

Heavenly Flash – Forward

by Lyndsey Chadwick

There she stands, bewildered, and amazed, illuminated by the glorious light of Heaven. In her left peripheral, wearing a bright white robe, Jesus. He reaches his hand out, scarred where he took her sin as his own, and called her by name. “Anna, come to me.”

Immediately engulfed by an overwhelming cocktail of feelings- joy, euphoria, and the unbearable weight of love- she fell to her knees in reverence. “Lord, Jesus, forgive me for I did not do all I could do in my life to bring glory to your name. I am unworthy to stand in your presence, and I do not deserve to...” He lifted her chin, cutting off her sentence. “You have done well, my good and faithful servant, but your time on earth is not finished. We will meet again.”

The sound of a beeping monitor brings her to her senses. Anna, 63, hears the familiar yet high-spirited chatter of her loved ones, muffled, but she can make them out. “Honey, you’re awake! I thought I lost you.” Exclaims her husband of 41 years with a kiss to her forehead, hand gripping hers. Anna feels his face where a single tear drop filled with a million emotions was falling. “Mama, the doctors said you’re cancer free! All the tumors disappeared. They’re calling it a miracle. You’re going to be okay!” Says her daughter, Caroline, now uncontrollably sobbing.

Anna, vision still blurred by the intense brightness of the LED lights, looks up to heaven and says a quick prayer of thanks before responding to her family. “I saw Jesus. I saw him and talked to him! As real as I’m talking to you now. And he sent me back, here, and said that he’s not done with me yet. What have I done to deserve this miracle? This love?”

“Mama, you devoted your whole life to being a servant for Jesus. You’ve sacrificed so much! When you were 7, you brought chalk with you everywhere so you could write scripture on any and every sidewalk you came across. At 13, you’d written a book report for history class about Moses and the 10 Commandments when the prompt was about World War 2. You failed the assignment but were so proud to read your report in front the class. At 17, you were so close to buying the car you’d saved for years for, but you decided to use the money to go on a missions trip to help build a school and church in Uganda instead. Our friends and family recognized your sacrifice and pulled the money together to get you that car. You were blessed because you blessed others.”

Anna’s husband chimes in. “When we were 22, we got married before God and our family in our hometown church and made a Holy covenant to always put God first. He blessed us two years later with Caroline.”

“You’ve spent the last 40 years serving our church, leading small groups, giving to those in need even when we didn’t have the means to do so. You’ve prayed over random strangers at gas stations and have never failed to share a smile. And even in the last four and a half years of battling cancer, you have given all the glory to God and stayed strong in your faith. You, my love, are the strongest, most devoted person I have ever known.”

“Mama, because of you, I have become the best parts of you as a mother and a wife. I could not have asked for a better example to follow. Jesus sent you home to continue your work for Him. Do you understand all this? Mama...”

“...Can you hear me, mama? Mommy! Wake up, mommy! Wake up!”

Anna awakens and opens her eyes to a cute little 4-year-old Caroline jumping on her to make breakfast. “Mommy you were smiling in your sleep. Did you have a good dream?” Anna smiles and grabs Caroline, pulling her in for a deep snuggle. “I love you so so much now and I’ll love you just as much when I’m 63.” “Mommy, that’s in like a million years.” Anna chuckles, inhaling the sweet scent of her child, reminiscing on the life well-lived that is to come.