

Chapter XXXIV

Ramona's Ordeal

June 24, 1965 – July 12, 1965

During the rest of the week they had zone conferences in the Honolulu, Pearl Harbor, and Oahu zones on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday. During his interview with Elder Idler, Sheffield talked to him about the visit from his parents. It had caught him off guard but he wasn't surprised that his father would do such a thing. He assured Sheffield that their visit didn't have an adverse affect on him. Sheffield promised him that if he was faithful and worked hard and shared his experiences with his father, that he would soften.

As they often did for the meetings in Laie, they left early on Saturday to drive up to Laie and attended the Temple. That night after the conference, they stayed with Manti and Iolani and attended church in Laie on Sunday the 27th.

During sacrament meeting, Sheffield and Ramona were enjoying the meeting seated on the stand next to President Morley. Brother Henry Shoupe, a high councilman from Kaneohe was talking about the aspects of grace. The windows were open, allowing the gentle breeze to ventilate the chapel. Outside, the flowers were in bloom and being tended to by some honey bees, busily gathering pollen. A bee came through the open window unnoticed as it searched for flowers.

As was her custom, Ramona wore a white gardenia in her hair. The bee gently lit on its pedals and began gathering pollen. Unaware of the bee's presence she brushed her hair back with her hand, knocking the bee out of the gardenia and into the high top collar of her blouse. She felt a tickle on the side of her neck and scratched at it, still unaware of the bee. Confused and dazed, the bee instinctively stung her.

Ramona felt the sting, but before she could react, her throat and face immediately began to swell making it difficult for her to breath. About all she could do was grasp Sheffield's hand. Gasping for air, she began wheezing.

Sheffield averted his attention from the speaker and knew that something was desperately wrong as soon as he looked at her, but didn't know what. "What's the matter, Sweetheart?" he asked.

Chocking for breath, she was unable to answer and slumped over and slipped out of her seat and tumbled onto the floor, unconscious.

The move didn't go unnoticed. The Brother Shoupe stopped mid sentence and looked to see what had happened. Every eye in the congregation was focused on her.

Instantly Sheffield was on his knees at her side. Seeing that she was having difficulty breathing, he unbuttoned the top button of her blouse in an attempt to unrestrict her airway. As he did, the crumpled remains of the bee rolled out onto the floor.

Henry left the pulpit and practically leaped to her other side. He took her by the wrist and after a few seconds said, "She's got a rapid pulse."

"She was stung by a bee." Sheffield said.

"Has she ever had an allergic reaction to a bee sting before?"

"Not that I'm aware of."

"We've got to get her to the hospital, but first we've got to get her breathing again." Henry said. Then he explained, "I was a pharmacist's mate in the Navy so I've had some training, but it has been a long time."

First he put his ear to her mouth and nose. "She's not breathing at all." he said in desperation. "The swelling has closed off her trachea."

He pulled his pocket knife from his pocket and asked loud enough for every one to hear, "Does anyone have a match or a lighter?"

Such a thing was bound to be scarce in a congregation of nonsmokers. But a man clear in the back stood up and began making his way to the front.

As he came forward, the former medic said to Sheffield, "The only thing to do is to give her an emergency tracheotomy."

"Have you ever done this before?" Sheffield asked in panic.

"Once, a long time ago."

The man from the back, was now at the front of the chapel and handed a cigarette lighter over the breastwork of the podium.

Henry snatched it from him without a word and flicked up a flame and held the blade of the knife over the it, turning it over once or twice."

"Should we call for an ambulance?" Sheffield asked.

"They would take too long. We can get her there before they could arrive." Then again he asked loud enough for everyone to hear, "Does any one have a straw or a Bic pen?"

The organist who was on the row behind them, reached into her purse and pulled out a pen and went to hand it to him.

"Take it apart and break it in half." he ordered.

Sheffield could hardly watch what he did next. He felt her throat and found her Adams apple and traced down with his finger to a second smaller bump, called the cricoid. With his pocketknife, he made a shallow, horizontal incision across her throat. Blood spurted onto her white blouse. Next he used the knife to puncture her trachea, allowing the air trapped in her lungs to escape.

He then took the casing of the Bic pen and held it under the lighter long enough to sterilize it and inserted it into the puncture wound. He put his ear to the end of the pen to listen. "She's breathing again." Henry announced. "It's shallow, but she's breathing. Now we need to get her to the hospital."

