

Into the Light

by Becky Stayton

Chapter One

It was morning. Or was it? Kelsey opened her eyes and her room was still dark. What had woken her up? She lay still and listened. Then she heard it. The sound of crying. She wondered why it had woken her. It was a pretty common sound in their house lately.

She got out of bed, stuck her feet into her slippers and padded down to her parents' room. Outside the closed door, she could still hear her mother crying. She tiptoed down the stairs to the living room, but before she reached it, she already knew the truth. Her father was sleeping on the sofa again. She could hear his snores bouncing off of the walls. The little bit of light from the moon shining through the windows confirmed that her father was there.

How can he sleep through her crying when I can't? she thought angrily.

As she walked back to her mother, the thoughts and memories rushed in. She remembered many nights where her parents argued and yelled at each other. It seemed that they were always mad at each other about something. Often, she would just put a pillow over her head to drown out the noise, but now, she wondered if there was anything she could do to help.

Her mother was quiet now. Kelsey just heard a few sniffles through the door. She knocked quietly and slowly opened the bedroom door.

"Mom, are you okay?" asked Kelsey.

There was silence for a moment. Finally, in the dark she heard, "I'm fine. Why are you up, Honey? Go back to bed."

"Are you sure you're okay, Mom? Is there anything I can do?" Kelsey asked.

"No, I'm alright. Just go back to bed," answered her mother.

Kelsey sighed and quietly shut the bedroom door. As she headed back to her room, she felt completely alone. She had no idea what was going on and she had no one to talk to. Being an only child was tough. Her friend, Angie, always told her what a pain her little brother was, but at times like this, Kelsey would give anything for a brother or sister.

Thinking of Angie brought another wave of bad memories. Her best friend was mad at her and Kelsey knew why. Her heart felt heavy.

I just wanted to talk to her, she thought. I needed Angie to listen to what I was saying. Isn't that what friends are for? But, all she could do was babble on about wanting a new bike or that new show she's been watching. I lost my cool and said some things I shouldn't. Now, she hates me.

Tears formed in Kelsey's eyes as she lay back down on her bed. The darkness seemed to surround her. She pulled the comforter closely under her chin and tried to fall back asleep.

As she closed her eyes, a memory verse from Sunday School came into her mind.

“The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake...

As she recited the 23rd Psalm, she could feel herself relaxing and getting sleepy. The next thing she knew, it really was morning and her cat Butterball was rubbing his face on her and meowing.

Discussion

Why did Kelsey feel all alone?

What did she do to help her fall asleep?

Have you used scripture to help you in times of need?

Chapter Two

The day was a boring Saturday. She and her best friend were not on speaking terms, her parents were barely speaking to each other and Kelsey had very little to do.

Kelsey fed Butterball and then spent the morning eating cereal and watching TV. Every once in a while, she thought about the events of the last couple days. She played them over and over in her mind.

How could she have said the things she did to her best friend? she thought. *Would Angie ever forgive her?* Kelsey was afraid that she had lost her friend forever.

She kept her phone close to her. A couple of times, Kelsey thought about texting Angie to apologize, but then remembered how Angie had not been there for her when she needed her.

“It serves her right,” she muttered to Butterball. The cat looked up at her and then started washing himself. “Humph. Just like Angie. He doesn’t care. Nobody cares.”

As she flipped TV channels, Kelsey paused on a religious station. She usually buzzed right by those. But, as she paused, the guy up front said something that caught her attention. He said that however much you like your worst enemy is how much you love Jesus.

“What!? Is that even in the scriptures?” she said out loud to the TV.

Then he quoted a Bible verse:

“But I say unto you, Love your enemies; bless them that curse you; do good to them that hate you; and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you;”

Love my enemies? Then they’re not really my enemies, are they? Why should I love an enemy? Wait a minute. Is my friend my enemy? I guess she hates me right now, so I should pray for her anyway.

She didn’t catch the next part because Butterball rolled over onto the remote and changed the channel. By the time she got back to the right station he was saying,

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“God is light. There is no darkness in Him. In First John it says, ‘But if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus cleanseth us from all sin.’”

Kelsey flipped off the TV. She needed time to think.

If God is light and I want to be right with Him, I need to be right with others. I think that’s what it means. I can’t walk around in the darkness and expect God to be in the dark with me. He can’t bless me or my friendships unless I get right with Him. And I think the first step to getting right with God, is making things right with Angie.

She started to feel a resolve to make things right and then had second thoughts.

“Well— that’s easier said than done. What if Angie doesn’t want to forgive me?”

In spite of her last question, Kelsey felt an excitement growing inside her. *That scripture said, IF we walk in the light, THEN we will have fellowship with each other. Fellowship means friends. Right?* She really wanted to be friends again.

Kelsey bowed her head right then and asked God to forgive her for her mean words and asked Him to help her make things right with Angie. She also asked Him to help her parents. But, she knew the answer to that prayer would really take a miracle.

As soon as Kelsey said, “Amen,” she heard her phone chime. She looked at the screen and was amazed to see that it was a message from Angie asking if she could come over to talk. Kelsey texted back immediately, “Yes!”

Soon, she could hear the rattling of Angie’s bike and looked out of the window to see her coming up the walk. *Why did she have that old clunker of a bike, anyway?*

After the chat with Angie, Kelsey realized God had been softening both of their hearts at the same time. They talked, apologized, shed a tear or two and hugged. It felt great to have her best friend back and Kelsey knew that darkness was on its way out and they were heading into the light.

Kelsey smiled up to heaven and silently prayed, “Wow! Thank you, God! That was a fast answer to prayer! Maybe there’s hope for that miracle for my parents after all!”

Discuss: