at The Herald

CAPT. CUTHBERT

Well Richmond is a very interesting place, being the capital of confederacy and all. People everywhere are interested in how this city deals with the war and the effects of post slavery, so I will be interviewing several city officials about their positions.

GENTLEMEN 1

Yes, Ms. Van Lew we all understood your father and mother's views about slavery and the south. Do you see things the way they did?

MISS. VAN LEW

Very much so! Even to the effect of freeing the slaves that Daddy had. All of them had stayed on as house servants. They are all earning a living and are free to go and come as they please.

CAPT. CUTHBERT

Interesting, So you are carrying on the family tradition I see!

MISS. VAN LEW

Yes, It's just the way Momma and Daddy have raised me, I was taught to respect God's creations.

CAPT. CUTHBERT

Mm mm, sounds like an article.

MISS. VAN LEW

Maybe so!

Ms. Van Lew prompts the men to stay the night.

MS. VAN LEW

Well men I trust that you will be staying the night and your stay

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

MS. VAN LEW (cont'd)
will be a pleasant one. We will
have breakfast in the garden and we
can talk some more. The help will
show you to your quarters and I
will see you tomorrow morning.

Ms. Van Lew excuses herself. A Butler comes in.

ONE OF THE BUTLERS
When you gentlemen are ready, I
will show you to your quarters.

GENTLEMEN 1
I think I'm going to turn in.

GENTLEMEN 2
Yes a good night sleep will do me
good.

The other men settle in for the night leaving Cuthbert to
settle in for his self.

EXT. BACKYARD VANLEW MANSION -DAY 1863

Cuthbert looks for a night cap. Capt. Eccles Cuthbert steps
outside to take a smoke from his pipe. He is drawn to the
window of the slave quarters of Elizabeth Draper (short
names Lizzie).

Capt. Cuthbert is aroused as he moves closer to Lizzie's
window. He peeks in and see's her take off her robe.

He knocks on the cabin door and is let in by Lizzie.

That night Capt. Cuthbert has his way with Lizzie. The view
is outside the window, we see the light in the room going
out and the view shift from the window to the stars in the
sky.

Their have a sexual encounter.

EXT. VANLEW BACKYARD BREACKFAST TABLE -MORNING 1863

Early morning in The Vanlew's patio on the side of the
estate. A table is prepared for guest.

Cuthbert and his men are welcomed to breakfast. everyone
finds his way to a seat.

(CONTINUED)

Ms. Vanlew enters the scene and takes her place at the table, the men all greet her for a delightful breakfast atmosphere.

MS. VAN LEW
So did you all rest well?

THE TWO OTHER MEN
Yes, we did right well!

About that time Lizzie brings some more food to the setting this presents an awkward moment.

MS. VAN LEW
How about you colonel?

Colonel Culbert looks up, it takes a second for him to realize that the question is directed at him.

CAPT. CUTHBERT
Oh I slept well!

Col Culbert changes the subject.

CAPT. CUTHBERT (cont'd)
So Ms. Van Lew I'm sure you are continuing your Daddy's work as an abolitionist. How are you looked on by your peers.

Before Ms. Van Lew can answer Lizzie walks away from the setting feeling a bit broken but gathering her strength. Ms. Van Lew answers Col. Cuthbert's question.

MS. VAN LEW
When I'm at the market I can feel tension from a lot of the people, but I pay that no mind. I just feel that I'm going to do what the good Lord has for me to to do!

Col. Culbert gathers himself and begins to engage in more conversation.

CAPT. CUTHBERT
Miss. Van Lew it seems like it could be a lonely world that you live in, living in Richmond the capital of the confederacy.

MS. VAN LEW
Yes! sometimes I long to be accepted and loved by others, but
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

MS. VAN LEW (cont'd)
my daddy raised me to follow your
heart and believe in doing right by
people and it will all work out in
the end.

The men continue to eat, however, they are listening. Ms.
Van Lew reaches for some more food.

MS. VAN LEW (cont'd)
I know some people refer to me as a
witch that lives on the hill,
however, I'm looking to carry on my
daddy's work and believing for the
day when all of God's children can
be free in this great country!

The other men are looking at the servants that come and go
to the table serving them. One of the other men confront Ms.
Van Lew about her servants.

ONE OF THE GENTLEMEN
Ms. Van Lew it appears that you
have your share of Negroes serving
you. Do you realize how that may
look?

MS. VAN LEW
All the coloreds you see around
here were freed by my father. They
get paid to work, some of them room
and board and they are free to come
and go. So they view what they do
around here as a job.

