



## General Topics :: Why Be Afraid?

### Why Be Afraid? - posted by ginnyrose (), on: 2008/12/2 4:38

Last week while surfing the web, looking for something, I came across this article. I was so blessed by it that I contacted its author who graciously gave me permission to share it with others, including the posting of it here on SI. The story is one of many inspirational stories in the book "He Raised Me Up To Stand On Mountains." Her website is: [www.helenlescheid.com](http://www.helenlescheid.com)

Read and be encouraged....

Blessings,  
ginnyrose

Why Be Afraid? By Helen Grace Lescheid

My 87-year-old great-aunt, Anna, was a very practical woman more at home with serving up delicious meals than dreaming up stories. But one day, after a scrumptious meal, as we were sitting on a sofa together, she hesitantly began to tell me of an experience in her life, then stopped abruptly as though she were going to change the subject. "I've told very few people this," she said shyly. "They might not believe me." My curiosity piqued, I encouraged Aunt Anna to continue. We settled back into the sofa cushions and she began to tell me the following story.

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Three weeks before Christmas 1944--the memory is as vivid today as though it happened yesterday--I was a refugee from the Ukraine living in an old house high up in the Alps near Ratkersburg, Yugoslavia.

World War II had unleashed its fury upon my village of Nieder-Chortitza, west of the Dnieper River in Ukraine. After many months of bombing and shelling, we had fled for our lives. In the dim interior of a freight car, we tried to calm our pounding hearts by singing hymns. Our train, crammed with refugees, had inched its way across the Ukrainian steppes and through Poland.

Sometimes the Russian army opened fire on the train. Bombs exploded and rocked the cars. The staccato of machine guns drummed in our heads. We clung to each other.

But we had made it safely to Yugoslavia, now occupied by the Germans. Since the Germans had brought us and treated us favorably, the Yugoslavs hated us. We feared \*partisan activity against us. Wild stories circulated about how these men, dressed as firemen, had raped refugee women and plundered their homes at night. Some of our boys had been shot at by them. For that reason we kept our doors bolted shut. Women never traveled alone.

Added to this peril, the fighting front was again too close for comfort. Many nights searchlights fanned the night skies, then explosions rocked the windows as the Russian bombers dropped their deadly cargo.

Once more we feared for our lives and thought about evacuation. "Come to Germany," my sister Tina had written. "You'll be safer here."

So, on this particular day, a friend and I took a train to Graz, Austria, to fill out application forms for a visa. The long, dangerous journey took all day. On the return trip to Ratkersburg, I noticed how quickly daylight was fading. Then sleet pelted the window.

"A miserable night to be out walking," my friend muttered.

I agreed.

"I'm getting off at the next station to spend the night at my son's house," she said. "Anna, you're welcome to come too." I shook my head "no." My friends at home would worry if I didn't arrive tonight, and I had no way of telling them about a change in plans.

The train slowed and my friend got off. Watching her receding back as she hurried away, I felt desolate. Should I have gone with her? The train lurched and began to move again. At 8 p.m. it chugged into my station. As I descended, an icy wind tore at my threadbare coat and thin kerchief. The sleet stung my face. I hurried into the dimly lit station, sat down on a wooden bench, and deliberated what to do.

To get back to my home up the mountain, I would have to walk ten kilometers, alone, in the pitch darkness. I had no flashlight, and I would have to find my way. Even worse, the narrow path ran past a cemetery, vineyards, and dense forest--the kinds of places partisans might be hiding in. Only a few houses lay scattered on the lonely terrain. Then, too, I would have to ford a rushing mountain stream.

There's no way I can make that trip tonight, I thought.

A middle-aged man busied himself behind the wicket. Timidly I approached him: "Sir, could I spend the night here, please

e?"

"No, ma'am," he said emphatically.

"I have far to walk..." I began.

"Ma'am, I can't allow it," he said abruptly. He grabbed his coat and hat and fished for the keys in his pocket. Then he headed for the door. Panic kept me rooted to the floor. I can't go up that mountain alone.

At the door the man turned and said impatiently, "C'mon. I'm locking this place up." He must have seen the panic in my eyes, for he said more kindly, "During an air raid, you'll be safer up the mountain anyway."

As I listened to the receding crunch of his boots on gravel, the knot of fear in my stomach tightened. The only man who could have helped me vanished into the night.

What was I to do? For a few moments, I stood under the eaves of the straw roof. Then I lifted my face to the sky and spoke to the only Person who could help me now. "Father," I whispered, "I'm so scared. Take away this terror. Walk with me."

Suddenly a light fanned across the sky. Oh, no, the bombers! I thought. Knowing that train stations are targeted, I moved away from the building. The light moved with me, clearly shining on my path. I waited for the screeching of planes, then the explosion of bombs. Nothing. Instead, a deep quietness. An indescribable peace filled my heart, dispelling every trace of fear. The path lay bright at my feet.

Hymns of praise welled up inside me: "Lass die Herzen immer froehlich und mit Dank erfuellet sein"; (May our hearts be ever joyful and filled with thankfulness.) "So nimm denn meine Haende und fuehre mich." (Take Thou my hand, O Father, and lead me on.) Song after joyous song filled me with praise. I fought a strong urge to sing out loud--after all, one had to be prudent--but I began to hum softly.

Then I realized the wind had stopped--and the rain. In fact, it was as warm as a summer's night. I began to loosen my kerchief. How strange to be so warm in December, I thought.

When I reached the swollen stream, the water glistened like a myriad of diamonds. Sure-footed, I stepped onto the flat rocks sticking out of the foaming water and forded it.

The light guided and cheered me all the way up the mountain. As I neared the old house, I looked back over the treacherous mountain path I had taken. Like a ribbon of light it lay behind me.

