

A dramatic sunset over a rocky coastline. The sky is filled with dark, heavy clouds, with a bright sun low on the horizon, casting a golden glow. The ocean is a deep, vibrant blue, and the foreground is dominated by large, dark, rounded rocks. The overall mood is serene and inspiring.

*Visions,  
Dreams,  
and Miracles*

By Betty Bowman Thomas

**This book is dedicated to my Mother,  
Elaine Bowman**



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## Chapter One - Abortion

There is a dark haired young man standing in a hall of a hospital. He is waiting for the doctor to give word on his lovely wife. She is giving birth to his first child. Complications with the delivery are causing his wife to be in danger of losing her life. The doctor walks down the hall and tells the man that he has a choice of either his wife or his baby. The man begins to cry and not knowing what to do, turns to his pastor standing next to him for advice. His pastor says,

“Stop it Ernest. The Lord Jesus Christ has control of this.”

The young man turns back to the doctor and says,

“I want both of them.”

The choice the young man made that day is the reason I am here today. Fifty-five years later I have decided to try and tell the story.

With both of these wonderful people, we experienced together a lifetime of hope, joy, faith, love, and miracles. They chose to let me live.

Now I will share with you our visions, dreams, miracles, answers to prayers, stories of family, friends, and my innermost feelings. Also I will show you how to help a terminally ill patient, live until they die.

First, I will tell you that Mother was a Christian. At the age of sixteen years, she developed a disease called Phlebitis, which is the inflammation of the inner membrane of the veins. This disease left Mother with her left leg swollen.

Mother was told that she should not have children. Well, I was the first child that she was not supposed to have. She almost died at my birth. The doctor wanted to abort me at the last minute.

Abortion you say, in 1953! Yes, sin has been around since Adam and Eve.

Mother risked having a cesarean operation after being in hard labor for more than twelve hours.

Four years later, she had a son without the recommendation of the doctor. This time, she had no

problems with this delivery.

The same doctor advised her to have her tubes cut, tied, and burnt. He fixed it so she could not have any more children. The doctor must have thought that it was in Mother's best interest not to have any more children.

Had the world already forgotten the power of prayer and God's miracles?

Seven years later while Dad was taking a Sunday afternoon nap, he awoke suddenly and asked,

"Mother, where is the baby?"

"What is wrong with you? There is no baby in this house. You must have been dreaming." Mother replied.

"That was the strangest dream. It was so real. The little girl had a heavy head of black hair, fair complexion and deep blue eyes." Dad said.

All afternoon, Dad could not get the dream out of his mind. At the time, no one had any idea that Mother was pregnant, with a black-haired, blue-eyed girl.

Weeks later, Mother was having the same symptoms of morning sickness. Mary, her friend, remembers Mother telling her,

"If I didn't know any better, I would believe that I'm pregnant."

Mother went back to the same doctor that was now one hundred miles away. She went for a checkup. Mother and Dad had put their trust in the same doctor, until this day. The doctor checked with hospital records, and according to the records, Mother could not be pregnant. The doctor examined Mother and said,

"You can't be pregnant, but you are."

He told her that she needed to be hospitalized to have a growth removed from her uterus. He said Mother needed to be put to sleep in order to perform the procedure.

Mother and Dad told the doctor that they needed to have time to think about it and they would get back with him.

I remember as a child, when we returned to the car, Mother and Dad commented that this did not sound right. They had a bad feeling about the procedure. Then, at that very moment, Mother and Dad remembered the dream about that special baby girl.

They decided to get a second opinion so they drove back home and made an appointment with a local doctor. Mother explained that she had a growth on her uterus. The doctor asked the nurse for her help and within minutes, the growth was gone without Mother ever having to be put to sleep. Then, the great news came, Mother was going to have another baby.

This was truly a miracle that God had performed. Mother had grown another tube over to where it made it possible to get pregnant. The doctor said Mother should not have any problem with the pregnancy or the third operation.

I believe God sometimes warns us in dreams of possible danger to us and others. The danger that day was a doctor's decision and him not trusting in God.

She had that baby girl, Ava Loretta Bowman, Lori for short. I know Mother made me the happiest little girl in town because I took Lori down the street showing her off to everyone like she was my own.

This almost aborted miracle baby had black hair and blue eyes that has delivered more than one thousand babies. She is now a Major in the U.S. Army Nurse Corps.

Abortion to me is murder. The 6<sup>th</sup> Commandment in the Bible says,

“Thou shall not kill.” Exodus 20:13

Just think that more than one thousand mothers and their baby's lives have been touched by an almost aborted Army Nurse. My brother touches people's lives daily as he works in the public as an electrician. As for myself, I have been put in all types of jobs that have given me the opportunity to touch people's lives. Three Christian individual lives almost taken from this Earth because of abortion, but one gracious Christian Mother made their lives possible.

How many doctors, nurses, pilots, scientists, and inventors have been thrown in the trash cans? How many diseases may have been cured by the aborted ghost of a nation? Who knows? We do know

that God stopped this doctor's decision to destroy a life.

God warned these Christian children of this through a dream. Listen when God speaks.

## Chapter Two - Diet Pills

“Betty Ann, something’s wrong,” Mother says as she picks up her left leg to put her foot on the clutch of the car. Mother then starts the car.

“What’s wrong with your leg?” I asked.

“My muscles aren’t working properly. I have to use my hands to pick up my legs, so I can drive. When I squat down to get something off the floor, I have to use something to pull myself up. I am planning to go to the doctor soon and get it checked out,” Mother said.

Since Lori’s birth, Mother had been concerned about her weight. Mother was in her early 40’s and was beginning to gain a few pounds. I know how she felt, because I have gained weight and can’t get it off. The difference is that I am a recovering anorexic and I can not afford to get into a pattern of not eating again. She must have experienced the same feelings of being fat that I did, when you aren’t.

Mother decided to go to a weight doctor to get a few pounds off. I remember the pills. There were a lot of them. I asked her once why she was taking so many pills and she said that she was taking them to lose weight. She also ask me not to tell Dad because he might get mad. She knew that he would not approve.

Mother had an innocence about her and probably did not understand the dangers of these kind of pills. She had commented about all of her friends taking pills and how much weight they lost. These few pounds would eventually turn into a nightmare of gaining. She gained more than 100 pounds that she would never be able to get off. Can I say, the beginning of the end?

This makes me angry to talk about but I want people to know the dangers of diet pills. Reality has just now hit me. This was the early 60’s, when doctors prescribing medication to patients was dangerous because of the lack of technology. Millions of people were putting their trust in men and women who just wanted to make a buck at the expense of others. One victim was my mother. What happened to the great knowledge of modern medicine?



During this time, Mother was struck down by what we were told was a muscle disease. This disease left her paralyzed from the neck down. Mother had been sent to a hospital in New Orleans. Doctors spent months trying to find out what else was wrong with Mother, and a cure for this disease.

Dad came home for the weekend. He went to the neighbor's house to tell them what the doctor had told him about Mother. The neighbor looked at her husband and said,

“Don't you think it is about time we tell Ernest what's been going on with Elaine? Ernest, don't get mad at Elaine because she just wanted to look pretty for you. She has been taking diet pills from a local weight doctor.”

The doctor had given Mother diet pills without checking her medical history and her blood. Mother had been taking diuretics for years because of the Phlebitis. The diet pills took the potassium out of her blood and dropped her with a lot of other women in our area. The local druggist that was a close friend of Dad's told him that the doctor had bootlegged the pills into the area. The druggist had told the doctor that the pills were very dangerous and he would not sell them for him. Could this have been the cause of Mother's paralysis? We will never know.

