

She Thought She Had it All



Dr. Sharon Schuetz

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The weight of her body rested on Meg's twisted arms, sending pain shooting down her arms. The duct tape used to tie her hands suppressed any movement in the tiny trunk. Three hundred horses under the hood, potholes, darkness, and searing pain joined forces against her. Terror wrapped its icy fingers around her throat, suffocating her. Bound and gagged, Megan Sanders, Lincoln High's Cheerleading Captain, was at the mercy of her captors.

Meg couldn't imagine her life could take such a drastic turn so quickly. Today started like any other. She joked around with her friends after school at the soda shop. Blonde ringlets fell loosely around her slim shoulders; hazel eyes scanned the room, and her thick red lips puckered at the corners for effect. Fooling around meant tormenting the kids from the tenements, especially Beth Alexander, who worked to support her family.

Meg's crowd hurled cruel insults at Beth. She dared to challenge Meg's hypothesis that one couldn't be happy without money. Beth's Scriptural response, "...I have come so that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly," wasn't appreciated by Meg or any of her wealthy friends.

Beth explained that Jesus came to atone for our sins and give us abundant life through the Holy Spirit. With her flawless complexion, long brown hair pulled back, and contagious smile, Beth explained that Jesus atones for our sins and brings abundant life through the Holy Spirit. This abundant life includes spiritual power through a personal relationship with God. Meg was livid as Beth concluded, "In this kind of relationship, we can find joy in every circumstance."

Meg was tough on Beth that day. She refused to pay for the food she ordered, accusing Beth of getting the order wrong. She knew Mr. Strickland would take half the cost out of Beth's paycheck, but she didn't care. "Let's see her find joy in that," she smirked as she backed out of the soda shop. A quick stop at the Post Office changed everything. She never looked in the back seat and leathery face. "Drive 'til I tell you to stop. You'd better not do anything stupid."

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Just outside of town, Meg went in the trunk. Ghoulish laughter permeated the car. Meg's eyebrows furrowed in pain as she listened. She was desperate to hear what they were saying but couldn't make out their words. Her thoughts raced. "Oh, God. Where are they taking me? What's going to happen to me? Please don't let them hurt me." Pain, fear, and engine fumes lulled her into a fitful sleep.

She woke to the squealing of brakes as they rolled to a stop. She had no idea where they were or how far they had traveled. The smell of pine needles mixed with exhaust fumes filled the air. She heard them planning her death while they built a campfire. Cackling over their plans, they both agreed that she would die after supper.

Meg's mind was reeling. Thoughts flashed like frames on a strip of broken film. Let's see; if I can kick a panel out, maybe I can reach around with my, no, I can't move my legs. My arms are so numb. What can I do? There's no way out. Am I going to die? Oh, God! Let's see; I remember they taught us a prayer in Sunday school. Now, what was it that stupid teacher said?

The smell of bacon frying and biscuits baking invaded her senses; hunger pangs screamed for relief. She heard forks scraping against dishes, pans tossed on the ground, and footsteps. The footsteps were getting louder. Let's see what was it. Now I lay me down to sleep. No, that's not it! What was it? I bet Beth Alexander would know what to do.

The key turned in the lock as the sunbaked hand jabbed a gun in her face. "Come on, Missy, it's time to take a walk."

Meg staggered forward like a drunkard; every limb screamed in agony. "We'll take the tape off your mouth if you promise not to scream."

Her temples pulsed, eyes darting between her captors, pleading for mercy. She nodded in agreement. "Please, don't do this," desperation engulfed her.

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McCallous hands pushed her toward the woods. “Enough with the tears already.” Meg’s mind was spinning desperately. I guess Beth was right; my money can’t help me now.