

Healing In The Storms

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Healing In The Storms



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*Dedicated to the best gift God
Could have ever given to me
My son Levi. I love you
And I miss you.*

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Thank you so much for helping me sort through, clean, paint, and spruce up after Levi's death.

And to Rosalie Storment and D.F.Higbee,

Who inspired me to get this book finished.

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1

Growing Up A Twin



I have one of the best brothers one could ask for. Jeff and I are twins. We were born 7 minutes apart (a twin will tell you how many minutes apart they are – some twins will go so far as to say for 7 minutes they had it made.)

People used to ask me “What is it like to be a twin?” Some of these people would even answer for me, “You always have someone to talk to, you have someone to play with and you have someone to help you with your chores.” (Well until one of us wore out his or her welcome.)

Jeff and I grew up on a ranch on California. We participated in the 4-H Club. We raised rabbits and sheep. When Jeff and I bought our lambs Jeff wanted to name them Bonnie and Clyde – I didn’t like sound of those names (wonder why) so I named my lamb Sunflower.

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Sunflower won Grand Champion in the fair that year while Jeff sold his lamb at market at the fair.

The next year, Sunflower gave birth to twins. The newspaper came out and wrote an article. The article was titled 'Twins for the Twins'

Sunflower had 3 more sets of twins, all of her babies were Grand Champions.

When Jeff and I had graduated High School, we moved to Idaho because dad was sick with cancer. Dad needed to be in a dryer climate. Jeff had culture shock from moving to a small town and he enlisted into the Marines right away. This was the first time Jeff and I had been separated; this time was a difficult time for me not seeing Jeff everyday.

Some twins are fortunate to live in the same town, some others like Jeff and I live miles apart. After Jeff was discharged from the Marine Corps, he married and had a beautiful daughter. I always appreciated the fact that Jeff worked all day then would go and have 'daddy/daughter day'.

Jeff always wanted a daughter and I had always wanted a son. I married in 1984. My husband died in 1990 from diabetic complications. Jerry and I had a son, Levi. Levi died tragically in a car accident in July 2007.

Everyday is a struggle without having my son. God gives you strength and peace to move forward in Him everyday. I am working, writing my first book and living life to the fullest.

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I had to realize even though my husband and son went to Heaven before I did, I still have goals I want to achieve before I am called home as well.

After Levi passed away people would comment, “I can’t imagine being you”. I would tell them “I can’t imagine being me either”.

I wouldn’t trade the hardships I have gone through for anything. God knew in His strength I could walk through this pain and be victorious for Him.

The Twins’ Arrival

Jeff and Julie were born on September 27, 1961. Jeff weighed 5lbs.3oz.

I weighed 2lbs.10oz. Jeff and I were both full term babies. Mom was sick during her pregnancy.

Jeff came home from the hospital after 5 days.

I stayed in the hospital for 3 months. I was in an incubator.

With me being in the hospital for so long, this became a hardship on my parents. Mom and dad had so much money to pay for my hospital bill and food; it was hard to make ends meet.

One day, dad didn’t have the money to pay my hospital bill; the Doctor’s gave dad 24 hours to get out of the hospital. Mom took me to the Children’s Hospital in Los Angeles.

I am blessed being in the incubator; I was not blind,

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deaf or have any other disabilities to have to deal with.

Coming Home from the Hospital

The day I was able to go home from the hospital, the nurse did a final weight on me. I weighed exactly 5 lbs. The nurse told my mom “get her out of here before she has a bowel movement.”

When I got home from the hospital, dad found out the nurse was feeding me 2 oz. of formula every 4 hours. Dad said” he was going to fill me up.’ I am told I took 12 oz. of formula my first meal.

My grandmother made my clothes for me because in 1961, there weren’t premature diapers or baby clothes like they make today.

I think I slept in a basinet for the first year.

When I was finally put in a crib, dad said I would take all the screws out of the crib. At least mom had 3 months to adjust to having my brother home before she had to get up with both of us.

2 Of Everything

I wonder if Mom and Dad ever felt like they were seeing double with 2 sets of everything.

I do know and I have seen plenty of pictures of this event, Jeff was in the play pen, and I was outside the play pen on the floor. (Something about our fighting all the time).

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Jeff and I were the only set of twins born on either side of the family in 40 years.

