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"Farrell Jarrett's Account"

Dear Mr.Dene

Hi My name is Farrell Jarrett, you probably don't know me but I know you are a jorn-eli-sts? I think you'll find my tale good for the paper. So below is my account of what happened to Eatonton.

At the time I was living in the house my pa's grandpa made when my family first settled here. My Pa went to go fight in the war and forbid me from going. I tried anyway but my Ma changed my mind. My little town was peaceful. The most notable thing that ever happened was the occasional fight between neighbors.

At least it was that way until **They** came. I Always have to get up early to do some farm work. It had been the off season you see so all I had to do was to feed the animals. The first thing I had done was feed the chickens in the coop little did I know this would be their last meal. Then I moved to feed the cow. You see all the grass was dead at the time as it was the middle of November shortly after thanksgiving. Oh how I remember it. Pa sent some money to use to buy some food for the celebration. It was the most food I had eaten since the war had started. A loaf of fresh bread turkey from the town butcher and stuffing seemed like the smallest thanksgiving before the war but now it was the best we had in awhile.

Nowadays the best thing during meal time to look forward to was an egg and a cup of coffee that had been made with beans that had been used over and over again for weeks. Where was I again? oh right so I started milking the cow I knew I wouldn't get any of the milk you see we traded the milk for bread from the baker. That's when the thumping began.

THUMP
THUMP
THUMP

It was like hundreds of boots walking down the road. I heard some shouts of men.

"Hey Jimmy See those chickens?"

"I know exactly what your thinking Gordon"

Then I saw two union soldiers climb over the hedge that lined the roads.

"Time for some dinner!"

"It's 5 in the morning Idiot"

One of the union soldiers, I think it was the one called Gordon, pulled out his baton and stabbed one of the chickens. I couldn't just stand there and watch them being killed so I shouted out at them.

"Hey, those are my chickens!"

"Not anymore kid"

They proceeded to kill two more chickens and took them with them. I Had to tell Ma. I burst through the door.

"Ma! The yanks are here!"

I ran to her room and ponded on the door until my fist hurt.

"We need to get out of here!"

She finally got up and unlocked the door to her bedroom. She was still in her sleeping gown pointing dads musket at me.

"What are you going on about boy?"

"The Yanks are here, they killed our chickens!"

"We need to get out of here"

"How the entire town is surrounded!"

"How do you know that?"

I didn't, so I did not protest when she grabbed my wrists and led me outside to our only mode of transport other than our own 2 feet, our donkey. She jumped up right on the donkey and pulled me up onto the saddle. She grabbed the reins and we were off. Our donkey was quite old; his only job was plowing the fields and pulling the wagon into town once a year after harvest, so you might imagine I was quite surprised that the donkey took off. It was faster than anything I have ever ridden. To be fair the fastest thing I ever ridden was a wagon pulled by him loaded down by Ma and I with lots of crops and other goods to sell in town. So maybe it wasn't that fast. But It felt like the wind was on my face that only happens when the wind blows so maybe it was faster then I think.

After all that we almost made it. I say almost because we got caught by a Yank at the edge of town.

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"Hey Gorden that lady and the boy are trying to get away!"

I looked behind me to see the soldiers from before behind us, one of them holding up a rifle.

BOOM

I heard the whistle of the bullet go by my ear.

"Jimmy reload faster before they get away!"

BOOM

This time the bullet looked like it was going to land true. But it hit the donkey in the leg instead. The donkey immediately collapsed, throwing both me and Ma off. I heard a loud crunch when my Ma landed in a heap in the dirt.

"Farrell, I want you to promise me something"

"Anything Ma"

"Get away from here"

"I can't leave you here Ma I- we can work something out we are going to make it through the war we are going to be back with Pa someday I-"

"I have something to tell you Farrell I wanted to tell for awhile"

"What Ma?"

"Your father Boyd Is dead"

I was in shock, I couldn't think. Pa dead? Those two words just don't compete.

"W-w-w-when?"

"November 5th"

"Where did the money come from for Thanksgiving?"

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"It was the last of his pay, Stop stalling go!"

