



My older brother James stirred. I realized that I should have been up an hour ago. I crawled out of my sleeping bag, which seemed to mock me saying, "up so early?"

The coals sat in the fire waiting for me to light them. As I brushed the ash away, I thought of the dark, damp ship I had called The Mayflower. But that had been some time ago. After lighting the fire, I dressed in my warmest wool dress and apron. I lost my bonnet so now I had nothing on my head.

My brown hair swirled around the oatmeal I was preparing for Mama, Papa and my older brother James. He was 12 and always telling me what to do.

"Emmie!" James called to me. "Is my oatmeal ready?"

"Yes," I answer with a sigh. It was so unfair that James got to go to school first thing after breakfast and I had to finish my chores before I could go.

After eating I quickly put out the fire and ran to the barn to feed the animals. My favorite animal was a chicken named Beth. We are not supposed to name the animals, but I couldn't help myself.

At last it was time for school. I dashed to the one room schoolhouse. As I ran, reeds brushed against my ankles and sticks snagged my apron. I scurried inside just in time to see Miss Manderly walk in. Miss Manderly is the head mistress and very strict. Every Tuesday she gives us a test. Today was Tuesday.

"Children," she said.

"Miss Manderly," the class responded.

"Please begin by memorizing this poem. You have five minutes until I test you," said Miss Manderly. "Begin."

I read the short poem. "Thirty days hath September, April, June, and November. February has twenty and eight alone. All the rest have thirty and one."

Easy, I think to myself. I repeat it in my head until the five minutes are up. Only two of us get it right.

Next Miss Manderly tells us to get our quill pens from the bin. I took my pen and a piece of parchment to copy poems. Then I read my hornbook until lessons were done.

As I rushed home, cool wind whipped my long brow hair and the sun flashed before my eyes as I entered my log house. Dinner was ready on the table. I could see Papa had dropped off meat and gone back out to hunt more. I sat as James told about his amazing hunting skills and Mama talked about how James was growing up to be just like Papa.

I ate my meat, bread, and berries and then grabbed my lavender kite. James and I always flew our kites after dinner. It was a windy day, perfect for kite flying.

Just as I opened the squeaky door, the kite soared into the air. I watched my kite making figure eights all around the sun.

Suddenly, James' large yellow kite knocked my lovely kite out of the air ending my daydream.

"Hey," I yelled. I stomped on James' foot until my own foot ached. He rushed inside when I finally stopped attacking him. I realized he was telling on me. Mama came out and said I would be fetching the water today. I sighed, every good day has it's down sides, I guess, I thought.

My shoulders started to ache, but I made it back carrying the heavy pails of water. Lost in thought, I bumped right into James as I came in. He rolled his eyes. I had always envied his eyes. They were a bright summer sky blue, unlike my eyes, which were a dull brown like dirt. He smirked and looked as proud as the King of England. I wondered why. Then, I spotted a deer on the wooden table. James must have gotten his first deer.

A gust of wind swirled in through the open door soaring in causing my hair to brush gently across my face. It was Papa home from hunting. He kissed me hello. Then he looked over at James and the small deer. "Why, James," said Papa, "you got this deer? This will last half the winter for certain!"

Papa sounded so proud. I wished that I could hunt. I almost felt ashamed that girls could not hunt. But I know that girls do many useful things as well.

Papa picked me up. His arms were as cold as ice. But it did not matter. We were family, and we would always be family from the moment we drifted off to sleep to the first frost we saw the next morning.