

## The Hidden Legacy

Today was the family reunion, everyone was going to be there. It was at grandma's house as it was every year. The family is always together, but all so far apart. There was so much feud in the house, but everyone was there for grandma. Oliver knew that everyone tried to act kind to each other when he was around because he was the only kid in the family. He hated all the hugs. Everyone was talking about how much of a man he was becoming. Eventually he grew tired of everything going on and wanted to get some fresh air.

Grandma lived on a beautiful, peaceful farm. Oliver went out to the barn. It's amazing that it's still standing since it looks like it was at least one-hundred years old. Inside were abandoned horse stalls filled with spider webs. Oliver was stumbling around trying to find a light. He heard an animal, running around in the loft above him. He wasn't sure if it was a cat, rat, or even a raccoon but he wanted to find out. While looking for the animal he realized there was a light up by the loft. Once Oliver turned the light on, he realized the beauty that the barn still had. The stairs that led up into the loft looked so intriguing. Following his impulse he began walking up the stairs. He couldn't shake the feeling that he was doing something wrong, but he kept reassuring himself while continuing into the old loft. As he cracked the door open, it looked like the loft had been an office many years ago.

He began looking around the office and saw lots of photos covered in dust. Oliver wiped off the dust and saw photos of grandma and mom with a guy. Who was this guy? He looked vaguely familiar but a stranger at the same time. Maybe it was a boyfriend of moms, or maybe dad looked a lot different when he was younger. Oliver was curious and took a photo to ask his mom and grandma who it was.

When Oliver walked back into the house it was the same as he had left. He found grandma, who was in the center of everyone, and showed her the photo and before he could even ask who it was, she started to cry. Softly, she said, it was time that he found out. She explained to him that it was her son, his mom's brother, named James Oliver. He loved horses, and that was the reason they moved out to the farm. When he was old enough, he started a business of training troubled horses. His business became really successful because he put his whole heart into it. At a young age he had the flu which developed pneumonia, which he later died from. Grandma told him that he had been named Oliver after him, and every time the family saw him, he always reminded them of James Oliver.

Grandma explained that they had kept it a secret from him because some of the family still didn't want to talk about him. James was everyone's best friend in the family. He was younger than most of them, but yet he was so grounded in his faith and had an obvious walk with God. If they needed advice or just needed someone to pray for them they went to James. Not having him around anymore was really hard for all of them, and they never saw a good time to tell Oliver.

Oliver went back into his uncle's office. Looking at the office now with his new perspective, it was so much more sentimental. He found drawers full of letters people had written to him thanking him for how he had helped them. Oliver found journals full of notes and ideas on how to help troubled horses. Most importantly, Oliver found his old leather worn Bible filled with handwritten notes on every page. Oliver thought about the impact his uncle had made on everyone in the short amount of years he lived. Oliver wanted to live out his late uncle's legacy, and he was going to start in the Bible.

696 words

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