"Can we give her a blessing first?" Sheffield asked.

“If you are quick.”

Sheffield pulled a vial of consecrated oil from his pocket and handed it to Manti, who was standing over him. “Will you anoint her?” he asked as he handed him the oil.

Manti knelt down and placed a small drop of oil on her head and uttered the appropriate words.

He moved aside and Sheffield placed his hands on her head. While President Morely put his hands on her head as well, Sheffield nodded his head for Brother Shoupe, who was still on his knees to join them. Sheffield simply said, “Ramona Brason, in the name of Jesus Christ and by the power and authority of the Melchizedec Priesthood, we command you to remain alive until you can receive medical attention. Amen.”

Sheffield scooped her up in his arms and despite his bad leg, carried her off the stand and down the aisle and out the door with Manti ahead of him and Henry right behind him. Someone else had picked up Sheffield's cane and was trailing behind.

“Let's take my car.” Manti called over his shoulder as he led the way.

He opened the back door and Sheffield climbed in with Ramona still in his arms. With them situated, the person following called out, “President Brason, your cane.” Henry, who had already closed the door, took it and went around and got in on the other side, while Manti got behind the wheel.

Manti started the car and put it in reverse to back out of his parking space. He put it in gear and sped out of the parking lot and began the mad dash for the hospital in Kahuku, four miles away. Once on the highway he had a straight shot without any stops. Fortunately there wasn't much traffic on a Sunday afternoon as he sped at speeds well above the posted speed limit.

The car came to a stop in front of the hospital and Manti got out and went inside to get help, while Henry got out and went around to the other side to open the door for Sheffield. As Henry was helping him get out of the back seat, an orderly and nurse arrived with a gurney. Henry explained what had happened and what he had done while they took Ramona, who was still unconscious, from Sheffield and laid her on the gurney.

As they wheeled her inside, Sheffield was at her side while Manti and Henry followed behind. The orderly leading the way, pushed open a set of double doors. That's when the nurse told Sheffield that he would have to wait outside. He let go of her hand and stopped in his tracks as they rushed on past him and the doors swung shut.

Sheffield had no choice but to wait outside with Manti and Henry, who did their best to comfort him. Sheffield was struck with fear as in his mind he recalled seeing Geannie just before she died. He didn't think he had the strength to lose Ramona too.

After what seemed a very long time, the doctor who treated her came through the double doors that Sheffield wasn't allowed to go through. He got up to meet him and asked, “How is she?”

“Are you her husband?”

“Yes. I'm Sheffield Brason.”

“I'm Doctor Goodland.” he said as he put his hand on Sheffield's shoulder and guided him back to where he had been seated. “Please have a seat Mister Brason.” he said gesturing to a chair. “Your wife, excuse me but what is her name?”

“Ramona.”

“Ramona went into what is called anaphylactic shock due to an allergic reaction to the bee sting. Who performed the tracheotomy on her?”

“I did.” Henry said.

“That saved her life. If not for that, she would have suffocated. She's still unconscious but we have her stabilized with an IV of Epinephrine to take care of the swelling. We also have her on a ventilator until she is able to breath normally on her own. I need to know, Mister Braosn, does she have any medical conditions or health issues?”

“No. She had always been very healthy and rarely ever gets sick.”

“What is he age?”

“She just turned sixty two three and half weeks ago,”

“Sixty two?” he questioned. “She doesn't appear to be a day older than fifty, if that much.”

“She's aged well.” Sheffield added.

“I'd say. Anyway, she should be alright. If the worst was going to happen, it would of happened by now. This type of allergic reaction can be fatal. At the moment her heart rate is still elevated, but coming down and her breathing has improved. Its hard to say how long she will remain unconscious.”

“When can I see her?”

“I can let you see her for just a moment, but then I need you to go the office and have her admitted.”

Manti and Henry remained in the waiting area while the doctor took Sheffield to the room where Ramona had been taken.

Her face was swollen and puffy, and the tube in her neck was attached to a machine by a flexible hose. There was an IV in her arm and a heart monitor was attached to her chest, over her heart. She looked as is if she had been hit in the face with a baseball bat. He was only permitted to stay with her for a moment and then was shown to the office by the nurse.

