



# COURAGE To STAND

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*Stories of Young Strength  
and Triumph in Adversity*

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ELISA BRINTON

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ELISA BRINTON

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Editing by Chuck Vermillion, [www.HelpPublish.com](http://www.HelpPublish.com)

Cover design and page layout by Yvonne Vermillion, [www.MagicGraphix.com](http://www.MagicGraphix.com)

Printed by Crown Media and Printing, Inc., [www.crownmediacorp.com](http://www.crownmediacorp.com)

Published by

**Novel Concepts Publishing**

[www.NovelConceptsPublishing.com](http://www.NovelConceptsPublishing.com)

Publisher's Cataloging-in-Publication  
(Provided by Quality Books, Inc.)

Brinton, Elisa.

Courage to stand : stories of young strength and triumph in adversity / by  
Elisa Brinton.

p. cm.

CONTENTS: The high cost of unity -- Traitor to my blood -- Answer the  
call.

SUMMARY: Three young American heroines of the mid-1800s fight for  
their lives against dangerous odds. A headstrong teenager joins the Union army  
during the American Civil War. A Native American girl is kidnapped by enemy  
warriors. Mormon pioneers flee persecution to face starvation and despair during  
a cruel Wyoming winter.

Audience: Ages 13-17.

LCCN 2008905788

ISBN-13: 978-0-9818178-0-4

ISBN-10: 0-9818178-0-7

ISBN-13: 978-0-9818178-1-1

ISBN-10: 0-9818178-1-5

1. Teenage girls--United States--Juvenile fiction. 2. Women heroes--Juvenile  
fiction. 3. United States--History--19th century--Juvenile fiction. 4. Historical  
fiction. 5. Young adult fiction, American. 6. Teenagers' writings, American. [1.  
Teenage girls--Fiction. 2. Women heroes--Fiction. 3. United States--History--  
Fiction. 4. Historical fiction. 5. Youths' writings.] I. Title.

PZ7.B78019Cou 2008

[Fic]

QBI08-600202



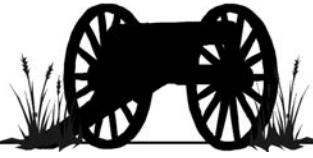
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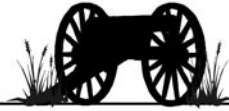


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*THE HIGH COST  
OF UNITY:  
THE SCOURGE  
THAT IS WAR*

BY  
ELISA BRINTON

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## *Prologue*

The floorboards creaked loudly beneath her feet, causing her to jump headlong into the silvery and dusty strands of a spider web which was barely visible in the dim light filtering through a small window overhead. Startled, she inhaled sharply, but she choked on the thick cloud of dust and struggled to calm her racing heart. Brushing the cobwebs away from her face, she thought she heard a scuttling noise. *It's nothing*, she told herself, but she couldn't help looking — and saw a flurry of gray. She sighed in relief, as she realized, *It's only a mouse*.

*The heat up here is stifling!* she thought, as beads of perspiration formed on her forehead and trickled down her cheek, and then she wondered why she was going through all this trouble on such a hot day. With an exasperated growl at herself, she pulled away the pile of junk which was covering the ancient chest.

The paint of the chest was peeling, and the wood was dented, chipped, and stained. The latches were rusty, and the key, still in the lock, grated loudly as she fought to turn it. Finally, carefully, she lifted the lid. It seemed to shriek in the unbelievable stillness of the attic.

Little Maria was exploring the attic while visiting her grandparents. She lived in Boston, Massachusetts, while her grandparents lived in a small town just outside that city. The year was 1896, and Maria was only ten years old.

Maria's school teacher had talked about the Civil War, which had ended more than twenty years before Maria was even born. She knew that her grandfather had been a brave Union soldier in that war. She knew very few facts about the war, but she had heard of its devastation and destruction — mostly from her grandfather.