ONE OF THE GENTLEMEN
Oh I see!

All of the three men look around at each other as though
they don't know what to say!

EXT. BACK YARD WITH CLOTHS LINE - DAY-1863

Lizzi the servant is in the backyard doing chores. She
carries and drops down a load of cloths. She begins to hang
bed sheets on the line.

Ms Vanlew eyes her from the window that looks out to the
backyard.

(CONTINUED)

As Lizzi is working she touches her lower belly as if she has pain in her lower stomach. Ms Vanlew notices something a little different about Lizzie. She leaves her chair to enter the backyard to talk to Lizzie. She walks up on Lizzie.

MISS. VAN LEW
Lizzie how are you today?

LIZZIE
Oh doing fine! Ma'am.

MISS. VAN LEW
Lizzie I can't help but notice, if
I didn't know better I would say
that you are pregnant. Is that so?

Lizzie stops her chores for a second and confesses that she could be.

LIZZIE
I don't know but something is
different!

Lizzie hangs her head. She begins to tell Ms. Van Lew about what happened to her.

MISS. VAN LEW
Who have you been wallowing with?

LIZZIE
Well Ma'am one night a few months
back those men came to stay. After
they met with you one of the men, a
Col. Cuthbert came in my quarters
and had his way with me.

MISS. VAN LEW
Why didn't you say anything?

LIZZIE
I wanted to but I was afraid of the
noise and commotion it would cause,
so I just allowed it.

Ms. Van Lew Hugs Lizzie.

MISS. VAN LEW
No Lizzie, no one has the right to
come into your room and have their
way with you, you are free! You are
free!

She hugs Lizzie even more, Lizzie hug her back. They cry together. Ms. Van Lew is very disturbed that Lizzie was handled like that.

INT. LIZZI IS IN BED WITH LABOR PAINS- NIGHT- 1864

Nine months later Lizzie is about to give birth. She is in the bed with other servants helping her go through labor.

The other woman are chanting her on as she breaths hard trying to push out a baby.

The main woman in charge encourages her to give it one more big push.

MID WIFE
Push, Push.

LIZZIE
Noises.

MID WIFE
Push one more good time.

LIZZIE
Noises

A moment of silence in the room! A babies cry is heard.

MID WIFE
It's a girl!

Ms. Van Lew sits on the side of the bed to talk to Lizzie. The Mid wife hands Lizzie her baby. The baby is calm, however she looks nothing like Lizzie. Lizzie accepts her with open arms.

MISS. VAN LEW
Oh Lizzie she is beautiful!

Ms. Van Lew wipes Lizzie's forehead as she is sets on the side of the bed.

LIZZIE
Yes ma'am she sure is!

MS. VAN LEW
What are you going to name her?

LIZZIE
My mother was named Margaret.

She pauses to think!

(CONTINUED)

LIZZIE (cont'd)
I'll name her Magdalene from the
bible. Maggie for short.

The camera is on the baby.

There is a pause between them. Miss. Van Lew reassures
Lizzie of her support. She grabs Lizzie's hand.

MISS. VAN LEW
Lizzie I'm so sorry that this
happened to you.

Lizzie looks down in despair.

MISS. VAN LEW (cont'd)
You and Maggie can continue to stay
on and live your lives here as long
as you want. I can see that with a
fine education Maggie can grow up
to be a fine young lady and make a
contribution to society.

Ms. Van Lew lays her hand on the babies head. Ms Van Lew
encourages Lizzie to rest.

MISS. VAN LEW (cont'd)
Now Lizzie you get some rest and I
will check on you later!

LIZZIE
Okay!

Miss. Van Lew leaves the room and Lizzie and Maggie get some
rest.

FADE TO BLACK

INT. KITCHEN AT THE MANSION -DAY -1865

UP FROM BLACK

The mansion has a nice kitchen were servants prepare meals
and keep the house happy and fed.

Other are going and coming with thing to do, Lizzie is up
and running. She is a hard worker eager to do her part.

Lizzi's job is to assist the cook. Lizzie is cutting
vegetables in the sink.

(CONTINUED)

William Mitchell, a butler, he comes into the kitchen. William wants to talk to Lizzie but finds it hard to strike up a conversation.

WILLIAM MITCHELL
Morning Lizzie!

Lizzie turns around. She wipes her apron.

LIZZIE
Morning William.

WILLIAM MITCHELL
You look like you are feeling good today, chopping them vegetables and all.

LIZZIE
Oh yeah!

WILLIAM MITCHELL
I have a special way that I chop them vegetables.

Lizzie has a knife in hand and a smile on her face. She feels like William is trying to pull her leg.

