

God's Doorstep

By Wendy Lynn Larson

It was the spring of 1984—my junior year in high school—and I had just finished playing the role of Bloody Mary in our *South Pacific* musical. I was in choir class and flying high with the tune of “Bali Hai” still ringing in my ears when I noticed some unusual bruises on my arms.

When I got home, I showed them to my mom, a licensed practical nurse. She took one look and said evenly, “I think we should have a doctor take a look at this. It might just be a vitamin K deficiency.” I couldn’t tell from her calm demeanor, but she later told me her spirit was filled with anxiety at the sight of the bruises. Her training and background taught her that bruises like these could be something far more significant.

After some blood work and an unexpected delay because of an oversight by the clinic, I was taken in for a bone marrow biopsy. The following day, I went to school sore but otherwise unconcerned, hoping they could get to the bottom of this nuisance so I could get on with the remaining four days of my junior year. After my final class, I called home from school to see if the biopsy results had come in.

Mom answered the phone and I immediately knew from her voice that something was wrong—horribly wrong. I hung up, and turned to one of my friends standing next to me. “My mom wouldn’t tell me, but I think I’m dying!” She told me Dad was coming to pick me up and would tell me what was going on when he arrived. As I walked to my locker, I felt as if the walls around me were closing in. My life was suddenly coming to a halt.

As we drove out of the parking lot, Dad gave me the news: “Wendy, you have something called Acute Myelogenous Leukemia.” The first two words meant little to me, but I knew what the last one meant. *Cancer!* In the minutes that followed, my life actually flashed before me as I faced my own mortality at 17 years of age.

When we got home, I went up to my bedroom, a place that had been my solace since I could first remember. I had strong faith, but it had never been put to the test like this. I sat on my bed and asked that infamous question. “Why me?” Without a doubt, I heard a distinct, audible response. “Wendy, you will be healed.”

Instantly, my tears were replaced with a small smile of hope. Faith suddenly took on a completely new meaning—and I clung to those words through the next five months as I endured three rounds of chemotherapy, full body radiation, a bone marrow transplant, and all the side effects that go along with the treatments.

Like any cancer survivor, this experience has helped me grow as a person and, because of my faith, as a woman of God. Each day is a blessing and should be lived to the fullest. I consider myself blessed to be here to live the life I’ve been given. Since healing from Leukemia, I have seen numerous additional miracles in my life that I know were heaven-sent.

With children home from school along with family vacations and relaxation, June and July bring refreshment and sunshine-filled outdoor moments. Consider what would happen if we took that same mindset each day and applied it to enjoying God, instead of focusing on the negative things in life. And when life gets difficult, let’s remember this: The end of our rope can be the beginning of God’s doorstep!

Wendy Lynn Larson is a speaker, singer, and happy homemaker with a bachelor’s degree in Speech/Communications from Bethel University. She has been a spokesperson for the American Red Cross and the National Bone Marrow Association, and has worked in recruitment, management, and customer service. Wendy’s passion is to minister to other people about the hope God has given her. She’s shared her story with numerous groups and organizations and through her book, My Climb. Wendy lives and loves in River Falls, Wisconsin with her husband, Dan, and their children, Abby and Lucas. wendylynnlarson.com

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