

JULIE'S STORY-GLIMPSES OF GOD IN EVERYDAY LIFE

Queen of Everything

PRINCESS OF NOT NEARLY ENOUGH!

SCRIPTURE STUDY

Psalm 67:1-2

Psalm 34:1-3

PRAYER FOCUS

Dear Jesus,
Give me a humble heart to recognize your blessings and give you thanks.
In Jesus' Name,
Amen



A GOOD YEAR

My fifth-grade year was *absotively, posolutely* the best year of my life. Everything went downhill from there. Those were the days: pre-glasses, pre-braces, and pre-trans-fats. Mrs. Douglas was my teacher and I was unequivocally her pet. She sported a “bubble-cut” hairdo beautifully plastered with Aqua Net and always wore neon clothes. Every time Mrs. D. posed a question, my hand shot up like a rocket and I would pontificate about any subject we studied. My classmates were mildly annoyed, but they didn’t persecute me as much as I deserved.

The School Spelling Bee was held every October like clock-work. With my new-found confidence as class genius, I determined to add another star to my crown. I would take on Elma Studder, the two-time champion in seventh grade, and grind her to a pulp. I poured over the bee study book in the bathtub, during recess and even during *The Flintstones*.

The big day arrived. We faced off like two ornery gunslingers. Elma pulled out her Colt 45 and aced “beneficent.” I fired back with “anonymous.” After a heated exchange, I obliterated her with “zygote”. “Zygote. Z-y-g-o-t-e. Zygote.”

I now proudly took my throne as queen of everything. The newspaperman took my picture, (fuzzy ponytail, pot belly and all) and I grinned like a Cheshire cat. Even Betsy the crossing guard quaked in her Keds upon my approach. I hesitate to mention I was shot down on the first word of the District Spelling Bee. “Independence. I-n-d-e-p-e-n-d-a-n-c-e. Independence.” What was I thinking?

Even my defeat couldn't snuff out my euphoria. Phil Taylor, the boy with the buzz cut in math class, fell madly in love with me. He asked me to be princess of the Oak Cliff Nuggets, his Little League softball team. My chest swelled (s-w-e-l-l-e-d) with pride. Mom bought me a new dress and some grown-up lady undergarments. She twisted my hair into a bun and I donned a 50-cent silver tiara. I knew I was a dead ringer for Marilyn Monroe (no pun intended). Phil and I sat on the back of a pink Cadillac convertible as the Little League parade crept down Main Street. It didn't matter that the only onlookers were our doting parents. I proudly practiced my gloved beauty queen wave: elbow-elbow-wrist-wrist. It was uncool to look excited. Princesses always appeared blasé, even bored with their adoring fans. After signing autographs (one for my Grandma and one for my little sister Kathy), Phil and I sauntered over to the softball field. I had no idea what a foul ball or a strike was. I had never even witnessed a softball game, so I simply continued my beauty queen wave and sucked down my Dr. Pepper.

After a blissful spring, my final triumph would come at the end of the school year. Mr. Carpenter, the choir teacher, asked Stephanie, Ronald and me to be cherubs in the Boito chorus with the Dallas Symphony. We became stars of the music class. We even had paparazzi. Boito was this Italian composer obsessed with the afterlife. As angelic cherubs we perched in the Music Hall balcony with 97 other little angels and chirped out our three-stanza Italian melodies. I can still remember it. I can't remember my social security number, but I can sing "Fra telli per namci lontano fin ultimo cielo non tamo, poi sempre dove angelo cantar." Maestro Johanos would point his baton our direction and we'd warble like night-engales.

The angels were crammed together like sardines and the overhead spotlights beat down upon our sweaty foreheads. Soon the ammonia from our perspiration made Tommy Ligdorf a little queasy. Tommy, third row, sixth seat from the left, had contracted the stomach flu shortly before our debut. He spewed his dinner all over the altos before we sang the first "Fra telli..." Once Stephanie saw Tommy toss his cookies, she hurled her undigested French fries into the tuba below. A few fragments landed on the tenors in hell. Bedlam ensued.

In spite of a somewhat rocky start, the concert went off without a hitch. Maestro Johanos was from Moscow, and Russians are not easily ruffled. We receive a standing ovation, and I had my cherub robe bronzed for posterity. (Just kidding.)

I really did keep the angel wings and the silver plastic tiara. And when I am having a bad day, I put on my heavenly cloak and my softball crown and recall the magical time when I was Queen of Everything.

"May God be gracious to us and bless us and make his face shine upon us, that your ways may be known on earth, your salvation among all nations." Psalm 67:1-2

"I will praise the LORD at all times. I will constantly speak his praises. I will boast only in the LORD; let all who are discouraged take heart. Come, let us tell of the LORD's greatness; let us exalt his name together. Psalm 34:1-3

- Think of some of your happiest memories. List them here. List some answers to prayer that you have received. Take the time to share them with someone else this week.
- The psalmist teaches that the purpose of blessing is to make God's ways known on the earth, and to declare His great gift of salvation. Do you take the opportunity to give your testimony when others see God's hand working in your life? Is it difficult to share your faith? Try rejoicing with someone this week.
- The first three verses of Psalm 34 give us very descriptive verbs for giving God glory. What are they? How often are we supposed to do them. Is it good to praise alone? Is it better to praise and thank God with others in the context of community?