WILLIAM MITCHELL (cont'd)
I like to show you someday!

LIZZIE
Well Mr. Mitchell, Since you know so much here's the knife show me what you know.

William grabs the knife and begins to chop, however you can see that he doesn't know what he is doing. Lizzie let's him chop for a minute or two then she stops him.

LIZZIE
Okay William I see how much you know about preparing food you just might need to stick to what you do and leave the cooking to others!

She grabs the knife as William laughs knowing that he had no knowledge of cutting vegetable. He just wanted to share a good time with Lizzie.

LIZZIE (cont'd)
Give me that knife before Ms. Van Lew comes in here and do away with all of us.

(CONTINUED)

She try's to paddle his bottom with the side of the butcher knife. He gets out of the way smiling all the time, he leaves the room. Lizzie returns back to the table to begins cutting again. William comes back into the room with another tray, he sits it down he wants to talk to Lizzie. The tone is a lot serious now. William sits down another tray and begins to take things off of it.

WILLIAM MITCHELL

Lizzie, little Maggie is getting alone fine. She is running around here like she belongs.

LIZZIE

Yes, you are right! I thank the Lord everyday that things are working out.

WILLIAM MITCHELL

You know Lizzie, Maggie reminds me a lot of myself.

LIZZIE

Oh yeah how is that?

WILLIAM MITCHELL

Well a white man came into my mother's room and I was born. It's a different world when you have to look out of your eyes and try to understand two worlds coming together. On one hand you are colored but you know you have another side of you that is white. The whites don't want you and the colored think that you think you are better.

Lizzie stops to think about what William is sharing.

LIZZIE

I never thought about that!

WILLIAM MITCHELL

Yeah but at the end of the day you still have to live out your world. Lizzie I admire you, how you are raising Maggie. I'm sure she is going to grow up someday and be something special.

William grabs Lizzie's hand, looks into her eyes and says

(CONTINUED)

WILLIAM MITCHELL (cont'd)
and I hope I'm around to see it!

LIZZIE
Well thank you William!

There is a moment of silence between them. Lizzie takes her hand back. She wipes her apron and they get back to work. As William leaves the room, Lizzie looks out as if she and Maggie might have a future together with William. A pleasing moment.

MONTAGE OF SHOTS THAT SHOWS TOGETHERNESS -DAY- 1865

These scenes show the couple getting close

Int. A scene of laughter in the kitchen.

Ext. A scene of William helping Lizzie bring a load of cloths in from the cloth line.

Ext. A scene of William and Lizzie having a family picnic.

Ext. A scene of William and Maggie playing a childhood game.

These scenes clearly show that William and Lizzie are engaged in a romantic relationship.

Fade to back.

EXT. AT THE PARK -DAY- 1865

UP FRON BLACK

The scene is at the local park. William, Lizzi and Maggie are having a picnic. William is pushing Maggie in a swing with Lizzie in the backdrop sitting on a picnic blanket.

About that time William and Maggie finishes up they enters the scene where Lizzie is.

William and Maggie are laughing, out of breath and having fun. they sit down at on the blanket.

WILLIAM MITCHELL
Wow!, Pushing a swing is hard work.

LIZZIE
Don't feel like you have to do for
Maggie.

(CONTINUED)

WILLIAM MITCHELL

No no believe me, I enjoy doing for her. It makes me glad to see her smile. As a matter of fact I wish I could do more!

LIZZIE

How do you mean!

WILLIAM MITCHELL

Well Lizzie I've been thinking maybe you and I can get married and I can take care of both of you forever!

LIZZIE

What?

William goes into his pocket and pulls out a ring that he has been saving for. Lizzie's eyes light up!

WILLIAM MITCHELL

Lizzie, I want you to be my wife, so I can take care of you, both of you!

He puts the ring on Lizzie's finger!

LIZZIE

Oh William nobody has ever been this good to me before.

There is a pause.

WILLIAM MITCHELL

So what will it be?

LIZZIE

Yes! Yes!

They hug and embrace and have a moment of satisfaction. They really feel that they are meant to be together! About that time Maggie joins them on the blanket. Lizzie holds Maggie in her arms as William tells her the good news.

WILLIAM MITCHELL

Maggie, your mother and I are planning to get married. What do you think about that?

LIL MAGGIE

I think it's good and I hope we can all be happy together.

They hug again and have a moment of happiness.

EXT. THE MARKET PLACE- DAY- 1872

The market place is where everyone goes to get fresh fruits and vegetables. People in the neighborhood come from miles around to shop. It can be a very crowded place on certain days.

