

Letters from Prison

April 8, 2011

Dear Marie,

I was very humbled by your good heart (happy face). Thank you from the bottom of my heart. I knew when I grabbed this envelope it was really big. Marie, I wasn't expecting this, the cards are beautiful, top of the line cards. Your cards are better than any we can get our hands on. Marie, you are truly a blessing from God.

Can I tell you something funny? I told you I was black and you didn't run; I told you I was black and you gave me something to eat. That shows what type of person you are, Marie.

The cards I can sell for 5 stamps or 6 soups. I was sitting here before mail call and wondering where I was going to get some money from, and here you come.

I wish I would have spent 30 years in Piecemakers instead of a gang. Marie, I've always wanted to be a part of something bigger than myself. I wish I could have given all those years of loyalty to God instead of a street gang. After 30 years of service, I have 37 tattoos, one tooth missing, 46 stitches, 3 times shot, 2 bullets still inside me — 2 strikes, homeless, no friends, and nobody cares what I used to be. One thing about being in a gang, there's always somebody new coming behind you.

The only thing I can hang my hat on is, I've found God. Marie, I want to tell you, I've never killed nobody, thank God, I've never wanted to hurt nobody, but I never let nobody know that. You're the first person I've ever told that to. All my years of gang banging, I've never killed nobody. I really, really feel bad at who I used to be, but God was always in my ear telling me what to do. I'm proud of who I have become, Marie.

Marie, can you have somebody make me a peach cobbler please? I was looking over the Piecemakers (class) schedule and I see a cake baking class. I had no idea that Piecemakers was that big.

Marie, once again thank you for the greeting cards. I sent you a picture cause I believe if you have a picture of the person you're praying for it's better. I hope I don't scare you with my jail look; I wasn't saved in this picture, but my look is much more softer, plus this prison turns your look hard.

Marie, I want to tell you that you are my only friend. Nobody writes me but you.

After 13 years in, I've been forgotten. But I'm happy with where I'm at, Marie. How do you have the time to do all you do and write people in prison?? Well, how ever you find the time, God bless you. You are Good People, Marie. Don't forget that peach cobbler. I'll be able to get that, God willing. Marie, I think you may have just saved my life.

Terry

Marie,

I just got your letter today, Thank you once again for the stamps and cards. You really warm my heart when I get a letter from you. I don't know how you find the time. I really like that piece on OPPORTUNITY. I've never had so many stories inside my head. Marie, let me share this with you. Like I told you, I have to hustle in here to eat. I sometimes sell photos and greeting cards for stamps, so I send stamps to this company and cash them in. I'm trying to buy a package (of food) that costs \$40. So I send my stamps in December so I could have it in January or February. Mind you, this is a lady at home running this (exchange). I've done 7 or 8 transactions with her over the course of a year and a half. Well, she took all my stamps and didn't send nothing.

Marie, I was hurt, but all I could think of was when I was out there gang banging, and doing wrong. Marie, why do things happen to us when we're trying to do good? Was I supposed to remember all the wrong I've done over 30 years of gang banging? I just thought I'd share that with you cause I had gotten a funny feeling - I really felt robbed. I really think it's like Opportunity.

Thank you, Marie, for always listening to my wild stories. I hope you like the card; it was made with love. John 6:9

Marie, please keep sending me stuff to read. I want to take advantage of my new Opportunity with Piecemakers.

Terry

Marie's Answer

April 16, 2011

Hello dear Terry,

You tickle my funny bone as the old saying goes. With your enthusiasm you will definitely be one of those entrepreneurs as the new age begins.

Well, in answer to "why do these things happen to us when we are trying to do good"???? Actually it is a good question and my answer would be, "Would life not be dull without the little and big hurts???" There are not too many in this world that will do unto others as they would want done unto them. We all get rather soft hearted and thick skinned eventually but it takes suffering, rejection and all the other things we hate to go through.

So God is making you a vessel fit for His use. As you pant after Him, He will fill you full of His glory and you will be born from above. Terry, we start out as of the earth and we end up born from above and are of the heavens. That is your goal.

However, working as you do to make a living is part of His plan also. That is what Piecemakers is all about. We are tending His vineyard and pray He finds fruit on our tree when He comes to inspect us.

Till we meet again, your family here bids you adieu and sends their deep respect.

Marie 

Thank you for the picture. Actually do you want to laugh???? I was wondering why your letter came from Corcoran as most gals I write to are from Chowchilla. Then with all the wisdom in your letters I thought, "This cannot be a female as they do not have that much depth".

I WILL GIVE THEE ANGELS WATCH OVER THEE

THE YEAR WAS SOMEWHERE IN THE EARLY 30's. I was perhaps 10 years old and my brother Harv, around 17, when my story took place.

Wisconsin was just beginning to emerge from its icy tomb of winter. Although the weather did not indicate any such thing, the brave little fluff ball with an orange breast, the robin, would make his appearance and snow, hail, cold wind could not discourage him or detain him from his mission in the life God gave him.

As was quite the usual thing for me, I was home from school sick with one thing or another. I think I spent as much time in bed as out of it when I was younger. My

dad used to call me "spindle shanks". Guess that is the way I looked to him.

Anyway, on with my story. Suddenly the front door of our cracker box called a house flew open and Harv came in with blood spurting three inches in the air from his arm. My mom got faint. I jumped out of my sick bed got a rag and rapped it tightly around his arm making a perfect tourniquet. The blood stopped flowing and Harv and I jumped on his motorcycle and sped through the cold icy wind (me clutching my arms around Harv's waist) to the doctor in Omro which was about 7 miles away. Harv with a ruptured artery and me on my sick bed. But hey, this was ordinary life on the farm.

We get safely to the doctor and as he begin to stitch the wound that Harv got from trying to kill a sparrow with a rifle, the doctor asked, "Who made that tourniquet????"

Harv said, "She did," as he pointed to me probably a bit embarrassed about needing help from his little sister.

And then the doctor said, "The tourniquet was perfect and probably saved your life."

This is the "what if and how come" of my story.

Did God intervene in a most unusual way to save Harv's life on that cold spring day so he lived to be 80?? How come the day before this happened, I had learned in school about a tourniquet??? And how come I was home from school ill at just the right time?

As we bring God into our lives and look back at the times that were more than coincidental, we will see our Father's love watching over us and giving angels charge over us. I get warm and cozy thinking God is with us as we plow through the sometimes "more than we can handle" parts of life. Do not believe that He never gives you more than you can handle. It was just this very part of my life that made me trust in Him. He gave me more than I could handle and He became my rod and staff to comfort and guide me.

*By the way, I do not remember Harv ever saying, "Thank you for saving my life."
Tee hee. MARIE KOLASINSKI*