After filling out the paperwork, he returned to the waiting area. lolani and Henry's wife had arrived a few minutes later while Sheffield was in with Ramona. lolani greeted him with a hug and asked, “How's Ramona?”

Sheffield explained to them what the doctor had told him and described how she looked.

Knowing that everything was going to be alright, Henry left with his wife, but not before Sheffield thanked him profusely for what he had done. Manti and lolani offered to stay with Sheffield, an offer that he gladly accepted.

lolani explained that after their abrupt departure from the meetinghouse, the Bishop simply got up and closed the meeting and called for the benediction. In the closing prayer, a blessing was asked for on behalf of Sister Brason.

There wasn't much they could do, except for visit as they waited for any further updates on Ramona's condition. As the evening grew late, a nurse came and reported, "Her vital signs continue to improve, but slowly and she is still unconscious. I recommended that you go home and get some rest and we'll call you if there is any change."

"You can home with us Sheffield." lolani volunteered.

"Can we see her before I go?"

"For just a moment, and only two of you." the nursed agreed.

"Why don't you come with me, Manti and we can give her a more complete blessing. We were in too big of a hurry earlier."

Manti accompanied Sheffield into Ramona's room and together they placed their hands on her head and gave her a proper blessing.

lolani waited while they went to see her, and then they took Sheffield home to their house. On the way, they stopped by the meetinghouse so he could get his car. Takara and Teancum and their children had come over as had some of the rest of the family. They had something to eat ready for them, although Sheffield didn't feel much like eating.

"As soon as I got home from Church," Takara said, I called Janet to tell her what happened at church, although I didn't have any details on her condition. She's really worried and said that she would call Norma and have her tell Craig."

"I guess I'd better let them know." Sheffield said. "But it will be in the middle of the night back home."

"Janet said that it didn't matter, they want to know as soon as possible."

"Feel free to use our telephone, Sheffield." Manti said.

"Thanks. I'll keep it short."

"Don't worry about it."

Sheffield picked up the telephone and dialed Janet's number from memory. After only two rings, Janet answered. She was obviously greatly concerned as were Norma and Craig. Sheffield told her what he knew about her condition and what was being done for her.

"I just wish I could be there for her." Janet said.

"I know. Sweetheart. I'll keep you posted."

"Thanks Dad. I'll call Norma and tell her and she can tell Craig. I'd better let you go. Call me if anything changes."

"I will. Goodbye."

"Goodbye Dad."

After talking to Janet, Sheffield realized how exhausted he was and excused himself to go out to the guest house and got ready for bed. As he said his prayers, he poured out his heart and soul on behalf of his dear companion.

The next morning, he got up and got ready and went in the house. Lolani had breakfast ready and insisted that he have something to eat. Manti told him that he would call the mission office for him as soon as they began answering calls at eight o'clock and tell them what was going on.

Sheffield drove back up to the hospital in Kahuku, where he found Ramona much improved, but still unconscious. This time he was allowed to sit with her in her room. The swelling had gone down considerably and her heart rate was normal but her breathing was still shallow. When no one was around, he would talk to her about whatever came to mind. He told her how much he loved her.

About mid morning, he went for a stroll just to stretch his legs and walked to the snack bar and bought a bottle of 7Up and a Snickers bar. When he returned to the room, the nurse was checking her vital signs. When she was done she left him alone with her again. By noon, Ramona had improved even more. Doctor Goodland had said that he expected it to take at least forty eight hours. By one o'clock he began to feel hungry and was about to go find something to eat when the door opened. He supposed that it was the nurse or the doctor. He was surprised to see Janet and Takara.

"Janet, what are you doing here?" he said as she rushed into his arms.

"Like I told you Dad, I wished I that could be here and my wish came true."

"I sure wasn't expecting you. What a surprise."

"After I called Norma, Jerry said that I should come, so I called and got a ticket for the next flight out. I called Takara and told her that I was coming and asked her if she could pick me up in Honolulu. He drove me to Salt Lake to catch my plane and after switching planes in LA, here I am."

"Where are the kids?"

"With Gail and Wayne."

"Gosh its good to see you."

"How's Mom?"

Sheffield took her by the hand and led her over to Ramona's bedside and told her all that he knew. "Are you hungry?" he asked "Because I was about to go get something to eat."

“Oh no. I ate on the plane. But if you are, go ahead and I'll sit here with her.”

