

# .†. is my Shepherd

The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want.



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## HIS MYSTERIOUS WAYS

The Chicago neighborhood I grew up in was a friendly place, but ever since I was a little girl my mother had warned me not to accept rides from strangers. Still, one frigid day when a man in a truck offered a lift, I climbed aboard.

I knew the moment the door slammed shut that I was in trouble. It was something about the way he looked at me. *"You passed the grocery."* I said meekly. *"Please stop."* He said nothing. *"I want to get out,"* I said.

*"Don't touch that door!"* he ordered. The truck speeded up. From his coat he drew forth a knife and skimmed it along my leg. *"Any noise out of you."* He warned. *"any noise at all and..."* He made a violent dagger gesture.

I could hear myself screaming inside, but no sounds were coming out of my mouth. *Our Father, Who are in Heaven...* I began silently saying the Lord's Prayer... *hallowed be Thy name...*

The truck turned into an alley and stopped. I fumbled for the door handle. The man reached over and pushed the door open so swiftly that I fell out. I tried to get up to run, but he was there standing over me, and I saw the knife again. *Thy will be done...*

Down the alley I heard running steps and wild yelling. The man leaped up. A policeman jumped on him as a woman picked me up *"Are you all right?"* she kept saying to me. And then, *"Thank God that I heard your screams."*

But no sound had come from my mouth. Except in my head, there had been no screams.

Ellen Daveys, Phoenix, Arizona  
Guideposts – January 1982

## REFLECTIONS

### MARLENE

By Stan Manley  
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The police say I was the last one to see her alive, except for the coward who waited for her in her little two bedroom house. As I was making my way home that evening, she drew alongside of me and honked and waved as she turned down her street that would bring her to the end of her life. Brutally murdered, shot in the back of the head with her hands bound, she dropped to the floor and bled to death as her murderer escaped.

Later on that evening the phone rang with the news that Marlene was gone, murdered for no reason. Disbelief was immediate. Knowing her as I did, a person so kind and considerate, young and dedicated. A beautiful young lady who had devoted her life to building the Kingdom of God the best way she could.

She was a talented teacher at a local Christian school and the main pianist at our church. She could read music, play by ear, transpose on the spot, write and compose. She could do it all; and, with a heart of giving, she was the epitome of a Christian.

Why? How could this happen to such a dedicated Christian with so much left yet to give? In retrospect the question was better directed as, "How could this happen to us. How could she be taken from us?" Our hearts were broken.

Days later I found myself in the church office when the phone call came from the local police. Our pastor had been given control over the house and was free to go in and do what needed to be done. Up to this point, no one had been allowed inside except for the police and investigators. The pastor emerged from his office after talking to the police. He asked if I would want to accompany him to Marlene's house, and I agreed. (Continued)

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(Continued) It was an incredible moment to walk into her small home and feel the stillness. The house was left just as the police had found it a week earlier. A few dirty dishes on the counter, laundry on the floor with some clothes half hanging out of the dryer. Her car in the garage, nothing disturbed. It was as if she should be coming through the door any second. No time to finish the dishes or the laundry, normal life had been interrupted. She was there and suddenly she was gone.

She had been raptured, it seemed. The evidence was there—immediate interruption and disappearance. No time to call or finish what she was doing. On the floor by her piano were her music workbooks. I looked and saw that she had been in the process of composing a song for yours truly. She had finished two or three measures, but the last measure was only half completed. It would be normal to quit at the end of a measure, but not in the middle.

I stood there in the middle of her living room, and the thought as well as the feeling came over me uncontrolled. This is really what the rapture would be like for those left behind. She was just here, a person I loved, a co-worker, a dear friend, and in an instant she was gone. No time to make things right, no time to make one more phone call, no time to tell her friends good-bye. Gone!

The Bible is filled with warnings that your life will end. If it happens as a result of the actions of another or if Jesus splits the eastern sky to call us home, there will be no time to say “I’m sorry, forgive me,” or to call out to Christian friends to pray for you. I repeat this warning because it is so critical. Please don’t miss it. The decision is yours.

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Stan Manley

(Marlene’s murderer was discovered. He was a friend of hers from out of town, here to be in a wedding. He had come by to see her and made some sexual advances toward her, she refused and he shot her in the back of the head. He is now serving a life sentence in prison.)

**MISSION STATEMENT:  
TO ENCOURAGE THE FAITHFUL  
TO SAVE THE LOST**



**FOR GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD  
THAT HE GAVE HIS ONE AND ONLY  
SON, THAT WHOSOEVER BELIEVES  
IN HIM SHALL NOT PERISH BUT HAVE  
ETERNAL LIFE. JOHN 3:16**



**IT'S YOUR RESPONSIBILITY, DO IT TODAY.**

## **WORDS TO GROW ON HELEN HAYES**

**T**here was a time in my life when I drifted away from formal religion and closeness to God. In those years, when it seemed that nothing could ever go wrong, I came to think that I was the master of my fate and the “captain of my soul.” Everything, it seemed, happened as I intended it to happen. It wasn’t that I did not believe or that I did not call upon God from time to time. It was simply that I had become sort of careless and took my faith for granted.

And then came the moment of tragedy. My daughter Mary died. And I felt a desperate need for help – beyond anything that anyone could give me. I tried desperately to find my way back to a complete acceptance and realization of an identity with God as my friend and my strength. Yet, for a long time, I could not make it happen, as I had made so many other things happen in my proud youth. I couldn’t order faith the way you order a good dinner.

So there I was for months in despair, struggling. One night I had been tossing as I had so many other nights before, sleepless. I suddenly sat up and turned on the light, and reached for the Psalter that I’d always had by my bed. It opened to the 40<sup>th</sup> Psalm. And there it was – in those early, dark hours of the morning: *“I waited patiently for the Lord; and He inclined unto me, and heard my cry.”*

I finished that Psalm and greedily reread the lines again and again. I felt better, and I waited patiently from that moment on. I thought that if King David had had his moments of doubt, and if he could be so patient, so could I. That night I understood that faith comes of itself, not by straining after it. Finally, for me, it did.

**HAVE A SAFE  
AND HAPPY NEW YEAR**