Eccles Cuthbert has settled in the area and visits the market on a regular bases for his groceries. Ms Vanlew is a regular at the market as well and is very aware of her surrounds there.

Ms Vanlew has desided to take Maggie (8) to the market with her to be her helper. She is a pretty little girl and very attractive, pleasing to look at from a white perspective. You can see that she is a mix between the races. Lizzie accompanied her as well, she is on the other side of the market for the moment.

Ms Vanlew recognizes Cutherbert and make sure they come into each others presence.

ECCLES CUTHBERT

Ms. Vanlew! How are you?

ELIZABETH VANLEW

Col. Eccles Cuthbert! I'm doing fine. How are you?

ECCLES CUTHBERT

Doing well! I see you are here with one of your workers. I saw one of your workers over that side of the market.

ELIZABETH VANLEW

Who Lizzie? She is with me today with her daugther.

ECCLES CUTHBERT

I see.

ELIZABETH VANLEW

Did you see her little girl?

ECCLES CUTHBERT

Yes I did!

(CONTINUED)

ELIZABETH VANLEW
Lizzie told me that you had an
encounter with her the first time
you came to visit.

ECCLES CUTHBERT
I see.

He stops for a second to meditate.

ELIZABETH VANLEW
Her name is Maggie. She is a lovely
child very beautiful full of energy
and enthusiasm.

ECCLES CUTHBERT
I didnt now!

ELIZABETH VANLEW
Do what you can to help her along.
She looks more like us than them!

As Ms. Vanlew walks off, Cuthbert sees Lizzie and Maggie
from a short distance and is taken back by the Lil girls
beauty.

FADE TO BLACK

INT. VAN LEW MANSION PARLOR -DAY- 1874

UP FROM BLACK

William Mitchell wants to ask Mrs. Vanlew for her blessing.
He and Lizzie are in the hallway of the Mansion preparing to
enter in to the parlor to have a conversation with Mrs.
Vanlew. She setting in her easy chair.

William and Lizzie are in the hallway getting prepared to
talk to Ms Vanlew about getting married. They are very
careful about doing things the right way, being pleasing to
the Vanlew family.

Lizzie is making sure that William is presentable. Maybe a
little to worried. She tries to make sure that everything is
in place with his apparence.

LIZZIE
Hold on for a minute you have
something on your collar!

(CONTINUED)

WILLIAM MITCHELL
I know I got it.

William leaves the hallway and enters the room where Ms. Van Lew has just finished breakfast. William approaches Mrs. Van Lew respectively. She looks up and sees William coming.

MS. VAN LEW
How are you this morning William?

WILLIAM MITCHELL
Fine Mrs. Van Lew how has your morning coming?

MS. VAN LEW
Oh just fine what's on your mind?

WILLIAM MITCHELL
It's about me and Lizzie.

MS. VAN LEW
okay!

WILLIAM MITCHELL
Well, we been getting mighty close lately and I like to ask if it's alright for us to get married.

MS. VAN LEW
You know I've been watching you all the last few months and you seem to be getting mighty close.

WILLIAM MITCHELL
Yes ma'am and I think with your blessings we can make a go for it!

Mrs. Van Lew sets up in her chair to hear more!

MS. VAN LEW
So William tell me something are you willing to take on Lizzie and her child Maggie and treat that child like she is your very own.

WILLIAM MITCHELL
Yes ma'am, you know I came into this world with the same situation Maggie did, one parent being of a different race. So I can help her make your way around different people.

(CONTINUED)

MS. VAN LEW

William sounds like you thought
this thing through and if you
understand what you are getting
into, then I say by all means do
what you feel in your heart. You
have my blessings.

By that time Lizzie is standing at the door listening, She
hears Mrs. Van Lew give her blessings. She appears Mrs. Van
Lew sees her and invites her in.

MS. VAN LEW (cont'd)

Come in Lizzie is it true you and
William want to get married?

LIZZIE

Yes ma'am he says that he will take
us on with your blessing and I said
yes.

MS. VAN LEW

Then so shall it be, a wedding is
in order.

Mrs. Van Lew stands up and congratulates the both of them
putting their hands together. She blesses them.

FADE TO BLACK

INT. IN THE KITCHEN AT THE VAN LEW MANSION- EVENING

UP FROM BLACK

It is customary for the servants to have celebrations in the
kitchen area, a place where a small number of people can
attend without causing a big expense.

A small number of their friends and family gather in the
kitchen so that they can say their vows to one another.

A Pastor is there reading a verse or two from the Good book.
As he winds down he pronounces them man and wife.