“That would be nice.” Sheffield said.

“I'll walk with you.” Takara said. “I need to go pick up my kids. lolani has them.”

After having a quick bite to eat, Sheffield returned to Ramona's room and told Janet more about what had happened. Janet told him about her trip and marveled at how one can go so far so quickly in the jet age.

While they were talking, they noticed Ramona stir. They looked over at her to see her eyes open and rushed to her side and took her by the hand. Ramona tried to speak, but was unable to because of the tracheotomy tube in her throat. She had a confused look on her face as she looked at Sheffield. The look on her face said what she was unable to vocalize.

“Do you remember being in Church yesterday afternoon?”

She nodded her head, “Yes.”

“Do you remember being stung by a bee?”

Again she nodded, “Yes.”

“Well, you had a severe allergic reaction. Your throat got all swollen and you couldn't breathe and passed out. Brother Shoupe gave you a tracheotomy and it most likely saved your life.” He went on to explain everything that had transpired, including how they had given her a blessing and rushed her to the hospital and all that had happened there. “I need to let the nurse know that you're awake. In the meantime, there is someone here to see you.”

Sheffield stepped away and Janet came to where he had been standing. A big smile came over her face as she squeezed Janet's hand.

“Hi, Mom. After all of the times that you spent with me in hospitals after all of my accidents, I just had to come and be with you.”

She didn't get to say much as she was practically shoved out of the way by the nurse who rushed in as soon as Sheffield had summoned her. They stepped back and let the nurse do her job. Not long after that, Doctor Goodland showed up as well. Sheffield and Janet were invited to leave the room so they could do whatever it was that they needed to do.

After a several minutes, Doctor Goodland came out to meet them. “The good news,” he said, “is now that she's awake, she will begin to improve more quickly. Like I just explained to Ramona, We need to keep her on the ventilator until at least tomorrow morning. By then the swelling should have mostly receded and her breathing should be stabilized. Until then she won't be able to speak. Then we'll put a bandage over it until the swelling is gone altogether. At that time we can stitch up the incision. I expect her to make a full recovery. I'll be on my way now, but I'll check in on her again this evening.”

Doctor Goodland went on his way and Sheffield and Janet went back into to Ramona's room and stayed with her pretty much all day. At one point Janet went out to the nurses station and got a tablet and pen so Ramona could communicate with them.

During the day, she had a number of visitors. The missionaries in Laie stopped in to see her as did Takara and Teancum and Manti and Iolani and some of the members of the ward who had witnessed what had happened. When Ramona was tired and needed her rest, Sheffield and Janet went to get something to eat. Late in the afternoon, Doctor Goodland called on her again and reported that she was progressing pretty much as he expected.

That evening Sheffield stayed with Manti and Iolani again, while Janet stayed with Takara and Teancum. Fortunately, Sheffield didn't have any travel scheduled for that week. If he had, he would have canceled it.

On Tuesday morning, Sheffield swung by and picked up Janet and went back up to the hospital to spend another day with Ramona. They found that her swelling had gone down considerably during the night. When Doctor Goodland came to see her, he determined that it was enough to remove the tracheotomy tube so she could breath on her own. Once it was removed, a bandage was applied to the open wound and she was able to breath on her own, with only a little difficulty. She could speak in a raspy voice, but the hole in her throat strained her vocal cords so she continued to communicate in writing. She still wasn't able to eat solid foods.

Tuesday passed much like Monday had. Ramona felt better as her vital signs were returning to normal. The zone leaders and lady missionaries in Laie called on her again as did the Morleys. Late in the afternoon, towards evening Henry Shoupe came to see her before attending his high council meeting to find out that she was doing.

Ramona wrote, "Thank you for saving my life. If you hadn't of been there, I might not have made it."

"You know," Henry revealed, "I was supposed to speak the week before but something came up and I had to switch Sundays. If not that for that, I wouldn't have been there."

"I'm glad that you were." She wrote. "Where did you learn to perform a tracheotomy?"

"I was a pharmacists mate in the Navy during the war."

Ramona raised her eyebrows and quickly wrote, "When and where did you get your training?"

"At Bethesda Naval Hospital in forty four."

Before Ramona could write her response, Sheffield said it for her. "Ramona was the head nurse at Bethesda then and one of her responsibilities was to oversee the training of medics. Occasionally she would teach a class just be involved with the training."

