

GINI

Sequel to “In His Tents”

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One: Mother’s past

Two: Determination—on my own

Three: Challenge—the choice to live

Four: Never alone

Five: In His tents forever

Six: A new area

Seven: Mystery

Eight: Pioneering worlds beyond

Nine: Eternal days

Ten: The golden eternal now

Epilogue

Michelle Sherice, (nicknamed “Virginia”, or “Gini,” by her mother) was a spunky young lady. Shella, Gini’s mother, had lived a dream. She’d tried the world and its plastic shine, and had chosen to give her life over to a cause. Shella was said to have been a kind and wonderful woman; however, her daughter hardly knew her. When Gini was three, her mother died. When her father passed away—while she was in her late teens—Gini’s life began to blossom in its own way.

One: mother’s past

“Gini,” she whispered while looking at the small broach she held in her hands. It had her name engraved at the back. It was all she still had from her younger years, and it was said to have been her mother’s, given to her when still just a baby. She thought of the soft hands she knew her mother must have had, placing this delicate ornament on her clothing, for the rare special occasions, in the humble life they’d led. Tears began to well up in her eyes and she gazed out the bus window, trying to distract herself.

Gini was now 18 and had set off to discover more about the mother she’d longed to know better. While resting her head back, thoughts filled her mind of all that had happened thus far in her life. It seemed a lifetime had passed her by, painfully slowly, yet she knew she was still young and had a glimmer of a hope that she could do something to better the world for others—just as her mother once had. Her life had been hard on not only her, but father Fernando as well. She couldn’t stop thinking about how the past 12 years of her life had been spent.

“Get up!” Came the gruff call to the girl’s dorm where Gini and the many other girls had slept the short night hours. It was now five in the morning, time for the chores. The home or orphanage that Gini now stayed in, was located

on a farm in the outskirts of town. She had been there since she was six.

Fernando was no longer able to keep her at home full time, due to debts owed, and the passing of his mother-in-law. She had to learn to grow up fast, and this often tough and trying life had taught her that. Gini would see her father often on the week ends, and they formed a close father and daughter relationship—they were each other’s only relations—on Fernando’s side. But life was hard and young Gini would often wish she could just go to sleep and wake up to a new world, the world her mother had gone on ahead to.

On this particular day, the stalls for the horses were to be cleaned, and Gini, now 10, would be helping some others with that. There was a farm boy, who would help teach the girls what they needed to know, as he knew animals well. He was just 14, but she found a friend in him, as he too had lost his mother years back. Jack was his name, he’d come from Alabama and had lived there in the city when he was small, but his parents wanted a change, moved away and got a job with a real estate company. But now that had all changed. His father took up carpentry, since mom passed on, and Jack wanted to learn more about animal husbandry and had a part time job here.

“Jack, it’s just really hard to imagine what it must be like to live in a ‘normal’ home. You know, with a mom and dad, and ...” Her eyes started to tear up. She’d felt alone most of her life here in this home she now had to call her own. She so longed to have the close ties a family might provide. But her life was on a different course—her solitude teaching her things that she’d need in the days ahead of her. But she was glad to have Jack there, and would often confide secrets in him.

“Well, if by normal you mean it’s the way that everyone else lives... I haven’t seen a ‘normal’ home yet. There’s so much variety, so much change, and no matter what situation you find yourself in, whether good or seemly bad, things always change at some point. Everyone’s just different. But I know what you mean about having a dad and mom. Well, I have a dad, and so do you, but when you want to just sit around a table at night and tell your folks and family what you’ve been thinking and hear stories from when they were young, yeah, I sure miss that too. Why don’t we go and finish up putting away the tools and I’ll see you tomorrow then, unless something comes up. It’s nice talking with you,” Jack said with a smile. He always had a way of brightening her day, even when the clouds on her life looked the darkest.

Being fair skinned, Gini sometimes had a hard time mixing and mingling with the other children, as they looked at her as being some what different. But she had a way of making even the most reserved of all laugh and feel good about themselves, and had a talent for caring for the ones that seemed to have no friend at all. The girls grew to love and accept her regardless of her race and lack of color.

There was a quiet place that she'd often go to, when she could manage to get away. A tree house of some sorts, where she, often accompanied by Jack, would go to talk, pray and even read the Bible together.

She grew to find a dear friend in her Lord and Maker through these quiet times, and when things looked the darkest, time spent with her Lord always helped to brighten the day.

One day, in the morning hours, having finished her chores earlier than usual, she sat alone in her quiet spot. A bird chirped nearby and caught her attention. "There's so much beauty in the world around us, if only I could appreciate it more. It gives me such peace to see the things the Lord has made, and somehow I just feel like I'm in the palms of His hands, and know that no matter what happens—or doesn't happen—I will be cared for." With that thought Gini closed her eyes and visualized sitting right in the middle of these large, strong but gentle hands. She imagined looking down, way down, on the earth, while up on these Heavenly hands, and seeing how it and all the troubles it had, seemed so very small and far down.

I like this, she thought to herself. Why not just trust that while in my Heavenly Father's hands all those things that seem so big and troublesome, are really just specks, and I don't need to worry or fret myself about them. I really am cared for, and not as alone as I so often feel.

Gini often thought of this when the day seemed drab, and she found herself trying to sneak away more and more for quiet communion with her dearest Friend and Lord.

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"Today, on your birthday," Fernando explained to his now 13 year old daughter, "I will take you somewhere real special. Special to your mom and I. It's where we first met, actually. Want to come?"

Fernando had set this special day aside for the two of them to be together, and they were going to enjoy some time walking, talking and visiting his father's former farm, which had now been sold to a rich family.

They approached the gate, and Fernando, who was trying to bravely face these grounds again, began to get fidgety.

"Oh, I don't know why we came all this way, it's just land, like everywhere else."

"Oh, Papa, it's beautiful. I'm so glad you took me here. I've been wanting to see it for awhile now. Why, again, was it that mom was staying here?" Gini asked, wanting to know every thing about her life before, that was so long ago tucked away in her young mind.

Gini had never been told just exactly who her flesh father was. But now it seemed to be the right time. Although the topic had come up in previous years, and Gini had wondered about it, since neither Fernando nor her wanted to discuss it much, they left it in among the unspoken topics which were now increasing in this young adolescent mind. There was so much more she wanted to know about, but didn't always know how and when to bring things up.

"Ding!" They took the plunge to ring the door bell and were ushered into the house by a servant. After expressing their desire to look around the property briefly and then to be on their way, the head of the house gave them leave to do so.

Stopping by a tree, which supported an old clothes line hanging near the small house that Shella had stayed in, Fernando, after moments of silence, swallowed hard and attempted to explain more about his girl's background, how he'd met Michelle (or Shella, as she was always called). This led into facts about her heritage, what her mother had done before coming here and starting the work with the street children and so on.

So many questions, feelings and emotions flooded Gini's mind, and a few of them made their way to her lips.

"What am I to do, when I get old enough to move into my own life? I so much want to provide a place for a family, and nurture young ones. How can I know what to do, who is right for me, since mom's not around to talk with? Why couldn't mom have waited till she found you, before getting all up close and personal?" She said, commenting on their discussion of who her flesh father was.

Fernando answered his daughter as best as he could, though there were many things his daughter would have to learn in time, in order to fully understand.

Gini's heart drank it all in, every tid-bit and every large piece of the puzzle of her life that she'd not known about before. She was glad to have things explained to her, things she'd always wondered, as well as some new questions just now forming. A love grew deep in her heart for her mother, as she learned more about her life. She admired her so much more now, knowing the hardships she'd been through and felt a fresh new bond with her, being formed deep within.

"Do you feel angry at me for not having the means and skills needed to support and care for you, darling, at home?" Fernando ventured. "I know it hasn't been easy on the both of us, and it's something I've wanted to discuss with you in full."

"Angry, no. Sad, yes--plenty sad. There are times I just don't see the point. You feel I'm getting better care there than I would be getting with you. I get to do my studies and all, and get to learn different things, but I really just don't see it. But I guess, in away it's true."

"Honey, it hurts me more deeply than I ever let on to you. I know it's what I must do, for this time, putting you in the care of others, and letting you learn and experience the things a young lady needs. I know, though, that there are things about life there that make it very difficult for you. And it hurts me so. If it had it my way, we'd always be together, and that would be enough for me. But I have to take your future into consideration. There is something special up the road for you, I know, and this is what our Lord has shown and led us to do—it is your time to prepare for something wonderful. It is with His blessing—and only by His grace, that I can cope with letting you live apart from me, and in that place. I'd much rather have you with me. When you are of age you'll be glad for the things you've learned while

there—and so will I—though it’s hard for me to imagine the deep hurt going away.

“Things won’t always be the way they are today, you know. You have so very much ahead of you. Your spunk and joy in living gives you a special sparkle. You will lead a full and wonderful life. I know Jesus is there with you—as your dear mother has taught us both. I pray for you more than you can imagine,” he said as he gave her hand a squeeze and wiped a tear from her cheek—his own heart weeping deeply.

After their time of discussion, and heart to heart communication, Gini flung her arms around Fernando and thanked him for sharing all that he had. Though it was hard stirring up those emotions, and mentally reliving the past, and he now wondered what Gini thought of him, he was relieved by her full acceptance. Taken a bit back he realized with joy, that he was accepted and loved for who he was. The good that he had tried to live, the love that he had striven to give this young one and her mother, had been appreciated.

There was so much more he wished he could have given and done, and he felt like he’d been a failure many times, but regrets wouldn’t get them anywhere. They chose to put the past behind them and to keep moving forward with the present.

They walked back to thank the man living now on these grounds for allowing them the visit, and returned to their perspective homes.

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“She’s ready now, isn’t she? My dear six-teen year old girl. She’s grown so much over the past years. And although it’s been hard to see her going through the moments of solitude, her love for You has truly kept her.” Shella commented to the Lord, as they were watching Gini, from above.

“Yes, that boy, Jack has been a good influence on her, and has helped her to grow closer to Me, taught her to pray, and to want to reach out and love others. She’s always been a special girl. She has such love in her eyes as she reaches out to those around her, hoping to bring a bit of cheer to their life, though she feels despondent herself. I think now might be the right time. It’s not going to be easy though, and it hurts Me to see the tears that she cries in her bed at night, when she feels so alone. But I will not take one thing away from her, without replacing it with something far more beautiful. The love she holds for Me will help her now more than ever. She’s like a bud, now, the colors of her soul’s flower are beginning to emerge, and in time as she keeps drinking in the good from the things she experiences--much like the rain--and let’s My love for her shine light on her life, she will blossom and form the most beautiful life one can imagine. I’ll see to it.”

Kissing Shella’s hand, Jesus said with a smile. “I’ll take care of her.”

Meeting with her Lord in the Heavenly realm, was the greatest joy of her stay here, while learning all she could

and awaiting the arrival of her family and friends. There was so much to explore, so much more to learn, that she was never bored. And even in those times when she began to feel a twinge of sorrow, Shella felt Jesus’ love wash away each and every tear and helped her to know all that had happened, and still was yet to come to pass, would truly work out for the good of all. She patiently waited for the Lord’s timing to be perfect for each of her loved ones to find the fulfillment of their dreams.

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Fernando’s time on earth had now come to a close. And as Gini watched the funeral take place, she felt the lowest she’d ever felt.

“How can there be a great God of love, who takes away my family, one by one plucking them out of my life, like a pheasant is plucked for a feast. And what am I to become?! Is not the pheasant then devoured? Oh!” She sobbed, and was soon taken home, where she spent the afternoon weeping on her bed.

Beside her stood a kind and angelic being, though Gini could not see her. This angel was sent from Heaven to be her new guide and caretaker while she crossed the threshold of adolescence into womanhood. There wasn’t much time left—though even a moment seemed to go on for ever, in her now dimming life—till she was to be released and come to know what living in the big world was all about.

Julaine, the angel sent to care for her, was gently stroking Gini’s forehead, and whispering to her thoughts and scriptures that promised of the Lord’s loving care even when all else seems to be battered and torn and ripped apart.

Gini sat up, with the verse running through her mind, “I will never leave you nor forsake you.” She knew that verse well, and had claimed it many times when sorrow and emptiness that set in, and all seemed so dark.

“I want your presence here, dear Lord. I don’t understand how it’s possible, or how You can be here with me, but I want You to show yourself real and near to me. Can’t you see I have no one else? Even Jack, the dear friend that he’s been, has his own life, and says he’ll soon be moving on. Oh, I don’t see how things could be any darker. Lord, please do something to lift me out of these high and boisterous waves of emotions. I can’t see any hope or joy in going on. Even if I were to set out today, to make something of my life, I wouldn’t know where to start or what to do. Please help me!”

With that she fell asleep, awaking only briefly to arrange her blanket and hoping to wake one of these times realizing that her dad’s passing had just been a bad dream.

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The birds seemed to sing so sweetly this morning, as she awoke and headed outside. She felt something special was to happen that morning, after her heartfelt cry to her Savior and Lord the night before.

“I do want to have You as my closest and dearest companion, and I so need the friendship of someone who knows all about me and can understand all that I’m thinking.

Please help me through this time of sorrow.” Gini whispered, while resting in her new quiet hide-away.

Just then, as her eyes wondered upwards at the leafy formations of the tree sheltering her that let bits of sunlight through, she saw Him. It wasn't that she had never seen Him like this before, but this time it took on new meaning. Every pore of nature, every song that escaped the birds throat, each drop of light that now shone on her, was a bit of her Creator. She felt His presence more real than ever before, as if she could touch Him, He felt so real. She reached out her hand, as if grabbing on to His, and closing her eyes she cried in the bosom of her Lord. She knew without a doubt it was the God of love Himself comforting her.

Words filled Gini's mind, though she wasn't quite sure just where they were coming from, whether it was her own thoughts and mind echoing out hidden words of comfort, or whether the Being, who she knew was beside her, whispered them Himself, though inaudibly.

“Daughter, be of good comfort, thy faith hath made thee whole. I am always here with you, Michelle, and you will never lack for a friend in which you can confide the most treasured secrets of your heart and mind. I'll always be here listening, watching and waiting for you to turn around and embrace Me, and letting Me be the joy of your heart. Never fear about what you are going to do with your young life; that is for Me to take care of. You just have to take it a day at a time. And every step that you take I will be two steps ahead of you, preparing safe passage ways for you.”

I read that somewhere, those words about being comforted. Maybe Jack knows where I can find it. She thought as she walked back to the main house. It was meal time and the day carried on busily from that point on. Only when the sun went down, and the chores were completed, did she get the chance to ask Jack about the passage she'd heard that morning.

“I'm so sorry about your dad, Gini,” Jack said, while she rested on his chest, a few tears escaping their usually guarded cell.

“Yeah, but I'm sure I'll be fine. Hey, I've made it this far, and things can't get much worse. I've always thought when things look the darkest and the roughest, that means there's only one way for things to go, and that's for the better. Besides,” she said, now sitting up, I'm a big girl, aren't I? There's lots more for me to learn and do, my life's just beginning.”

Surprised at her own sudden burst of courage, she asked, “And what about you, where are you going to go from here, or do, now that you've decided it's time for a change?”

“Ah, I'll just have to cross that bridge when come to it, won't I? Guess we're both just going to have to take life one piece at a time. First off though, I think I'd like to go back and see my roots, so to speak. You know, see where my dad grew up, and then maybe get a job for awhile, perhaps I can raise enough to come and see you from time to time, though I figure you'll be on your way soon enough yourself, will you not?”

Gini nodded. She knew things were going to change sooner or later, but this realization was harder than she'd thought. Wanting to change the subject she blurted out, “I

want to find a story, and I figured you know the Bible much better than me, seeing you're older than me and all,” she teased. Where does it say something about ‘Daughter go in peace...’ Ah, I can't remember it all. I just need to find that, something in me tells me it's what I need, perhaps it's something that will help me.

Jack thought for a while, then remembered. “Hmm, I think I know, it's when the lady, who had been sick for so long, in a desperate attempt to gain healing reached out, barely touching the Lord garment, and instantly was cured. It's a fascinating story, though I'm not sure where it is just yet, I'll have to look it up. I think there's one account of it somewhere in the book of Luke, though.

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These times of sweet communication helped to soothe her troubled and wondering heart, not knowing exactly where to turn. When speaking of the Lord, their faith grew, and by and by, Gini had gained a firm and steady friendship and connection with the Lord of her life. In the time that remained in her life here at the orphanage, she took up studying more seriously and learned new trades. She wanted to be prepared for whatever life had to offer her—and for whatever she could give to others in return. There were times when she realized that the troubles she'd been through had taught her much and, like the scripture, she had been on many occasions able to turn around and comfort others. One such time happened the last autumn of her stay at her farm life home.