About that time someone hands the Rev. a broom from the
pantry. He drops it to the floor and the couple jumps
across. Everyone celebrates.

WILLIAM MITCHELL

Are you happy?

The crowd is clapping singing!

(CONTINUED)

LIZZIE

You have made me very happy I
didn't even know that people could
be this happy on God's green earth.

They continue clapping, they kiss, and they truly enjoy the festivities well into the night.

INT. VANLEW MANSION THE COUPLES LIVING QUARTERS -NIGHT

The servants have their own quarters located down the back end of the property. There is only room for a couple of beds. It's a small area and the family wants to expand.

This means that they will have to give up there positions at the Mansion in order to strike out on their own.

William finshes up some chores at the big house and enters the small cabin in which they live.

As William gets ready for bed he talks to Lizzie about the possibilties of finding new work outside of the Mansion. Lizzie and Maggie are under covers, Maggie has already fallen asleep however Lizzie is in listening mode.

This also means giving up their postions at the Mansion as cook and butler. A scary proposition!

WILLIAM MITCHELL

You know Lizzie I hear of a hotel
downtown called the St. Charles
Hotel, I wonder if I can get a job
there? It will mean having our own
money.

LIZZIE

You can't work there and we're here
too! We would have to leave here
for you to do that.

WILLIAM MITCHELL

That's just what I mean. If I got a
job there then we can strike out on
our own and have our own place!

LIZZIE

I don't know William, Ms. Van Lew
has been very good to us all these
years. Why would you want to leave?

(CONTINUED)

WILLIAM MITCHELL

That's just it Lizzie there's a great big world out there and I think we should venture out and let the Lord bless us, just like he blesses others.

LIZZIE

Are you prepared to tell Mrs. Van Lew?

WILLIAM MITCHELL

Yes!

LIZZIE

Then I guess I'll just have to pack our stuff, we are with you!

As William gets in the bed with Lizzie he caresses her with a hug and a kiss to the forehead, they rest for the night!

FADE TO BLACK

EXT. DOWNTOWN RICHMOND, ST CHARLES HOTEL- DAY- 1870.

UP FROM BLACK

The St. Charles Hotel is located in downtown Richmond, Va. You hear the sounds of the city, people coming and going.

A large entrance leads to the front of the building where a doorman meets and greets customers.

Williams isn't scared to ask!. William Mitchell approaches the St. Charles Hotel, locates the doorway and enters looking for someone in charge.

The sounds of people in a restaurant fill the air. He approaches the door man.

DOORMAN

Yes sir can we help you?

WILLIAM MITCHELL

I am applying for work!

DOORMAN

What is your specialty?

WILLIAM MITCHELL

I can wait tables, take orders and wash dishes, I do that for Mrs. Van

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

WILLIAM MITCHELL (cont'd)

Lew at the Van Lew estate but now me and my wife and children are starting out on our own and I need a job.

DOORMAN

See that gentleman over there standing in the kitchen doorway tell him I sent you over for a waiters job!

William, with his hat in hand, makes his way over to the man standing in the kitchen doorway.

WILLIAM MITCHELL

Sir the doorman told me to come over and talk with you about the latest job. I can wait tables take orders and do anything you will need me to do.

CHEF

Have you ever worked as a waiter before?

WILLIAM MITCHELL

Yes I'm a butler at the Van Lew estate.

CHEF

We just got an opening, when can you start?

WILLIAM MITCHELL

Right away sir! I just need to go home and get some affairs in order. What does the job pay?

CHEF

You will earn wages and any tips that you get is yours. So you keep the people happy and they will make you happy. Can you do that?

WILLIAM MITCHELL

Yes, I think so, you have a deal!

They shake hands as William leaves, he sees other waiters working and getting tips. He is very enthusiastic about the opportunity.

INT. VAN LEW MANSIONS KITCHEN. DAY- 1870

In the kitchen of the Mansion where Lizzie sends most of her time working, she makes sure everything is neat and clean.

About that time she is interrupted by William's good news about getting a job as a waiter at the St. Charles Hotel.

William bursts into the room and startles Lizzie with good news. He begins to tell her about his success in finding a new opportunity.

WILLIAM MITCHELL

Lizzie Lizzie, I got the job! I got the job!

LIZZIE

Why are you making all that fuss?
Calm down!

WILLIAM MITCHELL

No no I got the waiters job at the hotel. You know what that means?

LIZZIE

What? That we can move?

WILLIAM MITCHELL

Yes we can get our own place now and start out on our own!

LIZZIE

I don't know what to do next!

