

Chapter XXVII

The Light in Their Eyes

September 7, 1964 – October 31, 1964

Even though the previous week provided some free time, it had been very busy. It was good to have Monday to rest up before beginning another busy week. That day happened to be Labor Day, and their thoughts turned to the family gathering back home at the Two Star Ranch.

Being a holiday, there wasn't any mail that day, but a pile had accumulated while they were away. There was a letter from Norma, who they hadn't heard from for a couple of weeks. She told of how Samantha was looking forward to her first day of the first grade after Labor Day. Norma took comfort that there would be at least one third grader at school looking out for her.

Norma's talk of going back to school, caused both Sheffield and Ramona to pause and realize that after the last several years, this year they were not part of all of the excitement and anxiety that the first day of school had been to their students.

After having a break on Monday, Tuesday was busy getting ready for the next round of zone conferences. That evening, Sheffield met with his counselors in their weekly presidency meeting. On the morning of Wednesday the 9th they took off in the chartered Cessna and flew to Kauai for the first of September's zone conferences.

The theme for this round was from chapter three of "The Challenge", "How to be a Missionary of Courage". In his presentation, Sheffield particularly focused on the section on how to get the spirit of missionary work on pages 45 through 48 covering the five points outlined by Elder Dyer. Number one being, are your thoughts clean? Followed by: Do you love your companion? Do you love the people you're preaching the gospel to? Follow the counsel and direction of those placed over you. And follow a well worked out missionary schedule. Elder Lee and Elder Shumway covered other parts of the same chapter.

After Kauai, they went to Kona on Thursday, Hilo on Friday and finished up in Maui on Saturday. Each evening, Sheffield was scheduled for interviews with members of the districts as well, especially in Kona and Hilo as there were a number of key callings to fill following the reorganization. The trip concluded with the Maui district conference. Sunday afternoon they flew back to Honolulu.

Again a pile of mail was waiting for them. Craig wrote to tell all about the Labor Day reunion and picnic the previous Monday. From his description, there was a good turnout, despite the fact that weather was a little unsettled.

The ensuing week was much less hectic with no travel on the schedule, so attention could be given to other business. The most pressing being transfers. Ever since they had arrived, he had wanted to meet with the LDS servicemen stationed on the island. The meeting had been scheduled for several weeks and now it was at hand. It had its origins in the combined Sixth Fleet LDS serviceman's group meeting that

Sheffield hosted in Naples, Italy back in the summer of 1953. Both Sheffield and Ramona gave a lot of thought to what they might say.

“I think I'd like to pretty much use the same idea as the talk I gave back then, if I can remember it.”

Sheffield announced.

“Do you mean your 'In the Navy but not of the Navy talk?’”

“Yeah that's the one, only I'd make it more generic to cover all branches of service.”

“I remember that day. You really had them eating out of your hand.”

“I don't know about that.”

“Some of those guys practically worshiped the ground that you walked on, especially Quinn and Sedic.” Ramona reminded him. “That whole meeting went over quite well.”

“I think it was the picnic that got a lot of them to come. As I recall, that was how they got some of their nonmember buddies there.”

“Do you think it will work as well this time?”

“I guess we'll find out, won't we. At least this time I don't have to worry about the protocol for senior officers and enlisted men. That was always awkward in those settings.”

“I just remembered something I told you that day.” Ramona said. “Do you remember how I said how they reminded me of the missionaries that we had in our home and then I realized that they were missionaries too?”

“Now that you mention it, I vaguely remember something about it. That was more than eleven years ago.”

“You go ahead and give your 'in the military but not of the military' talk and I'll talk about the missionary opportunities that are available to them.”

“That sounds good to me.” Sheffield agreed.

“Oh, you now what, Babe? I just remembered something else I said to to you that day. I forgot all about it.”

“What's that, sweetheart?”

“Right after I said that about them being missionaries too, I told you that I could see you working with missionaries some day. Now just look at you. I didn't know it then, but that was a prophesy and look how it has been fulfilled.”

During the week among the other things that required their attention, like transfers, they both worked on their talks, collaborating together. Toward the end of the week, it all came together and they felt they were ready.

On the morning of Sunday September 20th, servicemen from all over Oahu streamed into the Nuuanu Valley Park, just a half a block down the street from Mililani. The afternoon before, members of the Honolulu Stake Seventies Quorum brought all of the folding tables and chairs that could be spared from the meetinghouses in the stake and stacked them by the garage at the mission home. Earlier that morning a detail of sailors from Pearl Harbor and the office staff loaded them into the two mission Nova wagons and hauled them down the street where another detail of sailors began setting them up. It took several trips.