There was a girl, she thought she knew pretty well, an independent girl, who lived her life acting tough, though deep inside there was a tenderness wanting to be discovered. Gini had spoken to her from time to time, though on this day when passing Gala in the hall, she was much too filled with thoughts of what her future entailed, to spend time with another. Though when she saw a secretly wiped away tear steal from her guarded emotions, Gini took the time to find out what was wrong.

At first, talking was the last thing Gala wanted to do, for she wanted to maintain such an air of confidence and didn't wish to be seen weak, but after a bit more probing, all was let loose as a wave washing on the shore un-restrained. Gala's heart felt broken in more pieces than she could begin to count, and felt she had lost any reason for continuing on in life. She was on the verge of ending her life.

Praying inwardly for what to say or do, Gini held her hand and began to tell her a story—the one she'd thought only she could understand—how in the depths of despair, with every last bit of joy being taken from her—or so it seemed—she met the One who is now the dearest Friend one could ever had.

Gala changed that day. Not only did she carry on living, and have new purpose in life, but her heart met with the One who knew all there was about her, and found more love in return than she'd thought existed.

Such events stirred in Gini glimmers of hope to carry on in spite of her own sorrow, and kept her close to the One Who would help each of them through the turmoil of their

youth and the heartaches they shared. She realized she had purpose and reason for living, and the more Gini reached out to share it with another the fuller her life seemed and the greater desire she had to help others yet more. She felt as a piece of compressed coal, that would be discovered for the diamond it was. The pressures and heartaches were giving her a special shine, and others were finding beauty in life as well, as she opened her mind and heart to others, speaking of the love in Jesus she'd come to know.

* * *

Her thoughts were transported back to the present, at last she was at the station. As the bus pulled in, Gini gathered her belongings, tried to tidy her clothes, and make sure she wasn't forgetting anything. At the station she was met by her uncle Ned, who carried her belongings and drove her to his house, that was about 5 miles away.

Striking up a conversation with this lass, who he'd always wanted to meet, but never quite made it down south, found her an interesting and ambitious girl.

"So, you going to be stayin' awhile then?"

"About two weeks. I want to look around and get to know the life my mother had while growing up."

"Ah, your mother, dear Shella, she had a mind of her own and used it well. Though I can think of several things I'd have rathered her do with her life than ..." he stopped sharing the slanted opinion he had of her work with the Mexicans, realizing that his niece had other things on her mind, and thought rather highly of what her mother had done with her life.

"Do you have an idea of what kind of job you'd like to get, where you want to go from here?"

"Oh, I'm not too sure at this point, but one thing I would like to do is learn more about you, and life here. So, what was mom like? You're her brother. Tell me a story or something, I'd sure like to know."

Switching to the topic to a lighter subject, Ned began to describe his kid sister, as he'd known her when they were young.

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Aunt Megan was there to greet them as they entered the small house on the outskirts of town. It wasn't a mansion by any means, but then again, Gini was used to anything but high living, so she found her self at ease soon-- especially when the dessert of apple pie and ice-cream was served. She didn't know if she'd tasted anything half as good as that before.

"Goodnight, then," her Aunt bid her, as Gini got comfy on the fold-out couch in the living room, with as many blankets as she could pile on. The temperature was something she wasn't quite used to. But the change of scenery was nice.

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The sun was as shiny as ever when she awoke, feeling so alive and ready to get on with a new chapter of her

life. She was up and cooking before anyone else had even stirred. A home-made meal of bacon, eggs and bread with jam was served on the table for a pleasantly surprised couple who had been come accustom to the quiet life of solitude they'd shared for some time now. She'd taken a course on cooking, before leaving the home she'd known for most her life, and was anxious to put her skill to use.

Enjoying the full-of-life company of Gini, Ned and Megan decided to take her around the village and show her what life was like in this part of the world. Gini took it all in and when the day was over, sleep came quickly. She was going to enjoy her time here.

* * *

"Today I'd like you to meet some distant relatives of yours, you may have some things in common." Ned announced, while enjoying the last tasty bite of his muffin that Megan had set out for breakfast. "At 12:00 we'll go, if you're ready."

"Sure, sounds good. I really appreciate you taking me in like this and showing me around. I'm glad my letters made it safely to you, and your warm welcome is like a bit of fresh sunny air. It's just good to be doing something out of the ordinary, you know?"

"Well, it needn't be too unordinary, now that you're a grown woman, but we're glad to have you." Ned continued his subtle attempts to get this young girl used to the idea of living a more settled life, coming up with a job and so forth.

And so the days went, running from town to town, meeting new people, taking walks in open fields and just getting to know what life might have been like for her dear mother. Time was up all too soon, and Gini had a bus to catch in the morning. As the little team sat around the dinner table, Ned passed on his last bit of advice to his niece.

"Gini, I know you love your mother dearly. She was a kind and good woman. You know though, that I don't approve of her throwing away what could have been a very promising career, for whatever reasons she had. And if I make one thing certain to you, in my attempt to help you have the best life you could lead, I'd say this: Don't throw yourself into something that really isn't going to bring you what I know you want in life. I know you want excitement, and want to do some crazy or even wild thing. But take it from me, from someone who knew how to settle down to a good job and support a family: Hold on to what you know is really the best, and don't be blown about by the fleeting winds of feelings or all too-high ambitions." Enough said, he asked for the potatoes to be passed, and lighter conversation resumed.

* * *

What Ned had said stuck in Gini's mind as she went to bed that night.—Though in a different way than was intended. "Don't throw yourself into something that really isn't going to bring you what I know you want in life." She

thought on it again. “Well, what is it that I really want? Don’t I want to follow in the footsteps of someone who’s life helped so many? What good would it do to hold firm to settling down to a place of least resistance, just to make a steady income? To me that seems to be a waste.”

Julaine, her personal guardian nodded and was helping to direct her thoughts.

“Yes, I know what I want, and with God’s grace I’m going to hold on to it with all the might in my soul, and I won’t let it go.”

At the station, she bid her Aunt and Uncle a kind farewell, and boarded the bus that would take her to her new future, now having settled a bit of her past. She felt ready now to form her own life to whatever shape her Savior, and her own heart, knew to be best.

Two: determination—on my own

“Ring!” Someone was at the door of the tiny apartment that Gini had stayed in now for the past 7 months. After leaving her former home for good, she’d been able to make her way to a small town in Texas, a place she’d always wanted to go. She got a small time job and was making plans for a future of fulfillment.

“Annette, it’s you! I haven’t seen you in so long. What have you been up to?” Annette was a friend of hers, that she’d met about a year ago, while working her way to this town. When one’s feelings were up, the other seemed to be down about something, and so they helped to balance one another out and be a support to each other. Annette helped to run a dancing school, while Gini still wasn’t sure what she was good at, but for the most part made a living down at the grocery store, though the cost of living was getting to be more and more unbearable.

The two talked for a while and decided to meet the next day at lunch to make plans for the summer. It was the one time when they could do something nature-related, which they both enjoyed.

Without much money to spend on such things as holidays, they decided to borrow a tent from a friend and camp out for a few days under the stars.

* * *

“Stars are such beautiful creations!”

“Indeed!” Annette enthusiastically responded.

“They are like diamonds that have soul, that are alive and could tell a story, if only you’d take the time to listen. They’ve seen each night that this earth has lived. Think of the millions of events they could tell of that no one has ever heard of!”

Drifting off to sleep, Gini felt a tender and warm presence, a motherly figure beside her, and it gave her a sense of comfort.

Shella’s presence was felt, for she too enjoyed the night air and often enjoyed star-gazing to relieve the pressures that built up so easily while working down on the earth.

Rest, my child. She inaudibly whispered, while stroking her daughter’s forehead. *There’s much to come in your life, and this peaceful moment will soon pass, and you will find yourself soon awakening to a much different world. There is work to be done, but Jesus and we will be here to help you.*

Given leave to visit with their daughter, Fernando and Shella talked nearby while the girls slept. Tomorrow would be the first day of their new mission—to help Gini find what she’d been looking for. There was much to be done, many pieces had to be in place. So far all had gone according to His plan, for their Lord was working along side of them to help bring Gini to just the right place, not only in body, but in mind and heart, with her desires heading in the direction that would bring the most fulfillment.

* * *

“You know that guy we met at the campground?” Gini inquired, as Annette and her spoke of their time off. “I just think he had a point in what he said.”

“Which point would that be? Besides ...”

“No, I don’t mean that—though we both found him attractive. I mean he really did have a love for those children. It’s hard to imagine how little ones like that, after escaping the horrors of their environment, still had no real place to turn. But he had a heart and if he wasn’t attached to his commitments here, would be off in that land helping them out. Just think what good you and I could do if we were to put our time and energies to helping those in the war-torn Baltic lands.”

“Not me!” Annette emphatically exclaimed. “I don’t know about you, but it just freaks me out to think of all those bombs that could be going off at any time. You’re just walking along and boom, that’s it! I think I like my home here. It’s not that I don’t care, it’s just that I don’t feel called to do it, or like that’s what I’m supposed to be doing.”

“Well, shouldn’t it be each one of our goals to make ourselves a benefit to the world at large? I don’t think that takes any special ‘calling’ to do that. But I see your point, and it scares me too. But seriously, what would you think if I were to go somewhere like that? I may live a shorter life than most, maybe my body will have to get sent back in a less-than-comely form, but think of those lives I could help and save, who don’t have any other chance at living, who see no other hope of existence, except to scrape together a few crumbs to live on for a few more hours. I don’t have a father or mother—at least not living, so I know a bit what it’s like to lose the ones dear to you.”

After her courageous thoughts had been passionately shared, and Annette left for the evening, Gini sat musing what had been shared by that man at the camp. He told stories of the orphan children that greed and pride had made, and stories that the good others had done in locating parents or guardians for the dear young ones, how shipments of aid had bettered the lives of those in the make-shift homes and camps they were forced to dwell in. How he got this information, she was unsure. Sleep was scarce that night, for each time her

thoughts drifted to that far away land, the desire mounted yet higher, till she thought she'd burst.

* **

At her lunch break the following day, Gini sat alone, her heart fixed in prayer to the One Who had kept her all these years and Whom she knew had a definite plan for her.

"Lord, is this the path You want me to take, or what is it that I am to do? I've been sitting around here long enough, I'm rearing to go, to explore, to reach far and wide with the message of Your love and salvation, and salvation not just of spirit, but for the lives of these dear young ones."

"Yes," came a reply she heard in her heart. But just as soon as it came, the silence followed again.

"But what exactly am I to do, I don't have many friends or those who can help me monetarily. But, like Jack used to tell me, with You all things are possible. Guess I'll just put that to the test, and see what You can do with a simple and unlearned girl as me, who barely scrapes by. Please guide the steps that I take and lead me in the way that You know is right for me. I don't wish to do as I please. I don't wish to live a quiet and 'normal' life. I feel like a twig that has been lit on fire, and in the short time I feel that's left, till the twig's time is up, I want to take that fire to light others lives who dwell in dank solitude and pain. Make me a bright burning torch to light another's life, this is all I ask."

* * *

Tears ran down her Savior's face, as He heard these words ring out from Gini's heart. Her heart too had been touched with a bit of the compassion He felt many times over. Jesus hugged Shella and put his arm around Fernando and said, "It looks like we've got a winner. She's going to be perfect for the job. This is the kind of girl I need, and your help in her life has helped to bring her to this point of desiring My will above her own. It hasn't been easy, it took you giving your own lives while living on earth, and parting with the physical to continue your missions above, but the rewards for such lives of giving are going to be phenomenal. I'm so proud of you. Thank you for letting your daughter be used of Me. I, and those who's lives she will yet touch, will be eternally grateful."

It was Shella's turn to shed a tear, for she knew that all credit belonged to the Lord she'd given everything to. It was Him that had made all good possible.

"Lord, Your love for us, as nobodies as we are, touches me so deeply. I fail to have words to describe how you make me feel. But please, always know that we and our daughter, will be Yours for eternity, to use however you see fit, to accomplish Your purpose of spreading Your love to all."

A heartfelt smile beamed on Jesus' face, and they parted to continue being the help Gini needed at this crucial time.

* * *

Some months passed, and Gini was able, with help of both those on earth, and those who helped her from

beyond, to raise enough support to fly to the Baltics, to help out in whatever way she could. She'd stayed for a couple of months and then returned, though things as they seemed when she left had changed drastically upon her arrival back "home."

Annette met her at the airport, and she was invited to stay with her, seeing as she'd closed down her own apartment during the time away.

"Tell me all about it!" Annette was showing more signs of enthusiasm, even if just for the sake of a good story. The two talked as late as strength would allow, and till Gini could not stay awake one moment longer. She slept the longest she's slept in a very long time. Her time away had been a moving experience, and she was not the same as she'd been before. A deeper maturity filled her soul, and Annette, among others, noticed the change.

* * *

For awhile all Gini could speak of was her time away, the poor needy souls, the children crying and those who had lost their lives for what seemed to be no cause at all, at least not worth losing loved ones and friends, parents, sons and daughters for. But in time she too was on with the life at hand. Experiences like that had a way of fading from the forefront to what was deemed more important in society's eyes. She took a job as a waitress and stayed with friends in a room that was rented, in the basement of a widower's house.

Christmas time came and went without much thought, till one January morning disaster struck. Because of false crediting, her job as a waitress came to an abrupt end. She hadn't done anything wrong, but hard times had forced those she worked for to take matters into their hands to "make them work," but the schemes they concocted only brought a low blow to their whole business, and Gini was once again, without work, goal and felt herself just floundering about.

How does one describe the feeling of having known your life was meant to be used for a good cause, and waking up one morning knowing you haven't really lived it to the full, you're soon to be penniless, and don't know who to turn to.

Entering a chapel, Gini sat to pray.

"Dear Lord, I've had a good life. You've kept me through so many ups and downs. I don't even know why You've chosen to use me to be Your little light to others, or so I felt when off away in that cold and needy land. But I just want to know what I'm supposed to do from here. What is it that I'm supposed to accomplish? I can't go on without some meaning to my life. I just know I can't stay stuck here for too much longer. Please show me what I am to do."

Shella, Fernando, Julaine and other Heavenly helpers surrounded her, whispering words of comfort in her heart. Somehow just praying and talking about it made Gini feel better. With tear stained cheeks she went to Annette's home, for friendship, and just to have someone to talk with, hoping, somewhere along the way she'd find a clue to the deep questions of her heart.

* * *

On her way to Annette's house she found a pamphlet lying face down on the ground. Curious, Gini picked it up, but before returning it to the pavement, noticed the words "job offer" and decided to give it a closer look and slipped it into her pocket.

Gini made a few phone calls that night, talked to a few friends and finally retired around midnight.

An angel appeared by her bed, as she lay sleeping, it appeared as a dream. Just seeing the light and pleasant being near to her reminded her that her Savior was present and near too, and she woke with a feeling of peace.

It took a week before she found a place to call her job, though it seemed to take an eternity, and all the while her mind was on a different plain, dreaming of much higher ambitions. The job offered on the slip of paper was for work at a daycare center. Though she wasn't able to get a job there, it got her thinking that working with children might be what she wanted to do, at least for now. And soon enough she found herself some work with kids elsewhere.

* * *

A month past, and still no sign of what she'd like to do on a more permanent basis. She felt her time was drifting away and would soon be gone. Little did she know that this time of floundering, finding out what things she was good at, learning to work with people—albeit little ones—was teaching her a great deal. She needn't have worried so about what she was to make of herself, for it all was going according to plan—His plan.

Her first paycheck was issued, her rent was paid and other pressing needs, and with what little she had left by the end of the month, was used towards a fund she was saving up. Gini wasn't quite sure what for, but thought it good to have a buffer of some sort.

Then it came! The message she'd been half expecting, half hoping for. It came as a telegram from someone she'd met 2 years ago. It simply said, "Come and join me this summer.—Fred." She knew what that meant, and was more than happy to oblige.

Gini had kept communication with this gentleman, via e-mail, and now, in his own special way, he'd stated that he was ready for closer contact. Without much thought, preparations were made, and time went by all too slow.

Thinking about Fred now had given her a life a new twist, and she wanted to do it right. First there was preparation of heart, wondering how it was all going to go, thinking things through as far as what it was she wanted out of this relationship that had somehow developed, though wasn't ever in the forefront as it now was.