Dad returned to New Orleans. Dad said that while he was there, he would sometimes go and get him a room at a local motel. He would lay on the floor praying and sometimes beat the floor with his fist. It seems that he could get no satisfaction from the Lord. Sometimes we have to be patient and wait on the Lord. Dad said that it came so plain to him to dry up his eyes and shut up.

“I know what I am doing,” the Lord seemed to say to him.

After the doctors telling Dad that there was nothing they could do for Mother, he took her home. He drove 300 miles, while she lay in the back seat of the car. I will never forget Dad's words that day.

“The doctors have told me to bring your mother home to die. There is nothing they can do for her.”

My brother looked up at Dad and said,

“Mother is not going to die. Jesus has assured me she is not.”

Imagine these words coming from a ten-year old.

The next few months were difficult for me. I was fifteen years old and was having to learn to raise a family, with my mother this sick. I remember struggling in school too. All of my teachers passed me to the next grade except one. This was my English teacher. I didn't like her anyway. I made everything up later and made an "A" in the class. I learned to cook, clean house, and care for two young children.

Mother now had taken the roll of one of my children. The care was even harder. She had little or no mobility. One night, Dad woke up out of a sound exhausted sleep. He heard Mother saying,

"I give up! I give up!"

He rolled out of his twin bed he was sleeping in and sat down beside her bed.

"No, you don't give up. As long as we have you, we have a home. Without you, there is no home. You are our happiness," Dad told her.

"That is not what I am talking about. Whatever the Lord wants me to do, I'll do it," Mother said.

"Do you mean that you have been fighting him?" Dad asked.

Dad lay his hands across Mother's legs and asked Jesus to please give her back to us. She immediately started recovering.

Just a few months later, she walked back into the doctors' office in New Orleans. The doctor said that this was a miracle and that he had nothing to do with it. This was truly one miracle that God had performed. Mother was supposed to get no more than 50% use of her muscles. She had regained all of the use of her muscles. The waiting on our Lord paid off. He gave her back to us again. Thank-you Jesus, for an answer to our prayers.

### Chapter Three - Skin Cancer

God continued to pour out His blessings on Mother and the family. Mother continued to do the things she loved to do.

Mother was a member of the Women's Bowling Association. She was known locally and nationally. She was also a well-known seamstress in this area.

Dad and Mother traveled all over the United States. They also traveled on mission trips to Alberta, Canada and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Mothers' Phlebitis flared up at least every two years. She would have massive infections and brushes with death. Trouble for Mother was brewing due to the infections and in a few years we would find out.

In 1990, Mother was hospitalized for skin cancer. They had to remove several places on her left leg that had Phlebitis in it. The doctor came out of surgery and told us, he had to remove more skin tissue than he had expected.

Later that day, she returned to her room. I started down the hall toward Mother's room, when I saw the nurse and Dad standing outside. Dad and the nurse told me that the bandages on her leg had been removed. They also wanted to prepare me before I entered her room. The nurse said,

“This will be very difficult to see.”

The nurse made the comment that she had never seen anything as shocking in all of her nursing career. I looked up at the nurse and Dad, then I said,

“I have to do this. I will be the one to help you care for her, Dad.”

The doctor had no idea what he was up against when he cut open that bad leg. In all of these years, no one had dared to cut on Mother's leg. They were afraid of what it would do to her. There was no other choice but to take the cancers off, before they did any more damage to Mother. Mother was not prepared for this kind of shock either.

When I walked into the room, she was crying. I looked down at her leg and I have never seen anything like that, no never. I'll give you an idea of what it was like. The place where the doctor had removed the skin cancer, it looked like a shark had taken a bite out of Mother's leg. All I remember is seeing black spots in my vision. I looked over at Dad's face and it was red with sweat popping out all over it.

"I have to go back to work." Replied Dad.

"No, Dad, you can't leave. I don't want Mother to be alone." I said.

All I wanted to do was run or just at least get out of the room, before I passed out. Mother didn't need me to be hysterical. She needed me to be strong. The nurse had to give Mother something to calm her down.

In a few minutes, a nurse friend of ours walked into the room and told us that she would stay with Mother until one of us could return. The friend could see that both Dad and I were in shock and needed time to deal with this.

Still to this day, I don't know where Dad went. He told me that Mother didn't need to see him, until he could get a hold of himself.

Immediately, I drove to my husband's place of work. I walked into his office, sat down in a chair, and didn't say a word. For me, that was a miracle in itself. Gary was in the other part of the building. One of his employees noticed there was something wrong with me. I always talked and laughed with someone when I came in. Gary found me and I told him what had happened.

Thinking that this would be the most difficult thing I would have to face in my life, I would soon find out that it wasn't. This was just a taste of what would be in store for Mother and the family. My trust and faith were now being tested. This was the time to toughen me up, for the really bad times to come.

Mother always needed prayers. Don't we all? God sent me to this earth, a cold January 26, 1953, to care for Mother and love her. Who would have taken care of her unconditionally

as Dad and me? We were both so caring and gentle with her. I never felt that she was taking up my time. She was never a burden to me. I knew that I had to do what I did for her. She was a beautiful person, so loving and caring.

Mother raised me to love as she did. She never met a stranger. Everyone fell in love with her.

The next few years, this fine Lady, would spend her last years and days helping me with my life.

Not long after the operation, without our knowledge, Mother found out that she had a terminal illness. She was told by the doctor that she had about five good years before any of us could detect that she was very ill. Mother started planning for our future without her. She didn't want to face it so she just continued life as usual.

In October of 1991, I auditioned for a chance to sing at the Dixie Jamboree. Mother encouraged me to make the audition. I said,

“Mom, I will die or pass out if I get up and sing in front of a crowd.”

“No you won't pass out. Go ahead and go to the audition on Thursday.” Mother said.

Mother remembered when I was about 14 years old, I sang a solo in Church. I got about halfway through the song and began to cry. I was crying because the song was about Jesus dying on the cross. This was what made me sad. No one got me up to sing again. I lived with that fear until I was about 36 years of age.

As it turned out, the Dixie Jamboree loved my singing. I began to sing regularly on the show. It didn't take long to get over the stage fright.

Mother wanted a goal for me in my life, that would help me live on after she was gone. I was not a strong person, even with the things I had now endured. I was very weak and an emotional person. The singing built up my ego and gave me confidence that I did not have before.

Mother knew that I needed this in my life because I had always felt inferior to my siblings. They both had good careers and had lots of money. I had always struggled for every penny I got. I kept on going. I now had a peace and the confidence that I could make goals to see them through.

One night, Mother asked me if I would sing the Country Western song, “A Picture of Me Without You.” I didn’t know why she loved that song so much and wanted me to sing it all the time, but I do now.

I struggled the next few years on what I would do with my singing. I wrote a few songs but nothing that was very good.

This lovely Lady, was trying to help me learn to live after her death. In just a few months, I would help her live everyday that she had to its fullest.

Please stay with me through this story of such courage and strength from God. How could anyone believe that so much could happen in the life of one person? Faith, believing on His Word, and living in His Word. How could she endure so much and continue? Life was obviously worth living and holding on, for her. She appreciated everything God had given her, in spite of the pain she had to go through. She loved Jesus and put her faith and trust in Him every day.