WILLIAM MITCHELL

Gather your stuff and the children and I will ask Mrs. Van Lew if she can help us move.

LIZZIE

What do you mean, help us move?

WILLIAM MITCHELL

We'll have to travel from here to the downtown area and try to find living quarters.

LIZZIE

What are you asking her for?

WILLIAM MITCHELL

Maybe she can let us use a horse and buggy. I can pay her with a

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

WILLIAM MITCHELL (cont'd)
first weeks earnings. I can bring
the horse and buggy right back!

LIZZIE
Oh!

WILLIAM MITCHELL
You begin to get everything
together and I'll go and talk to
Ms. Van Lew.

Lizzie jumps into Williams arms, she is so excited about the blessing that is laided before her and Lil Maggie.

INT. VAN LEW MANSIONS PARLOR- EVENING

Ms Vanlew is getting up in age, she is in the parlor seating in her favorite chair after having supper.

William knocks on the door to the parlor, he wants to know if he can enter Mrs. Van Lew's presence.

William wants to do things right. He is determine to speak to Ms Van Lew humility and appreciation in his heart.

WILLIAM MITCHELL
Mrs. Van Lew!

MS. VAN LEW
Yes is that you William?

WILLIAM MITCHELL
Yes ma'am I'd just like to know if
I can take up a little piece of
your time this evening?

MS. VAN LEW
Yes William what is on your mind?

WILLIAM MITCHELL
Well Mrs. Van Lew, Lizzie and I
have been thinking for a while
about starting out on our own! I
figured that if I could find a job
out here then that would be a sign
that the good Lord is pointing us
in that direction.

MS. VAN LEW
So have you found such a job?

(CONTINUED)

WILLIAM MITCHELL

I went down to the St. Charles
Hotel and got a job as a waiter and
the man told me I could start right
away!

Mrs. Van Lew sets up to take notice at what William is
telling her.

MS. VAN LEW

Oh I see, so you know that means
that you'll be leaving us.

WILLIAM MITCHELL

Yes ma'am of course with your
blessing!

MS. VAN LEW

Now you know William once I fulfill
all positions here that means I
won't have any more space for you
to come back you understand that
right?

WILLIAM MITCHELL

Yes ma'am we understand that!

MS. VAN LEW

Okay as long as you understand!

WILLIAM MITCHELL

I just have one thing that I want
to ask of you!

MS. VAN LEW

And what's that?

WILLIAM MITCHELL

I want to know if I can use a horse
and buggy for transportation so
that I can move my family and
things.

MS. VAN LEW

Of course William I'll do one more
better, I'll have one of my drivers
take you, Lizzie and the children
to your new place!

WILLIAM MITCHELL

Ms. Van Lew I can pay you with
money from my first pay.

(CONTINUED)

MS. VAN LEW

No, I wouldn't hear of it. You have been good to me and my family here, thats the least I can do to help you.

You have my blessing!

William stands over Mrs. Van Lew and he grabs her hand in appreciation.

William wants to cry! Ms Vanlew he takes a moment to reflect. There grib tighten.

(Williams chin quivers)

He knows the cat is out of the bag. They must move.

FADE TO BLACK

EXT. OUTSIDE THE VAN LEW MANSION. DAY

UP FROM BLACK

A house an buggy is parked on the street in front of the Mansion. William has just loaded the last of their bags on the wagon. He straps the bags down.

Lizzie and the Maggie are in the carriage with a driver. The driver is prepared to take them to the downtown area.

William wants the best for his family and takes charge of moving them. William addresses Ms. Van Lew and thanks her for everything.

She walks out slowly to the sidewalk in front of the house.

MS. VAN LEW

Okay William so I guess this is it!

WILLIAM MITCHELL

Ms. Van Lew me and Lizzie and the children are so appreciative for all your support throughout the years and we want to take this time to thank you from the bottom of our hearts! You are truly a good person and may the good Lord continue to smile on you now can I get a hug!

MS. VAN LEW

You most certainly can!

(CONTINUED)

William and Mrs. Van Lew hug each other she also wishes Lizzie and the children well!

MS. VAN LEW (cont'd)
Now Lizzie you take good care of
William, Maggie and little Johnny,
you hear!

LIZZIE
Yes ma'am you don't have to worry
I'll take good care of them.

MS. VAN LEW
I know you'll do fine. Goodbye now
y'all come back and visit sometime!

WILLIAM MITCHELL
We will Ms. Van Lew, we will!

The horse and buggy with the driver and the passengers pull off from in front of the estate after they say goodbye. They disappear down the street.