Sheffield and Ramona got there early to greet the men as they arrived. They came from the Navy base at Pearl Harbor as well as the ships in port and the Naval Air Station at Barbers Point. They came from Hickam and Wheeler Air Force Bases. They came from the Marine Corps Air Station at Kaneohe Bay. And they came from the Army base at Schofield Barracks up in the Central Valley. Captain Lloyd Crane, US Army, the highest ranking LDS Chaplain on Oahu had worked hard to get the word out.

Mixed in with the men in Navy, Marine, Army, and Air Force uniforms were a number of missionaries. Mainly the office staff and those assigned to areas that covered military personnel. The men had been encouraged to bring their nonmember friends, which several of them did. The missionaries also brought some of their military investigators.

As expected, most of those who showed up were enlisted men, but there were a few officers among them, including Commander Haggerty, who brought Darlene with him. Those who were married also had their wives with them.

Before forming up in lines, a blessing on the food was offered by Marine Corporal Lance Strutter from Blanding, Utah. The picnic consisted of various cold cuts and hoagie buns, potato salads, potato chips, baked beans, two coolers full of sodas and several of Sister `Auli`i's home made pies that she had baked over the last couple of days. Most of the food had been purchased with funds available to Captain Crane, with some coming from the mission.

After lunch, the food was put away and the chairs were rearranged for the outdoor meeting which began at one o'clock under threatening skies. Captain Crane called the meeting to order and announced the opening hymn and invocation.

The opening hymn, "Behold a Royal Army" was sung a cappella since a piano wasn't available. The invocation was offered by Air Force Staff Sergeant Raymond Ortiz from Tucson, Arizona. In his prayer he asked that weather cooperate for the duration of the meeting. No sooner than the amen was said, the clouds over the Nuuanu Valley parted and the sun shone through while it began to rain in other parts of Honolulu.

Following the invocation, Captain Crane welcomed the serviceman, missionaries, and guests and thanked them for coming. He recognized President and Sister Brason and thanked them for arranging for

the LDS serviceman's conference. Next the congregation sang "Jesus Once of Humble Birth" and the sacrament was administered to the one hundred seventy three people in attendance. Those who blessed and passed the sacrament also wore the various uniforms of the United States armed forces.

Following the sacrament, Captain Crane introduced President and Sister Brason of the Hawaii Mission by telling a little about them, such as the fact that they were from Roanoke, Virginia and that President Brason was a retired Vice Admiral and that Sister Brason was a retired commander in the Navy Nurses Corps. He also mentioned that over the years, the two of them had spent many years in Hawaii. He then turned the time over to Sister Brason, who would be followed by President Brason.

Ramona stood up and stepped forward and began her her remarks. "What a handsome bunch of missionaries." she began. "Because that is exactly what every one of you are. I hope that you recognize the opportunities all around you. You might not have the calling that our full time missionaries do, but you are in a unique position to be an influence and an example to countless people all around you. You might not realize it, but the military is ripe with people who hunger for the gospel. It is true that the military is full of people with virtually no moral character who seek only for wickedness. But there are countless honorable men who seek good and righteousness.

"Let me tell you the story of one such man. They was once a young man who was brought up in religious family. In fact his father and later his brother were Methodists ministers. This young man grew up next door to the love of his life. He wanted to do nothing more than to fly. That lead him to the naval academy and a commission in the US Navy. He married the girl next door, who also was from a religious family.

"This young officer always attended services whenever possible and lived his life in accordance to the values that he had been taught. Eventually he went to flight school and earned his wings. Wherever he and his wife and their children went, they were faithful and true to each other and to God. His assignment took them to San Diego and that is where I became acquainted with them, as his wife became my best friend. They introduced me to his wingman and after a while we were married, only to loose him in an accident six months later.

"After that, I was transferred here to Hawaii, but I remained in touch with them. Sometime later, they lost a baby. It was a very difficult time for them, but it caused my friend to begin searching for answers to questions like where did we come from, and is there any way that families can be together forever?

"Tragically, my friend and their two children were killed, without ever finding the answers that she was searching for. The pilot now a high ranking officer was left a widower with a war to fight and grieve for his loss. By then he had risen through the ranks and was the captain of his own ship. During a crossing of the equator, he participated in the ritual as the judge. A seaman by the name of Morris Gover was brought

before him who professed to have crossed the equator before and asked to be spared the initiation.

“The Captain asked for proof and the seaman was allowed to go to his quarters and returned with a journal that proved that he had indeed crossed the equator enroute to Brazil where he served for two and half years as missionary for his church. I bet you can all guess what church that was, can't you. The captain was so impressed with this seaman that he made him his personal assistant and secretary.

“Morris had a number of shipmates who were also LDS and the Captain watched them very closely. He was impressed that they didn't participate in the vices that so many young sailors find themselves enslaved to. These young men were above reproach. But the barriers between a commanding officer and his crew would not allow him to ask them or for them to tell him what made them stand out.