## Chapter Four - Terminal

It's late November 1993, where I am standing in the front room of our home practicing on some music. This was music that I had planned to sing in the upcoming year. The past few months I had been setting goals in my life, which included a singing career. My feelings were torn between a career in Country Western music or Gospel music. Gospel music was what I had been raised on and a home of a high standard of morals. If I decided to continue the goals towards a Country Western music career, then there would be bridges to cross that I did not wish to cross.

As I was standing there that day singing a gospel song, I felt the presence of the Lord in the room with me. I felt His presence so close, as if I could call out His Name and He would have answered. The song that I sang, began to minister to me. I made a big decision in my life that day, that I would not realize how big until two years later. I made the decision to use my singing voice for the Glory of the Lord.

While standing there that day, I also asked Jesus to come into my heart. This was just in case I may not have done so already as a child. I remember Mother and Dad, telling me that I had made a profession of faith. I only remember walking the aisle and being Baptized. I did not know how significant those words were until later.

In the year of 1994, with the help of Jesus, I would write enough songs with words and music for a complete album. Jesus would open doors that enabled me to schedule singing engagements in churches, fairs, local radio, and TV stations. My singing would now become a way for me to project something positive into my Mother's life.

In December of 1993, Mother told me that she had Myeloid Metaplasia. This was a blood disorder. We were told that she had five to fifteen years to live with this disease. Little did the family know that Mother knew her five years were up. This according to the doctors would probably be the last year.

Mother was a strong but gentle force in everyone's life. She always told us that we should not

borrow trouble until trouble was truly there. Trouble was there for her and staring her in the face.

Denial, pain in her eyes, all that I could think of was to let her live, live, live.

This was the beginning of helping a terminally ill patient live, until they die. By this time she was in great emotional and physical pain. She was forced to face what little time she had left and try to make the best of it. I could see it in her eyes every time I came to see her. We would talk about it but nothing seemed to help. Terminal! Will God work a miracle? Dad tells us what happened that day in the doctor's office.

“I have a final question. Is this terminal?” Elaine asked.

Mother's hematology doctor looked like someone had slapped him in the face.

“Yes.” He said. “It is also in the advanced stage.”

Dad said,

“For me the world stood still. Elaine's eyes glazed over and she did not hear the rest of what the doctor said. She heard nothing past the yes. I hug her and love soaks into my heart. Live one day at a time and trust Jesus. He made us, He owns us. He bought us again. To let Him have His will is the wisest thing to do. How? How? How? I don't want to say, thy will be done, because it may mean I have to lose Elaine. I love her. She is everything in my life. The other afternoon a fierce storm came up. She lay on the couch and went to sleep. I went into my bedroom and lay across the bed. I didn't care if the storm killed me or not. Maybe, Jesus just took away the fear. He loves me but I can't understand how He can stand me. It's like a father loves a son. He is not so proud of him at times but he still loves him and longs for him to do better. Weeks later, I lay across the bed and exhaustion came over me. I never had been that tired before. Someone patted me on the head. I figured it was Betty, then she answered me from the other end of the house. I knew then that Jesus loves me. Jesus said, “I will never leave you or forsake you.” “Little bells on the front door pulled me from a deep sleep. Elaine was sitting on the front porch with her coffee. I dragged a dining room chair to the front porch to spend quality time with my love. She arose and went to the other end of the porch to check her flowers. She noticed the old



rose bush that had just one limb on the rotten stalk. There was one beautiful rose on the limb. The rose bush was nearly gone. I went into the house and the tears flowed. Out of the decayed bush one beautiful rose. God help, have mercy.”

Mary shared with me a story of love and concern for a young lady. Mary was my Mother’s best friend. She was like a sister to my Mother. They were sisters in Christ. Mary told me that her granddaughter asked her if my Mother was going to die. Mary said,

“Mrs. Bowman has been sick before and recovered. Maybe she will make it this time. She is a very strong lady.”

The story goes that the granddaughter’s Dad had died years ago when she was a baby. He was in Vietnam and died of Agent Orange, after returning home. She asked Mary again if she had asked Mrs. Bowman if she was going to die. Mary asked her why she wanted to know if Mrs. Bowman was going to die. She replied,

“If Mrs. Bowman is going to die, I would like her to tell my Daddy, hello. Tell him that I love him.”

Just a few days later, Mary came by Mother’s to drink coffee. They would drink coffee together nearly every morning and discuss the weekly events. Mary shared with Mother what had happened and what her granddaughter said. Mother looked at Mary and said,

“Tell her I said, I will tell her Daddy hello and that she loves him.”

Mary said that she knew then Mother must have known for a long time that she was going to die.

Why wouldn’t Mother tell me she was going to die? Why wouldn’t she let me hold her, cry with her, scream, and share with me how she felt? That just wasn’t her way. She was just that strong. Where is your smile, Mother? Where has it gone?

## Chapter Five - Vision or Dream

“Gary.” Betty says. “What does this picture of Mother in my mind mean? She doesn’t look like she does now. What does it mean?”

“What picture, what are you talking about?” Gary questions.

“It’s Mother on a cloud ascending into Heaven. She is beautiful. She has long black hair. Her left leg is healed and there is nothing wrong with it. It is pretty, just like the other one.” Betty says and closes her eyes for a second.

“Maybe someone is trying to tell you how it will be someday.” Gary is puzzled.

“But Gary, Mother is alive. Every time I try and think of what Mother looks like, I see this picture. I am afraid she is going to die, now.”

Gary tried to comfort me and as always it worked. He tried to assure me that Mother was not going to die. I was just worried about her because she was so sick.

This was in March of 1994. Mother had been hospitalized with pneumonia. While in the hospital, she needed a blood transfusion. She was having chest pains and back pains. That week, I stayed worried and afraid. I thought she may not make it. Every time I thought of her, I would have a vision of her in Heaven. I did not have the heart to finish telling Gary what else I saw. Mother was on the cloud and she was looking back at me on the cloud below. I didn’t see the vision anymore until one other night. I just couldn’t tell Gary that she was looking back at me on a cloud below her.

I asked Jesus, if he would give her one more year. Praise His Name, He did.

## Chapter Six - The Healing Touch

In April of 1994, I was scheduled to sing at a local Christian TV station. I arrived at the station a little earlier than usual. Finding myself drawn close to the prayer room, I decided to join the group in prayer. We ask the Lord to bless this night in hopes that someone would come to know Him as their Saviour. One of the men in our group was weary and needed our prayers. So we prayed.

The night went well with the program that was scheduled. I was finished with my singing so I stopped by the prayer room again. I asked them to pray for me and my Mother. We joined hands and prayed. When we finished, the lady next to me said that she felt a presence walk between the two of us. She immediately went to the door, asked the camera man not to enter the room until she opened it again. Then she shut the door. At this time we continued to pray. I had been at Channel 39 before and would continue to be there many times during my Mother's illness. Some of the people in the room with me began to speak in tongues. This was a first time experience, so I listened closely. As I listened, I found myself understanding the man next to me. I am a Baptist, yet I was understanding what this man was saying! Later that night it would be revealed to me by my husband what I had heard. The language that was spoken was in Hebrew. They continued to pray. When we finished, the lady next to me said that I needed to go home, lay hands on my Mother, and pray for her. I went into the studio, got my things, and left.

As I reached the parking lot, I felt a strong presence with me. I had never felt anything like this before. I went to my van and got in. I felt that something might try and keep me from reaching my Mother. So I began to pray. This time it was out loud. I prayed,

“In the Name of Jesus, Jesus protect me.”