Mom was surprised after Jeff was born; I came kicking out 7 minutes later. Dad said “by the time he had mom signed into the hospital, Jeff was already born. I think the nurse came out and told dad “it’s a boy”, and then the same nurse came out and told him “it’s a girl.” I think Dad said “what?”

The Twin Thing

Some people will say about a twin,” that if one twin gets sick, then the other twin will have the same illness.” Or people will say “if her car breaks down, the other twin should watch out this will happen to you also”.

I always thought this was funny. People refer to it as The Twin thing.

What people need to realize is one twin is at a sport, and maybe the other twin is good in math. Just because one twin won the basketball championship, doesn’t mean the other twin is expected to do the same thing.

Twins are individuals with their own talents, gifting, desires, and independence.

I know people probably didn’t mean to compare the twins, but I know it happens. What people didn’t realize is it is very hurtful.

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My Twin Brother

I am glad to have you as a brother.
I always had someone to talk to.
Someone to share my troubles with.
We did our daily chores together, and err rode our horses
on long rides.
We taught our lamb how to walk on a leash.
We ran our lambs for the dreaded mile around the drive-
way getting ready for the fair.
We shared the same friends.
We even dated each other's friends.
It was fun growing up with you.
We had a lot of good times, and
We had hardships in growing up, but we both persevered.
God couldn't have given me a better friend, and a brother
than you.
I am glad I am your sister.
I love you Jeff.

School

When Jeff and I entered into school, we were not put into the same classes. I had never thought about being separated in kindergarten, because mom and dad did this from the start.

We always saw each other on the play ground and at lunch time.

When Jeff and I went to school in the 1960's, the hear-

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ing truck came around to the school to test the child's hearing. (Remember these?) I used to hate to see the hearing truck comes because I knew I would be in there for at least 2 hours. The kids would tease me saying "did you learn how to hear yet?"

I had to have tubes put into my ears so I could hear well. When I was younger, my ears would get infected. The build up of fluid in my ears would cause my ear drums to burst. I couldn't hear for 2 months at a time.

I also have crooked fingers. I have an extra bone in each finger, so it looks like I could have arthritis. My fingers do hurt sometimes. As I have gotten older, my fingers are fusing together, so they are becoming straightened.

I am blessed because I can use my hands even if my hands are small and my fingers are crooked.

A Very Special Christmas

I remember one Christmas Eve, Jeff and I were told Santa Clause was coming soon, it was time for bed.

During the night, I kept hearing a horse. I thought I was dreaming, but I kept hearing a horse at my window. I looked out my bedroom window, and April, a horse we had at a nearby stable, got out of her coral, and came to our house.

We kept April in our backyard of our tract home for 2 days.

All the neighbor kids had fun riding her until we had

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to take her back to the stable.

What a fun Christmas gift my family received from Santa Clause that year!

Visiting Grandma's House

When Jeff and I were young, we divided our vacations and holidays between Kernville, and Goleta in California.

When the grandparents were able to take Jeff and I, it ended up one grandparent would take only one of us home (Something about us fighting all the Time.)

Our family used to go to Colorado to visit family and go hunting in October.

Jeff went hunting with everyone; I hung out with my grandmother. I learned how to sew and how to make shoo fly pie.

Our Trip to Montana

I remember when Jeff and I were about 7 years old; the family took a trip to Flathead Lake in Montana. At the time, we had a small dog, named Tina. Tina went everywhere the family went in our truck and camper.

One morning, the family planned an outing on the lake. Dad was getting ready to put the boat in the water; I walked on to the dock Tina was jumping in and out of the boat.

The family climbed into the boat, put on our life jackets, and called for Tina to get into the boat. When dad started to take the boat out into open water, Tina turned

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green. She went under one of the seats, put her paws over her eyes, and kept her head down the whole boat ride. I felt so sorry for her. She was never more excited to hit solid ground once we got back to the dock.

The Blanket

A child had a blanket.

It was a security blanket.

The child also had a habit, the child sucked on his thumb.

One night, the adult came into this child's bedroom.

The adult felt he or she had the right to violate the child's security. The adult took the blanket, and burned it in the fireplace.

"How do I get through the dark right now?" the child asks. One by one, the night will turn into morning.

The child looks for another form of security. This one he wants to hide.