She often played in the attic, but this time she had gone to find the uniform her grandfather had worn in the war. After some searching, she found it in the old trunk, which she had never ventured to open before this day.

But, much to her surprise, she found not one but *two* military uniforms, *two* guns, and *two* knapsacks! One uniform was much larger than the other.

Naturally, Maria was very puzzled by this, so she spoke to her best friend, John. He was the grandson of another Civil War soldier, and his family had been the best of friends with her family for many years. John's father was best friends with her father. Their grandfathers, Tom and Jim, were also very good friends, both of them Civil War veterans. Jim was Maria's grandfather. Anna, Maria's grandmother, was the closest of friends with Mary, John's grandmother. These families' lives were very much entwined — and had been for generations. So, with the tradition continuing, Maria went to talk to John about what she had seen.

"I was up in my grandparents' attic, and you know how there are all these wonderfully-interesting things up there?"

"Yeah."

"Well, I went up there expecting to see one Civil War uniform, one knapsack, and one gun — you know, my grandfather's. Instead, I found two of everything! What do you make of that?"

"I don't know! But I think you should ask your grandma. She would probably tell you."

So that's just what Maria did at the first opportunity.

The next afternoon, while sitting in the shade of the front porch and sipping a cool drink with her grandma, Maria brought up the topic, "Grandma?"

"Yes, child?"

"Well, um... I was, um... in the attic yesterday, looking to see if I might be able to find Grandpa's old uniform and stuff."

"Did you find it?"

"Yes, but I actually saw *two*! Why would there be uniforms and equipment for two soldiers up there, Grandma?"

“Well, the year was 1861. There had been trouble between the Northern half of the country and the Southern half for some time. The South wanted to own slaves and was afraid that the North would take that right away from them. They decided that they wanted the states to be more powerful than the Federal Government. They tried to split away, to make their own country, but the North said ‘No’ and did all it could to stop them. We Northerners tried everything possible, short of war. But, finally, North Carolina seceded, or left the Union, and ten other states soon followed. The Union tried to stop it, but the South kept on. They soon formed their own government and called it the ‘Confederate States of America’.”

“But what does that have to do with the uniforms upstairs?”

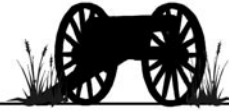
“Well, the Rebels, as they came to be called, started to take over Federal forts, but the Federal Government would not stand for that. When they took over Fort Sumpter, the North tried to stop them. The South fired cannons at the fort for an entire day until the fort was surrendered. The South got the fort, but this action also started something much bigger, much worse.”

“What was that, Grandma?”

“We call it ‘The Civil War’, and after a couple of battles were fought, I made a decision — one which would change my life forever.”

“What decision, Grandma?”

“I decided to become a soldier.”



## *Chapter 1*

Her grandma then told her amazing tale:

It was March of 1862. I was only 14 years old at the time, and I didn't care about the law. I didn't care about what would happen to me if I were found out. The only thing I thought about was how to get into the military.

It wasn't fair that only the men were allowed to go to war. If the women were allowed to go, as well, the army would probably more than double in size! I really wanted to help the cause, and just sitting back and knitting socks for the soldiers wasn't enough. I had to be part of the action. And do you think that a little thing like a dumb law was going to stop me — especially when the law did not protect the public? Of course not! And besides, they barely did any physical examinations on the soldiers, so it would be easy for me to get by and not be stopped from entering the military.

The first thing I did was to go to town when I had the money and buy some fabric. I went about making a binder that would strap my chest down, hopefully concealing my true gender. I made myself some male clothing, then I did the hardest thing that I would have to do in order to pass as a male — I had to cut my long hair, which was almost to my waist.

I cut it short, but not too short, because not many men kept it short at the time, except those who were wealthy and had the time and money to keep their hair perfectly groomed. I used a dull pair of scissors so that it would not look as if it had just been cut. I also deliberately cut it in a jagged, slightly uneven way.

