

HOME



Samuel Fox was bone tired, hot, thirsty and just plain wanted to be home. He wasn't far from Buffalo where he could rest and get a drink and a bath before he finished his journey home. He had dreamed of his bath since last week. Tracking was dirty, hot and sweaty work most of the time. He didn't want to go home dirty. He had other things he wanted to do as soon as he arrived.

Samuel had been away from home for over a month tracking some very bad men, but they had caught their men. He had good money in his pocket and would stop at the bank on his way home.

His wife, Suzy, would be happy to see him, even if he had left on bad terms. He couldn't wait to hold his "little bit" in his arms again. He had been dreaming about that practically since he had left. They'd had another argument about children. Suzy just couldn't seem to carry a baby to term, and it broke his heart to see her so sad every time she lost another one. Each time, it would take more of her spirit along with the child until she was a quiet shell of the woman he loved and married. Finally, he couldn't stand it anymore and had asked the medicine woman to give him something to keep her from conceiving after they had sex. Susy hated taking it, but

she grudgingly obeyed him. This time, they'd had a terrible argument about it right before he had to leave.

As he traveled, he thought about his beautiful little wife. She was so full of fire and spirit when he'd met her at a barn dance in Buffalo. He was in his mid-twenties and she was eighteen. All the men followed her around like bees to honey and he understood why. She had the prettiest blue eyes that twinkled when she laughed and light brown hair that fell below her knees when she let it down. He never thought he had a chance with her because he had Indian blood, but by some miracle, she had fallen in love with him and he had fallen hard for her. She fought with her parents, who normally denied her nothing. She finally convinced them to let him court her for a few months to see how it went. He knew they would never approve but he figured all he needed was the approval of his little Suzy. Her parents finally gave in, and they were married the next day in the church with only her parents and brother there. He knew it hurt her, but she was strong. She shrugged it off and they started their life together.

He had already accumulated plenty of money and was well sought after by the different sheriffs, the Pinkertons, and the U.S. government. He never lacked for work and his wealth grew. His father had bought the five hundred acres some ways away from town so they could have some privacy, and his father helped him start a horse ranch with the finest breeding stock in the area. He loved living near his parents and Suzy's brother. They all helped one another and, until Brenden was old enough, they all worked that land along with their own. They used most of Brenden's land for grazing his father's steers.

He built Suzy a fine log cabin. He made sure it was big so he could fill it with children. He put a large bell on the front porch near the door and the sign of the fox on the gable so his brothers, the Cheyenne, knew he was to be protected. He also put a swing on the front porch so he and Suzy could sit and watch the stars, hoping soon she would carry his child. She lost the first child when

she had carried it a few months and then the same happened with the second. Each time, she would blame herself and Samuel would comfort her and tell her it was God's will. The third one just about killed her. She had carried it nearly to term. Only a couple of months more to go and she began to hope again. When she lost that one, the doctor said another would kill her for sure, so Samuel did what he never thought he would do. He went to his father and asked him how to help Suzy. He had ended up going to the medicine woman and getting medicine that would make sure the seed didn't take root. He had to protect his Suzy. He couldn't live without her. He had decided this was his last tracking job. He had plenty of money, and the horse ranch was famous for miles around. He didn't need to leave home like this anymore. He could stay home with his Suzy and make it up to her. God, he was tired and hungry and thirsty. His body ached with the need to hold his little Suzy. He stopped to take a drink from his canteen and a pull of jerky when he heard what sounded like a scream. He put the canteen down and listened carefully. There it was again, faint, but a scream. He turned his horse, looking in the direction it came from. He looked through his binoculars. In the distance, he saw a covered wagon all alone. It was leaning slightly like it had a broken wheel or axle.

He quickly turned his horse and urged it to gallop towards the wagon. What he saw made his blood run cold. A child, no more than seven-years-old, holding a rifle twice her size and a snake slithering towards her and another child, maybe three-years-old. The baby was screaming and crying and the older girl was shouting at the snake to go away. Without hesitation, Samuel took out his revolver and shot the snake. He jumped down, running to the children. He took up the baby first and saw she had been bitten in the leg. The older girl was still holding the rifle, crying. He took his knife and cut an X on the baby's leg and started to suck out the poison, which made the older girl scream and cry even harder. When he had gotten all the poison out that he could,

he turned to the older girl. "Are you okay? The snake didn't bite you, did it?"

The girl shook her head. "Just sissy."