“Then one day, their ship came under attack and the Captain was badly injured. Morris gave him a priesthood blessing and the Captain lived and was sent home to heal. I happened to be working at the hospital where he was sent. All the while his faithful assistant was at his side, and I got to know him very well. I too was very impressed with this young man.

“During the Captain's recovery, we fell in love and were married. Morris even attended our wedding. By now you have probably figured out that the Captain is President Brason. He was later promoted to Admiral and retained his assistant until the end of the war.

“About three years after the war, we had a very interesting spiritual experience that told us that we were about to stumble on what my friend and his late wife was looking for. The very next day we received a wedding announcement from Morris that informed us that he was being married for time and eternity in the Logan Temple of the The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

“We both knew that this was the key to what we were looking for. We flew to Utah to attend their reception and were introduced to the Church. A few months later, this young man flew to Virginia to baptize us. So you see the impact this one young man and his friends had and what it led to. And we weren't the only ones. Because of them, others came into the church as well. We shall ever be grateful to Morris Gover. In fact, one of our daughters married his younger brother.

“But the story doesn't end there. Because of our conversion, President Brason's entire family joined the church as well. When President Brason was recalled to active duty during the Korean Conflict, he had the opportunity to set the same kind of example and be an influence on others, some of whom who he in turn baptized.

“So you see, there are opportunities all around you. You might not even realize the impact that you have had on someone else.” She went on to talk about the ways that they can be missionaries while serving in the military and admonished them to keep themselves worthy so that through them the Lord could perform his marvelous work and wonder. At the conclusion of her remarks, she bore her testimony.

When she was finished Sheffield stood and gave her a hug and a quick kiss before she sat back down. He then began his remarks. He picked up on Ramona's remarks about remaining worthy and introduced his theme of "Being in the Military, but not of the Military". He told of experiences he had during his naval career before he ever knew anything about the church and the contrast that he observed between himself and others. He talked more about Morris Gover and his friends and the example that they were to him and others. He talked about Quinn and Sedic and the serviceman's group aboard the Reprisal during the Korean War and of the way they conducted themselves.

Sheffield went on to encourage them to resolve to keep themselves unencumbered from the things that so many good young people find themselves ensnared by in the military. "You may take some heat for it," he said. "But believe it or not, those who give you grief, actually respect you for the way you are and that's why they do what they do. They give you a hard time because they have lost respect for themselves and seek to drag you down to their level. When they succeed, they lose respect for those who give in to their taunting and move on to seek someone else to bring down to their level.

"Most of you won't make a career out of the military and when your enlistment is up, you'll return to your homes, your families, your girlfriends, and your wards. Be sure to go home a better man than when you left because you still have your whole lives ahead of you. You will not want to have to live it with addictions to bad habits that are difficult to break and the guilt from transgressions that result in the loss of virtue. Yes, these things can be repented of, but it is very difficult and it can leave scars. Don't fall into the trap of thinking that you can indulge now and repent later. The Lord has a work for you to do, not only here and now as Sister Brason talked about, but for the rest of your lives. Don't forfeit those opportunities."

He went on to talk about all of the good things that lay in store, if they keep themselves above the world that is so prevalent in the military and closed with his testimony.

Following his remarks, Captain Crane opened the meeting to the bearing of testimonies. One after another, men in uniform came forward to bear their testimonies, among them was Commander Haggerty. They shared faith promoting experiences and missionary opportunities that they had had. They told of standing true to their convictions and standards and expressed their gratitude to their families and to the Church and their testimony, whether it was weak and faltering, growing, or rock solid. And every one of them expressed their gratitude for having been in attendance. Eventually, Captain Crane had to cut it off and bring the meeting to a close when others still wanted to express themselves.

After the closing hymn and benediction, the men seemed to want to linger and enjoy their brotherhood that they shared, regardless of the uniform they wore or the rank they held. Many of them went out of their way to talk to Sheffield and Ramona and thanked them for their remarks. Nearly all of them radiated with light in their eyes. Some said it made the difference they needed to keep them from falling into

the trap. Others had begun slipping into it and wanted out before it was too late. Many of them shared their own experiences. Captain Crane also got a lot of the same comments. In talking to Sheffield, he suggested that they do it again sometime. With the park cleaned up and the tables and chairs returned to the mission home, the men all went their own ways.

P-day was spent preparing for yet another busy week. On Tuesday, Ramona received a letter from Harvey with the plans for their trip. Late in the afternoon on Tuesday, Mililani became a busy place as missionaries in transit began arriving for an overnight stay. That evening Elder Shumway, the faithful assistant to the president reported his mission along with two other elders and one sister who would be going home the next day.