EXT. THE STREETS OF RICHMOND -DAY

The house and carriage and it's occupants approach what is called the Navy Hill area located in what is today called downtown Richmond, Va.

The streets are made of cobblestone and you hear the sounds of wagon wheels, horse huffs tapping against the stones in rhythm.

William Mitchell and his small family are relocating and getting a fresh start on their life together.

LIZZIE
Where are we moving to William?

WILLIAM MITCHELL
I found a small place at College
Ally

LIZZIE
College alley where is that?

WILLIAM MITCHELL
It's right in the center of
everything. Is not too far from the
hotel, right where a lot of
movement is going on. I think you
would like it.

(CONTINUED)

LIZZIE

I don't know about living in no alley.

WILLIAM MITCHELL

Not in the alley. College alley is this street name.

Lizzie looks at William with a smile and trust in his decisions. This scene finishes with Lizzie smiling as the carriage travel on.

INT. ST. CHARLES HOTEL. MORNING

William's first day on his new job. Restaurants sounds feel the air. Glass tingles, plates clatter and people are having conversations among themselves.

William turns the corner with menus in hand and a note pad in the other.

He looks the customers in the face and is eager to serve them. William enjoying what he is doing, keep in mind he was a waiter at the Vanlew Mansion all his life.

WILLIAM MITCHELL

So what will it be?

CUSTOMER 01

My good man we will have the special. The fish how is it?

WILLIAM MITCHELL

I highly recommend the fish it is great and you will like it, I say have the fish!

CUSTOMER 01

Okay my good man fish it is!

WILLIAM MITCHELL

Coming right up!

Montage-You see William helping people! You also see him getting tips putting them in his pocket. You can tell that he is doing something he is good at!

William is so good at what he does, he doesn't notice that his success is bothering others, two busboys in particular.

INT. THE ST. CHARLES HOTEL- AFTERNOON

William returns to a table he is expecting a good tip from a customer who told him he was going to leave him something.

One of the busboys is cleaning off the table. William arrives and ask about a tip.

The busboy is cleaning up the table and has rolled up William's tip in the place mattes and is purposely trying to discard it as trash.

William confronts the young white boy about his tip left.

WILLIAM MITCHELL

Hey was there a tip for me at this table?

BUSBOY 01

I didn't see no tip!

WILLIAM MITCHELL

That's funny because normally Cunningham's always leave me something! You sure you didn't see anything?

BUSBOY 01

I say I didn't see no tip! Why are you still asking me! If I didn't think different I think you was accusing me of stealing.

The busboy is clearly angry with William even though he did steal the tip! William thinks it's very odd him not having a tip from that customer.

BUSBOY 01 (cont'd)

If I didn't think so I would think that you are accusing me of stealing. Is that what you're trying to do is get me fired.

You can see William stop and think for a minute.

WILLIAM MITCHELL

No-no I was just asking.

William walks away as if he knew it is not worth making a big fuss over. As William continues to work he can feel the tension between him and busboy 01 he can see busboy 01 talking to busboy 02 about the accusation.

(CONTINUED)

BUSBOY 01

Did you see that Nigger accuse me
of stealing his money!

BUSBOY 02

Why would he do that?

BUSBOY 01

Because maybe I did! Have you been
watching that guy he is pulling in
the money. They been given him big
tips, I bet you he goes home each
night loaded.

Busboy 1 show's some money to busboy 2 that he stole from
William's table. They plot to rob William in the very near
future. William lets the incident go, however he is very
disturbed by the situation. He can't wait to share the
situation with Lizzi.

INT. THE MITCHELL'S BEDROOM.- NIGHT

The bedroom at their new apartment is a small quarters, a
little bigger then at the Vanlew Masion.

William always discuss his day with Lizzi. She has already
prepare Maggie for bed and is now able to give him her
undivided attention.

William stops for a second to tell Lizzie about the
situation at work.

LIZZIE

How was work today?

WILLIAM MITCHELL

It was going fine until some money
from one of my tips came up
missing.

LIZZIE

What do you mean missing?

WILLIAM MITCHELL

Well normally before a busboy
cleans off the table he waits until
the waiter comes by and gets the
tip!

LIZZIE

Okay!

(CONTINUED)

WILLIAM MITCHELL

Well this particular time one of the busboys had cleared the table off before I got my tip!

LIZZIE

Did you say anything to your supervisor?

WILLIAM MITCHELL

No I didn't say anything!

LIZZIE

Why?

WILLIAM MITCHELL

Well because I don't want to start any trouble. I have to keep in mind who I am, and where I'm working. I thought it best to let it go! There are some guys who don't look very friendly, who are working down there.