He nodded to her and hurriedly gathered the girls up on his horse and jumped behind them in the saddle. Holding on as tight as he could, he galloped to town to find the doctor, taking the time to stop a couple of times to quickly loosen the tourniquet for a second and tighten it again. He wasn't far from town, but every minute counted. He pushed his horse more than he ever would have, but he hadn't a minute to lose. By the time they got to town, the youngest girl was limp in his arms and the older one was still silently crying, fear evident on her face. His horse was done in and needed a rest, sweat and lather gathering on its withers. He galloped up to the doctor's office and yelled for the doc. He jumped down and grabbed the baby, running to the door.

The older girl hung on to the pommel until strong hands lifted her down. Brenden had run from the stable after hearing the commotion. Doc Henderson came running out. When he saw what had happened, he grabbed the baby and rushed her into the back room.

Samuel turned to Brenden, taking the older girl from his arms. "Brenden, please take care of Midnight. Make sure Tom gives him some extra oats and a good brushing. He saved a child's life today. Also, bring a buggy around the front for us, too, will you? Head on home as soon as you can and tell Suzy we will have a couple of girls for a while. At least, until I can look for their parents. I didn't have time to look into the wagon."

Brenden nodded and with a quick, "Yes, sir," he was gone to do his bidding.

Samuel walked into doctor's waiting room and found a comfortable chair, putting the older girl on his lap, cradling her and soothing her with his words just like he did Suzy.

When the girl finally stopped crying long enough to talk to him,

he asked her some questions. "Where are your folks, little one? I didn't see them near the wagon."

The girl sniffled and looked as if she was about to start crying again, so Samuel began to rock her on his lap. She wiped her eyes and looked at him. "Ma was in labor trying to have another baby when the wheel broke. Everyone left us to continue their journey. No one stayed to help Papa. The wagon slipped and fell on his leg. He managed to get the horses to move the wagon enough to get out from under and he told me how to get the horses loose, but when I got them loose, I couldn't hold them and they ran off. I tried to help, but I wasn't strong enough. I could see he was hurt bad, but Ma kept crying something was wrong so he hobbled into the wagon. They are both dead in the wagon." She looked up to Samuel, her lower lip wobbling as she tried not to cry and to finish the story, but it was hopeless.

"They left us all alone," she wailed. "And it was cold, and we just finished the last of the food and water, and the damn snake came." She looked up at Samuel after saying the swear word to see if he was mad, but he just shook his head and kept rocking her on his lap.

"I was so scared at night by ourselves, and no one came back for us," she wailed again.

Samuel held her tighter and kept right on rocking her until the doctor came out. He was shaking his head, and Samuel stood, putting the older one back on the chair as he braced for bad news.

"If you hadn't come when you did and sucked out the poison, that child would have died out there, for sure, and left this one..." he pointed to the older girl "...all alone in the wilderness. I heard what she said, and if that isn't the damnedest luck I ever heard. What are we going to do with these little ones? The youngest could go home, if she had one."

Samuel knelt to the girl's level, looking in her eyes as he asked her seriously, "Do you have any family, girl?"

The girl shook her head no.

Samuel looked at her again and gently asked, "Do you and your sissy want to go home with me and my misses?"

The girl nodded eagerly. "I am afraid of the dark, mister, and so is my sister."

Samuel grunted and then stood, turning to the doctor, "I will have to talk to Suzy, but I will take these two home with me and see what she thinks. I will let you know."

The doctor went to get the youngest one while Samuel picked up the older one. "What is your name, young lady?"

"My name is Spring and my sister's is Autumn. It is when we were born, you see, but I don't know the day."

The doctor brought out Autumn with a candy stick to suck on and also gave a candy stick to Spring.

"This one will need plenty of rest for a few days and plenty of good broth and water for a while. Keep the wound clean." He shook his head as if just realizing who he was talking to. "Aw, you know what to do. Good luck, and let me know if me or my misses can help in any way."

Suddenly, another patient arrived, so Samuel carried Autumn and took Spring by the hand as they left. He put the girls in the buggy and drove to the sheriff's office to let Mark know what was going on before they headed to the stable so he could leave money for the stable master to take care of his horse until the next day.

"I think we should eat at the diner here, before we go home. What do you girls think? I am starving and we can get some broth down you before we go home."

Both girls agreed, although Samuel didn't know how much Autumn understood.

In the diner, he pulled out two chairs and gently set Autumn down, then ushered Spring to her chair before he sat down himself. His mother had raised him right.

The waitress came for their order. "What do we have here, Samuel? Some kin of Suzy's?"

Kayla was Suzy's best friend and as nosey as all get out.

"No, I found these girls all alone, just outside of town. Their parents are gone, so I am taking them home to Suzy to see if she will raise them as our own."

"Oh my gosh, I am so sorry, girls." She turned to Samuel. "Suzy will love them and maybe that will solve your problem," she whispered so he alone would hear.