Fred was an interesting person, though he had his quirks too. He loved to gamble, and this was one of the things that had brought him to the place she'd found him to begin with. Tired, worn-out, sitting on the side of the road, with nothing left to go on, he'd seen her looking at him, wondering, in her tenderhearted way, what was wrong, and why he was so downcast. When he composed himself, they began conversing and she found out that he was a banker,

and lived up the road, but often, because of lack of joy or challenge in his life, found little else to do for a thrill then gamble on the weekends, and he'd just lost—big.

He found in her a certain light and joy in living that struck a cord in his own heart. He thought there was only one way to walk life's path: to get a job, raise a family, and somehow make things work out. But looking at her he could tell she was worth taking note of. Gini had an inward peace, yet a fire, a zest, something she wanted to do with her life. He loved talking with her, and by and by, through mail communication, they got to know one another better.

Gini felt he needed a friend, and was happy to be that for him, though not in a very serious or close-contact way. He lived far away, but they'd decided, when he was ready, they could spend some time together.

It's amazing what can happen in the course of a week—the week they spent together that summer. They both fell wonderfully in love with each other, and by the time each parted to their prospective homes and work, it was hard not having that companionship.

* * *

"Annette, I've just got to tell you how things have been going with Fred and me!" Gini exclaimed one Friday evening over the phone.

"Shall I come over, I could bring a film, and we could catch up on things a bit?"

"Yes, that'd be great. And if you want to bring someone else along, that's fine with me too—you know like... that guy you seemed to be hanging out with lately."

"Oh, Gini, it's nothing serious, really. I'll just come and it can be the two of us. See ya!"

* * *

With Annette there they talked for hours, filling each other in on all kinds of new happenings, feelings, and stuff that girls talk about. The hour was late and Annette headed home. Somehow, Gini felt more alone these days, the times when she didn't have a friend around she felt the need for someone, so much more than she did in times past.

It must be that I'm missing Fred, though I don't remember feeling this down in quite awhile, she thought as she climbed in bed. Picking up her Bible from her bedside table, she began reading the story of Esther. It always interested her, and soon she was away in the land of Persia, re-living the events with these men and women of old.

She always admired this woman, who had no parents, much like herself, yet followed her Lord and saved many because of her obedience. *I wish I could have that fire, that conviction within, to bring me to place of full usefulness. How I want to be greatly used!* Gini thought, placing her Bible down and drifting off to sleep.

She awoke early the next morning—too early—with loud banging sounds at the door of the apartment she now was living in. Groggily making her way to find out who it could be, she found her neighbor pleading for help, saying she'd been robbed and came back in time to miss the thugs, and was worried she'd be harmed any minute.

Gini let her in and tried to settle her. "I just don't know what to do," Esme said through her troubled tears. "I've been here for 5 years and nothing like this has ever happened to me. What am I to do? What if they come back and wish to harm me?"

Praying a moment, Gini pulled out her Bible to the book of Psalms, the book of comfort and courage and faith in the Lord, and began to read chapter 91. In her heart she saw how she had been wonderfully spared, and felt her Lord's protection more than she'd realized before. In her heart Gini let out a praise, she knew she was being looked after.

No matter how dark the moment, there never failed to be a time when she was comforted and reassured of her Lord's love, in some way. —Even this odd and troubling occurrence proved to do that.

* * *

Esme felt comforted and soon went back to her own apartment, but not without asking her Savior to come and be a part of her life. She received His love freely, and felt like a new woman, full of confidence in His care. Gini promised to visit her more often, and they soon became close friends.

Three: Challenge—the choice to live

Early one October morning, the air was still and silent as Gini boarded the bus that took her to the children's center she worked at. Thoughts kept flooding her mind, "What if all the freedom I have left is taken away from me? Things are getting a bit too tight these days, with more and more regulations and less privacy for individuals. I just don't know how long I can play along with their games, games with hearts and lives. I feel as a puppet at times, when my string is pulled I have to move, or I'll break."

A bird flew by, singing its merry morning song, and it sounded as a whisper, telling her that her life, her all, was in the hands of the One she cared most about.

* * *

That day after work there was a notice on her door, telling her to sign up with the "New improvements committee," imploring her to become of better use to society. Signing up wasn't something she had a problem with, she was always happy to be of some good use to others. Just the fact that in doing so she had to give away so much about her personal life, records and so forth, on the sign up form, that bothered her. She felt as if everything she went to do, more and more questions were being asked, from health matters to family relations, to opinions. For awhile Gini felt she could only go along with these things, thinking that this was now the way of the world, and were she to continue on struggling to find her place of usefulness she'd just have to submit to these increasing encroachments on her private affairs.

Then came the day she'd always feared. It didn't come in the way that she thought it would. Gini had thought of herself as a good citizen, had always lived in such a way to promote peace amongst her country men and women, and wasn't one to stir up trouble. So when changes in her life

style, causing less privacy, were implemented in subtle and serene ways it was easy and less trouble to move along with the flow. Were things presented to her in a hard and fast manner, she could have easily rebelled, for Gini was not born to be made and forced into anyone's mold. But these things appealed to her sense of "live peaceably with all men."

Though the day came, when her eyes were opened, and nearly too late. She was stopped by the police for not carrying certain information, telling more details of her life, telling personal information that she felt should be tucked away with one's private papers. But now it had become law for all to carry such personal matters with them at all times. Gini smiled and apologized for having been so forgetful, submitted to paying the fine it cost and carried on her way.

It would have seemed like a small matter to most who were happy to flow with whatever the system required, planning only to better their own existence in some way. But to Gini this was a serious encroachment into her own world. Not only did she have to keep her faith and the scriptures to herself while at the work place, and the many rules and regulations she had to abide by, but now, in essence, a mere walk across the street, was monitored by the "big boys." That night she pondered how she was to make her escape from such a society that made its citizens feel like branded animals, made to bend and yield to its master's every wish. She'd made up her mind, and could take the strict control no longer.

* * *

"Lord, I don't know if I'm just being rash, or if there is something to this, but I just feel I've got to get out of here. I have been treading water, or so it's seemed, trying to make of my life something worthwhile, but all this time not feeling like I'm getting anywhere, or doing much good with my time. I've got to know what You want me to do—but it can't be here any more. I've had it with this life style, and I'm outta here. Oh, Lord, what do I do?" She pleaded and implored, before crashing out for the night.

* * *

At 2:00 she was awakened by a noise. It came from the small livingroom-kitchen area. Was she also being robbed? "Lord, keep me!" She froze a moment, before venturing out to see what was going on.

"Fred? What are you doing here? You had me scared half to death. I didn't know you had a key to this place."

"I'm sorry I didn't ring, I didn't want to wake you, but I just had to see you. You know there are some important things I've got to talk with you about. But if you want to wait till the morning, I don't mind, I'm pretty tired as is."

"Well, you're here now, and I'm up, so lets get settled with a cup of coffee and talk it out."

He shared with her how he'd been laid off just a week earlier, because he couldn't keep the strict regulations newly in place on the job. He told of his desires to also move, to venture out to some new land, but wasn't sure if that's what was best.

“I just don’t get it, you know. First they want your services, they suck you dry, taking all they can from you, and then in your hour of need, when you want something to hold on to, when things are changing so fast all around and you just need to have some semblance of stability, something to count on, they fall through on you.”

“Yeah, I’ve been thinking similar thoughts, you know, I too feel the need to get out and move on to a new life style, to get control of my life again, that I feel is being taken away from me bit by bit. I was just praying tonight about it. How do you feel about the Congo? Is that too bazaar? I don’t know, maybe you’ve got a better idea.”

They talked till 4 in the morning, till they decided they better get some sleep.

Fred stayed with Gini, till they were able to make some more definite plans.

“One thing is certain,” Gini told her reflectioned image in the bathroom mirror, while brushing her teeth. “I’m not going to be one of those mindless, brainless, gutless, robotic souls that are roaming the globe today. I’m going to stick to what I believe. I know I’ve been called for a purpose and I’m going to find whatever that may be. And come what may, by God I’ll do it!”

Her voice began to choke a bit, and a tear stole down her cheek. In moments like this, deciding what to do with one’s life, she missed the caring arms of her mother, the encouragement of her father, and just wished they were there to help her through this next pass.

* * *

A month later, Fred and Gini had packed up most of their stuff, sold what they could and had worked towards buying their tickets. They were ready for a fresh new start. Sitting in the livingroom, sorting through papers, Gini found herself reminiscing over days gone by, when times were much simpler. She thought of Jack, and the times she’d spent with him, the conversations with God she’d had. Though times were hard, she thought, in the orphanage she’d spent so much time in, at least they were simple.

“Mom,” she whispered. “I wish you were here. Well, I know you see and know what I’m up to, ‘cause sometimes I feel you so close, and it’s a comfort to me. But can you just speak or tell me something. I just need to know if I’m heading the right way. Sometimes Fred and I have our conflicts too, and I just don’t always know if I’m going the way I should.”

Just then a small paper caught her eyes, it was something written by her mother. It said, “Today I want to start anew. I don’t know how I’m going to do it, or where I’m going to go, but I just know from this point on things are not going to be the same.” It was dated the 17 of October, oh so many years ago. *I wonder what Mom was talking about, but I can sure relate.* Somehow Gini heard Shella whispering as she read that, “If I could make a turn around and change my lifestyle, move out and work to better other’s lives, so can you.” That little note and whisper gave her courage to keep on in her quest to find a new life.

* * *

Things seemed to be going as well as they could, till one heartbreaking day.

“I’m sorry, Fred that you feel that way. I just don’t know what I’ll do without you. You’re a good friend, and I care so deeply about you. But I’ve got to follow this feeling, this desire I have deep within. There’s no way you or anyone else will keep me stuck up here, doing God knows what. I’ve got to break out. I can’t go further in this life here.”

“It’s not that I don’t love you also, it’s just that I have these other engagements now. I have responsibilities to tend to. I’ve got this new job and I seem to be doing okay, for once. You’ve got to understand this is where I belong, and of course I’d rather you be here with me. I guess we’re just going to have to follow where our own hearts lead. If they take separate paths, then we’ll have to trust that they’ll either lead to one another again, or never join because they are not meant to,” Fred expressed.

“I understand, but it’s just hard, cause you’d be the perfect one to branch out with. You’ve got talent, skill, like to work, and are good to me.” Gini said with a tear stealing down her cheek, as she reached out and held his hand. “I was really hoping this would work out. I know we’ve had our differences, but I thought they’d iron out eventually. But if you feel this is the place for you to be, then we’ll just have to leave it at that. Come join me then, if you get the urge. My flight leaves in one week, and I’m sorry, but I’m getting on it. There’s no way I can stay any longer, though of course, I’d rather be with you.”

“Good night, I’ll see you in the morning, Gini. Maybe we both just need more time to think it over. I’ll stay with a friend, and see you in the morning.

* * *

“Gini? ... Michelle? ... Are you here?” Fred called out, when he dropped by the following morning. She was gone. Definitely took the suggestion for time to think. “I’ll leave a note and be back later.” Fred thought.

Deep in thought, Gini whispered a prayer in the nearby cafe, “Lord, it’s hard--one of the hardest things I think I’ve ever done--to leave friends, loved ones, this land I’ve known, to walk out and try to make of my life something special, something different. I just don’t have the strength to follow through with it. When Fred and I worked on it together, when it was our united dream, it seemed so much easier. Maybe that’s all he was there for, placed by You to help give me the push I needed to go in the way You wanted me to. But now I feel all but abandoned. You’re here, but I sure could use a bit more support.”

As the words left her lips they ascended to her Master’s ears, touching His heart to give her a bit more strength, joy and thrill at the challenge before her. Gini felt new joy stir her heart, from where she was not sure. But just that time in her Savior’s arms helped to give her the ounce of strength to take the next step.

Day by day, as she poured out her heart to the Lord He continued to lead her, telling her what His plan for her was. The day came at last—a very long week it had seemed—and she was awaiting her flight.

“Gini, Gini,” she heard Annette call out, running and waving to her. “I’ve brought something for you!”

“Well? What is it?”

“It’s the permission to join the disaster relief team based right where you’ll be going. You heard about the recent flooding and civil unrest, haven’t you?”

“I haven’t given much of my time to online reading, but I did catch news of it. This is wonderful, how did you do it ... I mean get it?”

“Oh, never mind that now, just take it, and I wish all your dreams to come true.” Annette said, clasping Gini’s arm, holding back the tears.

“I just wish I was coming with you. Really I do. I know how you feel about life here and all, and I do somewhat too. I’m too tied up with things and have got to stick around. But maybe a bit of me can go with you, as you try and help the people there. I know you will, you’ve always been more concerned about others than you have been of yourself. I wish you the best, and God bless. I’ll think about you often. I don’t forget to write, if and when you get the chance.”

“I’ll write when I can, and I’ll always remember the friendship we shared here. You’ve been right there when I needed you. Take care. May God bless and keep you also.”

* * *

Sitting on the plane Gini flipped through the music channels, seeing if there was something that would inspire her, she was in great need of a mood upper. Just then a handsome looking man, who had been sitting towards the back, placed himself in the vacant seat near to her, giving him more leg room.

They started talking and enjoyed the flight, getting to know one another. Spencer—as he introduced himself--was also trying to get out of the strict control of the system, the way things were now, and also wanted to be a help to those in need. With such things in common it was easy to talk, and Gini found herself forgetting her pain, her loneliness, for many of the hours they chatted.

Promising to keep in touch, they bid one another fair-well at the airport, and Gini now faced the challenge of her life.

It was easy to find a place to stay, for hotel accommodations were plenteous, though not fancy in any way. When she felt somewhat accustom to the time change, she ventured out to find the office where she could apply to help the peoples the land.

“Is this where I ask about helping?” She was able to get the secretary to understand. Holding up the slip of paper, and with a few hand motions, was somewhat understood. The secretary pointed to a near by door, with the director’s name on it.

Boldly Gini knocked and entered.

Four: Never alone

It’d been four months now, since Gini had taken up residence in this foreign land—and been well received too. She’d known sickness and health, friends and moments when she felt as alone as the moon in the sky, without partner or mate, but all in all, she felt the freedom this land granted her, worth it. There was one thing, however, that neither work or jobs could complete for her—her dream of being a mother herself.

She was much too busy for thoughts as such, most of the time. Just when she’d see the little ones snuggled up in their mother’s arms, looking like they felt they were the luckiest souls alive, she wished she could be loved so dearly too.

Gini started to make a simple day-care center, where whoever could come and contribute their time to care for the children, could come and join her in her attempt to begin teaching them what they could, with the little supplies they had on hand. In addition to her care of children during the day she began a “mother’s support group” where they’d gather once a week to contribute ideas, or supplies that were no longer needed, to help each other with the challenging job of caring for newborns, or soon-to-be first-time mothers. She was happy, for the most part, and carried on doing what little she could.

“Gini, there’s a man here to see you!” One of the ladies exclaimed, as she came running in where the mothers were meeting.

“Oh? Where?” Her question was answered as she saw a middle-aged man standing near the doorway.

“You must be Michelle?” He inquired, and introduced himself as Ralph, her Aunt Megan’s younger brother.

“Ah, yes, I think we met when I visited.”

“Yes, indeed we did. And I found you to be a fine lady. Do you have time to meet with me, and show me around a bit? I’ve come just to see you.”

Later that afternoon, they walked through the town, buying some supplies, and finding out more about each other.

“Well, it’s quite a surprise to have a relation show up in a place like this. So what’s brought you here?”

“Believe it or not, I have been here on business. My company owns a branch of stores just a few hours drive away. Since I’d heard you were around here, after making further inquiries exactly where, I decided to pay you a visit. So how’s things been for you. You makin’ it alright? Anything you need, that perhaps I or the others back home could send for ya?”

“Now that you mention it, there’s one thing I can think of, among the many things we need just to survive. But if I were to have one wish granted, it would be the funds to build a simple house, on the top of that hill over there.”

“Well, that’s a hearty request. And what’s your vision with that?”

“Well, I’ve been staying with friends now, for the past several months, and I think I’d like a place of my own. I have permission to stay as long as I need to. My services here have been approved, and I’m happy to help these folks here as long as I can. I know it’s a large request, and I don’t imagine it being an easy one to grant, but since you asked, that’s what’s been on my mind these days.”

“You’re an ambitious young lady, and I’ll see what can be done. I’m sure it won’t take all that much…”

“Yes, that’s what I thought, though I’m not too experienced in those sort of matters.”

Ralph had to be on his way the next day, though his visit was a welcome one. It was good to have someone from back home to talk with. Life carried on, nothing too out of the ordinary turned up, till the day a wonderful package came—the funds to build the house she’d dreamed of! How Ralph swung it, she wasn’t sure. And even how the money had made it so safely to her, was a genuine miracle. But she knew she was in the place God wanted her to be, and as long as she kept looking to Him for guidance, He always seemed to pull her through, regardless of how challenging or daunting the outlook.

