

A Jewel in Your Crown - Part 1

BY ISAAC KRONK



Bruised, confused, and naked, Hope lay in a car, as her adversary drove her northward.

“Where am I? Where is my husband?” she cried inwardly.

The hot Louisiana sun beat down on the thin bed sheet, which alone covered Hope’s frail, ninety-four-pound body. Her physical nakedness was a fitting omen of the emotional nakedness engulfing her. Dentureless, she pleaded with the driver to take her home—to no avail. The driver, who had taken her captive, was no stranger. Her daughter had taken her possessionless from the hospital—without phone, purse, or clothes, not stopping so much as to gather her things from her house or even to bid her husband with Alzheimer’s farewell at the nursing home. On their way to northwest Arkansas, Hope attempted to recall the events of the past months, but with little success. Her thoughts and memories were clouded by the three strokes she had just barely survived. The doctors had told her she was going to die.

It was January 2024 when she arrived in her new home in Arkansas. The spacious house was located in the wooded countryside and was built by her daughter and her daughter’s husband before he passed away.

“It’s beautiful, at least,” Hope thought to herself. The birds greeted them as her daughter forced her arm under Hope’s shoulder, practically having to carry her weak body inside. Her daughter’s two mangy dogs greeted the pair with barks, happy panting, and snuggles, nearly causing short, bow-legged Hope to tumble to the ground.

However, it was not long before the sweet bird songs became mockery. Her daughter worked two jobs and was seldom home. So Hope sat at the house alone, wistfully looking toward the heavens and longing for friends with which to converse. There were only a couple of neighbors, but the distance was too great for her to endure the walk. Loneliness engulfed her as she sat on her daughter’s front porch, unable to contact friends, family, or her husband in Louisiana. She longed, cried, and prayed to return to Louisiana, but she could not. Her new home had become a dungeon.

Months rolled by, and Hope’s condition worsened. The thought occurred to her to run away—so she did. The police located her about a mile down the road and dragged her home, not paying attention to her desperate pleas to

return to Louisiana. After her attempted escape, her daughter secured a tracker around Hope's wrist. Hope then began making plans to commit suicide. She was at the lowest point she had been in for years. Little did she know, however, that the God who counts His children's tears had prepared to intervene. What might be impossible to do through the mere explanation of doctrine, He would accomplish through His ambassadors of love by personal work.

Total Wellness had just begun in the little town of Decatur, Arkansas. A company of nine young adults gathered together with high hopes of accomplishing something called blended evangelism, which they had been studying in the writings of Ellen White. Uniting their varied talents for the ten-week program, they hoped to blend health evangelism, music ministry, Bible work, and canvassing to win souls for Christ. With excitement and awe, the team immediately set out to knock on doors.

On day one, following Christ's method of going two-by-two, Jake and Isaac jumped into a car together. They began scrolling Google Maps in search of the best location to start. Plotting their course, they drove through the countryside, searching for a large apartment complex they had seen on the map.

"Umm... is this it?" Isaac questioned. The car slowed to a halt. They both burst out laughing as they realized they had mistaken a northwest Arkansas chicken house "complex" for an apartment complex.

Still eager to get started, Jake announced, "Well, we might as well see if there are any houses around here that we can stop by and knock on their door."

Jake shifted the car back into gear and sped the vehicle to the closest strip of homes. They turned onto a gravel road and were filled with adrenaline as they saw the first door. (What they didn't realize is that this day would be the farthest out into the country they would canvass all summer.)

After conversing with a respectable gentleman at the first door, they returned to their car to drive to the next home on that road. As they went down the gravel drive and parked at the next house, two mangy dogs greeted the pair with barks and happy panting.

An older woman with troubled sad eyes greeted them. "Hello!" she said hoarsely, with a voice immediately identifiable as belonging to that of a long-time smoker. Jake and Isaac introduced themselves and the programs and services they were bringing to the community. Hope listened respectfully but explained that she wasn't very interested in health and that, furthermore, she had nobody to take her to the events at the lifestyle center.

"You know, I grew up in a Baptist church in Louisiana. And since being here, I have wanted to find a church to go to for a long time," she said out of the blue, "But nobody will take me."

"We can take you to our church!" Jake said excitedly.

"But I don't have a dress, hun," she said in a serious Southern accent. "You know, I been trying to go to a church ever since I got here, but nobody will take me. People promise me they will come and take me, but they never come. One lady came and did pick me up one time and took me to a Pentecostal church, but they turned their back on me. Nobody talked to me the whole time. They judged me because I wore pants—I don't have a dress. I came here from Louisiana with nothing but a sheet on. And they turned their backs on me. When I was walking out, they would not look at me. Not even the preacher! I'm not going back there again."

After reassuring Hope four or five times that she would not be judged at their church, but would be welcomed with open arms, Jake and Isaac agreed to pick her up the following Saturday for church. They prayed with her and assured her that they would be back again before church next Saturday.

After they left, Hope cried. Who were these two young men? Would they be like everyone else who had promised to visit her and take her to church?

To be continued next week...

Isaac Kronk studies Theology and serves as President of the Revival and Reformation Club at Weimar University. For more information on Total Wellness, please visit www.total-wellness.net.

World Church Prayer Requests

SEPTEMBER 27 — OCTOBER 3, 2024

1. **Botswana:** Pray for workers—men, women, and young people—to serve as full time literature evangelists. Pray also that the 99% of workers currently working as part time literature evangelists will be able to work full time.
2. **Nigeria:** Pray for the Impact 25 evangelism team working in a satellite community in Nigeria. Groundbreakers have been at work providing medical missionary health expos to the community in preparation for an evangelistic series in October. Pray that those they are ministering to will be ready to take a stand for God.
3. **Netherlands:** Pray for Almere Church Plant as they seek to develop a new church among the Ghanaian communities.
4. **United States:** Please pray for the Lighthouse SDA church Community Service Ministry. Pray that they will have the volunteers and resources necessary as they minister to over 500 people weekly.
5. **Canada:** Pray for Avad ACF as they seek to reach all the students in the University of Toronto, Mississauga. Pray for the help of the Holy Spirit and guidance on what to do, how to do it, and when it should be done.
6. **Philippines:** Pray for Pagadian City Jail Ministry and the newly baptized members within the jail as well as those recently released. Pray that they will continue to go to church and strengthen their faith.