I prayed this prayer as I drove to Mother's. About halfway there I heard a soft voice, coming from within say,

“Tell your Mother to do not be afraid.”

I continued to her house. I started to stop but I felt that I shouldn't. I was told to do not touch anyone but my Mother. Something again told me to do not forget to tell your Mother, to do not be afraid. As I turned into the driveway, something told me,

“Your Father will greet you at the door.”

When I reached the door, he did. I asked my Father where Mother was and he opened the door to where she was. I walked towards her and told her that I was here to pray for her.

“Do not be afraid.” I said.

I placed my arms around her shoulders and began to pray. I claimed the blood of Jesus to heal the blood disease that she had. I got up and told her that I was going to tell Dad what had happened at the TV station. Mother changed clothes and joined us.

When Mother arrived in the room, she sat next to me on the couch and I read some scripture pertaining to the blood. Then I prayed for her disease. The presence that was with me left after the prayer. I was afraid and began to cry. I truly believe that the Holy Spirit had been there that night.

Just a few weeks later, I finished a song that I started writing about Mother. I named the song, “The Healing Touch.” Mothers' faith had been restored. Mother had seen things as a young woman concerning the laying on of hands. She thought it to be a fake. This night changed her life forever.

Later I was asked by Dad, if Jesus had healed Mother. I could only reply to,

“I have only been assured that Jesus has healed her Spirit.”

Mother knew that Jesus had touched her. She knew that with His help, she could face anything. Mothers' smile is back.

Praise God for His Healing Touch.

## Chapter Seven - Donors

Do you know what it is like to give blood? Do you know in some cases it is almost impossible to find the correct match? People with blood disorders rely on us who are willing to give one pint of blood. Your blood may save a life or give some precious hours to someone's life. I would have risk my life to give my Mother one pint if it would have changed things. It would not in Mother's case. Medically, I could not. My brother was in Colorado Springs, Co. and my sister was in Germany. Family blood donors are very important during this time.

Mother was hospitalized again. This time she was losing blood. She had developed ulcers in the lower part of her stomach. She was bleeding to death. Things were suppose to be simple. Just go in, have a transfusion, and she would be better. This was one complication they did not suspect. The other was to find the correct blood match. We waited and no blood. Finally, I called the doctor. He told me that they could not find anyone to match hers. I told the doctor,

“Is that all you need?”

He said yes, and I hung up the phone. I called all of my friends that I could find to pray. I let them know what was wrong. We needed blood fast.

The doctors went through Mother's esapogus and repaired the ulcer. God provided the blood we needed that night.

The doctors had told us that Mother's blood had become almost impossible to match. We needed to get family members to come in and be checked for a blood match. We would need blood in the future for her. He suggested that my two sons maybe a match. Both of my sons told me later they knew in their hearts that they could give her blood. They said that something said to go and check. They both matched. They had a personal pride that they were the only ones that could help at the time. I think they grew up a bit that day.

Mother told Dad that she wanted to go west one more time. The places they had seen over the last

forty-eight years that she loved so well, she wanted to see one more time.

They arrived in Spokane, Washington and stayed a few months at my Uncles house. While in Washington, Mother called to tell me that she had picked cherries off some trees in an orchard on the side of a mountain. Simple things gave her so much pleasure.

She was raised on a farm in Louisiana, during the depression. She never stopped loving to plant and see things grow. She told me what it was like to feel the warm sunshine on her face, feel the cool breeze, and smell the fresh air. The sound of her voice was so sweet. She appreciated Gods' creations.

Just a few weeks later, Dad called from Spokane and told me to meet him at the airport. Mother was extremely ill. She needed to be in the hospital. When they arrived at the airport, Mother begged us to let her stay home at least one night. She knew that she would have to have some more blood. While she was in the hospital this time they diagnosed her with congestive heart failure. The doctors believed it had happened back in March when I had the vision of Mother and me on the cloud.

Dad flew back to Spokane to drive the van home. The afternoon Dad returned, Mother took a turn for the worse. The doctors told us to contact the family and have them come home for Christmas. They said that would be her last Christmas on earth.

One of our closest friends found out that Mother needed blood again. He went down and donated blood. He was a perfect match with her blood. Our friend is Spanish and loves hot and spicy food. Mother picked at him about wanting a bowl of chili after she received his blood. This was a special time for both of them.

God is so good. Coincidence or another one of God's miracles.

## Chapter Eight - The Testimony

Mother wanted to go to church. The doctors had asked her not to go where there were crowds.

Mother wanted to go to church anyway. Mother went to church.

I remember her trying to sing and she would cry because the music was so beautiful to her. Mother had missed not being able to go to church. This was her first day back to church and she was so happy to be there. I held back my tears until during the invitation time.

The preacher had a conversation with Mother while she was hospitalized. She wanted to give her testimony. The preacher asked,

“Where are you, Elaine?”

She let him know where she was and he came to her.

“I know you wanted to give your testimony. Tell me what we discussed at the hospital.” The preacher said.

He held the mic up to her and she began to speak. She thanked everyone for their prayers that had gone up for her.

“If I did not know Jesus as my Saviour, I would not be alive today. Because of Jesus and your prayers, I am alive today.” Mother said.

I cried, reached over and kissed her. That was the last time she was able to go back to church.

## Chapter Nine - Mom's Last Christmas

Mother was always encouraging me with my music. In November of 1994, I decided to audition for the Christmas Follies at the Monroe Civic Center. I was chosen and the next six weeks worked hard for the performance. I was excited that she felt a little better. I hoped that she could go with me and see the performance.

I went to our favorite fabric shop and picked out some material to make Mother the most beautiful dress in town. As I have said, Mother was a well-known seamstress. Her sewing was something to behold. She had made wedding dresses, uniforms for rock bands, costumes for Miss Louisiana U.S.A., and more. I cut out the dress that Mother was going to wear. I was going to make it for her but she felt well enough to sew it for herself.

On Tuesday, December 7, 1994, at the Civic Center during practice, I began to write what I was feeling about things.

“I called Lori today and found myself needing her more each day. Mother is fading, little by little each day. It takes so much strength to hold on to life. Sometimes I feel like I'm dying. I think, I am. My heart is breaking and there is nothing that I can do to stop it. I pray every time I can and it doesn't seem to be enough. I wish, I had more time to love, share my life with Mother, and learn from her. I am sitting here trying to get myself together and smile for our performance on Friday night. We have to practice walking, smiling, and singing all at once. Sometimes I feel, I should be with Mother every minute. I live and continue on with my life. It gives her the strength to go forward and one more reason to live if I continue on with my life. God knows her wishes and mine. One more wish or two won't hurt. I will try each day to write and get these feelings out. Can you believe I don't want to talk. There is nothing to say, but God, please help her.”

I wrote a poem or something on how we all felt, that was in this performance. There seems to be a catastrophe going on in their lives too. We all need to draw strength from each other and we do. This is



what I wrote and it explains it.

“We are all here for some reason. We have shared with each other at this most glorious season. We have held each other up giving encouragement, a smile, or a hug, when we were down. We all have special reasons for being here. One is holding on to life and trying to live out her dreams. One is pushing forward after the loss of a father. Her Mother is moving forward by spreading her wings and experiencing the happiness of youth again. Each of us has our own special reason for being here but some we will never know about. I stood on this stage 25 years ago, while it was under construction. My dream was to sing on this very stage someday. It came true for me. I am glad I chose to be a part of the Follies this year. I saw people from different races, religions, and backgrounds. We came together as one family, at this time of year. It was so beautiful to see so much love. Everyone here has shown so much love to each other. Thank you for this Merry Christmas.”

