

## The Return

*by Sara Filion*

It was a hot summer day. Kids all over Alabama were playing in the streets of their hometowns. Everyone was outside, playing, swimming, and cooking, that day. May 25th 1973 was simply a beautiful day in the American state of Alabama. Sophia and John, just like every other couple on their street, were having a barbecue in their back yard. Sophia had made lemonade, John's favorite drink, except for beer. John was roasting some steaks and baking sweet potatoes on the huge barbecue Sophia's parents had given them for their wedding, two years ago. Sophia's dad believed that every real American man had to have a good barbecue on which he could cook real American food. "John, a man ain't a man if he can't cook real good hot dogs on a grill!" he had told him, with his strong and loud tone of voice. The great smell of roasted meat could be smelled all around the neighborhood.

Sophia and John had met when they were only sixteen years old. Sophia being the head cheerleader and John the quarter back of the school's football team, they were simply made to be together. They made the perfect couple. Sophia was the most beautiful girl in the whole town, and all the guys agreed on that. She had long, wavy, brown hair and big green eyes. Her skin was pale and flawless, but yet had an olive-greenish tone that gave her an exotic look. John had been the only guy who had ever got the chance to take her on a date, and was the only guy she had ever fell in love with. Five years later, as soon as they turned 21, they got married.

The phone rang. Sophia was hanging some clothes outside so John ran inside to take the call. Little did he know, that call would be the one who would change both their lives.

"John Williams?"

"This is he."

"This is a call from the USA Army. At this time of war, it is your time to serve your country Mr. Williams. We will come and get you in two days. Thank you, have a nice day."

John dropped the phone to the floor. Sophia came in, and asked what was wrong. The only thing he answered was “it’s my time Sophia” with a traumatized voice.

Two days later, John was leaving. Sophia was in tears, completely destroyed by the news and incredibly afraid her only love would die, and never come back from that horrible war. But she was especially afraid that her husband would never get to see his son, Sophia was pregnant. John promised her he would be back to see his birth, but Sophia had a scary feeling he wouldn’t make it. Sophia spent months crying and wishing the war would end, and John would come back.

A few months later, Sophia was watching the news. The war was getting worse and a great number of American soldiers were dying away from their country. And that’s when the worst news of her life struck her. A red car, with the words USA Army written on it, parked in front of the house. Two soldiers got out of it. Sophia ran to the door.

“Sophia Turner?” asked one of them.

Sophia started crying, she knew what they were about to say.

“It is with sadness that we have to inform you, Mr. John Williams has passed away serving his country.”

Sophia’s heart stopped beating. She had feared this moment since day one. And suddenly, stormed by all the emotions of the moment, her water broke. Sophia was rushed to the hospital. 23 hours later, the baby was about to be born, the door of the hospital room slammed open, and someone Sophia never thought she’d see again walked in. There he was. John was there. Sophia fainted.

A few hours later, everything was calm again. Daniel Williams was born. Sophia was holding her baby and John was sitting next to them. John’s return wasn’t a miracle, a work of god. There were actually two men named John Williams, The other John had passed away fighting, but the bad news was passed on to the wrong wife. Sophia was happy, her son would have a dad and she would have a husband, and nothing could have made this day, October 10<sup>th</sup> 1973, better.