LIZZIE

I understand!

William and Lizzie are sitting on the bed counting his money! William is still mad about that thing. It take him a minute to calm himself down.

FADE TO BLACK

INT. THE ST. CHARLES HOTEL. DAY

UP FROM BLACK

Back at the resturant a few weeks later, the same atomshere of people gathering to have lunch and dinner. William is waiting on tables as usual.

The two busboys have been watching William all day. They didn't see that he has a pocket full of tips. William is waiting on customers.

William attends to his customers.

WILLIAM MITCHELL

How can we help you today?

(CONTINUED)

CUSTOMER 02
Well we will have our usual

WILLIAM MITCHELL
I'll get that right up!

ABOUT THAT TIME ANOTHER CUSTOMER CALLS
OUT!

CUSTOMER 03
Waiter waiter!

WILLIAM MITCHELL
I'll be right there!

The two busboys have William in their view they are watching him collect tips throughout the evening. They plan to rob him after work. It is at the close of the day, William has wrapped up and is ready to leave. William has taken off his apron ready to leave the restaurant to go home! He has a conversation with the chef.

WILLIAM MITCHELL (cont'd)
So I think that's about it for the
day! I'm ready to go home!

CHEF
I think its about time for me too!

WILLIAM MITCHELL
Are you working tomorrow?

CHEF
Yeah I'm working tomorrow!

WILLIAM MITCHELL
I am too I'll see you then!

William hangs up his apron in the restaurant to walk home in the night air. He hasn't gotten far before he is jumped and robbed in the alley way! William puts up a good fight but the two men over power him. The men try to figure out what to do with him!

BUSBOY 02
Is he still alive?

BUSBOY 01
I don't know!

BUSBOY 02
What are we going to do now?

(CONTINUED)

BUSBOY 01

Load him into the cart, I have an idea.

They ride down to the river's edge. After the men rob William they knock him out cold, they wonder what to do with him. They load his lifeless body into a horse cart wagon. They dumped his body into the James River. When they dumped his body, you hear a big splash.

EXT. THE COLLEGE ALLEY HOME. -DAY

Lizzie looks out of one of her windows looking for William to come home.

He didn't come home last night and she is worried sick. She leave from her door to speak to a neighbor about keeping the kids.

The kids are in the doorway ready to go to the neighbors.

LIZZIE

Can you keep my children for me? I have to go check on William, he didnt come home last night.

NEIGHBOR

Where do you think he is?

LIZZIE

For him not to come home is very strange and I think I need to start looking for him at his job!

NEIGHBOR

Yeah child, you need to go right down there now and see whats going on, the children will be fine with me, now you go ahead.

Lizzie takes off to walk down to the St. Charles Hotel. Lizzie arrives and inquires about her husband. She talks to the doorman.

DOORMAN

Yes can I help you?

LIZZIE

Yes my name is Elizabeth Mitchell, my husband William works down here.

(CONTINUED)

DOORMAN

So you are Williams wife we have been concerned because we haven't seen him in a few days.

LIZZIE

We haven't seen him either. When was the last time you saw him?

DOORMAN

He closed out Monday night and that's the last time I saw him. You should go to the police station and file a missing person report.

LIZZIE

I think I will do just that.

Lizzie leaves for the hotel to go to the police station.

INT. AT POLICE STATION. DAY

Lizzi climbs the steps that lead to the entrance of the police office. She enters the front doors. The police station is busy with officers going back and forth with cases that they are working on.

Lizzie is trying to figure out how to navigate the system and who she needs to talk to about her problem, her missing husband.

Lizzi is a nervous wreck, she is looking for someone to talk to. A officer steps in her path and greet her.

POLICEMAN 01

Mam can I help you?

LIZZIE

I like to file a missing personsreport. I am looking for my husband William Mitchell.

POLICEMAN 01

How long has he been missing?

LIZZIE

Since Monday it's now Friday!

POLICEMAN 01

I see.

The policeman is shuffling through a few papers.

(CONTINUED)

POLICEMAN 01 (cont'd)
We have a person of interest. We
are looking for anyone who may know
this individual. Step over here
Ma'am into this room.

The officer and Lizzie go into in a office room they sit
down in a room and he showed her a pictures of a deceased
man reported from the night before.

POLICEMAN 01 (cont'd)
Do you know this individual?

Lizzie looks at the picture. When Lizzie sees the picture
she let's out a cry!

LIZZIE
It's him, it's him, Oh no, it's
him!

Lizzie cries inconsolably officers tell her how sorry they
are for her lost.

FADE TO BLACK