As the time came closer to the performance, Mother became weaker. On the night of the rehearsal, she was hospitalized again. Mother and my family urged me to continue. I made all of the performances.

Mother was released from the hospital long enough to go home for Christmas. We had a three-day celebration. Family members and friends came over, sang to her, and shared their love with her. She told me later that she felt like a Queen and the couch was her throne.

Two days later she was in the hospital for more transfusions. She returned home and grew a little stronger. Mother felt well enough to go to town and buy her a few new outfits. She showed them to me and put one on. I fixed her hair and make-up. We took pictures of her all dressed up. She was so pretty with the weight off. She was pretty with the weight on. I told Mother that I thought that she was prettier than Elizabeth Taylor.

Yes, Mother was a queen or was she an Angel.

## Chapter Ten - Prayers

Last night was a difficult time. Mothers' veins were becoming very fragile and would not hold up to the blood transfusions. They tried sticking her several times.

We have prayer warriors that we call from time to time for prayer. I called Mary and she called some of her prayer warriors. I then went and knelt by my bed at home. Gary lay on the bed and held my hand. We all prayed for Mother.

It was only ten minutes, when Dad called to tell us that our prayers had been answered. They found a vein for the blood. She rested most of the night. Three units of blood but the blood count had not increased enough. They needed to put a port in her chest for the blood transfusions.

Two days ago our Pastor and Choir Director lay hands on Mother and prayed for her. She is afraid and so am I. Time is running out for her. She wants to live so much and continue a productive life. She has always been a witness for Jesus. Her strength comes from Him.

A noon prayer, January 5, 1995.

"I pray in Jesus Name that He raise the blood count and the platelet levels in her blood today. Let her hemoglobin hold at 13. Let all the disease leave her body and she be a witness to Your Healing Power." I prayed.

These are the last days before Jesus returns, I believe that He can heal Mother. It hurts to see her this way, when she has so much will in her to live.

Again I pray.

"Jesus, I love you and know she loves you too. Please help her and me. Give me the strength to minister to her. Give her the hope, to live for You. I need to read Your Word more and learn more about You. Jesus help me to be strong and have more will to stand up for You. Help me to turn away from the bad things of this world. Please help Mother now as she is struggling to stay with us. You know her wishes. We thank You for what You have already done for her and our family on Thanksgiving,

Christmas, and New Years. These were our hopes, our wishes, and hers. Take care of her and heal Dad's broken spirit. He loves her so much. I thank You for giving my Mother such a wonderful man to love and protect her. Jesus, he has protected her from this dirty world we live in. This world has not touched her life like it has other women. Thank You for his love for her and his children. Help us in the days to come and give me the strength to go on each day. Amen.”

## Chapter Eleven - I Saw an Angel

What took place the last time Mother went to the hospital, will be with me until I die. The doctor said that she would not go home anymore. This was the beginning of a very difficult time for all of us. You must realize that I will tell you things that are very difficult to read but there is a positive side to all of this. I know there are people going through what I went through. If you do not know Jesus as your Saviour, you will need to settle that right now.

No one can deal with the emotional turmoil that we did and not have it affect you. With Jesus there with us it made things possible. He held me up. He wrapped His arms around Mother and me. Without Him in my life, I would be nothing. He gives you hope when you think there is none.

If you have the opportunity to help someone terminally ill, do so. They are alive until they die. Don't let them dwell on their death. Get a wheelchair and take them to the park, the movies, or the mall. Whatever they will let you do for them, do it.

When they are so sick they don't feel like fighting anymore, climb a mountain for them. I remember climbing many a mountain in Mother's hospital room. Try it. It is fun. They will think you are crazy. Who cares? Get them a stuffed animal to cuddle up with at night, when they are alone. I promise they will go to sleep with it in their arms.

They feel so alone, because they are. They have to do this for themselves. We can't do it for them. One day, we will have to do it for ourselves. When a Christian dies, he is absent from the body but present with the Lord.

Saturday morning, February 1995, Dad called and said come to the house now. Mother had not looked good the night before at the Peking Restaurant. My husband was worried and said she should go back to the hospital.

When I arrived, Mother's right eye had blood in it. Mother was crying and hysterical. I had to be strong to help her through this. We had been told by the doctors that she could bleed through every

place that blood could come from. There was nothing that they could do. Medical science has come far but was not able to help. No, this was not the end, not yet. We took her to the hospital so they could start transfusions again. Blood nor platelets from my brother would be able to stop what was to happen now.

On Monday, the bleeding started from Mother's mouth and nose. She was sitting in her bed at the hospital awake and talking. I came in and saw this. I am not a nurse but my sister and sister-in-law are. Why was I the one to do this? A sister in Germany, a nurse. A sister-in-law in Colorado, a nurse. Why me? I was here and God had a plan for my life. This was to strengthen a very weak person. Dad and I were the ones that had helped her through the near death experiences. She needed me and I needed her. She had a very strong spirit. I began picking up the bloody rags, the bloody sheets, and bloody gowns. I began helping the nurse the best I knew how. Mother would just smile and say,

“The doctors are doing their best.”

“I am not afraid to die, but I don't want to.”

On Wednesday, I walked into the room and she was the same as on Monday and Tuesday. I started to lose it. I looked up at her face with the blood running down from her nose and mouth. I turned away and turned back again to see the face of Jesus on the cross! I realized that she was covered with the blood of Jesus. Yes, she was safe in His arms. Through Him, I could face whatever happened from this day forward.

On Thursday night, I came by to see Mother. The room was full of men talking. They gathered around her like a flock of chickens. She motioned for me to come closer so that she could tell me something. She began to tell me that she was seriously ill. She thought she should be the one to tell me.

We knew everything that was going on. The doctors had leveled with us. We allowed the short time that we had to be precious and wonderful. I knew my Mother for more than forty years. She was very protective and did not want to be a burden to us. Her knowing that I knew everything would only hurt her because I was hurting. You see God was already making me strong. I asked my Mother to hold me.

I did not want to be big. I wanted to be her little girl again. I crawled up in the bed with her. I will never forget the gentle hands on my back, patting me. She did just like she did when I was a little girl. Mother then pulled away and let me be strong again.

When I went home that night, I asked Jesus to please stop the bleeding. If there was no reason for the bleeding, please don't let my brother coming in from Colorado, see her this way.

On Friday at 2:00 P.M., the bleeding stopped. My brother and his family came down one last time to try and buy Mother some more time by Mike giving her platelets.

On Saturday night, I agreed to let my brother stay with Mother during the night. Dad and I needed to get some sleep. I had not slept since Monday night without a nightmare.

About 10:00 P.M., I lay down to try and get some sleep. I shut my eyes and remembered that I would probably have a nightmare again. As I opened my eyes, I saw someone standing in the doorway. It was the most beautiful being that I have ever seen. I thought this might be a Heavenly Being, maybe an Angel. Then I quickly closed my eyes. This did not compute. I was curious and thought, what if this is Jesus. Then I opened my eyes again. It was not Jesus, because the being had wings. The garment that the Heavenly Being was wearing was a material that I have never seen. It was ivory white with a gold thread design. It was of a masculine nature, with reddish brown hair. The wings were like something that I have never seen before. I could not make out the face but that could have been because I wasn't wearing my glasses. I watched as the Heavenly Being changed to a smoky form, moving across the room, and passed into another dimension. I was not afraid, alarmed maybe. Then I closed my eyes and slept for ten hours without a nightmare.