She shoved the munitions bag into my hands along with the musket. And so I put the musket strap on and hoisted the munitions bag on my shoulder and ran off into the fields to warn the town. After running about a mile I heard the bang of a gunshot and I knew who that was for. I had a feeling that I would never see Ma again.

I ran into town screaming my head off.

"The Yankes Are comin!"

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An old man came out of the shop and grabbed my shoulders And shook me, Hard.

"What's wrong with you son?"

"Union soldiers they are comin!"

"They are!?"

He turned and opened the door to his shop.

"Woody the Union are here, get to the church and ring the bell get the militia!"

A Boy about my age bolted out of the shop and down the street.

"Boy!"

The man pointed at me.

"Me?"

"Yes you! Get in the back of the shop and load that musket of yours we can't let this town burn without a fight!"

I remembered what happened to Atlanta. We only got the newspaper at the end of thanksgiving about the burning and I knew I had to fight to keep that dog Sherman's men from burning the town, the last place I had left In the world to go to. I started by grabbing the shelves of the general store and setting up blockages with them to stop bullets and slow soldiers down from reaching me. I loaded the musket just like Pa showed me. Powder down the barrel, ram it in , cloth ,then the bullet, grab the ramming rod, ram it in, half cock it, priming powder, cock it fully. After that my stomach started rumbling. I hadn't eaten anything since last night's measly supper of baked beans and hardtack. I looked around the general store. Some dried meat and more hardtack. Good enough for now.

It took 2 hours for the union to arrive but they did marched through town waving the American flag. I never had any hard feelings toward the union and didn't really care

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for the confederates. That was until they killed the chickens, shot the donkey and killed my Ma and Pa. I was going to take as many of those yanks out as I possibly could. I held up the musket and aimed it directly at the man waving the flag and squeezed the trigger.

BOOM

The recoil almost sent me flying back but I managed to stay upright. I couldn't see much through the smoke. I quickly opened up the bag to open the cartridge with my teeth and just shoved the entire thing in. I rammed into the gun and put the priming powder in and fired. I didn't realize it until the last second before the gun fired but I forgot to take the ramming rod out of the barrel.

BOOM

It impaled a soldier straight through the skull. Without the rod I couldn't fire the musket. I knew I had no choice but to run if I wanted to make it out alive. But I had an idea to slow them down just enough to get away. I opened the bag and opened all the explosive powder. I grabbed a package of matches from the shelf and lit one up. I dropped the match into the bag. I knew I only had a second to throw it out into the street.

BOOM

It exploded. I don't know how much damage it did but they were distracted. I grabbed all the food I could, my musket and ran out the door. Luckily the general store owner had a horse out back. I climbed up into the saddle. I remember the basics of controlling an animal from riding the mule to the plow during farming season. So I tried to do the same thing I did with the mule. What I didn't expect was the horse to take off faster than anything I had ever ridden before. I had renewed hope that Ma survived so I headed back to the farm to see if she lived. I raced past ruined fields blackened by the fires still rolling within them.

I finally arrived at the farm. The cow was killed for no reason, they didn't even butcher it for meat. The coop was empty. I walked up the path to the house and there was nothing left, all of it burnt to a crisp. There was nothing left here for me. Ma was gone, Pa was gone, the farm up in flames it was worthless now. I walked back down the path to where I tied the horse to a post. I untied the horse and got in the saddle and off I went.

I heard news about the union going around Madison city so I decided that was the way to go. Luckily I had snagged a map on my way out of the general store by

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accident And I always had the compass that Pa gave me in my pocket. Using Landmarks on the map I was able to get my bearings. Based on the map It would take me a few days to reach Madison by horse. I rode Into the night past burned out fields and houses. I kept going until morning. By then the horse was exhausted and wouldn't keep going and I couldn't afford to wait so I jumped off the horse and started hiking.

It took 3 more days and all my food to make it into Madison. Some kind folks let me stay with them for the time being. I am sending this account to the Augusta gazette to spread the word of what the union has been doing to all the towns on their march.

Mr. Dene I hope you put my account in the paper
Thanks – Farrell Jarrett.