On transfer day, a flurry of missionaries came and went. Five new Elders and one sister arrived from Salt Lake. Sheffield interviewed each of them and gave them their area assignments. Next he had his final interview with those going home. It was Elder Shumway who had really helped him ease into his new responsibilities. Elder Mattheson had been a big help in the three weeks before he went home, but it was Elder Shumway who for three months counseled him on matters with which he was still unfamiliar with. In his absence, Elder Lee was joined by Elder Jake Wiemer from Morgan Utah. With a net gain of two missionaries, Sheffield was finally able to open a new area in Honomu in the Hilo Zone to make good on his promise to increase the number of missionaries on the Big Island. The only other change affecting the mission home was that Elder Blake Masters took over for Elder Wallace as the travel coordinator.

The rest of that week was spent holding conferences in the Honolulu Zone on Thursday, the Pearl Harbor Zone on Friday, and the Oahu Zone on Saturday. They left early that day and got to Laie and attended a session in that temple and had lunch with the Morelys. At the conclusion of their meetings in Laie on Saturday, Sheffield and Ramona spent the night with the Morelys and attended church in Laie before returning to the Mission home on Sunday evening.

The following week was more relaxed, without any need to travel. The main emphasis was getting geared up for the next round of zone conferences in October. On Friday, Sheffield and Ramona went out to dinner with Chauncey and Darlene Haggerty. They were surprised when Chauncey announced that he had decided to leave the Navy after fifteen years.

“Yeah,” he said. “After working as cartographer for the Navy, the US Geological Survey, who publishes our maps, offered me a job at their western region office in Menlo Park, California. They made me an offer that I couldn't refuse.”

“Its a real blessing.” Darlene added enthusiastically. “Its just forty five minutes across the bay from my family in Oakland.”

Sheffield and Ramona listened as Chauncey went on to explain, "My current assignment is just about over and I'd most likely be sent back to sea duty. Since I've just made one big change in my life, I might as well make another one. Besides it will let me get better settled into the church."

Finally, Sheffield got a chance to respond. "It sounds like a good move for you. I don't blame you for jumping on it."

"We'll sure miss you." Ramona added.

"I know." Darlene lamented. "You have been such good friends. But I'm excited to be near my family again. But we can keep in touch."

"So when are you going to make the move?" Sheffield asked.

"Well," Chauncey explained, "the USGS would like me in two weeks, but I'm committed to the Navy on this assignment until the end of October. The USGS agreed to give me until then."

"How do your kids feel about moving the California?" Ramona asked.

"Oh, their excited about it." Darlene said. "Even though it will mean changing schools in the middle of the year."

Over dinner they went on to talk about their move, such as wanting to buy a house and settle down and other things as they enjoyed one another's company.

Tuesday through Saturday of the following week took Sheffield and Ramona to Kauai, Maui, Hilo, and Kona with a district conference in Kona on Sunday the 9th.

On the Monday the 10th, Sheffield and Ramona met Harvey and Marcella at the airport and brought them back to the mission home and got them settled in the guest room. That evening they went out to dinner. On Tuesday, Sheffield and Ramona took the day off to show their guests around Honolulu, including a visit to Pearl Harbor and the Arizona Memorial.

For the rest of the week, Harvey and Marcella set out on their own to explore what Oahu had to offer, including the Polynesian Cultural Center in Laie. One night they even stayed at one of the hotels on Waikiki Beach and returned to Mililani on Friday evening. While they were touring the island, Sheffield was busy working out the October transfers, since following week would be taken up with zone conferences.

On Saturday afternoon, the 17th of October, they accompanied Sheffield and Ramona to the Honolulu Tabernacle for their baptismal service. They had been interviewed for baptism in the Texas Mission and brought their paperwork with them. Sheffield took them both aside and personally interviewed them himself as well. He could see the change that had come over them, especially Harvey. He used to enjoy his cigars and brandy, but he had given it all up, although his language was still rather gruff. They assured Sheffield that they were committed and ready. They reported that Joseph and Rhonda had backed off for now as they weren't ready. Winifred, who was a nineteen year old sophomore at the University of

North Texas an hour away in Denton, was too into partying and guys to have taken an interest.

That evening there were several other baptismal candidates to be baptized as well. Elder Long, the zone leader, and his companion had got there early to make sure everything was ready. Brother and Sister Lytle had the font filled and the clothing closet opened up. By the time the Brasons and Morrisons got there a few of the others were there and changing into their baptismal clothes. Sheffield, Harvey, and Marcella were given their clothes and Sheffield and Harvey went into the men's dressing room, while Ramona went with Marcella into the women's

While they were were changing, others arrived. Including the Morrisons, there were fourteen people being baptized that evening. Once everyone had changed, the fourteen new converts, which included seven children over eight years old, were all seated on the first two rows along with Sheffield and the missionaries who were performing the baptisms. As Sheffield sat next to Harvey and Marcella, he sensed a bit of nervousness, but then the others also exhibited some nervous excitement as well.