It was about noon the next day when I told my husband what I had seen. He asked,

“Why didn't you wake me up so I could see.”

“This was probably just for me.” I said.

“It was probably a Cherubim or Seraphim. They are ministering beings that are sent for specific needs. The need last night was to let you know that you are not alone. You needed the sleep.” Gary told

me.

Why was I chosen to be the one in the family to see this Heavenly Being? Was it because I would truly believe what I saw? Yes, the being was real. If you had seen this, you would have believed. I have never seen any picture show that had such magnificent special effects. They would not be able to duplicate this. I have tried to paint what I saw on canvas.

A few years later I started back oil painting. I had stopped for twenty-five years. I painted my Angelic Being, the one of Mother and me on a cloud, and Jesus with the three crosses.

I had read where Angels appeared to people in the Old Testament and the New Testament times. There were also miracles performed. While Jesus was here on earth He did the impossible. To Him all things are possible. He is away preparing a place for us.

When I decided to start back painting, I called an art teacher to help me with a refresher course. I shared the encounter of the Heavenly Being and wanted to paint what I had seen. I was amazed how emotional I became trying to paint someone so complex. I painted on black background with the Being standing in the doorway.

When I finished my painting, my art teacher said that I saw something not of this world. She had seen paintings of winged beings. People that painted them described them the same way I did. I did not see anything but shadows of lines for the facial features that night. All I know is that it was beautiful and no words or painting can ever describe what I saw.

Jesus and His Heavenly Host are alive and will someday soon return. Prove it, you say. Find Jesus, let Him into your heart and the proof will be there.

## Chapter Twelve - The Journey Home

Dad and I were in the waiting room at the hospital, on the floor that has good news and bad news. Most of the time it is bad news. While in the waiting room a lady came in and sat down. She began to talk with us. I will leave the names out because I don't believe we were introduced. She begins with,

“My husband has been in a coma for more than two weeks. I have seen you come and go. I think that you may like to hear my story. Awhile ago, I was in the room alone with him. He has said nothing for so long. All of a sudden he asked me to move from where I was standing.” She chokes up a bit.

“Honey, move over a little. I see someone over by the window. It is your Dad. What is he doing here?” Her husband asked.

“Now let me tell you. My Dad has been dead for a long time. My husband, my Dad and his Dad were the best of buddies. They fished together and you name it they were together when they could be. He then asked me something else.” She said.

“Move over a little so I can see who the other one is. Say. It is my Dad. There is someone in the middle that is dressed in white. I can't tell who it is because He is so bright. They want me to come and go with them. Come on and let's go, Honey.” He says. Then he turns and looks at me.

“I can't go right now.” I replied.

“Okay, I'll wait.” Her husband says.

“That was the strangest thing. He hasn't said another word. He has been out ever since.” She chokes up again.

“You know he maybe able to hear you. Go back in there and tell him to go with them. Tell him that you will be along in a little while. Give him permission to go. He is just staying here for you.” Dad said.

Dad told her and the goose bumps went all over him and me. There was more to the conversation but that was most of it. She went back to the room where her beloved was and told him. I don't know



the time space or much of anything else. He left to be with Jesus and she went home to be with her sorrow. I believe it was a little easier for her knowing that the man in white was in the middle. I wonder how many stories could be gotten from hospital rooms.

There was another, I believe would be of interest. There was a man that was brought into intensive care in a coma. He was out for three days. All of a sudden he rose up in bed and asked the nurse,

“How long have I been out?” He said.

“Three days.” The nurse replied.

“I surely knew it had been a long time. Someone went over everything I ever did. They would say, how about this one? It went on and on.” The man said.

The man got the message. He went home and his whole family is in Church all the time. Why do some seem to have a second chance to tell the truth. We have thousands of second chances.

During the next week, Mother’s kidneys started to give her trouble. She needed to be put on dialysis. She refused, so the doctor put her on medication to help the problem. It was not wise to do so but it was her wish.

On Sunday, Mother let the men of the Church anoint her with oil, lay hands on her, and pray for her. We belong to a Southern Baptist Church. My brother was amazed at our Church for doing this for Mother. This was a comfort to all of us. We left no stone unturned.

The next day her kidneys started functioning on their own. She began to get up, move around, and crochet a baby blanket for her first great-grandchild. Mother started to communicate with us again. For awhile she was withdrawn. Most of the time while Mother was bleeding, it affected her thinking. The loss of blood and the platelet level was low enough for her to have been dead for three weeks.

The doctor told us that he did not know why she was still alive. It was impossible for her to be alive with the platelet level this low. I told the doctor that Jesus was not ready for her to go home yet.

Mother grew stronger. We know that people sometimes get stronger before they die. Her kidneys were now functioning. She began to show some progress.

I remember the day she got so sick that she did not call me anymore. I missed her morning calls. She would call me every morning to talk. She would always call in the morning and say,

“Hey, what are you doing?”

I told Dad how I felt. Then one morning he dialed the phone and handed it to Mother. She was so sick that day that she gave it away. She said,

“I don’t know why Dad gave me the phone and said to talk to you.”

I laughed it off, then continued talking to her. Several days later when she was feeling better, she picked up the phone and dialed me on her own.

“Hello, hey, I figured out how to use the phone.” Mom said.

I was shocked and asked her where Dad was.

“He is at home, I guess. I just talked to him.” She said.

She was making the call on her own. Jesus knew that I wanted to hear her voice on the phone. That was the last time she would call me on the phone. Jesus knew my wishes. He loves us so. Something so simple but so meaningful to me. I wrote a song about it a few months later. The name of the song is “Mamma’s Going Home.”

Sunday about 9:00 A.M., I went to the hospital. I fixed Mother’s hair, nails, and gave her a bath. Mary and I were going to a friend’s 50<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary. We planned to stop by afterwards to see Mother. I wanted her to be as pretty as we were that day, seeing that we would be all dressed up.

When Mary and I came that afternoon to see Mother, we found her sitting on the side of the bed. She was so pretty. We had a nice talk. When it was time to go, Mother said,

“Let’s pray.”

This was our prayer group. Mother, Dad, Mary and I. We would get together and pray when problems would arise. Dad started the prayer, then I prayed. When Mary prayed, she asked the Lord to cast His shadow on Mother and to protect her. The sun had been shining brightly on her bed and her face. I had my eyes closed but a shadow or a cloud went over the sun at the same time, the room

darkened. Dad said that he opened his eyes but it was a cloud that hid the sun. I did not open my eyes after seeing my Angel a week before. I wasn't about to open my eyes. I am human, you know. I hadn't decided what I had seen. In a second the cloud moved on and the room brightened up again. Mother prayed. I wish I could remember all that she said. I do remember that she said,

“Thank you, Jesus for healing me. I love you, Jesus.”

This was the last time I heard my Mother pray. That Sunday morning when I was doing her nails she stopped me and called my attention to one of her nails. This was the one that had been split for years. We had tried repairing it for the last few years. It was now perfectly healed, no split. She looked at it and said,

“It is well, I wonder how this happened.”

I noticed that all of her nails were perfect. They did not really need manicuring. All I did was put nail polish on them. Everything was showing a healing process going on.

Later that same day, Mother told Dad to take some of her things home. She told him that she was going home. She paused and said,

“To 102 Bradley Drive.”