Feeling Invisible

I feel invisible.

I want to feel like

I belong

I want to feel like

I am loved

I want to feel like

I am accepted.

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The Pawn Shop

When I was 7 years old, my family visited my grandmother near Santa Barbara.

One day, the family was going to see my grandparents, we stopped off at a Second Hand Store. Mom said Jeff and I could have a toy. Jeff picked out a toy gun. I picked out a beautiful Victorian framed picture of Jesus praying at the garden of Gethsemane. Mom asked me “are you sure you don’t want a dolly?” I told her no. When we got back to the car, mom told dad I have to have a picture of Jesus. Dad just laughed.

Dad and the family went to a pawn shop on the way to grandmas. The family was looking around the shop, when a red haired man came into the shop and was looking at the gun counter. The pawn shop manager told the young man” We just got this gun in this morning would you like to look at it? The guy took the gun, nobody checked to see if the gun was loaded apparently, because the young man sighted the gun at my head. I heard Jesus tell me “sweet-heart, why don’t you step back here with me.”)

I stepped back 5 steps, the guy sighted the gun up 6 inches on then wall, blew the clock off then wall. If I had not moved when I felt Jesus ask me to, I would have been killed.

The young man through the gun down on the floor came over to me crying “are you okay?” He left the pawn shop very shaken up.

The young man told my dad how sorry he was. Dad said “you didn’t hurt her, so it was okay.”

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Easter at Grandma's

The family used to go to my grandmother's house near Goleta when the kids were small.

We would all go swimming in the ocean (probably with the Great White sharks) we would have our Easter egg hunts on the back of the trailer, and then we would have dinner.

At bedtime, I remember all the kids would gather around for the goodnight kiss. I would be standing on the outside of the living room and would wish for a kiss to.

I would go to bed at grandma's house and tell Jesus I loved him and goodnight. I didn't feel lonely then.

I have wonderful memories of my grandmother. She led me to the Lord when I was a little older. I would sit and talk about Jesus for hours with her. I still miss her.

Barking at the Moon

When I was growing up, a lot of my family had a drinking problem. I remember dad telling a story. Dad came home drunk one night and was barking at the moon. Dad laughs. The neighbors heard dad and said, "dad is barking at the moon again".

My family took trips to Oregon. I heard a story about dad and my uncle were working on my uncle's truck. They were busy with the truck, and didn't notice where they put the beer can. on the front bumper, where I could reach the can. I heard that by dinner time, I couldn't sit up in my

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high chair for dinner.

I have to put in a foot note; Mom told me that day my uncle was digging a cesspool, and I fell in the cesspool while drunk. I am glad someone was out there to rescue me or..... Yuck.

Neither Jeff nor I drink to this day. We both didn't like how alcohol affected the family. And to me, it is not a way to handle stress.

Moving to the Ranch

When Jeff and I were 8 years old, we moved to the ranch. What a mess; it took 10 dump truck loads to clean the place up to where we could move in.

I could remember thinking there weren't to many living rooms big enough to have a standard sized pool table.

Behind our house was an orchard. Jeff and I had the run of this orchard. We would ride our horses in the orchard until the horses or the dog would think we went too far, and would turn around and go home.

Mom and dad would have opening day of hunting season parties. Mom never knew how many people would show up on opening day. One year she had 50 people to go hunting.

Because our house was large, and we had acreage, my uncle and his family would come out and ride the horses. My uncle bought my cousin a horse. He kept the horse in our corral.

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We also had sheep, goats cows rabbits visiting snakes, deer that ate the dog's food (princess cried) owls hooting in the trees.

We lived on a sharp corner. So accidents happened and taking out the front fence was pretty normal. We live on a hairpin turn and 10 mph. meant what the sign said. Not many people paid attention to the sign, until they came around the corner and hit the other car. I saw a lot of accidents happen on the ranch. Maybe that is why I always wanted to be a paramedic when I grew up.

Geronimo

One of my fondest memories of my childhood was my horse Geronimo.

One Saturday morning, (I remember it was the weekend, because I thought I could sleep in silly me.) at about 6:30, A.M., I heard a horse near my window. I thought I was dreaming.

I opened the window shade; I saw my horse standing at my window crying. I got dressed when I opened my front door; my horse was standing at the door waiting for me. Geronimo escorted me to the hay barn, and then to his pen to eat.

