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Between Walls of waters by Randall C. Anderson

Sharp, small pictures so real his muscles jumped and flinched as they passed through his mind. A black night starkly lit by the full moon. Cries in the darkness so close he felt them brush his skin. Black smoke moved snakelike through the shadows. Blood of a lamb dripped from a door. He felt the air dissipate from his lungs as the snake of mist slithered closer to his family's house. It stopped, whipping its undefined head toward him. A heartbeat of paralyzing fear passed, and then the mist-creature coiled and leapt forward, jaws gaping in a harsh hiss. He convulsed back and shut the door.

"Yes," Acts groggily replied. He rubbed his face with both hands, slowly recognizing the desert sand he had grown newly accustomed to in the past week. "It seems I never know when one will happen."

That fateful night, Acts' curiosity urged him to look out the door when he saw a dark shadow pass across the full moon. Though its shape resembled a serpent, its form shifting in different shades of shadow and gray; glissading in the light of the moon. It moved as a mist in a soft breeze. He jumped when the first scream of surprise and grief echoed through the city. The sounds came from some distance, but to Acts, it felt like they originated next door. Time passed, and then the serpentine shadow turned down Acts' Street, and it began to weave between doors. By this time, the cries from the city were many and heavy with anguish, and the air was so saturated with death Acts could taste the metallic tang beneath his tongue. Some Hebrews had not done as Moses instructed and they too, lost their first born. The snake mist slowly advanced toward Acts' home, and when it reached him, it turned to face Acts. Although it possessed no discernable features, Acts felt its eyes burn through his and into his skull. Seeing it coil in preparation for a lunge, Acts jerked and slammed the door. His heart pounded, and fear gripped his throat. He could hardly move. He had witnessed Death. But death could not enter his father's house because of the lamb's blood on the doorpost. The essence of the absence of life had looked into his soul and desired him, even though it had already taken so many lives that very night.

"I'm fine and fit for duty, my captain." Acts called Joshua "captain" because Joshua was the one training him in battle techniques, decision-making, and teaching him how to handle stressful situations as a teenage boy. But he was more than a teacher; he was the older brother Acts never had. Even though there was a five-year age difference, Joshua looked at Acts as an equal and never belittled him, always remaining a patient teacher. Acts measured shoulder to shoulder with Joshua, but his frame still lacked the musculature of a grown man. To keep Acts' morale high, Joshua told the younger boy, "You are getting stronger every day." Acts thought in his heart Joshua treated him as Moses treated Joshua.

At the same time, though, Acts knew he was not immune to Joshua's anger. When Joshua did lose patience with Acts, he would first calm himself, then teach and explain the reason for his impatience; he'd even been known to apologize. Either way, it was always better than the way Acts' father and his siblings had treated him. His family also distrusted Moses, the man the Lord used to free them from Pharaoh, the King of Egypt.

The Lord God caused nine plagues to fall on Egypt, but Pharaoh hardened his heart toward the Hebrews in response. The Lord gave instructions to the Hebrews to put lambs' blood on the doorposts and over the doors of their houses, with the blood of the lentil dripping on the threshold of the door. The reason was for the protection of those inside the house. The Lord God was going to send the Destroyer through the land to kill all the firstborn of man and animal in Egypt. Only the presence of the blood promised safety. Even though it had only been a day since that night of terror, it still seemed Acts found himself peering into the darkness, feeling like a little boy despite his fifteen years.

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to follow the company and watch for any Egyptian troops that might appear to spy or even harm the last of the company.

They began a slow-paced run to catch up to the rear guard, which consisted of three tribes; Dan, Asher and Naphtali. These were the tribes Moses had put in that place of honor. The first tribe they would come to was Naphtali.

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