This was the second time as the mission president that he was actually participating in a baptism. The baptismal service was conducted after the usual manner of so many other baptisms that Sheffield and Ramona had participated in. At the last minute, Ramona was asked to conduct the music.

First to be baptized was the Kilmore family, consisting of Art and Susan and three of their four children. They were followed by the Nakamura family consisting of Carl and Ruth and their two older children. Next was a sixteen year old girl who's parents had given their consent for her to be baptized. After her was a single mother and ten year old daughter.

Then it was the Morrisons turn. Sheffield stepped down into the font and turned around and extended his hand to his long time friend, Harvey, and brought him down into the water. Once they were situated, Sheffield rose his right arm to the square and said, "Harvey James Morrison, having been commissioned of Jesus Christ, I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, of the Holy Ghost. Amen." Then he laid him under the water. His bad leg faltered just a little as he pulled him back up out of the water. The former Admiral and the former Air Force General exchanged a half handshake, half hug. Sheffield patted him on the back as he ascended the steps out of the font.

Sheffield turned around and reached out to Marcella and helped her down into the font and baptized her in the same manner. When she came up out the water, she pulled back her wet hair and then threw her arms around Sheffield and held him tight. He could hear her sobbing. When looked into her face, he saw tears mingled with beads of water from the font on her cheeks. "Thank you." she uttered.

Sheffield helped her to the stairs and made sure that she had left the font alright before he too exited the font from the other end and went into the dressing room. As he removed his wet clothes, Harvey was drying off. "Thanks, Sheffield." he said. "Having you do this means a lot to me. Whoever knew that when I

was eliminated from a war game by a hotshot Navy pilot that it would ever come to this. Thanks for your friendship and example over the years. You've been a real pal.”

“It was my pleasure.” Sheffield replied. “From Tokyo to Algiers, we've been through a lot together.”

Sheffield and Harvey were the last to leave the men's dressing room and return to their seats. They still had to wait a moment for Marcella. A couple of minutes later, she and Ramona who had been assisting her, also returned and took their seats. Then in the same order, each was confirmed a member of the Church. Again Sheffield administered the ordinance in behalf of Harvey and Marcella.

After the service, they stopped by at an ice cream parlor before going back to Mililani. The four of them sat out on the patio and reminisced old times as they gazed out over the lights of Honolulu. Equally bright was the light in the eyes of the two brand new converts. For Ramona, it was particularly gratifying that her only living relative and his wife were now also members of the Church.

On Sunday, Harvey and Marcella accompanied Sheffield and Ramona to church in the Nuuanu Ward. Not only was it the first time that they attended as members of the Church, but it was the first time that they had attended an actual ward. The branch that they were now members of in Sherman was still quite small. Sheffield and Ramona encouraged them to get involved and accept whatever callings in the branch that would be extended to them. Again that night, Harvey and Marcella stayed with Sheffield and Ramona at the mission home. The next morning they saw them off at the airport.

After their guests left, Tuesday was spent finalizing the transfers. On Wednesday morning, Sheffield and Ramona were getting ready for the day, with a zone conference scheduled in the Honolulu zone. They were about to go downstairs when the telephone in their apartment rang .

“Hello.” Ramona answered.

“Sister Brason,” a frantic voice began, “this is Elder Jamison. Elder Stewart is in really bad pain.”

“Alright Elder, calm down.” She suggested. “Can he come to the phone.”

“No.” he answered while his companion could be heard groaning in agony. “He is hurting really bad.”

“I can hear him. Can you tell me where his pain is.”

“Yes, ma'am. He says it feels like someone kicked him in the groin.”

“When did it start?”

“When he went to get up after saying our companion prayer.”

“Has it happened before.”

“Once the other day while riding our bikes to an appointment. It only lasted for a minute. He figured that it was because he hit a bump that caused him to come down on his bike seat too hard. But this time it isn't going away.”

“How long had it been going on?”

“About fifteen minutes.”

“Thanks Elder, I think I know exactly what's going on. You're on bikes aren't you? Tell him to hold on, and we'll have someone come by and pick you up and take him to the hospital, alright. Bye.”

Sheffield, who had been listening intently asked with concern asked, “What was that all about?”

“That was Elder Jamison. Elder Stewart is in a great deal of pain. We need to get him to the hospital.”

“What's the matter?”

“He has a testis torsion.”

“A what?”