Seven months later, her cozy new abode was built and ready to live in. Her new house over looked a beautiful setting, and she greatly enjoyed the quiet her own location provided.

The months rolled on, and Gini had become well accustomed to life in her new adopted land. It’d been nearly two years since she’d set foot here, with the intent of freedom and finding her life’s greatest fulfillment. Her dream of finding a husband, though scarcely possible, became more intent by the day. Each time she looked into another’s child’s eyes, her own heart yearned for one of her own, or two perhaps.

* * *

“Gini!” She heard a frightened voice calling and waking her in the wee hours of the morning.

“Whatever is the matter? What’s going on?”

“There’s been fighting nearby, in the village next to ours, it’s said that it will travel to our side, and our men will be called on to fight. I know they are able and willing too, but I’m so scared. What will happen to us, to our little ones, to our happy town?”

“Oh, come here.” Gini held this mother of seven, who she’d known for quite some time now. “Remember those things I’ve taught you, about the God of the Heavens, who walks beside us. He will show us what to do. Let’s pray

now. He knows just where we are and can shield us about with many angels if we call on Him to.”

As they prayed the sounds of fighting came closer than ever, but somehow the peace that filled their hearts seemed to give them courage to face whatever it was that lay before them.

“Let us go down and see who we can help.”

“No, no!” Wanai cried, “We’re safer here.”

“I feel a call to find the children and bring them to a safer place, till the fight is passed or subsided. If you don’t feel the courage, please take your rest here. But I could use your help. Will you come?”

Weighing up the possibilities, Wanai decided it would be better to help another, than languish in fear, alone. So the two brave ladies headed towards the village center, where confusion was mounting.

“Dear God, I feel as scared—or more—as Wanai, but I can’t show it, nor can I do nothing about the situation. I believe I’m here for a reason. You’ve put me here so You’re just going to have to pull me through, and pull all these dear ones through.”

* * *

Gini spent most of the night gathering those who had lost their parents, or were wondering around, misplaced in the fearful confusion. Wanai helped to sing songs to the crying and troubled little ones they’d found. Soon others joined them in their attempt to help those in need. They found a cottage to spend the troublesome hours in, while they rested and prayed, sang and comforted one another.

The long awaited morning came, and all was still, though war still waged in the hearts of the angry ones.

For weeks the fighting continued and spread to other parts of the land.

“When will this war end?” exhausted, Gini cried, as she tucked in bed the little one who had taken to her. Acting as a mother and father to so many was a big and tiresome task, and the job seemed to get bigger by the day.

Just when Gini felt there was not a moment longer she could carry on, and hadn’t the courage to go on any further, word came that war was subsiding, their village was now safe, and they were able to begin to re-set up the loving community that had been so hard-earned.

The unity of the villagers that were now there, seemed stronger than ever. If they were to make it, and become a thriving community once again, they were going to have to pull not only each one’s weight, but lift a hand to help many others. This drew them close in so many ways. Men worked to restore housing and businesses. Woman cared for others’ children who either had only one parent, or had lost them both. In a few months things seemed almost as they had been before the fighting—yet in many ways even better. The loss of many loved ones and relatives left everyone with a bit of emptiness and despair, but they learned to cope with it. They always had. It just was the way it had been, and life continued on.

* * *

Gwanado entered the room where Gini was praying. He was half American, half native, and had always been a great help. He was 27 and unmarried. He enjoyed teaching carpentry skills to the older children at the local school. He also loved to hike and take off for days at a time, alone, exploring new parts of the land.

"I'm sorry for interrupting, Miss," he said politely, as he attempted to leave.

"No, no, come on in. What's on your mind. Gwan?"

"I just thought I'd come to talk. You know you're a fine lady."

Hmm, I can see this going somewhere, Gini thought.

"That's sweet of you to say that. So what brought you here at this time, is there something you need help with, something you're wondering?"

"I just wanted to see you. I... I thought you looked so beautiful last night, as you sang those songs with the children before parting for the night. I wish I could see more of you... I mean be around you more often."

"You are a fine man," Gini said tenderly, "and I've always known that I could count on you. I don't know what I would have done without your help. You've done so much. How about we plan to go on a long walk tomorrow. I have some time off then. I could bring some food and supplies, and my Bible, and we could explore some of those places you so like to go to that I've never seen. What do you say?"

"I'd like that very much, it's just that I've hurt my ankle this morning. Could we still spend time, but only here at your house? Only if that won't inconvenience you, that is."

"I think that could work out, Gwan. Yes, come by tomorrow then, at 3:00," she said with a twinkle.

Gwan left with a very big smile on his face, and Gini continued her praying--only this time for guidance and direction in this very unexpected situation.

* * *

3:00 came, and not a second after Gwanado was at the door. Greeted with a warm embrace he entered to find a lovely display of some of the native food, set for them to enjoy, along with a bottle of wine. It was perfect for a special time of friendship and talking.

In time their feelings of love grew for one another, and they were often seen together, tending to the many needs of the village and the young. According to custom, and the wishes of Gwanado's father, marrying was not a possibility. They chose, however, to carry on their friendship affair in whatever ways they could--though keeping it in the "safe zone."

Though it was hard to endure at times, the two felt it best, for the sake of Gini's mission and calling there, not to risk losing their place of respect by jeopardizing it with affection beyond what would be considered acceptable. Their love for each other did not overshadow her love for the people of this land. They were her first love, and to them she gave all she could.

* * *

One night, a neighbor having had too much to drink, decided that he'd pay this white lady a visit. Gini not knowing how to take his advances, and being the only one in the house, could not do much to defend herself. She felt it best to yield to his force, rather than risk getting herself harmed. Though it was not pleasant, Gini was not harmed--the Lord and the strong angels watching over her, saw to that.

The neighbor, left the next day, and never was seen again. Rumors were spread about where he went and why, but Gini knew the Lord had put it in him, somehow, to leave. It would have been too hard to continue on, were he to remain. She was thankful for her Lord's hand in his life, moving him on, and she prayed he would come to know Him better, one day.

It had been an unsettling situation, however, and caused her several nights of fitful sleep, nightmares at times, and many awkward feelings. But when she earnestly sought her loving Lord, with simple faith that He was in control and would continue to watch over her, peace was restored again to her soul. Gini decided to look at this occurrence as but a piece of experience, that she might have greater understanding of others who'd gone through the same. In this land it was not an unusual happening. She was able to comfort others, in time, having found the grace and comfort of Jesus.

The inevitable--yet unexpected--happened. Gini found herself with child! She had always wanted a young one, but it just seemed so scary now, under the circumstances. Unwed, people might spread rumors that the young one was Gwanado's--that would spell trouble. Who could she go to, that would keep her heart's new concerns in confidence? She prayed so hard each night, not knowing who to turn to for help or assistance. Her Lord was there, whispering kindly into her ears, words of strength and courage, and she made it through those early days of pregnancy.

It was not noticeable, for a good while, to others in the village, and she was able to hide the fact pretty well. But she knew that in the later months, she'd have to get the assistance needed to pull through this challenge.

In an attempt to gain help, she wrote to her Uncle Ralph, asking for medical supplies, and so forth. She felt uncomfortable sharing this with any of her family, but she was desperate and needed help.

One day while finishing the care of the young ones, Wanai was there, her faithful companion. Gini invited her to her house, and there she confided in her the news, her questions, fears and so forth. Wanai, who continued to grow in her love for both the Lord and Gini, wisely answered her.

"You may have to go away for awhile, so as to be less obvious that this child is yours. When the child is born, I will care for it as my own. I'll nurture it in its youngest months, here at my home. In time you can choose other children who you will take into your own home, caring for them as their mother, and they as your adopted children. When the time is right she can join you and the others. It can appear to the neighbors that you have entered a new stage,

and now will parent young ones who have no mother or father.

Gini saw the wisdom of this plan, and when praying about it further, saw it was really the best and only solution.

Gini was gone for six months.--Three till the baby was born, and the next three while she recovered, and Wanai cared for the young one in their home village. Wanai was there at the birth and took the baby home with her soon after, so as to make it less difficult for Gini.

Gini named her young one after her mother, though she was given the name, “Angai” and was called this by Wanai, since her birth. This was the name she was to go by.

In those months she filled her time with much prayer and reading, as well as learning new skills, native to the land. She wasn’t one to sit still for too long, nor did she want to give her mind the time to think about the joys of motherhood she was missing out on. It was what she had to do, and she encouraged herself that things would be back to semi-normalcy soon enough.

* * *

Upon her arrival back home, Gini wasted no time searching out for those children who could come and live with her there at home, whom she would mother. Gwan and her also enjoyed moments here and there, catching up on all that had happened in the time she was away. He had not known the full reason of why she had been gone, or even to where she went, yet he gave her his quiet trust that seemed to say, “When you’re ready, I know you’ll explain it all.”

On the last day of the week of preparation, the two of them enjoyed that long walk they’d missed so long ago. The weather was perfect and the musical sounds of the birds added to the symphony nature displayed all around them. They both knew there wouldn’t be much time to spend after the little ones arrived. Gini would be a mother, and her children would demand so much more of her time. Their needs would come first.

The day they spent together was just perfect. As Gini lay in her bed that night, praying for the grace and strength to face this new stage of her life, her mother sat beside her, whispering in her ear, in inaudible tones, how Jesus would give her all that she needed. Though the words were not heard, the message made its way into her heart, and she drifted off to sweet and restful sleep.

The day dawned, bringing with it anxious excitement. Today Angai—and the others--would join her. Gini moved around restlessly, fixing up things in her house, wanting to make it all just right.

Gini had refrained from seeing her little one till everything else was in place, knowing how difficult it would be to wait once she did. The two other young ones she had chosen to adopt, a boy and a girl, Amar and Shinay, were both about 3 years of age.

This It was decided that Wanai would stay there one week, to make it easy on the young one, and to help Gini know what to expect, how to care for her. She was not experienced in caring for children this age.

As Wanai climbed the hill, with this bundle of love, a wave of emotion hit Gini’s heart. “Oh, God, help me to love

her, to care for her, and to treat her with the tender care You would if she were Yours—for that she is. Bless this dear woman who laid down her time and life to care for my darling angel.”

A tear stole down her cheek as she imagined it would be so very hard for Wanai to give her now up, after growing so close to this little girl from Heaven.

* * *

The week the women spent together with the children, was a challenging time. There were restless and sleepless nights, times when the only thing one could do was pray and hope the morning would bring with it new strength for the day. There were special moments of bonding and getting to know these dear little ones.

When the week was up, Wanai and Gini felt they were the closest in heart and soul than they’d ever been; they’d had to talk about so much—their fears, their feelings, as well as helping to instruct one another in the care of these little ones. Wanai returned to her house, empty handed, but knew she would always have a place in both Gini’s and Angai’s life and heart. It was because of her, this was all possible. She knew the Lord would bless each bit of effort and love that she’d given to these who she now cared about more than before.

* * *

“It’s beautiful to see you with the children,” Gwanado expressed, when visiting one sunny afternoon.

Because of the difficulty of the situation, Gwanado was never told the whole truth about the child, and it was kept a secret for a long time. When Angai was one years old, and learning to walk, Gini felt it was the time now to share with him what he’d unspokenly wondered about for so long. “She’s mine, you know.”

He was a bit taken back with the straightforward bit of information.

“I had wondered. How my heart has wanted to father a child, for the two of us, though I know that it is not possible at this time. I can’t be a father for your little ones in the way I wish I could, but I can, and want to help, in many other ways—with supplies, getting you all the things you need, and helping out at times in the care with these young and growing ones, so you can have time to rest.”

“I appreciate all you have done for us, Gwanado, and the personal friend you are to me. We will be mates in spirit, always, though we can’t show it with marriage vows. We will care for one another’s hearts and always look out for each other, to the best of our ability.

“Our love is as a rare and beautiful gem, with many more new and intriguing facets to it than others are able to experience. We have a true bond of love in spirit—though our flesh yet craves for more. Let us continue in this life of love, as we have been, our hearts beating as one, our minds thinking each other’s thoughts, and our hands freely giving each other aid. That is the most we can do, and though incomplete, and we desire a closer union, I’m glad our Lord has allowed us this portion of love. It has helped fill a need in

my own heart. I thank the Lord for you, dear Gwan, for I have grown to love you, dearly.”

With that he placed a kiss tenderly on her lips and left, promising to return the next day with fresh milk for the young ones.

* * *

Those were hard days, in many ways. Young ones had so many demands, and she was unable to get around in the town like she liked to do. Gini was confined to a life of a house-mommy, but it was a time of joy as well, for she now had the desire of her heart to have not only the love and adoration of a child, but she had three. She cared for them well, and did her best to also help in the village in any way she could.

* * *

Two years went by, and she moved to a new place, in the outskirts of the town, where the children had more interaction with those from nearby villages. Gini began a small business of weaving and making clothes. This kept her busy while the children went to school or were cared for by other families.

A familiar face, or rather not too familiar, showed up at the shop mid-day. It was Ralph.

“It’s a surprise to see you here, what are you up to?” Gini exclaimed, while throwing her arms around him.

“Well, funny as it seems, I’ve come to see you.” Just then her young ones burst through the door, excited about some new creature they’d found while playing.

“Ah, yes. So is this the one?”

Remembering that she had written and pled for help so long ago, and recalling how he might know about her little secret, she nodded.

“I hope to be seeing more of her, that is if I can. I’ll be staying nearby for about a week. When shall I come by to visit?”

“Tonight’s fine. I’ll be having company, and we’ve planned a special meal in honor of a village Father who has done so much for us all. You’re welcome to join us. That is if…” Gini spoke in hushed tones, and briefly explained the situation, in no uncertain terms. Ralph fully understood and nodded his compliance with her wishes.

* * *

The next morning, came with a wave of horror. Where had Angai gone? Perhaps she had wondered outside in the night, or was sleeping with her sister or brother. Searching high and low, she found not even a trace. Breaking down in tears of despair, calling for miraculous help, her eyes fell on a note that was peering out from under her darling’s bed.

“Sorry I had to do this. Your young one is safe with me. I’ll explain it full later. Sincerely, Ralph.”

“Sincerely? You call that honest?! How…? What kind of a person would…? Dazed in disbelief, she set off to find and speak with Wanai. Praying all the way for her dear one’s life and safe keeping. In her heart, though she hated to even consider the possibility, she wondered if she would be safer in some other land. But anger and pain filled her heart, and she was a puddle of tears by the time she arrived at her friends’ house.

Wanai fed and care for the other two young ones, while Gini spend the rest of the day in prayer and turmoil. Her life would never be the same, and there was little or nothing she could do, in the present circumstances.

By nightfall it seemed there were no more tears left to be cried, and so she took the two the Lord had blessed her with and headed back home.

As the months went by, she dreamed of one day seeing Ralph show up, bringing her darling back, apologizing and fully explaining what had happened. But none such thing happened--not even a letter.

Five: In His tents forever

“Gini!” A love filled voice, that sounded like an angel surrounded her like a blanket of love.

“Mother? Is that you, mom?”

“Yes, Darling!” Embracing for what seemed to be a very long time, the two were at last united again.

“Dad! Wow, it’s so good to see you again. You look so young.”

“Michelle, how good it is for us to at last see you face to face again, and hold you and let you know how much we love you.” Fernando exclaimed.

“Am I dreaming?” Gini thought playfully. “This is just the most beautiful day I’ve ever had!”

“Come let’s go by the lake,” her mom suggested, “like I used to love to do while on earth. We have some things to explain to you, darling.”

Holding the hand of her mother and father, one on each side, she felt at home at last.

The “lake” was so different than she’d imagined. Rather than it being a gentle, rippling body of water, surrounded by green hills, it was a tumbling-with-life-and-light awesome sight.

“Wow, now that’s a lake I’d like to swim in! The hills on either side seem to be embedded with giant gems, and the very air seems to invigorate me. Oh, it’s just the most refreshing place I’ve ever been.”

“Wait till you see some of the other wonders, the caves, the hills, the under water life, and so much more. You’re going to have a lot of fun Here” her dad said with excitement, as if he was handing a wrapped gift to his daughter, and was waiting with joy to see her enjoy it with glee. There was so much they would be able to enjoy together as a family, in this wonderful land.

“Come let’s sit down by this tree near the water’s ledge”, her mother, suggested. The flowers that bloomed on it put out the most Heavenly scent, that made all who inhaled of it’s fragrance feel tingly and warm inside, much like one would feel after drinking a cup of hot mould wine, or a hot spiked drink.