I miss my horse. I sold him before I moved to Idaho because he wouldn't fit in the front seat of my pick up. Oh well, he went to a good home where the little girl probable over rode him everyday. So he had a good life.

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Princess

6 months after we moved to our ranch, dad, Jeff, and I were going into town.

Someone had abandoned a German shepherd puppy. She was sitting on the curb with a lost look on her face. Jeff called her Princess, she jumped into the pick up and we took her home.

Princess loved the cats and chickens rabbits and the occasional deer. The dogs, cats and the chickens used to eat together. They would eat soaked up Purina dog chow.

We have pictures of princess lying on the porch with a momma cat and her babies lying down with Princess. Princess was watching the kittens nurse.

We had Princess for several years until we suspect that someone poisoned our dog and she died. Life changed drastically for the animals on the ranch.

Then We had Kelly

When we had gotten a new dog named Kelly, I had already had a dog named Trina. She was a cute little white fur ball.

The first day we brought Kelly home, she took Trina into the orchard and tried to get rid of my dog. Kelly almost got away with it, but Trina cried, and we made Kelly go into the orchard and bring her back home. Kelly's look was priceless. She knew she had been caught.

Kelly hated the cats, chickens and the occasional deer,

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and the cow.

One cat rubbed up against Kelly, thinking she was our Princess, and Kelly about took the cat's head off.

Dad chained Kelly up so she couldn't try and loose Tri-na anymore; and to save the cats. Kelly was put on a short chain; the cat would stroll in front of her and not move a muscle. One day, dad lengthened the chain, the cat strolled by, Kelly took off after the cat. The chain broke, the cat howled, and took off. Kelly chased the cat up a latter by our house and on to the roof, she realized what she had done, and stood there motionless. We had to get her down.

Our ranch by the way was called the triple J & L ranch not rancho bizarre.

Coo Dove

Jeff had a dove named Coo. He got her as a baby. She was quite entertaining.

We had a large screened in porch. Saw the chickens scratching for their food, the next day, I saw Coo rolling around on a volley ball, pecking at the ball for food.

Another time, Coo heard a rooster (oh yeah she did) she filled up her lungs with air, and cockadoodledoed, and the coughed.

At night we always had owls in the trees. You would hear the owls hoot. Then you would hear coo hooting on the pick nick table.

Too bad funniest Home Videos wasn't around then.

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Jeff's Black truck

Jeff bought a Ford truck from my cousin. Jeff painted the truck black. I think Dad had a talk with Jeff's black truck because of Jeff's dumb luck.

If Jeff was even 1 mile from where he told dad he would be that night, his truck would break down.

One night Jeff was on a date, Jeff and his date walked 1 mile to the nearest house to call dad to come and get him (no find him from his directions) at midnight; our curfew was 11 p.m.

Poor Jeff also had to leave his truck on the side of the freeway and walk the rest of the way home from work because he ran out of gas at 2 o'clock in the morning (this was before cell phones). He had to get up at 6 o'clock to go to school.

Jeff washed, waxed vacuumed out his truck every week. He took really good care of it.

When I got my first car, a friend asked "how come you don't wash your car and take care of it like Jeff does?" I told her "that is what the rain is for"

We are twins and very opposite.

Latch Key Kids

When Jeff and I were growing up, Mom and Dad worked. Jeff and I were latch key kids. It was hard to come home to an empty house everyday. A lot of times, Jeff and I rode our horses until mom and dad

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got home.

Because Jeff and I were in the 4-H club, we would butcher and sell the rabbits. Dad would tell us we had 20 rabbits to have butchered by the time he got home because we had to deliver the rabbits to the customers.

Someone told me one time this is child abuse. Jeff and I were used to getting it done, and just figured this is the way it is.

I remember my mom stayed home from work one day. I saw her car from the road while I was walking home from school. I told Jeff ‘mom’s home’ and ran the rest of the way home. I remember how it felt to go home to an empty house after school; I told God” when I have my babies, I’m not going to leave them home alone”.

Jeff and I don’t leave our kids alone. We always took them to school, and picked them up. Or my mom watched Levi.

