

## Here By the Grace of God...for now

By Elizabeth Tighe



These words express the memories imprinted on my soul from the minute of my life I terrifyingly looked at it leaving me, blowing up and consuming me, taking me away with it. I screamed for "Mary, Mother of God, help me" . . . She was taking me, taking me to another world.

But I wanted to live, I wanted my children to have a mother, and I was led back into the hands of angels to live. I was let go, gently even. I laid on grass in a cold shower of water that didn't seem to ever hit my burning skin.

It was just before Elias's 15th birthday, and I wanted him to have a good party.

The slash pile I built was a huge cleanup I'd worked on all summer. The orchard debris and an old shed that had lots

of old dry bags, ("shop" garbage), I stuffed in the bottom. When I lit it, I Blew up...

I was screaming in this horror of indescribable, incredible heat, then pain and rescue BY my son Elias, my Mom, doctors, Ed—all of this pure love.

I could not, NOT pray the rosary; over many days, I never stopped. Nor did I try. When I stopped, I was in pain.

I don't know how, it just happened; I found myself in a rosary trance and left my body.

She brought me back here instead, into my own angelic mother's arms.

Our beloved Ed slept on the recliner, facing me on the couch, the first night home. He talked to me, soothing words, as my soul stood in the fire, talking to the devil for what felt like days of heat so intense that it was in my eyes, my nostrils, in my mouth, in my breath, and my hands.

My son's quick thinking with the hose... my mother changing 6 weeks of bandages...

I couldn't braid my daughter's hair on her first day of school... My son—I ruined his 15<sup>th</sup> birthday.

How much more can I dare recall in this witness? No more.

I live by the grace of my dear Mother Mary, Mother of God.

I willingly decided in this story to relive a most horrific time in my life to witness to the Holy power of the Mother of God, our divine Saint Mary. Her power is infinitely healing, Holy and real. She invites us to appeal to her. All who labor and are weary, all who weep. She can and will bear and hold and strengthen you. She is the loving mother of God.

Why am I still here? Grace. What happened? I was just stupid. I didn't know what those bags once held, nor did I know what was on the old rags. I'd made a bomb.

Had I not screamed for Mary, I would have died; the exhalation saved my lungs from burning. My lungs were spared, I lost my hair and full use of my hands for months. I had a miraculous healing. Where doctors said I would need skin grafts, I healed well without. Later that year, I saw a woman scarred terribly on her face, and I wept. Why had God spared me from horrible scars?

He did outwardly, but what about those scars that were inside? How to heal those?

We all have them. God knows, if we let the horror story rule us, recounting terrible times in our lives, it is like re-inflicting wounds that we don't want to heal. Did we find the strength God was trying to teach us by pulling us through that horrible time in our history? *He was in the fire with you, Liz, I remind myself when PTSD thoughts strike, and God is here now, rooting for me and you. Don't pull him back into your imaginary fire. Bring God along on a new adventure.*

I want to witness to God now that I am healed and whole. I always have been because God is and was with me and cannot be apart from me.

Does God plan bad shit? No, humans are stupid and make mistakes—free will—but God sends angels to help.

*Replaying the old story doesn't matter—ya' lived! Ouch!*

It is very easy for me to find a witness story. I had to pick the one that I draw the most meaning from...this one. My mother of God, my Mary is mine, as much as she is yours. She is all of ours, equally, fiercely loving us if we but let her.

Really, our horror stories, if they are not an honest witness that inspires or provides some concrete help now, these stories just steep our brains in feel-bad, emotional chemicals and really steal all you have really got, right now. Please, be careful with trauma, only remember how it made you stronger, so the brain doesn't get bathed again in the horror that you were only meant to live once. Don't punish yourself again. Give glory to God for the witness of your strength, your amazing resilience, angels that helped you, and experience a beautiful rebirth. We are Catholic but, truly, with God in our lives, giving Him glory with witness, we are born again. We are Renewed in Spirit, called to be present now.

You've got today. Go live life abundantly because you're here by grace, for now.

Pray the rosary.