“Here are some delicious fruits for you to try,” her mom offered. Eagerly Gini bit into one and giggled as she chewed, “It’s like a very large candy, it’s so sweet. Oh, it’s good!”

After laughing and experiencing these tasty treats, Shella began to explain to Gini more what had happened.

“Sweetheart, there’s something your father and I would like to explain.”

“I’m all ears!” Gini gave her utmost attention.

“When your daughter was taken from you,” Shella began, “by your uncle Ralph, he thought he was doing both you and your young one a favor, and that in the end both you and he would benefit from it. You see he and his wife had been trying to have children for seven years or so, and never once had Meline conceived. When they received your letter, expressing the difficult strait you found yourself in, they decided that they both could care for it, and it could be raised as their very own.

“Just around that time business went bad, and he found himself swamped in financial troubles, as he owed a large sum to the government. It took him awhile, but with some good lawyers, and a few tricky deals and so forth, he was able to pull out of it for the most part.

“By this time, you were well on your feet and doing well with those three young ones and things had worked out just fine. Sure there were tough times, and Honey, in a way I wish I could have been there to help care for you and teach you about mothering. But you did well, and Jesus and we gave you plenty of help from our side, Here.” Shella said tenderly, patting her daughter’s hand.

A tear stole across Gini’s cheek. She knew her mother loved her and cared about what she’d been through. It just felt good to be understood, and commended by someone so dear to her heart.

Fernando picked up where Shella left off, while Shella put her arms around her daughter.

“So Ralph determined to find you and your little one--on one hand, wanting to fulfill his and his wife’s dreams of having a complete family, and on the other hand, thinking that in spite of the emotions you’d feel at having lost a child, that you’d have a better life, able to work freely, as well as thinking that some poorer country was no place for a relative of his to be raised. He had plans to invite you then, after some time, to come and stay with them for awhile, and leave that land behind.”

“That is until the fire,” Shella added.

Gini slowly nodded, vaguely remembering what had happened during her last night on earth.

“There’s something wonderful, though, that needs to be said, about your daughter, dear Angai.” Fernando continued.

“Yes, I think you’ll be very pleased to hear how she was used by Jesus, in spite of the painful separation from her dear mother.—Sound familiar?” Shella said with a twinkle in her eyes.

Gini cracked a smile.

“Your three, almost four year old little Angai was well cared for by your uncle and aunt, and though she missed you and the land she’d known so far, very much, and there was a time of adjustment, in time she was content and had her needs well cared for.

“She loved you very much, though in answer to your prayers, was spared too much heartache or disorientation. She fit in well and had many happy days. Your prayers for her helped make it all possible. She remembered you and the land she had left at night as she lay to rest, but these thoughts, rather than causing her tearful, troubled sleep, she would peacefully dream of you, being held in your arms and playing with her brother and sister, and her friends. These special times while she slept helped to give her peace of mind and helped her to adjust to her present surroundings. Your mother helped see to it that your young one was happily becoming accustom to her new life. She knew your daughter’s happiness meant so much to you.”

“Yes, sweetheart,” Shella added. “I even came up with some of the scripts for your Angai’s dreams. —Things I knew she so enjoyed doing with you.”

“Okay, so things continued like this for several months,” said Fernando, bringing the story further along, “till she was four or so. Around that time Uncle Ralph and Aunt Meline had to take sudden shelter, as a tornado had hitting their area. There was wide spread destruction. Thankfully their lives had been spared, but their house was in virtual shambles. There was an old military hospital that was being used temporarily by those taking needed shelter, so your daughter’s new family took refuge there.”

“Poor girl.” Gini, thought. “Going from one difficult situation to another.”

Shella, feeling those thoughts piped in, “But like her mother, she was tough and sturdy, and found it even kind of fun, learning new things, gaining new experience with what that temporary situation brought. She was the cutest little angel around. She was always smiling and trying to cheer up the others who seemed to be in such a daze at what had just happened, and were trying to collect their thoughts enough to figure out what they could possibly do to better their situation, and what action could be taken.

“Then your darling angel, who had won the hearts of many in the few days she had been at the shelter, was taken gravely ill.”

Fernando put her arm around Gini, while Shella held her hand and continued.

“All this time Ralph and Mel had tried to be good Christians in many ways, they tried to do what they knew to be right. They tried to help others every now and then, but it’s so different trying to be a good person and actually loving the Lord, and maintaining a close link with Him. Your prayers for them at this time paid off, not only in the life of your daughter, but in these as they cared for her.

“When Ralph saw how very sick, and on the brink of passing on, Angai was, he was moved to do something. The only thing he felt that could be done, since help was sparse at this time, was to pray to the One he’d spoken with every now and then, but hadn’t really let be a close part of his life. Mel joined in, on that bleak night. As the two of them stood vigil, telling Jesus and each other things that had never before passed their lips, confessing their need for Something and Someone bigger and greater than they, Jesus saw fit to answer in the most amazing way.

“The first miracle was their opening their hearts to Him, and realizing their need for Him. The second took place the following morning.

“Throughout the night Angai had been pretty restless and listless, tossing and turning and looking very pale. But come morning, while Ralph and Mel dozed, she woke free of any and all traces of what had ailed her. She was completely healed! Her eyes sparkled with more joy than they ever had before. Our wonderful Jesus knew her job of bringing her new family closer to Him was completed, and she was instantly healed. When Ralph and Mel woke again, their drowsy eyes were filled with grateful tears, they knew none else could have healed and delivered the young one, save the One who had taken compassion on so many, when He walked the earth. Their lives were changed from that point on.

“That day they saw everything around them differently. The people that had been so bothersome, with the noise and stench that had filled the air, they now took pity on, and determined to do what they could to be more part of the solution. Ralph knew a few friends in the government who could help, and after making some phone calls, arranged for bedding, food, clothes and so on to be brought here, till more suitable conditions were possible. Within a few weeks everyone had found either relatives to live with, or were able to rectify their house to a livable condition, while continuing to work on the rest of the repairs, or had found new housing.

“Ralph and Meline found housing outside the city and continued their life there, but in their hearts they retained that remembrance of what their Lord and God had done, and this change was reflected in many ways in their lives.”

Gini wiped the tears from her eyes, as she stood up to pick a cluster of delicious berries from a near-by bush. Sitting back down she said, “I had no idea my dear young one had been so well cared for, not only by Jesus, but by you as well. My loss seems so much less painful now. I can see how it only worked out good in the end.”

“And that’s not all!” Her dad said with a hint of surprise. “She continues to be a little angel, right where she is. Come we have something special to show you!”

Off they went to a near-by café type place, a transparent marble pathway that sparkled as if it were threaded with gold, led up to a cozy garden sitting place. Inside the main building, where refreshments of all sorts were being served, there was a type of movie screen, where one, with permission, could view events, past, present or at times even future.

Sitting on the stools, they ordered the most Heavenly baked good, with a delicious cream filling, and the best ice

coffee drink ever tasted. Once situated near the screen, Fernando had it display their young loved one busily helping to hand out T-shirts, clothing and other supplies, with Mel at her side.

“She looks so big and grown up helping out there. Oh, my little angel!” Gini exclaimed with emotion.

“Oh, my!” Something took her by surprise. “Is that Wanai? What is she... Oh! I can hardly believe it.”

“Yes, you guess it!” her dad said. “A year later, after the disaster struck, Ralph and Mel went down for the summer to help out--where you left off. Your daughter, the one you had so many hopes and dreams for, wanting her to learn to give her life to others, is doing just that, and at an earlier age than you had anticipated. Isn’t she beautiful? And what’s more is she’s helping to teach your uncle and aunt how to live to give.”

“This is just all so wonderful. I’m so glad to have been able to see all this. I feel many pockets in my heart of misunderstanding, mistrust and pain are being filled up instead with utter gratitude, and an overwhelming feeling of love both from and for our dearest Lord.” Gini expressed.

After finishing their snack and viewing adventure, the happy family parted ways for a time, while Gini had time to reflect awhile, rest and sketch some of the beautiful flowers she’d discovered that day. It felt good to lie in the grass and let her soul inhale of Heaven’s tranquility and perfect peace, and the love the very atmosphere around her seemed to radiate with.

As she drifted into a slumber like state, her mind was taken to relive her final moments on earth, before meeting and knowing the Joy of her heart.

* * *

The smell of smoke had filled the air where Gini and her young ones were sleeping. It had been a long, but satisfying day. Gini had worked hard for several weeks to set up a daycare center for pre-school aged children, and that was the official opening day. From that day on it would be a busy place filled with the sounds of laughter, songs, squeals, and children needing attention. Gini had also taught her two little ones how to sing a few songs she’d written, telling of their love for Jesus, and that day they’d sung them for the village gathering, leading many to know their dear Savior personally.

As she’d tucked Amar and Shinay into bed, she said a soft prayer for each of them, committing their hearts and lives into Jesus’ hands. She prayed for their wellbeing, and was grateful to have such special little dears to share her life with. Then she prayed silently for dear Angai, as she wept, her motherly heart aching to know, to hear word, of what had become of her dear gentle daughter.

The fire caught them all by surprise, no one was sure just what had started it, though there was possibly that coals in the heath had been unattended to. They had been baking some clay pots as a project before bed. Perhaps a rag had been blown to into the flickering embers and caused it. Whatever the case, there was no time to be lost. The straw

dividers that hung down throughout their humble house were lit ablaze, and smoke filled the air in no time.

“Quick, wake up! Amar! Shinay!” She tried stirring them, as they groggily tossed, wondering what could be the matter. It was too late, however, they were trapped, and flames guarded the only passage way out, beginning to creep up on them closer by the second. Her children sat up, as they huddled together, praying heartfelt prayers for their safe keeping, or for their merciful release from the inevitable.

The angels that surrounded them night and day, but had been hidden from eye-sight, suddenly appeared in full glory, standing, shielding and keeping the humble family, who had helped so many. Amar and Shinay could hardly believe their eyes, as tall strong and muscular angelic beings spread their wings, providing a tent of peace all around them.

“It’s time for you to go now, Michelle, Amar, Shinay. It’s time to go and see the great and loving King, Who you have giving your lives to. Will you come with us?” A powerful being projected into each one of their minds.

Holding each others hands they began to feel their spirits getting lighter and lifting up, higher and higher. They were filled with a wonderfully joyful feeling, knowing they would meet their loving Savior face to face.

The glories that met them upon their return to their Heavenly home were everything and more that they’d ever dreamed and hoped for.

Jesus held her young ones, one in each arm, and told them He had a special place just for them, up in Heaven. Thrilled at the fun they were to have, they bounded off with a kind and gentle motherly spirit being, and with the strong angels who had guarded them their whole life. Not one moment, in their new, marvelous, Heavenly surroundings, was to be wasted. Full of life and joy they said bid their mother good-bye for the next little while, and enjoyed making new friends in this place that was just how they liked it.

As Gini was then held in her dear Lord’s arms, she knew she was home at last, and knew that the time was right for her to be here. His love gave her a perfect sense of peace.

* * *

“When I first met you, dear Lord,” Gini communicated directly with the One Who meant so much to her, as she looked up through the leaves of the tree, “I felt as if a big blanket filled with love and light and warmth, had just been wrapped all around me. It felt so good. Never, in all my life on earth have I felt the joy that I feel when I’m here with You.”

Just then a gentle hand stroked her hair, looking up she saw once again the eyes of compassion and mercy that had kept her through all struggles on earth and had given her back so much more in return. He’d come to join her in these quite moments of repose.

Gazing into His eyes she remembered all that had transpired in their first intimate encounter, their time of face to face communication.

Jesus lay beside her, and placing His hand on her heart she relived each splendid emotion that has washed through her soul when experiencing their first embrace.

Turning again to gaze in her Savior’s eyes she remembered His commission to her, as clearly as if those choice words had just escaped His lips. She remembered in detail:

“Gini,” Jesus said, holding her affectionately in His loving embrace. “It’s been My heart’s desire for so long now, to just hold you and thank you for giving Me to those dear ones on earth.”

The humility of His nature, the warmth those words emitted had brought her to tears. She felt she could cry a million tears in gratitude for His appreciation of her.

“I know you feel you didn’t do much, and your life was cut short, or so it seemed. But the days you spent on earth were meaningful, and precious, and I watched you tenderly, as each day passed. I smiled when you were having a good time, I wept with you when your heart ached so, I placed My love all around you when you felt in need of companionship, and now to have you here, and to tell you of My great appreciation for you, is such a dream come true. I’ve waited for so long, yet every day you’ve given Me joy because I’ve known you were making a difference in other’s lives, and you were fulfilling My heart’s deepest need—for all to come to know and love Me as I am.”

“If I’d known You as I do now,” Gini said, with a heart full of emotion, “I surely would have done more, given more, reached out more and not let a second go by without bringing Your love into clearer focus for all those I came in contact with. I feel I have done nothing compared to all I could have done, and perhaps should have done.

“I feel most of my life passed on by without much to show for it. I am deeply touched by Your love. There really are no words that can express how in debt I feel towards You, my Savior, my Love, my All.

“Dearest Lord, You’re all I need and more. I don’t want to spend one second away from Your side. There is no joy like You give. There is no treasure more beautiful than Your heart. There is no symphony more lovely than the sound of Your voice. Everything about You sends me flying so high and all I desire to do is give You every bit of my heart, my soul—all my being. Thank You for treasuring me, as truly a nothing as I am. You’ve stooped to love and care for me. There is nothing I can say but that I am in Your debt and will gladly do anything and everything Your heart wishes.”

These words of abandoned adoration and commitment to the greatest love of all times, moved the heart of Jesus in a way that one could only realize a fraction of the intensity, when in His arms. In simple terms it would be as if there were no stars in the sky, and black was all that could be seen, and suddenly, at the whisper of love, light danced in exotic displays and colors, exploding, illumining all, and blazing torches filled with powerful light lit every corner of the universe.

From His heart came a beautiful song of love, which He sang, looking deeply into Gini’s eyes, filling her entire being with an incredible reassurance of His love and care. She could just about see those exploding light displays now, that her Lord felt for her, and there was no way to describe the heights the love words of her Maker and Lord, sent her to.

Back to the present, He whispered to her:

“And now, dear one, My beloved Gini, I have a very interesting, new mission to tell you about. Come with Me to a special place, we’ll float as if on clouds, while you rest in My arms, and I’ll explain things to you.”

Six: A new Era

Gini sat pondering by the lake she’d come to enjoy so much. “A new world... Things will be all different... a messenger of kindness...” These were some of the words that rang in her ear from her conversation with the Lord, when He described what new things He had in store for her in the near future. The thrills, new and challenging tasks, and so much more.

* * *

Time can’t be used as a form of measuring just how long it was till she was ready to begin her new ministry—for in Heaven there is no time. But when the time was right, and the changes had occurred that were needed, Gini was well prepared for the mission at hand. She had wasted no time getting prepare. She studied in the Heavenly halls of learning, talked with saints and angels, spent much time in communion with her Lord, and gave her all to becoming what was needed to fill the shoes her Lord planned for her to fill.

“Are you ready to go?” Said Angeline, the angelic warrior commissioned to escort her to the surface of planet Earth.

“Yes, let’s go! It’s going to be exciting, what I know dear Jesus will do through me, though I’m just a little nobody, really. It’s gotta be Him, that’s for sure.”

“And He’s more than enough, isn’t He,” Angeline added confidently. She’d known, even more so than Gini, the strength of the power of God. Her job as a Heavenly warrior had compelled her to need to activate it in amazing ways. “His plan for calling you to this job, is a perfect one.”

With a prayer, the two were transported to a small and humble village—one she knew well—though with the changes that had occurred on the earth, hardly anything was as it had been before.

Within seconds she met up with the rest of the team of Heavenly missionaries, sent to also help this country and surrounding area come to know the King that now had total reign on the earth. There was much to do, many people to help and minister to, children to be taught, and lots of fun to be had. There was only one thought that echoed through her mind when seeing the need, as her new team filled her in on the situation, “The Love of Christ constrains me.” Her love for her Lord, which seemed to grow more and more each day, gave her an ardent desire to share His love and compassion, His truth and mercy, to all that needed Him.

The powers of the World, that had held the nations in their grip of hate and lust, had come to nothing. The warmongers were now forced to submit to the greater power of love. The homeless and fatherless would now be given the

tender care they’d always sought. The mothers who’d lost their children would be given new hope. All the good that had been broken and laid waste at the hands of evil men would be re-created and re-born, till every fiber of men’s souls felt and knew the power of the love of God.