Strength in a Crisis

Dad was retired from the school district when I was in high school. Dad had cancer. I took my dad to 52 doctors in one year, to find out if dad could work or not. (Yeah dad was walking with a walker; he couldn’t hardly walk, let’s put him on some heavy equipment).

I was Junior in high School; dad got me a job at the school district. I took dad to the doctor’s office before I

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went and took my test for the job. The nurse forgot that dad had been allergic to rubbing alcohol, swabbed his arm with alcohol, and gave him the shot. Dad got dizzy, hit the door cutting his head and passed out. The head nurse and I took dad in a gurney across the street to the E.R. room to be checked.

I went to take my test. The nurse drove me to the appointment. (I still had to take the test even with all that just happened.) The nurse said “if I didn’t do very well on the test, she would ask if I could take it again because of what happened.”

I took the test, and out of 75 people there, I had the top 11th score. I got the job.

A Good Friend

I had a good friend in high school, who took me under her wing. She was really pretty, and a popular girl, nice tan, blonde, and a nice smile. She never made me feel like I was tagging along.

We met in dance class my freshman year of high school. I had long hair that she admired; she had short hair that I admired because I thought it would be easier to take care of.

I grew in esteem hanging around my friend. She made me feel like I was accepted. Thank you for being my friend.

She went on to become Miss Moorpark. I was so

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proud of her.

Thank You to all of you who take the time to encourage someone who may be different, shy, or feeling inadequate.

Psalms 27:4

“One thing I ask of the Lord, this is what I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life to gaze upon the beauty of the Lord and to seek Him in His temple.”

Our Move to Idaho

When Jeff and I graduated high school, the Doctor told dad he needed to move to a dryer climate.

My aunt, uncle and grandmother moved to Idaho a year earlier to retire.

Mom and dad started to take trips to Idaho to find a house. Jeff and I were left to hold down the fort (the house didn't burn down until after we moved and the fire department burned it down in a fire exercise.).

When we moved into the new house, I felt like moving back to Moorpark. In our old house, I had one of the bigger rooms. Now I had the sewing room. Pink and yellow wallpaper to top it off.

Post Falls was a small town a lot like the town I just moved from, so I was fine. Jeff on the other hand didn't like it at all.

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It was nice in Idaho with all the Lakes we have to fish in; you can breathe the air here, and a slower pace of life. You could get on the freeway, and not be afraid of being run off the road. When I first moved here, I liked to drive around, because it was rural.

I will never forget how funny it was for this California girl to be able to walk out her front door and into the snow our first winter; and not to have to drive an hour to get to the snow. I have always liked the snow even the shoveling or driving in the stuff (I know brainwashed.) No, I just adapted to the seasons.

Jeff Goes Into the Marines

When Jeff moved to Idaho, he had culture shock from moving to a small town.

Jeff enlisted into the Marine Corps. right away. This was the first time Jeff or I had been separated, this was a very difficult time for me not seeing Jeff everyday.

Some twins are fortunate enough to live in the same town, some others, like Jeff and I live miles apart.

Our first letter home from Jeff had just one word “Help”. I think mom still has that letter.

After Jeff graduated from boot camp, he came home for a couple of weeks. The family took a trip to Montana. We went 200 miles just to get an ice cream cone. And then again, dad went 200 miles into the park to get a better cup of coffee. I think dad just likes to drive.

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This was one of the best trips the family had taken together. We used to take a vacation every year and travel all over the country, but this trip to Montana was the most memorable, because it was the first time we were separated and I appreciated Jeff more than I think. I didn't take for granted he would always be living in the same town because for 1, he hated it here.

Psalms 31:3

“For You are my rock
You are my fortress
Therefore my namesake,
Lead me and guide me.”

T.E.S.H. Industries

After I moved to Idaho, I got a job at T.E.S.H. Industries. I worked at this job for 6 years. This is the best job I have ever held. I trained the mentally challenged in Janitorial Services.

It was so much fun to work with the clients. The clients love, laugh, and work with a simple grace.

I was so proud of my clients. They went to the Special Olympics and brought back a Gold metal in gymnastics, a silver metal in soccer, and a bronze metal in the relay race.

It was sad to have to leave this job, I run into some of my clients once in a while. I always get a hug and a hello.

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I remember one occasion where I met a former client in the mall.

This lady introduced me to her boss. I was so impressed. How many of us always remember to introduce our friends to each other?