**Cordelia’s Journey**

**By Hazel Hart**

**About the Book**

In this coming-of-age story, thirteen-year-old Cordelia endures her stepfather's abuse until she learns her ailing mother is pregnant again. Fearing her mother will die in childbirth, she runs away, heading for Westport and her aunt, the only person who might be able to save her mother. She disguises herself as a boy and sets out on foot to make the 150-mile trip. Following the Kansas River, she hitches rides with a variety of travelers going east, facing setbacks along the way while learning lessons about the world and her place in it.

Cordelia's Journey is the first book in the Pierce Family Saga, a series of historical novels that follow Cordelia and her family through the latter half of the nineteenth century.

**About the Author**:

What do a talk show host, an Egyptian mummy, a teenager questioned by the FBI, and a fundamentalist preacher have in common? They are all characters in Hazel Hart's fiction.

A member of Kansas Authors Club, Hazel has won awards for her short stories, including "Amanda Marie," published in KANSAS VOICES, and "Confessions," published in WORDS OUT OF THE FLATLANDS. Both prize-winning stories are included in an e-book collection, THE NANCY NOLAN SHOW, and available on Amazon.

In addition, Hazel has three published suspense novels, THE NIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS, FAMILY HISTORY, and POSSESSING SARA, and one young adult novel, THE SURVIVALIST'S DAUGHTER. She has co-authored two books of short stories, DARK SIDE OF THE RAINBOW and THE EDGE OF NOWHERE, with Bonnie Eaton aka B.J. Myrick, which are also available on Amazon.

**If you enjoyed this book*:***

* Abandoned by C.J. Petit
* Harper’s Justice in Canyon by William Black
* Brand Justice by Sam Scott
* The Woman Who Built a Bridge by C. K. Crigger
* The Pistol Man’s Apprentice by Linell Jeppsen

**Discussion Questions**

1. Did this book remind you of any other books you have read?
2. What did you think of the chapters from Minerva’s point of view? Did they add or subtract from the story?
3. Do you think the values and attitudes of the characters accurately reflect their 1850s time frame? Are any of their attitudes or values prevalent in today’s society?
4. Did Minerva do the best she could for her children? What, if anything, could she have done differently that might have made their lives better?
5. During Cordelia’s flight from her home near Ft. Riley to her Aunt Hannah’s in Westport, she meets several people. Who did you like or not like? Do you think any of these would make good continuing characters in later books about the Pierce family?
6. Was the pacing of the novel too fast, too slow, or just right? What about the length? Should it have been longer or shorter? If longer, what else would you have the author add? If shorter, what scenes might be cut?
7. Do you have a favorite scene?
8. Did a quotation or chapter title catch your attention?
9. Was going for help the right action for Cordelia to take? Besides running away, was there anything else she could have done to resolve her problems and help her mother?
10. Cordelia reacts with anger at the treatment of Gabe, a runaway slave, and declares she and Aunt Hannah should have done something. Were Aunt Hannah’s reasons for not intervening convincing, or do you, like Cordelia, think they should have done something?
11. Ryan O’Rourke seems to give little thought to the possible effects of his womanizing ways. Do you think Cordelia’s scolding made him consider the consequences? Will he change?
12. You have the chance to ask the author of this book one question. What is your question?