“I'll explain later. I'm going to call Elder Dayley and have him go pick them up and take him to the hospital. Why don't you go get the car and I'll meet you outside in just a moment.”

Without hesitation, Sheffield went downstairs and out to the garage to get the car. Ramona called Elder Dayley and instructed him to go pick up Elder Stewart and take him to the Queen's Hospital immediately. After talking to him, she called Elder Jamison back and told him that his district leader was on the way and that she and President Brason would meet them at the hospital.

Ramona went downstairs where Sheffield was waiting for her. They informed Elder Bateman where they were going before leaving the mission home. Sheffield had the car parked under the porte-cochère with the engine running. She quickly got in and they pulled out of the driveway onto the Pali Highway.

“Okay,” Sheffield said. “What's the matter?”

“I'm pretty sure that he has a testis torsion. Elder Jamison said that for the last twenty minutes Elder Stewart feels like he has been kicked in the groin.”

“Ow, that's got to really hurt. Just what does that mean?”

“A testis torsion is when the tube attached the testicle gets twisted, cutting off the blood supply. When that happens, it feels like you've been kicked in the groin, only the pain is constant and doesn't subside.”

“Oh the poor kid. No wonder he's hurting.”

“They say it's worse than labor. I've never experienced either. But I do know that if it's not corrected soon, he could suffer irreversible damage that could prohibit him from ever fathering children.”

Hearing that, Sheffield pressed down on the accelerator and speed. “So, I take it you've encountered this before.”

“Yes. It's quite common in young men this age. I've dealt with a number of sailors suffering from it over the years.”

“So, how do they fix it?”

“They have to go in and stitch the tube in place so it won't happen again.”

“Just talking about makes me hurt.”

Before long, Sheffield and Ramona pulled up to the emergency room at The Queen's Hospital just a couple of blocks off the Pali Highway on the other side of the Lunalilo Freeway at 1301 Punchbowl Street. They parked the car and went in. Elder Stewart hadn't arrived yet, so Ramona found the doctor on call and explained who they were and that she was nurse. She went on to tell him that one of their missionaries was being brought in with what she suspected as testis torsion.

No sooner than she had finished explaining the situation, a mission Nova pulled up. They were waiting for him with a wheelchair and two orderlies helped the incoherent missionary out of the car and into the wheelchair, the intense pain had nearly rendered him unconscious.

As he was being wheeled in, Elder Jamison asked, “Will he be alright?”

“They'll take good care of him, Elder.” President Brason assured him. “There's not much you can do here. Why don't you go back with Elder Dayley and Elder Wells.”

“Elder Dayley, the three of you cover both areas in the meantime, alright.” Sheffield instructed. “We'll keep you informed on how he's doing.”

The three missionaries left the hospital to go back to work. Sheffield and Ramona remained there while Elder Stewart was examined by the doctor.

A few minutes later, the doctor came out and said, “Mrs. Brason, you were right, he has a testis torsion alright. We have sedated him for now. I need to have him admitted to the hospital and we will schedule surgery as soon as we can make the arrangements. Since you are responsible for him, would you go to the office and get him admitted. Wait there and we'll let you know what we get arranged.”

Sheffield and Ramona went to the office as directed. In filling out the paperwork, they had to call the mission home and have Elder Bateman pull Elder Stewart's file for some of the information that they needed on the form.

Once they got him checked in, Sheffield and Ramona had a seat in the waiting room. It was nearly a half an hour later when they were informed that Elder Stewart was scheduled for surgery at eleven o'clock, which was about two and half hours away. They were shown to his room and were allowed to see him.

He was groggy from the pain medication that they had given him, but coherent enough to understand where he was and what was going on. Although the pain he was in registered in his eyes, it didn't diminish the light in his eyes. When Sheffield asked if he wanted a blessing, he said that before being brought to the hospital, Elder Jamison, Elder Dayley, and Elder Wells had administered to him.

They let him rest and stepped out of the room and went to the nearest waiting area to talk.

"I hate to leave him here alone." Sheffield said.

"Why don't I stay here with him." Ramona suggested. "There's no reason for both of us to be here. Go on back to the mission home and go to the conference this afternoon. If anything comes up, I'll track you down either at Mililani or at the Tabernacle. I have the phone number with me."

"Thanks, sweetheart. While I'm there, I'd better get word to his folks about what's going on."

Sheffield left to go back to the mission home while Ramona remained behind at the hospital. She stayed with Elder Stewart until it was time for him to be taken in to surgery. She pulled up a chair and sat beside him and held his hand as she sang softly to him one hymn after another.

"I'm sure glad that you're here, Sister Brason." he said as he squeeze her hand. "You're the next best thing to having my mother her."

"Why thank you, Elder. I'm sure your mother is a lovely woman. President Brason is going to contact your folks and let them know what's going on."