Excitedly, I knocked on the door. I wanted my friends to see this awesome sight.

The door opened. A gust of wind grabbed it, almost tearing it off its hinges. "Anna, come in," my friend yelled, pulling me inside. My friends crowded around me. "Such a terrible storm. Weren't you afraid?" they asked.

"No," I shook my head. "There was no storm." But I could say no more, for now I could hear it too: the howling wind, the sleet pelting the window panes, the moaning of the house.

While one friend busied herself with my supper, another took my coat. "It's dry," she said. "Anna, your coat is dry."

"I know," I said. I did my best to explain, but my friends looked at me strangely as though they were trying to make sense out of it all.

Aunt Anna finished her story and searched my face. "You do believe this really happened to me, don't you?"

"Yes, I believe you." I took her hand and squeezed it. "I guess what you're telling me is that we've got nothing to be afraid of--ever."

"Yes, yes," Aunt Anna smiled. "What is there to be afraid of?"

**Re: Why Be Afraid? - posted by enid, on: 2008/12/2 7:16**

A truly remarkable, wonderful and brilliant story.

God is limitless, and we seem to forget that. He is never 'stuck' for ideas.

Thank you for sharing this excellent story.

**Re: - posted by Nellie, on: 2008/12/2 10:05**

THanks for sharing this.

I needed it so much, today.

God Bless.

Nellie

**General Topics :: Why Be Afraid?**

**Re: - posted by fuehrerbe21 (), on: 2008/12/2 11:00**

what an awesome reminder of how God hears us, especially in our weakest moments.

**Re: Why Be Afraid? - posted by Lor\_E (), on: 2008/12/3 7:19**

Quote:  
-----Hymns of praise welled up inside me: "Lass die Herzen immer froehlich und mit Dank erfuellet sein"; (May our hearts be ever joyful and filled with thankfulness.) "So nimm denn meine Haende und fuehre mich." (Take Thou my hand, O Father, and lead me on.) Song after joyous song filled me with praise.  
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I think this is so appropriate at this time, it was so such a reminder of God's great mercies towards us and His divine power. I have heard other testimonies from people who were on the mission field, those who were held in prison camps, so me who were just in a time of great need, and over and over again God always proves Himself faithful!

He has ALWAYS been faithful to me, perhaps not always in such dramatic ways, but sometimes in ways that were to me as dramatic! Yet with those things that could well be one our way, I feel compelled to add; regardless of how things may seem to be turning out, there were plenty of others in Christianity's history that were not delivered but simply received the grace to endure, to be a testimony of faith. Oh, to have a heart like the friends of Daniel, '*But if not, should God decide not to deliver us, we still will not bow down!*'

I was reminded recently of these verses, they are the scriptures I will carry with me into every store, into every gathering this season:

*Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for He hath said 'I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.' So that we may boldly say, 'The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.'*

Blessings to you, thank you for this testimony.  
Lori

**Re: - posted by ginnyrose (), on: 2008/12/4 22:36**

Quote:  
-----Oh, to have a heart like the friends of Daniel, '*But if not, should God decide not to deliver us, we still will not bow down!*'  
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Excellent reminder! If this is in our heart and mind nothing will be able to destroy our soul. Body, yes, but it will turn to dust and ashes at some point anyways - we just don't want to hurry the process! :-o

Blessings,  
ginnyrose

**Re: - posted by Lor\_E (), on: 2008/12/5 9:12**

Quote:  
-----we just don't want to hurry the process!  
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Amen, no doubt...

My husband and I were once involved in a ministry that went during the adult Sunday School class to visit shut in's, one of them was a retired pastor that had recently moved into the area hoping to retire in a nice place and had then been diagnosed with cancer. There were several other people there, one in particular that "spoke" words of "faith and healing" to

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the man...

But the pastor looked at my husband and said, "What do you say?" I can't remember every word he said, but a couple have always stuck with me: "What would God say to each of us when we are faced with the facts of our own mortality? God is able to anything that is in His own will; but let us all consider that to go beyond this present life is to be unhindered in the very presence of God, to receive the result of our faith, the great promise of a faithful God! and "One thing for sure is that you will get every breath that God intends for you to have.."

There is a wonderful peace in knowing that God is sovereign! That He is more than able to deliver us, and should He choose not to, in His own will and design, we will only receive that which He has promised us in the beginning of our faith!

What would Christianity be if the saints of old, who suffered terrible atrocities, had not looked at the faces of their accusers, their murderers and with shining countenance and sang songs in their hearts and with their lips, glorified God, spoke the messages of salvation, and their own hope?

This life is a gift, each day we have opportunity to walk in a miracle! Remember "Christian" in Pilgrim's Progress, who along the pathway had to go between 2 lions? The lions could roar, but they were leashed and could only seem fearsome, they could come so far...but no closer.

As a young Christian God had to teach me over and over lessons of faith and trust. He still does, but now I **know** that God is faithful! That He has my best interest- the condition of my soul and spirit, the working of His Son in my life, the connections of His perfection working- at heart. I know that **everything** He does is for my good, whether I think it is good or not.

I don't believe in "accidents"; I believe that everything that happens in this life has a reason and a purpose in it; and like has been spoken to others: *who's to know if you were not born for such a time as this?*

Thank you so much for the reminding that God is faithful in all situations!  
In Christ,  
Lori

**Re: Why Be Afraid? - posted by ginnyrose (), on: 2012/7/2 8:00**

I was surfing this site looking for something else when I found this post...

I am bumping it up believing some could be inspired by reading it.

ginnyrose

**Re: - posted by White\_Stone (), on: 2012/7/2 14:42**

Thank you for bumping this thread.

**Re: , on: 2012/7/2 21:15**

This is so encouraging...and Lori, thanks for the wisdom you added.