

Flyin West

Miss Leah: I'm counting on you baby sister. None of this makes any sense without the children. There's a lot worse places than this to have a baby. I would have given anything to have had my babies in my own little house, on my own piece of land ,with James pacing outside with the midwife wife knowing what to do to ease you through it. I was only 13 when I got my first one. They wanted me to start early 'cause I was big and strong. Soon as my womanhood came on me, they took me out in the barn and put James on me. He was older than me and big. He already had children by half the women on the place. My James. With that first time, he was hurting me so bad and I was screaming and carrying on something awful, and that old overseer just watching and laughing to make sure James really doing it. He watched us every night for a week and after the third one I heard James trying to whisper something to me real quiet while he's doing it. I was so surprised I stopped crying for a minute and I hear James saying "Leah, Leah, Leah." He just keeps saying my name over and over, and at the end of the week, I had my first son.

I always thought if they would've let me find James for myself I would've loved him. The way it was, we stay together after the war because we was closer to each other than anybody that wasn't dead or sold off, and because James said we had 10 babies that they sold away from us we ought to have 10 more we could raise free.