Mother and Dad lived there. She also told me and other people that she was going home on Wednesday. Mother told me on Monday night that she wanted me to tell my oldest son to stop by her room on Tuesday. She wanted to tell him in person that she was going to go home on Wednesday.

My oldest son had just gotten a job in the hospital the day before. We did not want to admit that she was going to die on Wednesday. I was afraid she may die before then. I told both of my sons and husband on Tuesday afternoon that we needed to go to the hospital tonight.

When I arrived at the hospital and entered the room, I said to Mother,

“How are you, Baby?”

She looked in my direction but seemed to be talking to someone else.

“I have been sick for a long time. I am tired of fighting. “ She said.

That was not what I wanted to hear. I excused myself and told everyone that I was going to get some tea. I went to the nurses station to ask when Mother's vital signs had been taken last. The nurse said they had been taken around 3:00 P.M. I told the nurse that I thought Mother was having a stroke.

Mother's speech was slurred when I had come in the first time, where I could not understand what she was saying. I freaked out at the time and could not understand anything. That's why I left the room. Gary listened and could understand what she was saying. He told us later that she was looking at the corner of the room and was talking to someone telling them that she had been sick for a long time and was ready to go.

After me telling the nurses what I had heard, the nurse immediately went to Mother's room. When she came back, she called the doctor. When I returned to Mother's room, she had grown worse. She said something else that did not make sense. Dad got the oxygen mask and put it on her.

I left the room again and told the nurse that I was sure Mother was having a stroke. I waited outside. I was afraid. This was the time that I thought I was ready for. No one is ready for this. The nurse told me they were taking her down to do a Cat-Scan. When they wheeled Mother past me, I told her that I loved her. She was not able to talk to me anymore.

Mother returned to the room while I was making some calls. I started down the hall and saw the doctor walking towards me. All he did was lower his head and say,

"I am sorry."

I told Gary to stay in Mother's room while Dad and I talked to the doctor. The doctor told us that Mother had a massive stroke. She would live from one to three hours. Dad returned to Mother's room and sent Gary out to me. I asked Gary,

"What do I tell her? She is going to die and I don't know what to say!"

"You will know what to say." Gary lovingly said.

I entered the room. Mother was on oxygen and having a hard time breathing. I reached over, took her hand but it was drawn up to her chest. I place my hand on her arm and legs. I lay against her bed

and started to sing.

“Our Father Which Art in Heaven.”

Just one more chance to sing to Mother before she went to Heaven was what I wanted.

I then sang the song that I had written for her. “The Healing Touch”. A few minutes later I sang, “Just a Closer Walk With Thee.” I sang, “How Great Thou Art,” then finished up by singing again, “The Healing Touch.” Then I stopped. I got up and told Mother that I have to go now. This is Dad’s and your time together. I told her that I loved her and left the room never to return. I found out later that one of the doctors started crying, excused himself, and left the hospital. He loved her too. Dad motioned for me to call the children.

Gary followed me out of the room to go with me to call my brother in Colorado and my sister in Germany. I started down the hall after making a lot of calls to friends and family members. I started to feel weak and strange so I stopped by the vending machines. I then got a coke and a package of peanut butter crackers. I went to the nurses station to ask the nurse if I was supposed to feel this way when someone close to you is dying. I told her that I had blood sugar problems. I thought that they may need to check my sugar level. I had already started drinking a coke.

The nurse checked my blood and told the other nurse she had not come up with a reading. The nurse said she had just used the machine and it worked. They checked it again and it read 30. This was low enough to put me into me I.C.U. The nurse told me to drink the coke as fast as I could. Get another coke and eat the peanut butter crackers.

The nurse came over to me and asked me to please sit in a wheelchair. At that time I remembered the vision that I had the year before. The one of Mother on a cloud just ahead of me. We were both on a journey to Heaven. I felt this must be a sign to me. I decided not to return to Mother’s room again. I believe that I would have not survived the night if I had done so.

Mother and Dad were not left alone that night. There were four men with Mother until her death. These men were special to her and she was special to them. No one will tell me what happened after I

left. All I know is they have never and will never speak of what happened.

Mother had many diseases that faith helped her overcome. God did answer prayers in her life. She once asked,

“Why have I been sick all my life?”

I told her,

“The devil can’t find anything in your life you are doing that he considers bad enough. He thinks that he can reach you through illness.”

He was not successful even at the end. Mother went to Heaven at 11:30 P.M., just thirty minutes before she had told us that she was going home. She has a body that won’t suffer any more.

Dad has a picture of her when she was thirty-three. He said that is what she will look like when he finds her. It makes me have chill bumps to think of what she saw that night. How wonderful it must have been seeing the one that entered the room. Then would gently ask questions, to then give answers that she was ready to go home. How could I have sang the songs to her without Jesus being there to give me the strength? Dad said it was the clearest that I had sang since I was nine years old.

Dad kept asking her questions and she would squeeze his hand in reply. He said her head fell to one side and she was gone. The nail scarred hands reached out to her and took her from the sick body to be with Him forever. Dad said she found in Jesus what she could never find in him. Dad kissed her on her hand that he had been holding for so long. He stood up and then kissed her on the forehead.

She will never suffer again. The sickness is over and she will never be sick again. She was on her feet until a hour before she died. It was time to go home but she did not go home with Dad.

Dad and I had been at this hospital time after time watching people die. Family members would be crying hysterically. We also were hearing stories of others and their Heavenly experiences. There was no hysteria because we were sure that Mother was with our Lord. Dad, Gary, and I just walked out and left the hospital. We walked into the darkest night we have ever known.

## Chapter Thirteen - Moments to Remember

This book was written for one main purpose. Its objective was to help the loved ones of a terminally ill patient. You can read up on their disease. You can even go to the best doctors. When the time comes you will have to face the fact that they will die. It's okay to cry, feel angry, and try everything humanly possible to stop this nightmare. Death is a part of life.

“And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.”

Hebrews 9:27.

The most precious thing you can do at this time is to show your love.

Some people lose loved ones without any warning. Think of the pain, suddenly cut off without remedy, the things you wanted to say but kept putting them off and not having the chance to share your feelings.

What do you say to a loved one when they are leaving this world? I love you, I love you. That is what they want to hear, I love you. You are not alone.

How was I feeling at the time? Terrified! I don't think I ever believed that Mother was going to die. I never gave up hope. I filled my life and hers with singing, writing songs, and helping Dad write his first novel. We would argue over a paragraph in the story and Mother would referee. She loved it. It gave us time to be together sharing something positive in our life.

While at work, I would write my songs and then try them out on Mother. Her opinion was important to me. I don't know why God blessed me with these beautiful songs. Perhaps, they were given to us to help us through these bad times.

Mother knew that Dad and I were inseparable from birth. He would always take me fishing. I remember catching most of the fish. He spent his time putting the bait on my hook, so I could have the joy of catching the fish. If you have never been on Cheniere Lake with my Dad driving the boat, then you do not know what real excitement is.

Picture this forty-year old man, driving an aluminum boat, going at a high rate of speed, weaving in and out, through the stumps, and trees. To a ten-year old girl, it would look like that. I loved it. There is an apple, banana flip, and coke in a bag for a snack. We are heading through the trees with Spanish moss, stumps, wasps, spider webs, and alligators. I forgot the snakes. This was a place where no man had gone before except some fishing nut like my Dad. The stumps were used as bathrooms. Don't fall off because water moccasins or alligators may have you for lunch.