I then had to come up with a name for myself. I thought about it for several days. I wrote down possible choices for first, middle, and last

names, and then I thought long and hard about them. After several days of deliberation, I finally chose the first name of 'James', but none of the last names which I was considering seemed to fit with that name.

Suddenly I had an idea. My real name was Anna Jordon, so I changed my last name a bit to one that sounded somewhat fitting with James as a first name. I came up with the last name of 'Hordensen', and I then hunted about for a suitable middle name. I ultimately decided that I would use one of the names from my first-name list as my middle name, 'Henry'. Thus, 'James Henry Hordensen' was born.

A new army regiment was soon to be formed, and since we were in the county seat, men would be coming from all the outlying areas to our town for enlistment. I tried for several days to get used to my new name and into the mindset of being a male. Although I still did not completely have the hang of it by enlistment time, I had practiced enough to be able to pass as a man — at least — *I hoped so!*



*TRAITOR  
TO MY  
BLOOD*

BY  
ELISA BRINTON

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## Chapter 1

I stared out of the tipi, out at the world of the camp. All the people were busily running around, doing their chores and children were playing. It was a delightful sight. Then, I heard someone call me.

“Daughter!” It was my father. I stepped out of the tipi to speak to him.

“There you are, my daughter. White Owl is looking for you.”

I groaned inwardly, *Not White Owl!* but my father continued.

“He asked me to tell you to meet him in Storm Grove. He acted as if it was urgent. Please, go to him, my daughter.”

I thought fast. I had to come up with some way of avoiding White Owl.

“Uhm, well, uh, I... I... haven’t um... uh, finished... our evening meal! Yes! I need to finish the meal!” It was my job to help with the meals.

He smiled a strange smile.

“A little early, though, isn’t it? We just ate.”

I thought fast again, but before I could say anything, he requested, “Go to him, please, my daughter,” and he rode away on Rising Sun, his magnificent steed. I watched him go, a feeling of foreboding in my stomach.

*Not White Owl! He really is rather annoying, and he always acts especially strange around me. He is always seeking me out and trying to talk to me, but he often stammers and stutters, with very little to say. He seems to be trying to impress me, but his approach has the opposite effect. Oh, how I long to be somewhere else — anywhere else — away from him. I could always say that I never got his message, that I never— but now it was too late. White Owl rode up to me at that second.*

I turned and tried to blend in, but, as always, he spotted me. He called out, but I pretended that I did not hear him, and I quickly grabbed the new pair of moccasins I had just made. I dashed away to show my best friend, Mountain Flower, hoping to avoid White Owl completely.

He chased me, but I managed to get to Mountain Flower's tipi before he caught me, and I darted inside. Oh, how glad I was to have been away from him!

His family was respected because his father was a great warrior and a mighty hunter, but everybody in our village tried to avoid White Owl.

I told Mountain Flower about all my trouble, and she peeked out of the tipi every now and then to see if he had gone.

He waited for a long time, but at long last, he rode away.

We then sneaked out to our favorite little grove of trees, with a small creek running through it. There, Mountain Flower and I liked to talk where we would not be disturbed.

We spoke for a long time. *Oh, how cruel this world seemed!* I knew what White Owl's intentions were and what his actions meant. I shuddered at the thought. I did not want to hurt him, but I could not — indeed — would not give in! *I will not be his wife! I can only try my best to avoid him.*

I was thought to be 'different', even 'strange' in my village. At the time of this story, I was 14 winters old, but I had been called 'Dreamer' since I was a small girl, because I had always had dreams that reached the sky — dreams of excitement, and of exploring lands far beyond my small village. At first I did not like to be called 'Dreamer', thinking that the others were making fun of me, but, with time, I grew to accept it for the truth it was; I was, indeed, a dreamer at heart.

I was also thought to be very beautiful, with long, smooth hair which had the color and shine of the feathers of a raven. My eyes were brown, large, and gentle, like those of a doe, and I had full lips that always curved upward, as if in a soft smile.

