

†.my Shepherd

The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want.



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HIS MYSTERIOUS WAYS

In the winter of 1944 during World War II, I was in France, a platoon sergeant in the Yankee Division under General Patton. About mid-December I received a letter from my mother back in the States.

“Can you remember,” she asked, “Where you were on Thanksgiving Day?”

Could I remember? How could I forget the odd thing that happened that day. At dawn I was sent to check out a crossroads where an enemy strongpoint was suspected. Normally I would have had my men fan out so that they could move with the cover of the trees. But just before we started out that Thanksgiving morning, I stopped. I stood stark still, arguing with myself about what I should do.

Then, going strictly against the book, I walked my men right down the middle of a road in an exposed column. No one fired at us; there was no evidence of the enemy. We found that crossroads unoccupied and turned to walk back. There, on the backside of the trees where only the German soldiers would have seen, were signs cautioning. Minen. The woods were mined. We could have been blown to bits!

Mother’s letter continued. She told me how she awakened after midnight on Thanksgiving Eve when it would have been daylight in France:

“I had a strong feeling that you were in great danger,” she wrote. “When I opened my Bible, a phrase in Second Chronicles 20:17 gleamed on the page: *‘Stand ye still and see the salvation of the Lord with you...’*”

Stand ye still. Stark still.

Mac St. Johns
Thousand Oaks, California
Guideposts November 1987

REFLECTIONS

THE RIVER

By Stan Manley

...my Shepherd editor

(This story is one that I read years ago, I hope you enjoy.)

This is an old story but one that stands the test of time. The story takes place in the South; just outside a small community that has succumbed to its own destiny as life has slowly passed it by.

The surrounding area is maintained mostly by mother nature, the beauty and splendor of the area has blossomed into an oasis of natural beauty watered by a river. The river runs right behind Jimmy’s house only a stones throw from the corner of the barn. However, this tranquil setting will soon be anything less than tranquil.

One morning Jimmy was up early and finished his chores so he could get an early start on catching that big catfish he has only seen on a few occasions. He knew the best worms for fishing in the magnificent river were found beneath the big cottonwood tree.

He makes his way to the barn to gather up his fishing rod and a dirty old bag that keeps a variety of hooks, spinners, weights and all the other things that are a part of his arsenal. He has a feeling this is the day when he will successfully land that catfish, which has eluded him, time after time.

At the corner of the barn, he digs up some worms with his shovel. He fills his little bucket and is on his way to his favorite spot on the river. A tree had fallen across the river many years ago and formed the perfect spot for Jimmy to get to the best point to drop his line into the water.

The main highway that travels through the quiet community passes over the river just a short distance from Jimmy’s perfect spot on the tree. About the same time Jimmy began fishing, Officer Conley from the Highway Patrol headed out to the Interstate to start his weekend shift. Officer Conley was also raised in this small community and, in fact, used to fish in the same river that now entertains Jimmy.

The fresh worms keep disappearing as the big catfish continued to steal the boy’s bait. Before Officer Conley made it all the way to the Interstate, he decided to stop a few minutes at the river to visit his past. Stopping along the highway, he spots Jimmy as he made his way down to the river. Occasionally Officer Conley would join the boy on the log and enjoy the warm breezes and the serenity of the moment. (Continued)

my shepherd is not affiliated with any church or religious belief.

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(Cont.) Jimmy continued to reach into his small bucket to get another worm. Officer Conley noticed each time Jimmy would get another worm, he would flinch a little, but time was slipping by and he needed to leave and head for the Interstate.

As he drove down the highway, thinking about his childhood and his experiences on the river, he suddenly found his heart gripped in fear, his mind hoping it wasn't so. He immediately turned on his siren and flipped on the flashing lights as he turned his car around and headed back to the river.

Traffic was pulling to the side of the road as Officer Conley hurried to get back to his little friend. He approached the bridge but couldn't see Jimmy.

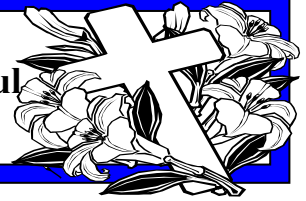
He drew closer and saw him lying in the grass, still and motionless. The officer could only hope for the best as he drove his patrol car off the road down to where Jimmy was lying. Jumping out, he turned Jimmy's small lifeless body over and discovered his fears were warranted. He grabbed Jimmy up and put him in the back seat of his car and sped off to the hospital.

As they were nearing the hospital, Officer Conley reached over the back seat with one hand to find a pulse but none was there. Jimmy's hand had now swollen to twice its normal size and what Officer Conley had feared was now a terrible reality. The worms Jimmy had discovered at the corner of the barn were not worms. Jimmy had discovered a nest of baby rattlesnakes. Too small to do any serious damage but every time he placed his hand in the bucket he would get bit. Just a little sting, just enough to make him flinch a little, but not enough to be fatal. The accumulation of the bites he endured every time he placed his hand into the bucket was more than his little body could take.

Officer Conley turned off his siren and flashing lights and continued to the hospital, knowing it was too late.

As we live our lives as Christians, it is tempting to put our hand in the bucket of deceit, immorality, wrong doing. Just a little bite now and then, not enough to hardly be noticeable until the accumulation takes over our sense of judgement. You can draw your own conclusions from this simple story and apply them accordingly, remembering our future holds our past. Our response to Jesus must be now for there is no such thing as almost saved or almost lost.

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 NIV

It's your responsibility, do it today



THEIR KISS

Nothing is as beautiful as a loving relationship that conforms to God's design. Consider this example written by a young surgeon, Dr. Richard Selzer from Dr. Dobson's Straight Talk to Men and Their Wives;

"I stand by the bed where the young woman lies, her face postoperative, her mouth twisted by palsy, clownish. A tiny twig of the facial nerve, the one to the muscles of her mouth, has been severed. She will be thus from now on. My knife has followed with religious fervor the course of the flesh; I promise you that. Nevertheless, to remove the tumor in her cheek, I had to cut the little nerve."

"Her young husband is in the room. He stands at the side of her bed, and together they seem to dwell in the evening lamplight, isolated from me."

Who are they, I ask myself, he and wry mouth I have made who gaze and touch each other so generously, so greedily? The young woman speaks. "Will my mouth always be like this?" she asks.

"Yes, I say, it will."

She nods, and is silent. But the young man smiles.

"I like it," he says. "It's kind of cute."

Unmindful, he bends to kiss her crooked mouth, and I can see how he twists his own lips to accommodate hers, to show her that their kiss still works, I hold my breath and let the wonder in.

HAPPY THANKSGIVING
TO
ALL OF YOU
FROM
ALL OF US