"Good. I've never been in the hospital before, you know. You sure have a good beside manner."

"That comes from spending most of life in hospitals. Well, we have a daughter that is rather accident prone and over the last several years since I retired as nurse, I've been in and out hospitals with her."

At that point someone came to take him to surgery.

"Before they take me away," he asked, "will you say a prayer with me."

"Of course."

"Would you mind saying it?"

"I'd love too."

Still holding his hand, she bowed her head and they both closed their eyes, while Ramona offered a short prayer. The orderly who had come for him even reverently bowed his head and waited patiently for him.

Ramona walked beside him while he was wheeled to the operating room. She called Sheffield from a courtesy telephone on the wall in the waiting room.

Elder Bateman answered.

"Elder Bateman, this is Sister Brason, can you put me through to the President."

He transferred the call to Sheffield in his office.

"Hi, Babe." She began. "They just took him into surgery. Did you get a hold of his family in Oakland?"

"Yes. I called and talked to his mother. She was surprised when I called. I told her what was going on and that it wasn't life threatening or anything, but that didn't ease her concern. I told her that I'd call back as soon as I had news for them. So call me as soon as you get word."

"I will. Good luck with your conference this afternoon. I wish I could be there, but my place is here."

"I'm glad that you are, Sweetheart. I'll talk to you later. Bye."

Ramona picked up a magazine from off the table and had a seat to wait. After an hour, she left long enough to get a quick bite to eat for lunch and came right back. She waited another hour and then the doctor came to tell her that the operation went well and that the problem was taken care of. He explained that he wanted to keep him in the hospital for a few days and when he was released that he wanted his activities limited for at least another month. Before leaving her, he told her that she could see him in about an hour.

Ramona picked up telephone and called Sheffield with the news. He was about to leave for the conference, but called his mother to pass along the information first.

When she was allowed back into his room, she asked, "How are you feeling, Elder Stewart?"

"Like I got ran over by a truck."

"I'll bet you do. Just so you know, President Brason has spoken to your mother. Your family is aware of what is going on and are praying for you. We're trying to get word out to the entire mission to pray for you."

"Thanks, Sister Brason. Thats good to know."

"If you'd like, I'll sit with you some more."

"That will be great, but I really don't feel much like talking. But I would like it if you'd sing to me like you did this morning. You have a beautiful voice."

"Why thank you, Elder Stewart. I'd love to sing to you."

Ramona began sining softly and over the next while he drifted in and out of sleep. Late in the afternoon, Sheffield stopped by after the zone conference to see how he was doing. Needing his rest, Ramona left and went home with Sheffield, promising to be back the next morning.

As promised she returned the next morning and found him in great discomfort from the incisions and stitches.

He said to Ramona, "With all these nurses handling me, I feel like I lost my virtue."

Her answer to him was, "Well, if they can't touch it, they can't fix it. Your heart is pure, Elder, so don't worry about it."

She called Sheffield to give him an update. In return, he called Elder Stewart's mother.

After Ramona had been there for a while, a nurse came to check on him. To the missionary's embarrassment, she casually lifted his hospital gown to have a look. That gown was all he had on.

"It looks like there's a little swelling." The nurse said. "It's nothing to worry about."

"Swelling?" Ramona asked. "Let me see." Her nurse's instinct kicked in and she embarrassed the poor Elder even more when she lifted his gown to have a look for herself.

“That’s not right.” Ramona said rather bluntly to the nurse. “He’s got some internal hemorrhaging going on. Why, just look at how bruised he is.”

“I beg your pardon.” The nurse replied curtly. “What would you know of it? Are you a nurse?”

“I’ll have you know that I am a retired Commander in the Navy Nurses Corps and was the head nurse at Bethesda Naval Medical Center. I’ve seen my share of torsions over the years. Once there was a case where the capillaries in the scrotum weren’t properly cauterized and bled into the scrotum. Before it was caught, the poor young man had swollen up like a big old bull. To make matters worse, the blood coagulated. It was a real problem. I tell you, he’s hemorrhaging. Now go get the doctor.” she ordered.

“Yes ma’am.” is all the nurse said rather obediently.

It took a few minutes but, eventually the doctor arrived. Ramona explained what the problem was. The doctor lifted his gown for a looked for himself. “You’re right, Mrs. Brason. You have a good eye?”

“Like I was telling the nurse, I’ve been down this road before.”

The doctor gave him an anti-coagulation drug and had the nurse pack his scrotum in ice to stop the bleeding. The ice was unbearable, but it did stop any further bleeding.

Then for the blood that had already coagulated, he next had him soak in hot water to thin the clot so it could drain through the tube placed in the incision.