This was their mission—that all would come to know the one and true God, and see His loving hand in all. They were to seek out those who wanted to help restore peace to broken neighborhoods, true and Godly education for the young, homes for those in need, supply care for the sick and ailing, and bring the joy of Heaven to others’ hearts.

Heaven’s small team, commissioned to this area, would grow and gain new helpers, through the very ones they were helping. More and more joined the team, and in time this land that had known so much strife, came to be a haven of love for those passing through. Because of the ministry Gini had had here, when working with these people before being called to her Heavenly home, it was easier to establish the loving principles among the people than it was for those in other lands who had no knowledge of the King of Love.

The more she taught others of Jesus’ love and mercy, and showed a living sample of it to all, the more her love for Him grew, and the more she saw it was the answer to everything.

Gini had a new body now. There were things she could do now that never was possible before. Through her supernatural thought power she’d learned how to tune into the thoughts of those she was helping to teach. She could then anticipate their needs better, as well as be on the lookout for possible problems or stewing trouble. Her body, though enjoying rest from time to time, didn’t get tired in the way physical bodies do now. This Heavenly version of her body could keep up tirelessly with the needy and demanding jobs at hand. At times though, her mind needed a rest, and her heart yearned for sweet and private communion with the dearest One to her. In these times she would take a break from the earthly surroundings, and would be transported to the most beautiful garden, or forest, or a mansion of a dear friend, or whatever her soul needed most, and enjoy a time of refreshment in the Heavens.

“Gini!” Wanai exclaimed, while appearing before her in an instant.” There’s a special message for you! Here, read it!” Wanai had been sent on this mission as well, and made good company, as they’d worked together well before.

Intrigued, Gini held the piece of shiny paper and opened it. “We’re coming to work with you, Mom!” was all that it said.

“Mama!” she heard and looked up. There was Gwanado, Amar and Shinay coming towards her, arms open, beaming from ear to ear.

Gini let out a joyful exclaim, and took each one in her arms, one by one, welcoming these wonderful new additions to her team. She was glad to see them. They’d popped by for visits every now and then, but today they were here to stay, at least for now.

Later while having a moment to herself, looking out over the country side, with its luscious foliage, Gini pondered about seeing her dear little Angai, the one she so

cherished, and hadn't seen for quite some time. The last she'd seen her, she was busy with her Heavenly studies. They both had to go their separate ways for the time being, to learn all that was needed, and to do what they'd been commissioned to do. Though it was hard at times, the joys that came into her life, and into the life of her daughter, made it more than worth the while, and in their hearts they knew the time would come when they would be together again.

"She's safe with Me, Gini." She heard her Lord speak clearly in her heart. "Though it's hard and you miss her, don't put down the candle of your hope that all things will work together for good. All things are in My hands and I know just when the time will be right and you will be with each other once again. Remember, if you ever wish to communicate with her, I'll work out a way that your thoughts to each other can be transmitted faster than you can blink. You'll always be near in mind and heart, though you have different paths of learning at this point."

With that Gini contently went about her business, and enjoyed a time of story telling and fun with the loved ones and family she now had there with her.

* * *

"Wanai, I think I need some time away. I've heard the beckon in my heart, from our dearest Love. I'll be back before long I'm sure." Gini explained.

"I understand. I'll look forward to your return. Enjoy your time." She said, bidding Gini farewell.

Two days had past, earth time, when Gini finally was back to her station, feeling more invigorated than ever.

"I had a lovely time, Wanai. Heavenly is really all I can call it."

"That's wonderful! Tell me about it as we go down to the market place. There's going to be a bazaar of the first harvest of crops. Each of the farmers and home growers are bringing a contribution, a sampling of their produce to give to others. There'll be singing and dancing, trading of goods, games for the children, and more. Everyone's looking forward to it."

"Seems so much has happened in my absence. How's Urgana doing with her newborn? And the cottage for the unwed mothers to rest and take time off, it was almost finished before I left."

"Tira, the young girl who helped you the other day with the children's curriculum has offered to stay with Urgana and help with the home chores till she gains back her strength, and the cottage is coming along beautiful. Plans for a swimming pool have been drawn, as well as a flower garden. The mothers themselves will help to decorate the house and property just the way they'd like it. Now business and work aside, tell me about your Heaven Hour—or days?"

"When I opened my eyes, after some blissful rest," Gini began, "I had the most amazing experience. All around me were colors and light, almost like being in a multicolored cloud. I sat up, and felt the particles of this cloud-like substance swirling around me, seeping into me, taking over my feelings and invigorating me like never before. Then I lay down again and dreamed a very peculiar dream.

"I was taken to a castle on the top of a hill, like one in the olden days of England. At first I thought I was just dreaming of the days of knights and lords, ladies and princesses. But to my amazement, as soon as I stepped on the drawbridge, to enter, it wasn't fixed up like a castle at all, but it seemed more like some sort of dark hiding place. There were all these people huddled together, making some sort of an agreement, counseling together and coming up with a plan. I wasn't sure what they were talking about, but I knew they were scheming something.

"Just then I felt a hand take mine, and I looked up to find the breathtaking face of Jesus. He told me to go on in, and that in there I'd find the answer to something I'd always wondered. I can't explain everything I heard, just now. But as I walked in the man that seemed to be at the head of the discussion, turned to me and said, "We're glad you could make it, we were just discussing plans for the destruction of this world's order—or dis-order, as we see it. We've got to get full control. Please have a seat."

"He had a sinister smile on his face, and I could tell what was being discussed had either already happened in the old world, or was a symbol of what had happened. They revealed plans and ideas, discussed theories and the like. All of what I witnessed taught me a great deal. I came to understand so much more what had been going on behind the scenes when to me, and innocent citizen in the old world, had just seemed that life was getting more controlled by the day. I never had known the full mentality of those behind it. That was before I first moved here. I had the impression I was being shown these things to help me better understand the job I have here now, and perhaps even to prepare me for future ministries."

"Yes," said Wanai, "this country won't always have you here, and if our Lord plans a new station for you, I know you'll be every bit the blessing you've been to us. So did you awake after that vision or dream?"

"Well, kind of," Gini continued. "I walked on out, with the Lord at my side, and He told me many things, explaining all to me that I asked about. It seemed we walked and talked for hours, and each new answer from His lips helped to stir in my heart deeper questions, till His words had permeated and explored every part of my mind and intellect, my heart and all my thoughts, and answering to satisfaction each question. I can't express how filled I felt after speaking with Him for what seemed to me like a week or more! He knows not only all the thoughts I think, but He knows in exactly what way those thoughts make me feel, the dreams they create within me and the needs they engender. He knows each of us so intimately."

That night it was Wanai's turn to be bid up into the courts of Heaven. And it was every bit the joy she'd anticipated. It was several days before she returned, and Gini kept up with all the new developments. Work progressed and continued to be a refreshing challenge. There was always more to learn, and with every new bit of progress new possibilities for greater learning were opened up. Though it was a time of helping the country in the ways she'd been commissioned to with the rest of her team, it was also just another learning experience. She learned how to give

genuine love to all in need, how to make her Lord and Savior the most important part of their lives on earth. She learned new skills and gained Heavenly abilities.

Her time there was well spent, and came to a close in time—but not without having the biggest cookout celebration they'd ever had. The whole town and surrounding villages enjoyed a wonderful time, celebrating not only their love for Jesus, their thankfulness to for what Gini had done, and the ways she's helped them each individually come to know their wonderful King of love, but they celebrated the joy that now filled their land, with strife and war being but a thing of the past. They sang songs to their Lord, danced and gave each other gifts. Angels were sent to this celebration, to entertain them with amazing displays they'd brought down from the Heavens. A new song was sung ushering in this new age of love, with great enthusiasm.

Gini would miss working among the ones she'd grown so close to, here in this land, but one thing she'd learned was that no matter what she'd been called to do, it was always more fulfilling than ever. Life and service for Jesus just got better and better. She knew she only had great things in store, and her anticipation and excitement mounted by the moment, though she wasn't quite sure yet of all that was ahead.

Seven: Mystery

Sitting on the sparkling, transparent, floral designed floor of her Heavenly abode, Gini awaited a meeting with her Lord. She'd been pondering over the events of the past decade, the things she'd experienced, the people she'd grown close to, and all the many challenging situations she'd faced. A musical note sounded through the air, Gini turned to see, in all His charm and beauty, the One who meant the world to her. She stood up to be greeted with such a warm embrace, it made her thoughts, the deepest ones of her soul, seem so trivial. All she wondered or was anxious about melted away as He held her and looked in her eyes, letting her know He cared deeply about her.

"Jesus, You just have away of making me feel so incredibly loved, so deeply cherished, so complete. I'm so glad You're here." Gini's heart rang out this praise that with a swirl of joy found it's way deep into His heart.

"When you were a young girl, Gini, tell Me, what was one thing you always wanted. What was the thing you looked forward to having one day, the thing you seemed to live for, in those dreary days at the orphanage?"

"Well, I guess the thing that meant the most to me, that I most wanted was to have a family, to live with them--You know, a father and mother to care for me. And I guess that's what kept me going, thinking that I would be able to give my child that same opportunity."

"Do you feel bad you were never able to see those dreams realized, in the way you wanted it?" Jesus' thoughts prodded her mind.

"I have learned to except certain things about my life, and since knowing You and Your love so completely in person, I have come to see that all You planned for me did work out for the best. I guess sometimes I did feel bad though, when on earth. I really did have my hopes on one day meeting the "man of my dreams," so to speak, and settling down with him to raise a family.

"I see though that if I had stayed where I was, before reaching out to help those in the land You sent me to, so many other, deeper and more meaningful dreams of my heart would have lain in the ashes of unfulfillment. Though it came at the cost of my petty desires, the fulfillment I found while doing Your highest will, and completing the desires You placed in my heart, was well worth the cost. I only had one life; I was glad to give up the so called 'normal' life, to obtain the supernatural."

"And for this, Darling, I have and will continue to bless you. You haven't even seen yet how far your witness has gone, how much of an impact your choosing My will has made. But in time darling, you will continue to see new and wonderful effects from your life on earth.

"I want to tell you a story, something you might be very familiar with. Absorb these words, and let them cheer your heart. This is the story, in parable form, of your own dear mother, and the life she chose for Me. You too had to choose to do the same. You had to put Me above your desires and dreams, and choose to forsake certain temporary pleasures to gain endless joy. Let Me show you this story with pictures I'll place in your mind, as I explain it all to you. Your heart will understand the deep meaning of these words.

"There was a young girl, who traveled from land to land, exploring new terrains, crossing deserts and trekking deep into forests. She had a hunger for the new, for the interesting, for things outside of the norm. She was an adventurer, always pioneering, or rather ever searching for greater things of interest.

"One day as she sat by a pool of water she'd found in the hot desert land, she saw the reflection of a traveler and his camel, coming to get a drink. She welcomed his friendship, and journeyed on with him, since he seemed to know the way across this barren land.

"As they neared a town, he asked her to do him a favor, in return for his help and kindness to her thus far. She was more than happy to oblige, and went into the town, traded some of the goods he gave her to trade, and returned with supplies for their journey.

"Time went on, and little by little she began working more and more for him, in return for his support and care. She soon saw that the more things he asked of her, and the more he tried to rope her into doing, the less able she was to break free and carry on with her journey. He was becoming more and more dependant on her. Sometimes it seemed like they worked well together, and that this was what she was glad she was doing--striking business deals with the various settlements, making lucrative gains and so forth. But for the

most part, she just felt she had no other choice but to go along with him. She hadn't thought of anything better to do.

"One morning as the sun was beginning to rise above the horizon, and the first rays made contact with these travelers, the young woman found she had been put in shackles and roped to a near by tree. Shocked at what was going on, she thought she must have been captured in the night, all possessions stolen, and bandits must have claimed her as their personal prize. But when she looked all around, everything seemed perfectly as it was when she lay to rest, the only difference being that the man for whom she now worked endlessly for, was sitting a ways off, with a snicker of a grin.

"So, my little angel, you're mine for good now. You thought you had it hard, running here, running there, but now, you'll know who's boss for sure. I'm not going to let you out of my sight. I have some new deals to break,' he said raising his eyebrow in the direction of a small group of men sitting nearby, that she hadn't noticed till then.

"She was aghast. She knew what he meant. This was to be something new. Not knowing what to think or do, if there was anything she could do about it now, she simply curled up in a ball and hoped this dream would pass, and she'd wake to the freedom she once had.

"As they journeyed on, the sun was torturous, the heat unbearable, food and drink was sparse, for her gruff master couldn't afford to spend much on a slave—or so he thought. Weary and bedraggled, compelled to do things she never thought she'd ever have to stoop to, life was miserable for this young woman.

"If I only had listened to my mother's advice as a child, not to trust those who's heart is filled with lust and gain, I wouldn't be in this terrible state. But something in my heart wanted to go with him, wanted to see what the "better" life, the longed-for life, was all about--the life of riches and accomplishments that the poor unceasingly long for. I have gone the way of the wayward and long to find my way to peace.' Her heart let out a cry, a prayer.

"A shadow crossed over her, as she lay in the sand, abandoned for the afternoon by her master. She blinked to see what or who was there. A kind hand reached down and touched her. She found herself peering into the most beautiful eyes, filled with a soft tenderness, almost as if in pain for the sight before him. She sat up and he gave her to drink of the most clear and fresh water she'd ever tasted.

"Come with me,' he gently spoke.

"But... But he--my master--will kill you if he ever finds out that you've taken me away? How can I come with you?"

"Just then her master had returned, drunken with the joy of his latest lucrative deal.

"Who's touching my girl?!" He let out with rage, reaching for his saber.

"The kind man stood up, 'She's not yours!' He said with definite tone. 'You claimed her, but she's mine from this day forward, if she so chooses. She has the liberty to choose her master.'

'Choose, woman' he added gently, 'with whom you will abide.'

"One look at her fierce master's face, with weapon held high, all she could do was close her eyes and cling tightly to the ankles of this angel in the desert. Her answer was plain.

"I will not let you do this', the beastly man growled, 'I will have you slain before her, and she will know that it's me alone she must serve.'

"You have no power over me,' the stranger, said unwaveringly. 'Look beneath your feet, for you have stepped into quick sand. It is you that must die the death before your victim's eyes.'

"And so it was that her former master sank into the sands, only pulled out by an evil on looker observing the scene, who had plans of his own. The young woman and her new caretaker swiftly left, and traveled to his camp.

"Faint with hunger and many sores on her body, the kind man of the desert nursed her back to full health, taking her into his own tent. In time she was well enough to decide where she wanted to go, and what to do with her well enjoyed freedom.

"You're free to do as you wish', the gentle man offered. Taking her into his arms he then whispered, 'but know this, that I love thee more dearly than you can know, and I long for your peace of mind and heart. Would you part from our company now, searching yet longer for your unrealized dreams, or would you stay with us, linger in our tents, and journey to find the joys you'll only know when in our company--joys beyond any thrill you have imagined?"

"Tears filled her eyes as she realized just how precious a gift was the love of this one she was coming to know more about each day. His love reached deep into the corners of her heart, and she could not contain the spring of emotion rushing forth.

"I would serve you, stay in your company, love you, give my all for you, if only to gain a moment by your side. For your love to me is worth living a lifetime to obtain, and you extend it to me to keep with me all the days of my life. Please, I beg of you, never send me away. I only want to live within your tents, every waking moment doing your bidding, every sleeping moment dreaming of fulfilling your desires, and giving my all--all heart, body and soul to bring you pleasure.'

"And so it was that she lingered on all the days of her life, being the helpmeet that she longed to be, for this one who had reached her in her base estate and loved her into full joy and health.

"Now child," Jesus continued, "you know the story, and how your mother longed to give her all to Me, and you likewise have followed in her wise footsteps."

"And I've gained only joy, dear Lord." Gini said with emotion.

"Let us walk in the wood," Jesus suggested, "while I reveal to you another of My secrets."

Gini's eyes were aglow, her heart beat with anxious wonder.

In a second their feet were gently hovering just above the path between the bright and majestic emerald trees lining it. Taking her arm in His, her Lord turned and said, "I

have someone special I want you to meet. I'll leave the two of you alone for a while and see you again when the time is right." At that He seemed to vanish from His visible form.

After a solitary moment, before her, somewhat up the path a form was making its way near to where she stood. It seemed to be a woman, by the flowing white, glistening gowns she wore. As this woman neared, her face was visibly covered, and a golden chain-like adornment was on her head.

When she stood before Gini, the young, small built woman touched her on her arm, lifted her veil. Great joy filled the eyes of the stranger.

For a second Gini was at a loss of what to say, one look in her eyes and a single word escaped her lips, "Angai..."