Mountain Flower and I talked by the stream for a long while. I knew I could tell her anything and that she could be trusted. We shared everything with each other, no matter how great a secret.

Soon, it grew dark, and we returned to our own lodges to eat and tell stories to help us sleep.

My grandfather, Nimble Fox, was one of the best storytellers among our people, the mighty Crow Nation. Tonight, someone asked him to tell the story of creation, and so he began:

“In the beginning, when the world was covered with water, there was a wise Coyote. No one knows how he came to be; he just existed. He thought that it was not good for him to be alone, and soon he met two ducks with red eyes, swimming in the sea. He asked them to dive down and see if there was anything at the bottom of the Great Water. One duck dove down and did not return for a long time.

‘Ah, it seems as though your brother has drowned,’ said Coyote.

‘Not so! We have stayed underwater for much longer than this,’ came the duck’s response. ‘He will return soon.’

And, just as his brother had said, the other duck soon came back up.

‘Is there anything at the bottom of this Great Water?’ asked Coyote.

‘Yes, and I bumped my head on something.’

‘Go down and get it, friend!’

So the duck dived once again. When he came back up, he was holding a root in his beak. Coyote was pleased.

‘For there to be roots, there must be earth,’ Coyote said. But the duck who had already been down twice was too tired to make the journey again. So, the other duck went down. He brought back a lump of dirt. Coyote blew on the dirt and it expanded, making the Earth. At the suggestion of the ducks, he made rivers, mountains, and valleys. He planted the root in the soil, and from it sprang forth all kinds of vegetation. Coyote made a brother for himself and created other ducks. Coyote’s brother said that they should have other animals to inhabit the earth . . .”

With the sound of my grandfather's calming voice, I drifted off to sleep.

After what seemed like only seconds, I was jolted awake by my father, Keen Eyes. It was very early the next morning.

"Hurry, my daughter! Get up and go with the rest of our family! Your elder brothers and I must fight!"

With that, he grabbed his shield, his weapons of war, and his coup stick to touch the live enemy as a sign of bravery, and he left the tipi. My two eldest brothers, Snow Bear and Strong Bow, did the same, joining my father.

As I got to my feet, still half-asleep, I heard the camp crier calling out a warning — "Hurry! The Cheyenne are coming! Many Cheyenne! Cross the river! Hurry! Go with swiftness! They are almost upon us!"

I did not listen any more. I was suddenly wide awake as terror pierced my heart like the arrows of the enemy. I tried to forget my own fear and rushed to help my mother and the other women to gather and calm the children. We hurried them outside, into the cool dawn air, and began to cross the river.

Around me, I could hear a great thundering noise — the whinnying of horses, the savage war whoops of the Cheyenne, the twanging of bowstrings, the cries of the wounded and suffering of my people — but I did not turn to look. I moved to the back of the group as we left the tipi, to urge the younger, slower children onward.

Several of the men who had rushed out to defend our village were now lying on the ground in pools of blood. I was shocked at this, since it was not normally the custom for the plains Indians to harm or kill their enemies — only to count coup as a show of their courage. But many horses, wives, and other goods were commonly stolen in raids by the enemy tribes.

As I ran, I suddenly felt a great jerk, and I was lifted into the air and onto a horse in front of a Cheyenne warrior. My landing was rough and hard, as if I had fallen from the low branch of a great tree. He held me tightly, and I could not escape. His war whoops were high and piercing in my ears, like the sound of a bone whistle.

I called out loudly, frantically, but my cries were lost in the great commotion which surrounded us. My fear grew as I saw that no one was going to come to my rescue. No one had even noticed that I was being taken away.

I was carried out of camp, along with a number of horses stolen from my people. High on the hillside overlooking my village, my captor rejoined a large band of warriors with their strong, colorfully-painted horses. The warriors let out a great, savage cheer for their victory, as they rode to the top of the large hill and down the other side.