Samuel just grunted and asked what the special was. After ordering for all of them, they sat and had a quiet meal. When they all were finished, Samuel gathered up his new family and they headed to the buggy and home. So much for his bath and clean clothes. He hoped Suzy would see these girls as a blessing. On their way home, Samuel talked to Spring about her new home and his wife, about how they had tried to have children of their own and couldn't. "I am hoping you girls will make Suzy happy again. Lord knows, she has enough love for you two mites."

As they approached the large cabin, Suzy came running out with a huge smile on her face. "Husband, Brenden told me what happened and that you were bringing two little ones home for us to tend." She threw her arms around Samuel and gave him a kiss and a hug before she turned to the girls. Samuel introduced them. Suzy quickly gathered up Autumn and, with her other hand, guided Spring into the house.

"I had Brenden and some men get the bed down from the attic, and I made it up in the living room near the fireplace, so they would be nice and warm. I thought they would like to sleep near each other for a while, and we must leave our door open so we can hear if they have nightmares. One of the hands has a couple of daughters near their age. She brought over some gowns for tonight and a dress for each of them tomorrow. We will go shopping for more clothes tomorrow, if that is okay with you girls?" She turned to address Spring. "The seamstress, Lori, is the best seamstress for miles around, and she has some already made dresses in her store. Maybe she can alter some to fit the two of you."

Autumn started getting fussy and Suzy put her down next to

Spring so she could make her some willow bark tea for the pain in her leg. She checked the wound and put on fresh ointment and a clean bandage before putting both little ones to bed, all nice and snuggly. Suzy bent down to give each girl a kiss on her forehead. "Good night, girls; if you are afraid or need something, please just call. We will be in our room just over there."

Samuel, in the meantime, had his warm bath and put on his sleeping gown, belting it closed.

He looked down at his wife and saw that the twinkle was back in her eyes and a smile was on her lips. Yep, he did good. They both sat in the comfortable settee in front of the fire, quietly talking about what they needed to do the next day. The girls fell asleep to the sound of the quiet voices.

When Samuel saw that they were both sleeping soundly, he gathered up his wife and headed to the bedroom. Brenden wasn't home yet, but he was fifteen and old enough to look out for himself. Sometimes, he liked to stay in the bunkhouse with some of his friends.

Samuel laid Suzy on the bed and began to undress her. When he was finished, he just stood next to the bed and admired his beautiful wife. She took his breath away with her great heart and beauty. Her hair reflected the light and her skin was like silk, the hair between her legs the same color as her hair on her head, her nipples a dusky rose color. He noticed her nipples were standing erect now, hard pebbles. Her stomach was flat and hard with muscles from hard work. His wife worked hard to please him when he was home. She worked hard to make this cabin a home.

He quickly undressed and crawled in next to her, pulling her into his arms. His rough hands traveling down her arms to between her legs. She was wet and ready for him. He leaned over her and took one nipple in his mouth, suckling gently. Her breath caught in her throat. It had been a month or more. His hand went lower, finding her bud of pleasure. Suzy began to moan, tension building inside of her. Her lips parted, her breath coming in short pants.

With his big finger, he began lazy circles around her bud. Her dew made his fingers slippery. Her sex clenched, dripping. He inserted his finger and then another as her hands caught in his hair, bringing him closer.

"Oh, oh, Samuel, please go in; please let me explode. You have been gone for so long," Suzy begged.

"My pleasure, wife of my heart, my pleasure." Samuel moved over her and plunged in up to the hilt, impaling her. Suzy cried out, writhing beneath him and then, slowly, ever so slowly, he began the dance of a man and wife. He could feel her inner muscles as they tightened. She was so close.

He chuckled in her ear. "Shh, Suzy, you will wake the children."

Suzy immediately quieted slightly, but being completely quiet was out of the question.

Samuel picked up speed until, with a cry, Suzy came apart and Samuel followed immediately after. Samuel immediately got up and walked over to the basin of water, wetting the cloth he found there, then to the glass of water and the cupboard that housed the container of Suzy's medicine. He cleaned her first and then himself before he poured Suzy her glass of water and a cap full of the foul-tasting medicine that would keep her safe.

Suzy began to argue, but Samuel gave her a stern look that told her he meant business. She looked into his deep brown eyes to see if she could change his mind and decided she couldn't.

"Suzy, we can't lose you. Those little girls in there and Brenden need a mama, and I can't live without you."

Suzy sighed a bone deep sigh as she took the medicine.

Samuel crawled into bed and took her in his arms, her head over his heart until the rhythm of his heart lulled her to sleep. Samuel was right behind her, content for the first time in over a month.