"Yes, mother! And there is so much to talk about."

The two hugged for the longest time before the silence was broken by an angel standing nearby.

"You both have been beckoned to dine with His majesty. Enjoy your time with each other now, and I'll come and escort you to His table in time. Until then." The angelic being said with a salute, and he was off.

"Oh, mother!" The young teenage-looking woman said with enthusiasm, "I've just got to tell you all about what's happened to me since we last were together. I've learned oh so much, and I'm sure you've got plenty to talk of as well. Come, I know the perfect spot in this wooded place that we can share sweet reunion."

Gini, happy to be whisked along in youthful chatter, felt no awkwardness, as Angai put her to ease with her bubbly nature, and affectionate hand squeezes. No time was wasted, and the two were engaged in captivating conversation, as if they'd been best of buddies for all of school year. There was no real age difference, or so it seemed, except for the fact that Gini was more mature in looks, and Angai called her "Mommy." They were best of friends right off the bat.

"Who's that?" Angai turned around to see the angelic form appear.

"Aha! I found you!" He said playfully. "The time is now. I've come to take you to dine with His Majesty. Will you come with me please?"

"With joy!" Gini exclaimed. And they let out girlish squeals. They weren't sure what was ahead, though they knew Jesus must have something very interesting to share with them.

In a flash they entered the amazingly set dining hall, filled with flowers of all kinds, crystal glasses so clear they were hardly visible, except for the embedded jewels they seem to have.

Each greeted warmly with an embrace and a kiss, they were seated by the Lord Himself. The curtains were drawn around their eating hall, drapes of rarest fabric, that gave the feeling they were alone with Jesus. It wasn't the privacy they were so interested in, but just the fact that He made them feel He wanted to spend special time with them alone, gave a wonderful feeling of worth.

Holding up His glass in a toast, Jesus prayed a prayer of rejoicing to His Father, and asked a blessing on all that would be shared between the three of them.

Indeed He did have news to share—good news, fun news, news of challenge. All that had happened in their lives, up until this point, each bit of forsaking, each moment of toil, each lesson learned with Him at their side, had prepared them for this moment.

They were ready and willing to be catapulted into the new fraction of eternity. Each moment lived both for and with their loving Lord brought them such increasing joy, they knew, whatever lay in store for them now would and could only be better. With bated breath they eagerly watched His lips as He described their new mission—mother and daughter--together.

Like a dream unfolding before her eyes, Gini joyfully drank in all that was said. She could hardly believe her ears, but it was all as real as life, and she was to be part of it. Turning to each other for an exchange of excited smiles, the girls were overjoyed at what was being laid before them.

Eight: Pioneering worlds beyond

"Mom! Come check this out," Angai said with a voice filled with wonder.

"What is it?"

"I'm not sure, but whatever it is, it's kind of mysterious."

"That, my ladies," their angelic guide appeared beside them to explain, "is a revolving heat generator. You'll find them all over the place. The people of this planet depend on this mechanism, or small form of radiated heat to keep them warm. As you've notice things here are much different than what you'd grown accustom to, when you lived on planet earth. Here, the basics of using the sun's rays to generated warmth, is not an element of their lives. In stead of the sun, light merely floods around the entire planet, all at once. Molecules in the atmosphere simply light up when it's the right time, and dim for a time of repose. It's too hard to get into the specifics of the science of it all, how the Lord planned it, but that's it, simply put."

Intrigued Gini and Angai kept walking. This was their exploratory mission, sent by the Lord Himself, to check things out and become familiar with the surroundings, before beginning their important work of keeping records of how things progressed on this planet after being introduced to beings from "other worlds." They would be writing a type of history book, kept in the annals of Heaven, and present it to the Lord, as they went along, for His insight and wisdom, in order to get it right.

This trip was one of many. The people of this land had different skills and abilities than the ones those on earth were given. These were given the ability to fly, as opposed to being gravity bound. But they were unable to speak with voice, and had to rely on their sense of projection of thoughts. What they did have in common was their great enjoyment of food, and the delights this planet's vegetation provided was quite Heavenly indeed.

“Look at this gorgeous floral display!” Gini exclaimed while she and Angai traveled through what would be considered jungle area, to observe the “camp-outs” as they were called. These were people who had left the main settlement areas, and chose to lead a more secluded life. These were said to have gained a greater awareness of life on their planet, as well as closeness with their Creator, without the trouble that surrounded and distracted in the day to day life in the communes.

“These flowers are so unique and rare, I wish I could have some recreated in my Heavenly abode.”

“I don’t see why not,” said an angelic being. Just then they turned to notice a strong looking, sturdy built man, about twice their size and height standing nearby.

“I’m Vernaz,” he introduced himself. “I’ve come to bring you back with me. There is a special meeting being held, and you’re invited. More will be explained to you upon your arrival.”

“Alright, let’s go,” agreed Angai, always ready for something new to catch her interest.

* * *

“Okay, so let me get this straight. First they settled in small bands, in smaller groups, ‘cause they had difficulties getting along. --Until the stranger came. Is that right?”

“Almost. Let me explain it more fully.”

Gini was using the time while waiting for the meeting to talk with Garnats, who was well trained in the operation and history of the planet. He was their tutor and counselor as they learned the inner workings of their mission at hand.

“Sometime ago, when fighting broke out, there was an evil perpetrator, designing a feeble plan to stir up more trouble than ever. Well, his plans came to an abrupt halt when he found out his life supply was running low. Each of these souls on this planet are given a certain amount of time to live. They know when their time is up, and unless there’s something stopping them, like selling over to the evil side, they will carry on till that time is up. It has happened that others have gained more time, because of their unusual closeness with their Creator. But for the most part things are clear as to what time factor they have to work with.

“So this one who gave his mind and evil intentions to cause and stir up trouble, found that he only had a short amount of time left to set things straight, if he wanted to be of any use to any one.

“It was then that he had a vision, before his time of departure came. He saw each of his fellow country men as orbs of light rotating, floating and traveling through the air, dancing in patterns with one another, like balls of light. Some were filled with colors of rare beauty, and gained more brilliance the more they stayed in sync with each other in the light dance they seemed to be engaged in. Others seeking to only bounce up against one another were instead rebounded off to the edges, where shadows surrounded, till they began to shrivel and shrink in size.

“As he looked down at his fading soul, feeling very much like a waning ball of light, dimming by the moment, he let out a heart cry, that was picked up by many searchers the

planet over. He stated his repentance, and begged for the forgiveness of those he’d wronged. He asked for all to take heed to the words his heart rung out, that it was far better to work together in love, than to seek one’s own selfish desires. With his last thought being for love to be shown by all, he passed away, his form turning to dust and his soul ascending to meet his Maker.

“In many ways people did change their conduct, and strove to work together better, teaming up for group projects, helping with one another’s young, but there was still much tension in the air. --Till the day He came. Dressed as a simple lad, He set foot on this planet, some time back. Everywhere this simple boy walked, He’d spread in each one’s heart a bit of the spirit and need for camaraderie. He walked from town to town, village to village, far flung location to main center places.

“No one could quite explain it, but when they set eyes on him, their only concern was to live life the way it was meant to be lived, in loving cooperation with one another. Slowly, as time went on, close bonds began to form; old friends reached out to one another again; strangers showed up in town villages seeking to get to know the people they’d felt shunned from, proving their was no gulf of ostracism too vast to be crossed.

“This young stranger didn’t stay long, though his travels took him far, and reached nearly every corner of this land. The change was phenomenal, for all, or most all, truly did want to change. Their hearts were open and receptive to being the creatures they were designed to be. They readily put off their own desires to instead be what was needed for the growth and maturation of their planet.

“Oh, this is so fascinating!” Commented Gini.

“And that’s not all,” Garnats continued. The intrigue has just begun. And this is where you and Angai come in. This people, much open to the guidance from their Maker, will get to explore new dimensions in their spiritual life and growth, as the new experiment, or trial period takes place.”

* * *

The meeting hall was filled with a spirit of joy, each one greeting loved ones, new and old, and being seated where their name appeared in golden light, hovering over their seat.

“Thank you all for coming!” The chairman then led in a word of prayer for Heavenly blessing on all that was discussed and agreed upon.

“Maybe you’re still unsure just why you’ve all been summoned,” Garnats continued. “There’s something each one of you have in common. Look around you at each friendly face present here.”

“Is it something to do with work with life on other planets?” Angai ventured.

“You’re getting warm. Well, the purpose of this meeting is to put together a list of ideas to be presented to the Lord, of ways we can better help those of planet we’re involved in, to work together in more loving cooperation with one another. They’ve learned lots along these lines, but if they had a bit more training in this skill, think of what they

could do with the abilities been granted to them. I'd just like to say, that all your ideas will be taken into consideration, though it might not be just the time to implement them yet. We've all learned that the Lord's timing and ultimate wisdom surpasses any great idea we can dream up.

"If there are things that need to wait, know that they've been considered and will happen at the right time, if the Lord so wills them. Okay, let's get started."

Many things were discussed, proposals made, and notes were taken on all. Before the meeting adjourned, Garnats had one last announcement to make. "You've all met Gini and Angai, or are at least meeting them now. They've been commissioned by Jesus to help document, and record the progress in the experiment with beings of our kind appearing and working with those of their realm there. It's going to be a big job, let's give them a hand!"

After the applause died down, Gini humbly admitted that she hardly knew what she was doing, but was happy to be of some help. Angai nodded in agreement.

"Speaking of needing the Lord, we have a guest speaker, to end our time here."

All eyes were glued to the entrance way, as Jesus Himself walked in.

"Each of you, dear ones," He began, "have learned much in the way of loving your fellow mates, working in unity, and thus have you each been called on to this special meeting. I've just been given the notes, which Angelice passed on to Me. They will be considered.

"Love—giving and showing My love—is such an important element, more important than you realize, even now. I'm glad you've all learned the lessons of love that you did while on earth, and are able to help contribute in this sphere of learning. I've called each of you to this mission because I wanted you all to see even more greatly, the importance of love, how it is the very essence of My spirit, and how I want all to partake of it more and more. Because you've chosen the love way, time and again, I'm able to use you now in this mission. And as a token of My appreciation for you, and as a symbol of My recognition of your deeds and lives lived in love, I'm giving you each a new medal of honor."

With that, gold-like medallions on invisible chains were passed out. Each one put their's on their neck, to be worn when in the meeting hall, as a symbol of their rank, and the lessons they'd learned on Earth.

As Gini put hers on, tears welled up in her eyes. She didn't see herself as having learned any great lessons of love while on earth, and she knew she had far to go still. But she was content to be included in this special "loving other planets" team. And wanted to do her best to make this mission a success.

* * *

"Ready?" Garnats called, as the team prepared in heart for their first official job on the planet. They had prayed up, planned well, sought their Lord for His perfect counsel on how this was to be conducted, so they were ready in every way.

Garnats explained, as they took off in their Heavenly space craft, what each one was to do, further counsel was given, and all were very excited.

One particular point of interest to Angai was that her post was near the young children's learning center. She was given the commission to monitor the thoughts of these young ones while their teacher for the day, a Heavenly being in disguise, explained to them new ideas, introduced new thoughts, to do with the workings of Heavenly beings in other lands. She was to see what their reactions were, and record them to be shared with all at their next gathering.

Gini had the mission this time around, to comfort the ailing and sick ones, through showing them visions of paradise, letting them get a glimpse into what was beyond their planet, and record how they responded. Her presentations were altered for the individual. And in counsel with her Lord and headquarters she was given many new ideas to portray the right visions to the right people that would have the greatest effect on the overall community.

Others of the team were given the simple jobs of putting thoughts into by passer by's minds that other things existed, beyond what they could now see there. Young folks were especially receptive to this ideas. Those who clearly loved and were close to their Creator were the most eager to know more about the workings beyond the visible. For they knew their Creator and those of His realm were very real, though they couldn't be seen or felt or touched. All this was done "behind the veil" so to speak. They remained invisible for the duration of the trip.

The mission was a success, and the next meeting was filled with tales and details of the nature of this people. New possibilities for spiritual growth had been opened up. New ideas were put out, and the possibilities were endless.

* * *

After a busy and exciting day, Angai decided to go down to the Heavenly lake for a time of personal reflection and quality time with her Lord. She noticed a note floating in the water. Picking it up it read: "Angai, wanna come with Me for an adventure?" Her heart skipped a beat, as she realized who it was that invited her. Her eyes scanned the scene till she saw Him, the One who meant the most to her. Flying into His arms, being met with a warm embrace, the two disappeared for a very special time learning of things she'd always wondered. The dimensions possible to explore in this wonderful Heavenly abode were just fabulous. This was truly the time of her life!

* * *

Gini sat reading over her notes on a special screen designed to take thoughts, as scattered as they seemed, and place them in clear format. This was the greatest word processor she'd ever known.

Feeling a pair of hands on her shoulders she turned around to see those beautiful eyes looking down on her, adoringly.

"Come My love," His eyes seemed to beckon. Leaving all behind, without a care, embracing her dearest tightly, she felt His fingers run through her hair. His sweet

whisper sounded in her ear, “Gini, I want you to know, more than I’ve even shown you before, just how very much you mean to me.”

Gini’s eyes expressed how much He’d already done for her to show just this.

His gaze communicated back she’d only begun to know all that He had in store for her, and she was about to find out yet another treasure of His loving care.

Nine: Eternal days

Garlands and streamer, huge flower bouquets, and scintillating decor of choice lined every corner of the banquet hall. Hall it could be called, though that in no way began to describe its size. So large was this place of gathering it seemed open-aired. Maybe it was, and it was just part of Heaven’s magic that kept the overhead decorations in place, as far up as they were. One felt when entering as if they had just walked into the very courts of love. And indeed it was. Love permeated the air, the moods, the tangible and non-tangible treats of Heaven that surrounded. It was a very real element, and seemed that all existed for the supreme purpose of expressing the nature of the God of it all—His true, unailing, limitless love.

Decked out in her new “evening wear”, though really, there was no night, Gini looked as striking as a queen. Her eyes not only filled with joy, but shone with a light that came only from the Source she’d spent this past millennium looking up to—her adoring Love of all times, Who loved her infinitely. To Him she owed her all, and her eyes shone this deep gratitude.

Meeting with old friends and family, who she’d not spent much time with over the past while, was a wonderful beginning to what proved to be the best party yet of her life.

Delights were served as the guests mingled and met with each other, talking about old times, looking forward with challenge to the new. There were other levels to this meeting hall or place, and one could roam around visiting with people of all nationalities, trades, angelic beings and those who’d been to earth when time was still in motion.

“I’ve always loved being around dear little children,” Gini mused. “I’ll go pay a visit to ‘Kiddy Korner’ and see what they’ve got planned for entertaining the children today.” As soon as she thought it, she fond herself in a place full of lively action, joyful squeals, and plenty of snacks!

A small boy, with a freckled face, and dark red hair ran up to her, and took her by the hand. “Come and see what I’ve made!” He enthusiastically invited, accustom to visitors popping by to see their cheery faces.

Anxious to step right into where the action was Gini floated along with him to a large and colorful display on a wall.

“You made this?!” Surprised and impressed she exclaimed. “Well, Malty and I, we’ve been working on this for a while now. See today we we’re told we could bring different things we’d worked on making, and display them for people who’d want to drop by and see.”

“It’s beautiful. Please explain it to me. How did you do it?”

“Well, it’s not that complicated, we just learned how to create a picture, like a painting, using real kinds of stuff.”

“Yes, I see. It looks like a garden, and has depth, like you could almost step right into it and take a walk around. But really it’s just a picture. That’s amazing. How long did it take you?”

“Oh, I don’t know. Guess it hasn’t been that long, maybe a week, you could say, or maybe two.”

The children and folks in Heaven who’d never known what it was like to be time-bound learned to understand the principles of time, and how to communicate in those terms.

There were games being played, simple “childlike” ones, or ones the young on earth might relate to, with a Heavenly flare. Other games involved tricks only these Heavenly youngsters could do, such as “air bobbing,” floating maneuvers, things using Heavenly thought power and the like. After enjoying Kiddy Korner, Gini bid farewell. She said special good-bye to the boy who welcomed her, over a cookie eating race, with just the two of them.

As she found herself once again in the main hall she felt a touch on her right arm. Looking up to see who it was, she found her eyes being met with a charming gaze.

“Uh, I’ve been looking for you all over. When I checked in with the control center it registered that you’d gone to see the children and would be back soon. So I waited hoping I could spend a little time with you. I have a drink saved. Wanna chat?”