Elder Stewart had a rough second day, but Ramona remained with him through it all. Again, Sheffield stopped in after the zone conference in the Pearl Harbor Zone, which was Elder Stewart’s zone. Elder Jamison, Elder Dayley, and Elder Wells came to see him also. Sheffield joined them in giving him another blessing. When Ramona went home, she called Elder Stewart’s mother herself.

Again on Saturday, Ramona spent the day at the hospital with Elder Stewart while Sheffield went up to Laie for the Oahu zone conference. She found that Elder Stewart was doing much better. Overnight the blood clot had dissolved and drained. Finally he was able to begin to heal. That day, he felt like talking and Ramona got to know the Elder Stewart quite well, better than she knew most of the other missionaries.

Elder Stewart had to stay in the hospital for three more days and was finally released on Tuesday. His doctor placed some strict limitations on his movements for the next six weeks. He was strictly forbidden to ride a bicycle and walking was to be kept at a minimum.

When he was released from the hospital, he was brought to the mission home to recuperate. Sheffield was in a quandary as what to do with him, and what to do about his companion and area. The only option that he could see was to leave Elder Jamison in a threesome with Elder Dayley and Elder Wells to cover both areas, as they had been doing for the last few days.

“I have a suggestion, Babe.” Ramona said in response to Sheffield’s dilemma.

“I’m all ears.” he replied in desperation.

“Well, you know how Elder Westlake is being rotated out of the office and Elder Harmon is coming in to take over as the mission recorder. Why not send Elder Harmon to Moanalua with Elder Jamison and let Elder Stewart stay here and be the recorder. It will be a few days until he'll be up to much, but its a job he can do while he recuperates. What do you think?”

“I think you're inspired, Sweetheart. Its so obvious, why didn't I think of it.”

Sheffield called Elder Harmon over in Kahala and informed him of the change in his transfer. It turned out that he was delighted. He would much rather be proselyting anyway, and besides this meant that he could step up to senior companion. Elder Stewart was pleased with the arrangement too.

That afternoon, the mission home began to fill up with missionaries in transit as it affected thirteen Elders and four sisters. After dinner, Elder Lee, who was going home, along two other Elders and one sister reported their missions.

On transfer day, missionaries came and went throughout the morning. Three new Elders and one sister arrived from the mainland to replace those going home. As was customary, Sheffield interviewed each and gave them there assignments. He also had his final interview with the four missionaries who were going home. When it came time to say goodbye when they left for the airport, Sheffield and Ramona told Elder Lee to be sure to look up his second cousin when he got back to Logan and give Janet and Jerry their love.

He promised that he would.

In the wake of the transfers, there were a few changes around Mililani. Elder Stewart was now part of the office staff. Elder Steven Miller from Syracuse, Utah took Elder Lee's place as an assistant to the president. He had been out for twenty months and had never served a zone leader, but went straight from district leader to assistant. Another new face around the mission home was Sister Priscilla George from Richmond, Utah who had just arrived.

The rest of the week was much more relaxed and was spent gearing up for November's conferences. On Friday night they invited Chauncey and Darlene and their family to spend the night with them at Mililani. Earlier that day, he officially resigned from the Navy and they had to move out of their house since it was the last day of the month. They had everything packed up and ready for their move to the mainland.

That night was also Halloween. In the past, Mililani had been a popular trick or treating stop for the children in the neighborhood. Sheffield and Ramona saw to that they weren't disappointed. The previous Saturday, Roy got out the Halloween decorations and dressed up the outside of the mansion. On P-day Ramona had enlisted the help of Sister Manning and Sister George to carve some jack-o-lanterns. While out and about on some errands later Monday afternoon, she picked up a few bags of candy.

As it began to get dark, fourteen year old Ellen Haggerty took her younger brothers and sister trick or

treating around the neighborhood. In return there was a steady stream of neighborhood children coming and going from Mililani as Ramona greeted them and handed out treats. There were the usual witches and Frankensteins and other goblins, ghouls, princesses, and cowboys. It wasn't surprising that a number of little girls dressed up as hula dancers. Some of the costumes were quite clever. There were even four little boys in one group, at least Ramona thought they were boys, who came dressed as Paul, George, John, and Ringo. They were all so cute as they came to the door in anticipation of receiving candy. As Ramona fussed over each one, the light in their eyes beamed with excitement.

* * * * *

For the serviceman's meeting in Naples, see *New Beginnings*, Chapter 44 page 574

The story of Elder Stewart is based on a composite of two stories. In one of my areas on my mission I replaced an Elder who was in the hospital with a testis torsion. When my new companion and I went to see him, he actually said "I feel like I lost my Virtue." Then in 1986 I had one too. The part about Ramona talking about the sailor with the internal bleeding is based on what happened to me.