Memories helped Mother focus on the good times. Think of this time you have left with your loved one as a moment to remember. Give yourself and them special quality time. Make goals with them. Help them believe they will be here to share them with you. Make some of the goals short termed, as I did with my singing.

Dad was there by mine and Mother's side. Mother was pushing Dad and me closer together for a reason. Mother feared that Dad and I may not be able to survive her death. She feared that we would go into such deep depression that we may never be able to pull out.

Mother didn't know then but God had a plan. He has had a plan before the foundation of the world. Without Him, I would be nothing. Without Him, during this time, I would not have survived. There is life after death. To a Christian, death is just a shadow. It can scare you out of your skull but a shadow can't hurt you. Psalms 23:4 says,

“Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.”

Isn't it wonderful when we believe, Jesus is the Christ. If we have eternal life then death is just a shadow. Dad tells of a dream he had one night. Here I'll let him tell it in his own words,

“I hope, I can tell this where you will understand. At times over the years, I have had bad dreams. Some of them were nightmares or whatever you wanted to call them. I have had good ones more than the bad ones. I had one a few years before Elaine went to be with Jesus. Elaine and I were in a Pine forest that I had never seen to my knowledge. It was just before dark. I noticed there was a glow in the



eastern sky that was growing like a sunset of great beauty. The sunset in the west had completely gone. This glow in the sky would have put the Northern Lights to shame. It was so beautiful, I could never describe it . I turned, looked at Elaine and said, "It's the Rapture." I noticed that without realizing what was happening we both were heading towards the light. We were already at the top of the Pine trees. I awoke and told her what I had dreamed. I could not get it out of my mind. Even years later it is still in my memory in color. I had never been at that place in my life. Elaine went on to be with our Lord and left me behind in real life. We had bought two cemetery plots years ago when the cemetery was just started. I never bothered checking the location. I knew where the Cemetery was located. I wasn't looking for a hole in the ground. I was looking for one in the sky. I was so hurt, I could see nothing but my grief. The man showed me on the map where the plots were. When we arrived at the Cemetery with my love, the grave was opened in a different part of the cemetery. The place was very pretty and looked over a lake at the foot of the hill. I wondered why they had moved the plots. It was not where the map showed. One day when I was visiting her grave just before dark, it dawned on me this is the place I saw in my dream of the Rapture. It was the exact spot and I had never been there in my life. Today, May 20, 1997, I thought that I should record it. She is now in the grave. My plot is now on the side where I was in the dream. Does He let us see in the future. This was more than a dream. She has been dead two and one half years now. It seems just like yesterday, I still love her with all of my heart."

## Chapter Fourteen - Recovery

Recovery! I'm in a new world now. This world does not include my Mother. I am satisfied that I did everything I could for her, before she died.

On Friday, March 10, 1995, after we buried Mother all of our immediate family members, spouses, and a cousin gathered in Mother and Dad's living room. We stayed up until 3:00 A.M. talking about Jesus, Heaven, and who Mother maybe talking to as she walked the streets of gold. I hope Jesus gave Mother a front row seat to watch her children talk with excitement of where she was and what she maybe doing.

We had to take turns and have someone time us so the other one could get a word in. The Bowman's love to talk. We are all looking forward to a reunion with her someday. At the Rapture, if we are still here, we will join with her and be changed in the twinkling of an eye. Oh, we hurt, we shed tears, and still do years later. Our hearts nearly break every time we think of her. We are not without hope.

Mother's life showed us what hope truly was about. She wanted us to live productive lives with Jesus as our Teacher. She did not want Lori to give up her career as an army nurse and come home to care for her. So Mother just reassured Lori that she would get better and would come to Germany again. Mother knew that Mike would be fine with his wife and three girls close to his side. Dad and I would have each other to keep us busy.

Mary has had tragedies in her life and Mother was the one link she had to this world. Mother was hope, peace, and a comfort to her.

As time goes on, I realize that I do not know how to fill the void that Mother has left. I find myself alone and no female companionship. Within a two year period of time, I lost both Grandmothers and my Mother. I have not drawn close to Mary because it hurts too much to be near her. She was a big part of my Mother's life. If I had to see Mary, then I was reminded that Mother was not there. Mary was feeling the same feelings. I talked to Mary last night and told her how I felt. I told her that I knew that

no one could replace my Mother but I would love to spend more time with her now. I felt that I was healing now and that I needed a friend. I found that Mary had been feeling the same way and she needed me too. Mary is a lot like my Mother. She is a Christian and is sweet and gentle like Mother was. We will now help each other fill that void that Mother left. I know that this would make Mother happy.

Mother was the closest thing to being an Angel that I have ever known. I like to think sometimes that she was an Angel that came to earth and stayed for a little while to show us how to live. Mother sure did what our Lord asked her to do better than most of us. She showed us a little bit of what love was really like. I wrote a song before Mother went to be with Jesus about the way I felt about her.

I am so glad we have a Saviour that has gone to prepare a place for us. Mother is more alive than she has ever been. She lives on. Think of the beautiful memories. Don't be afraid to reach out and let God work in your life and the lives of your loved ones. Recovery! Yes, you recover a little each day. Please be concerned and patient with those who are there every day and witness the suffering. They never get relief. When they finally do, they are left void. Nothing to do, no where to go, no where to run. In time you will heal. The good memories will return to you. Things you can't remember will come back to you.

Three weeks after Mother's death, I sat at work and wrote a notebook full of memories of every minute of her life that I could remember. I knew that I would write this book one day. I wrote this book to help my family and others know that you will heal from the loss of your loved one. This story will let Lori and Mike be there when they could not. I hope this will help others do what I did. I helped Mother live until she died.

It is how we live until we die that is important. Yes, live until we die. Not die every day you have left. Live every moment to its fullest. Give them hope for the future. Hope is all any of us have. Hope that we will see the next day. Without Jesus in my life, I would never have survived.

Jesus is the reason I live on. I try and let my Mother live on through my life. She left me with so

many things in my life. She taught me to sew, paint, crafts, cut hair, perm hair, and encouraged me in my singing career. Most of all she taught me about Jesus. He has been the most important thing in my life. He has always been there for me. Waiting for me to take His Hand and follow Him. That day in my music room, when I let Jesus have my life, he became my life.

Three months after Mother's death, I was in our revival at church. The preacher was asking us if we knew for sure, for sure, for sure, that if we died today, would we go to Heaven? I could not be for sure, for sure, for sure. I walked the aisle that night and admitted to all my Christian friends that I had accepted Jesus as my Saviour two years before. I was not saved when I was a young child as I thought. I knew that my life had been changed that day in my music room. The decision now was to confess it before men, just as it says in the Bible. In Romans 10:9-10.

“That if thou shalt confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus Christ and believe that God has raised Him from the dead, thou shall be saved. With the heart man believeth unto righteousness and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.”

Taking Jesus as my Saviour and knowing He was there for me helped me with this sorrow. He turned the sorrow into beautiful memories. I am able to go on with my life without Mother. One day I will see her in Heaven. Life is eternal for those who have Jesus as their Saviour. It is so simple. Ask Jesus to save you. If you want to be happy, let Him be the Lord of your life. For a Christian we have the assurance of being,

“Absent from the body is to be present with the Lord.” Hebrews 9:27.

He is Lord of Lords, King of Kings, Creator, Redeemer, Everlasting Father. You can trust a man that would die for you. Jesus did that for you and I.

God's love is your answer. Praise God for my Mother. Praise God for His Love.