Feeling very willing to go along, Gini’s mind was yet trying to recall who this was. Normally she’d have know instantly, but because of her joy of surprises, he hid his real identity till they had found themselves a quiet place.

“Oh, Tom, it’s you! We sure haven’t spent much time talking. I’m glad for this surprise.”

“Yes. Your mom was a dear one, helped me a lot, though she only claims that I truly helped her. Whatever the case, I’m glad to have had a small part in your life, somehow. And if you want to know a secret, since the time you were born, I knew you’d play a special role. The Lord let me peek at you from time to time, from my Heavenly view, and I was a’prayin’ for you ‘s well, ‘cause I knew you were so dear to that mother of yours, and to Jesus as well.

“Tell me, what have been up to this past little while? Anything you can let me in on?”

“I guess the main project I’ve been engaged in has been working on an organizational system, using something comparable to a computer, only worlds different, if you know what I mean. I’ve been assigned to work on organizing the stories and records of different people’s lives during “The Great Tribulation.” I find it the most fascinating part of world history. Maybe that’s one reason I got the job. There are so many incredible wonders, outstanding stuff that came to pass. I put it into a format that young children can easily tap into, learn about, and only draw from it what would be beneficial to them.”

“I can see you’ve been keeping yourself busy, learning new skills and talents. Learning and experiencing

life just goes on and on, and gaining more intrigue all the time.” Tom added.

“You can say that again! The stuff I learned on earth could only be a fraction of all I’ve come to know since. And the funny thing is, the more I learn the more I see there is yet to learn, and I just want to keep at it. So what have you been up to lately?”

“Oh, I’ve been working pretty much full time down at the stables. I’ve been training young boys and girls too, in the arts of Heavenly horse riding. Well, this hasn’t been my main job, but the Lord saw fit to teach me something new, and I’ve been given the honor working with the youngsters in this way. There’s lots to teach these young ones. Learning not only carries on for us as we complete our missions, but for these young ones that are just starting out, there’s an enormous vacuum for learning in all kinds of areas. We just keep learning and growing together. --Thankfully not older this time, in the way we once knew!”

There was dancing going on, in one corner of the hall, and after their chat, they eagerly joined in moving to the outstanding music that filled the air. The sonics of this hall worked well to accommodate all corners. The reverberating music, loud and perfect to dance to, didn’t travel waywardly to the corner where people appreciated more intimate fellowship and quiet communication. Likewise the songs and Heavenly tunes played by the live band for the people wanting to hear some of the latest hits kept to the space provided for it, that those chatting and eating could do so with out being interrupted. Though all guests were in the same meeting hall, one would be able to fully engage in their choice of activity without being encroached upon. Such was the nature of Heaven, supplying full enjoyment for all, no matter what the mood or activity or people present. Love made it all possible.

As fun as she was having, Gini knew the best was yet to come, when the Lord would enter the scene in the glory of His full majesty. He’d shared with them the news of future up and coming events, give His key note on the new era they were ready to begin. There was much more He’d do and say and cause them all to feel and experience, but this was so far all she’d been told. Her wonderful, adoring Lord, just liked to keep things as a surprise from time to time. This kept all intrigued with just what might next be around the corner.

At last the moment came. That beautiful, welcome sound, the sound that stirred the very depths of her heart. The time was come for all attention to be shifted completely to their Lord of Love, the King of all, the One she lived and was created for, the One every fiber of her being was devoted to. So immense was the deep love and adoration felt by her simple heart for this Love of all times, words would fail to articulate a fraction of what her heart held.

Royalty on this earth have nothing in comparison to the elaborate display set for the God of all—the King, His son, and the Queenly Mother. It was not at the cost of the poor humble workers of the land that costly accommodations were made for these Rulers of Love, as often had been the

case on earth. But the very love of the people whom they humbly lived to serve created the environment for their best to be given. Still, as elaborate as it might appear, it was a humble setting for the Rulers of Light. Their power and strength went far beyond anything the souls in Their presence this day could completely understand.

All eyes were facing the beings of total and complete love. Just the thought that They’d humble themselves and dwell among the souls of mankind, brought many a tear. Hearts were enveloped in such warmth being displayed by the God of the universe. The moment was indescribably rich.

In all her life, both on the earth as well as in Heaven, fulfilling missions in exotic locations, Gini’d never known or seen a more beautiful moment as she was living through now. There was delights in Heaven 10,000 times better than what she’d known on the earth--every kind of thing one could dream of or wish for, and far beyond. But the love and beauty that filled her soul now, while in the presence of the source of all love, was the best yet. A thousand expressions of gratitude seemed to want to burst forth from her heart. Though she remained subdued, waiting with bated breath for what would now be shared with them, it seemed her feelings escaped her. When looking at her Lord, a loving gaze was cast her way. His look of love went directly and personally to her. How He did that, she didn’t know--nor care. He’d picked up the message her heart had sent forth, and replied with tender passion.

* * *

Mussing over the day’s events, Gini sat alone, content to be surrounded with the memory and blissful feelings she’d gathered that day.

“Time would be no more, They said. It’s an awesome prospect. Of course I’ve lived minus the time factor for quite awhile now. But somehow things are to take a change for the better, though there’s much that still seems mysterious. Oh, there’s so very much I want to learn and do. And most of all, I feel so incredibly in love—with love!”

Her thoughts seemed to come in waves, mingling, washing about. She didn’t care about her seeming loss of focus on all that had seemed important to her before the gathering. All Gini wanted was to revel in the love she’d come to know more deeply than ever. She closed her eyes, and felt the presence strongly.

“My Lord, all that I’ve ever been. All that I seem to possess, that has been given by You alone, I return to You. Not out of ingratitude, not because of disdain, but I simply have nothing to give, and for Your love I want to give you everything. You have giving me a joyful life, friends, thrills, enchantment, gorgeous places to live, wonderful company. It all has been a wonderful token of Your loving care for me. Most of my life I have been in love with the love these gifts from your hand have displayed. I have loved You in some ways for the love I’ve know You to continually give and show to me. But today I’ve come to know an even deeper love that I’ve only caught glimpses of before.

“I feel like a child, who was once assured of their parent’s love because of the toys they brought home for him, the meals they cooked and the affection and warmth displayed. But then one day being given a most rare treat--to

see inside the heart of their parents at what love really was held there. A love running so deep that a young one, running free, could never fully relate to.

“It’s hard to describe this in words, but today the greatest gift I felt from Your hand was the glimpse You allowed me, and us all to see, of the deep nature of Your love. I feel I want to be ravished, enveloped, controlled, possessed, filled with the true and deep abiding love You hold. I’d give everything I’ve found pleasing, back into Your hands--each memory of Your kind deeds, each gift of tenderness from Your hands, each loving encounter with another. In essence, the effects of Your love, which I have cherished, to this point, more than anything else. They have reassured me that You cared, and for them I am deeply grateful. But in spirit I give them back to You, in total surrender, as I fully embrace solely the love You hold in Your heart. I want to live for Your love alone. I want to give more for You than ever. I’m so entirely crazy about You. Since knowing You, there’s nothing that could ever light the fire of my soul like You do. Take me, take all of me and all I’ve held dear. All I want now is You. I’m Yours for eternity.”

Ten: The golden eternal now

Walking up the path to their new Heavenly abode Gini held affectionately her mother and father’s hands. Laughing as they went they recalled times past, missions they’d gone on together, things they remembered from Earth, and the adventures the Lord Himself had done in person together with them as a family.

Something seemed different as they neared their mansion. An angel stood erect holding in his hand a written message.

Odd. Indeed this was a rare occurrence. Messages to them from Jesus were delivered much more directly than that. He held it out to Fernando, who took it reverently.

“Read it together as a family,” he instructed.

Fernando nodded. They entered the large lounge room, and with great surprise found it filled with guests and company. When looking at the faces before them, they were indeed all “family,” those they’d known intimately as part of their lives--children, lovers, fathers, mothers, all those who’d been a part of their lives, or they’d been related to some how.

With anticipation all eyes were on the scroll that was being held. All was quiet as Fernando took his place toward the front of the room. He knew this was what the angelic messenger meant. After breathing out a praise to their Lord of love, committing these moments to Him, he began to read. Tears filled the eyes of all present. Anointed with the power of the One who’s words they were, Fernando’s voice carried in its tones the very depth of love the words were meant to display.

With excitement at the mission now before them, each one rose and embraced one another, thanking the Lord for all they’d been entrusted with. There was only one way to go, and that was forward.

The very air contained an emotional rush as if the wind of the Spirit had blown through their midst and stirred them. Indeed it had.

After the meeting was adjourned, refreshments were instantaneously created and served. All went on their merry way, filled with great anticipation for what lay ahead.

Gini approached Fernando, who now sat in awe, grasping the scroll, drinking in deeply the meaning of the words given to them.

“When you’re done with it, would you mind if I read it over once more. I just want to experience those words again. So much was said, though the message was short.”

Handing it to her he winked. He knew what she felt.

A simulated tree house appeared in their back yard as Gini walked out to find the perfect spot to reread the message. Feeling very much like a little girl, she flew up and was soon settled for the reading.

“My darling ones, who have given so much for Me. Your dedication to Me moves Me. And today I give you a special honor, a new mission.

“You knew of each other before you were formed on the Earth. You were a team. You knew what your calling and mission was to be when I sent you down, and to the best of your ability you have preformed it. Not all of you have made it to this level of servitude and dedication to My love. But for the ones who are here, I commission you anew for the thrills I have yet ahead.

“The past is now gone; the new is all that lies in store. You must put off the past and embrace what new things I have for you. Each one of you will be given a mission unlike anything you’ve ever done. Unlike anything you’ve thought possible. It will take great dedication to Me, great love and faith. You will need to hone new skills, and it will take effort. But you are all, each one of you, well able to be what is needed. For I formed you thus, and I know your make.

“This mission will be revealed to you in full when the time comes. But I ask you on this day, are you willing to be transported to a time and place you’ve never known existed? Are you willing to leave behind what you have now known as your Heavenly situation, for a time, to explore untrod territory by any of your clan? The mysteries remains somewhat veiled, but when the time is right, and your training for this mission has been complete, I will gather you and fully empower you for this coming challenge.

“I love you more deeply, with a passion only My Father fully realizes, for it runs throughout the very fibers of My soul. I promise that each step you take to fulfill My will, will only gain you new joy.

“Care for one another, and embrace each other with a passion and ardency as true comrades, for you will need one another more than ever.

“I promise to be with you continually. As Your Lord and King I bid you well.”

Stirred with more excitement than when she heard these words the first time, Gini popped down out of the tree.

“I wonder when my training will start!” She thought.

“Why not now?” Said a friendly voice, standing away, who read her thoughts.

“Oh, what do you mean? Well, I’m sure ready.”

“Okay, then let’s go!” Said this simple looking man, who she’d never remembered meeting before. Somehow she knew that his full appearance was not being displayed, for he carried with him a nature that inspired respect.

As they walked along, thousands of thoughts filled her head. They walked silently, though all that went through her mind was either being answered by his own thoughts, or she was given reassurance that there would be a time and place for her to know.

They came to a rather interesting, large, crystal building, with many doors. Her guide took her hand gently, and immediately they found themselves within the building, on an upper floor.

The light was dim, much like a den on earth, with a fire near by, candles lit, and only a lush rug for furnishing. Sitting down opposite each other, she saw an amazing light in his eyes. The dimness of the room seemed to make it seem more outstanding. --Though that wasn’t the sole purpose of the room’s intriguing setting. One look in his eyes and she knew he was indeed one of the special trainers of the Lord of Heaven.

“Today we’ll begin. If you’re ready that is.”

She knew she was. There wasn’t a moment longer she wanted to wait.

* * *

The training seemed intense. She learned of things humans couldn’t even begin to fathom. She used her mind in ways she’d never had to exercise it. As her days of training continued she was taught of spiritual weaponry, of dimensions in the spirit she’d only been given glimpses of. Each one of her clan were given the precise training they needed to fill the role they accepted.

When their days of preparing were complete, though days can’t be measured as we now know them, they were gathered in the grand assembly hall, awaiting the final commission of their Lord.

Each one looked more radiant than before. Each one shone with a new aura, a truly new anointing. They’d gained strength through their training, new gifts of the spirit of Love, and had bonded more closely with one another. It had been a united effort to help each other through till this long awaited day. With anticipation they waited.

Instead of the usual pomp they expected their Lord to enter with, He came in dressed simply and greeted each one with a warm embrace. They sat in a circle, holding hands. Warmth and a great spirit of camaraderie flowed from one to another, as they gripped each other’s hands tightly.

In almost a whisper, Jesus’ voice filled with emotion, He tried to express once again, just how much He loved and cared about each one there.

Gini, now a more sturdy built woman, ready to fight many a battle, looking like a young warrior, could not hold back the tears. They streamed out from the depths of her soul, and all she wanted to do was fall at her dear Lord’s feet, to

kiss them passionately and express her undying devotion in return for His amazing love.

She kept her place in the circle, however, while Jesus described to them the details of their mission. He told what the end goal would be, what sacrifices it would cost on both their part, as well as His own.

“You will know sorrow, such as you have never felt before, for that is part of the mission. But I will be with you always. You’ll enter the realm of time once more, a time that you have not known, into a world that needs you. This world knows heartache and sorrow, because of their evil choices. But you will enter into bodies like unto theirs. You will be born as creatures of their own flesh, until such a time as I call you once again to My side. It won’t last forever, for it is but that, a time.

“My heart has gone out to these ones who have gone astray, and so send I you to be the link to the eternal, for them, to draw them near to Me. They have not the spirituality to know Me as you do. I will show you how, as you place your feet on the ground you most trod. But when your mission is complete, and you bring again with you those ones who will yet embrace Me as their King and Lord, great will be our joy. I am yet preparing a grand celebration for this final reaping, when My joy is filled to the brim. You are true to Me and thus I can trust you to be so, as you carry My light and truth to this place.

“You are each prepared for the way that is before. You must realize as you set foot on that land, that you don’t belong there, you are not of that land, but are My own, belonging to the Nation of My love. Remember this always. I will keep you till the end of your days there. ”

As each word was formed and entered their hearts and minds, they held tightly to one another’s hands.

When Jesus was done speaking, they each in turn expressed their full commitment to this mission, their submission to His will.

Knowing her desire to live and breathe the love of her Lord alone, Gini fully submitted to her Lord’s highest will and calling, telling of her full commitment of heart and mind. However, this mission would cost in many ways. She would experience new emotions, see things she hadn’t before, she’d have to forsake her Heavenly surroundings for a time and know things less than ideal, if she was to go through with the plan.

She projected a prayer to her Maker and Lord, “I truly know that all that I am, all that I will be, and any good that comes of this adventure, will be and is of You alone. I know how feeble and nothing I am. I know I can of my own self do nothing. Please reassure Me once again of how close you will be to us all, as we carry out this task. I need You more than I can express.”

“Honey,” she heard Him say to her heart, though with His mouth He was completing an explanation to a question that was raised. “My promise is true, unfaltering. You have not known Me to fail you, not once, not ever, and I will never leave you nor forsake you. If you ascend into Heaven, I will be there. If you dwell in the depths, so will I be there for you. Take now this promise of My love and let it stir

in you new confidence that will enable you to face bravely the challenge before you.”

Her heart warmed once again, Gini gave a smile as He cast His gaze her way.

As they left the meeting, they found themselves instantly in a grand ballroom setting.

“Let’s party!” They heard the familiar voice reverberate. Jesus was handsomely dressed, with the queen of Love by His side, as stunning as ever.

Looking at her own garments, she too had been magically dressed for such an occasion. And a fun time they had indeed. Old friends, relatives, acquaintances, lovers, those they knew dearly, were there among the crowd. They danced, played, sang, ate, praised, and each had a wonderful time together with their Lord, who reassured them personally of His care for them.

“May I have this dance?” She heard her dear Lover say. Gini’s eyes and face lit up, her heart soared with ardent emotion. Looking in to His eyes she felt like an awesome blanket of love had enveloped her.

“Darling, this love that now surrounds you,” Jesus confided, “will always be around you. Remember this.”

“I will,” she whispered.

And closing her eyes, He took her mind and soul away for a time of great love-making, though to the onlookers it seemed as if but a romantic dance was taking place.

“I never want to wake up,” she thought.

“You never have to wake without Me near.” He gently kissed her lips. “I’ll always, forever, love and be with you.”

And thus ends the written life story of Michelle Sherice--or Gini--as she was called. Though her life seemed it had just begun. Tongue can’t tell the joys, the immense pleasures, the deep mysteries, the unfathomable experiences she would come to know. New life, new love embraced her and beckoned her forward.

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