As the horse I was slung across reached the top of the hill, I twisted around desperately to see what was happening. I caught a glimpse of my village. Many of the women and children were fleeing across the river, while our brave men were fighting against a large band of Cheyenne who remained.

I wondered about my father and my brothers — my mother, sister, and the young ones. *Where are they? Can I see any of them?* But as I turned to look, I only caught a glimpse of my village, for the warrior who had captured me pulled me back around and tightened his grasp upon my arm.



*ANSWER  
THE  
CALL*

BY  
ELISA BRINTON

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June 30, 1844

Dear Abby and family,

Brother Joseph is dead! We heard the sad, unbelievable news from a messenger riding through the town of Nauvoo. We were all mortified. We thought this had to be a mistake. It couldn't be real! Not Joseph!

Grief is the prevailing mood in town at this time. How could Brother Joseph be dead? It is said that he was murdered along with his dear brother, Hyrum, at Carthage Jail on the 27th of June by yet another angry mob.

The mobs — haven't they done enough? And was not driving us out of the area enough for them? Did not killing some of our people satisfy their thirst for blood? Hadn't stealing our property made them happy enough to leave us in peace?

The grief is terrible. It comes in great waves, like surf pounding on rocks by the sea, only to be followed by rage which crackles and burns as does a fire. Will the mobs ever leave us alone? No one knows. What are we to do now? The temple is nearly completed, but without dear Brother Joseph, how will we be able to finish it? Will the mobs drive us out again? What is our fate? What is the destiny of the Church? We all wish to know, but none have the answers.

It is believed that the answers to all our questions will come if only we can find the next leader. But who is he? How will we know who he is?

Will there be disagreement? Will The Lord make His Will known to us on this matter? Will He choose another to lead His church? If a man claims to be the chosen one by God, how will we know he is telling the truth? Or, if The Lord leaves it up to us, how will we decide? No one knows.

Joseph is dead... I still can't believe it. The loss is great and makes our hearts heavy, indeed. Not only was he a great leader, but a very dear friend, as well. He was always happy and had a bright sense of humor. If he came to help, it always worked out. He was the one person who kept our faith alive during the mob persecutions, and now he is dead. How will we survive without him?

All is in The Lord's Hands.

With deepest sorrow,

*Aunt Jane*



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and Triumph in Adversity*

by

ELISA BRINTON

Published by

**Novel Concepts Publishing**

[www.NovelConceptsPublishing.com](http://www.NovelConceptsPublishing.com)

# *Stories of Young Strength and Triumph in Adversity*

Three young American heroines from the mid-1800s must fight for all they hold dear, against impossible odds.

- A headstrong teenager joins the Union army during the American Civil War, but in fighting for her life and the Cause, she must also keep a critical secret of her own.
- A Native American girl is kidnapped by enemy warriors. Desperate to escape, she finds help – and perhaps even love – where she least expects it.
- Driven from their homes by religious persecution and angry mobs, a group of Mormon pioneers is desolate and starving in the middle of a cruel Wyoming winter as Death stalks the company. A young convert struggles to maintain her faith while fighting for her life and for those she loves.



*“As historical fiction, *Courage to Stand* is a compelling and well written series of stories. The many plots and themes will inspire reflection regarding current conflicts taking place around the world. ...it is a well researched book that will be enjoyed by readers who appreciate historical fiction rooted in young heroines confronting and overcoming enormous adversity.”*

- Tracy Roberts, Write Field Services

*“The young adult reader will readily identify with all three heroines, driven by their courage and determination to overcome the trials and adversity they experience. These stories will appeal to anyone who enjoys historical fiction, mixed with riveting action and adventure!”*

- Nancy Hicks, history, English and drama instructor.

*“I would highly recommend these stories to anyone who wants to read about inspirational characters and their magnificent feats. She (Elisa Brinton) has a fan for life in me!”*

- Emily Rees, English instructor.

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