

I thought of the many nights spent in the trench, looking up at the night sky; I reveled in the magnificent display in the heavens—the stars, the moon, and the planets—and I wondered how ^{young} a One, the great Creator, could have a personal interest in ^{one person} a young woman without any special gifts, talents, or beauty. ^{Some} times the very magnitude of His handiwork made Him seem almost remote. But that night, that One, the High and Lifted Up Holy One of God, wearing His most magnificent robe, a robe of human flesh, came to dwell with a child of man in a new and beautiful relationship. Oh, the wonder of His love for me and His personal concern for me, as an individual, was overwhelming.

Together we walked through the events of that day. I heard again the insistence in His voice, as He reminded me of Mrs. Lie's Bible—not my Bride's Book, nor my full five-year diary—it had to be Mrs. Lie's Bible that was lying on my bed, directly above the ladder. Then it became clear to me why He didn't remind me of either of the two books, neither of which could ever be replaced. I would have been up there, tearing at the mat trying to retrieve them and, without doubt, the burning building would have collapsed on me. I just escaped, as it was. "O Lord, You saved my life! Thank You for reminding me of this Bible!" I hugged it to me, for Mrs. Lie had said I should keep it.

I had much to be thankful for. Of all the Japanese I had ever had any contact with, none terrified me like the Brain. I poured out my gratitude to God that the Brain hadn't noticed me when I passed through the gate. I thanked Him for the miracle that none of us was killed or hurt during the machine-gun strafing.

I knelt again before my Bride's Book, lying open on the heap of ashes. I saw how bright and shining the gold ink had become. The gold had to pass through the fire to destroy the tarnish, and it was the background of a black, charred page that displayed its beauty—a beauty I had never noticed, written, as it had been, on a bright white page, surrounded by pretty flowers! "I understand, Lord, I really do understand what You're saying to me through this. Forgive my tears!" I learned that my tears were a gift from Him to ease the hurt, a gift to be shared with others who were hurting. Was I not to weep with those who weep? (Rom. 12:15). "When the tarnish begins to appear, take me through the fire, Lord. I'm available."

(for p. 9)
Darlene
Dorilyn
Rose

Evidence
Not Seen

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Wearily, I lay down and began to count the months since our marriage of just over six years had been terminated by sickness and cruelty. I willingly accepted the year and a half we were separated, both in the States and while Russell was in New Guinea establishing our mission base. "But Lord, being robbed by the Japanese of the last year and a half of our marriage—that is very very bitter," I sobbed. "Please, Lord, take this bitterness from me. I have so much of good and so many beautiful memories that nothing and no one can ever take from me."

The Man of Sorrows, the One acquainted with grief, enfolded me in His arms. As He poured in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, the anger and the bitterness were released and I slept.

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One day one, He pinned scripture passages out of the storehouse of my memory, to remind me that they had been hidden there for just such a time as this. "I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction" (Isaiah 48:10). This verse called to remembrance my Lord in a blazing furnace with three young Hebrew men. There was something so poignant, so intimate about the privilege that was theirs, of "walking around in the fire" with their Lord. Because of the testimony, the faith, and the courage of three young men, the king and a crowd of people caught a glimpse of Jesus. When they emerged from the furnace, there was no acrid, caustic scent of fire upon them—just the fragrance that emanated from three young people who had been walking with their Lord in the furnace of affliction.

"That's very important, isn't it, Lord? I pray that, if I come out of this war alive, I may be "sweet-smelling"—not bitter or cynical, but like a sweet-smelling, fragrant incense unto You. All this long day, You have walked with me, and never for a moment have I been out of Your sight. Of this You have made me keenly aware."

I saw again, in my mind's eye, the bomb canister there in the ditch among the ashes of a mattress, and I knew how much my Lord loved me. Singing what has come to be my Lord's lullaby for me, I fell asleep:

Loved with everlasting love,
Led by grace that love to know;
Spirit breathing from above,
Thou hast taught me it is so!
Oh, this full and perfect peace!
Oh, this transport all divine!
In a love which cannot cease,
I am His and He is mine!

At first light the next morning, Ruth found herself in full possession of our mutual piece of blanket. "Oh, I'm sorry. I guess I didn't realize how narrow it was," she apologized. "That's all right, Ruth. You flounced sooner and stronger than I did, and I didn't have the heart to wake you up." It was good to be able to laugh. From then on we fell asleep back to back, with the piece of blanket covering our topsides. Whoever flounced first usually stayed in possession of it till morning.