"Oh really. Well thats where I learned how to do one."

“Just before I let you slit my wife's throat, I asked you if you had ever done that before. You said, 'Once a long time ago.'”

“Yeah. It was on Okinawa. A marine took some shrapnel in the face that caved in his nose and mouth. Not being able to breath, that was the only thing I could do to save his life until he could get medical attention.”

“What do you do now?” Sheffield asked.

“Well, when I got out of the Navy, I took what I already knew and my GI Bill and went to pharmacy school and became a pharmacist.”

“What brought you to Hawaii?”

“I got tired of working for someone else and started looking around for an established drug store that I could buy. There just happened to be one in Kaneohe. I had spent a little time in the islands during the war and really liked it so I thought, 'Why not.' It wasn't hard to convince my wife to come, so here we are.”

“Where are you from originally?”

“I grew up in Star Valley, Wyoming. Do you know where that is?”

“As a matter of fact we do. We've spent some time in Rexburg when first our son and later Janet attended Ricks College and we got around the area a little. Its a nice place.”

Ramona just listened to the conversation as it went back and forth.

“I don't live to far from there.” Janet added. “I live in Cache Valley.”

“Really? Whereabouts?”

“Over in Ckarkston.”

“Yeah I know where that is.”

Henry looked at his watch, “I'd better be going. I don't want to keep President Morley waiting.”

Ramona quickly wrote, “Thanks for coming to see me. Thanks for everything.”

“It was my pleasure, Sister Brason. Take care of yourself, and I'll be seeing you.”

“Goodbye, Brother Shoupe.” Sheffield said as he left the room.

Sheffield looked at Ramona and said, “How about that. You may have taught him how to save your own life.”

“What I find interesting,” Janet added, “was that he wasn't even supposed to have been there. You can't tell me that its just a coincidence.”

“No it wasn't.” Ramona wrote.

That night, Sheffield and Janet stayed with Manti and Takara receptively, and returned to the hospital on Wednesday. Doctor Goodland determined that Ramona had improved enough to remove her from the IV and have the opening in her throat stitched up, but he wanted to keep her in the hospital for

another twenty four hours.

The sedative made her groggy so Sheffield and Janet visited while she rested. When she was fully coherent, her throat was still too sore to talk and eating solid food was still out of the question. Again that day, she communicated through writing. To sooth her throat, the doctor gave her some Squibb Spectrocin-T throat lozenges to suck on.

"I want to get out of here." she wrote.

"I know. Just hold on and tomorrow you can come home." Sheffield answered.

"I didn't know that it was this hard to be a patient. I've always been the one giving the care."

"Now you know how I felt all those times I was in the hospital." Janet said.

"I suppose everyone gets their turn sooner or later." Ramona responded.

The rest of that day and that night were pretty much the same as the day before. The next morning, Doctor Goodland came to see her again. After looking things over he said, "I don't see any sign of infection. How do you feel?"

"Like my throat is on fire." Ramona wrote.

"Keep sucking on those lozenges, that's about the best I can do for you. You should be feeling better soon. Other than that, I see no reason why you can't go home. Just take it easy and don't try to speak for a day or two more. I'll send you with some more lozenges."

Ramona smiled and nodded.

"You'll feel weak and tired for a few days and may continue to have some difficulty breathing, so my advise is to just take it easy."

"That's why I'm here." Janet said. "To take care of you."

"Come back and see in a couple of weeks so I can take the stitches out. Just take it easy and don't push yourself, alright."

Again Ramona nodded.

He wrote out a prescription on his pad and said, "Get yourself some Epinephrine and keep a syringe handy in case you ever have another reaction to something like this again."

After Doctor Goodland left, Ramona got ready to leave. After checking out of the hospital, they first went to Manti and Lolani's to get their luggage. They had come prepared for an overnight stay and ended up staying four days. Then they went by Takara and Teancum's house to get Janet's luggage. She came with enough to stay for a couple of weeks, longer if needed.

On the drive home, they found Shoupe Drug in Kaneohe and stopped by to see Henry to let him know that she had been released from the hospital and was doing better. While there she had him fill the prescription for her.

“Here’s a syringe to go with it.” he said as he handed her the bottle. “Keep it filled to proper dose and keep it with you.”

He then treated them to milkshakes from the soda fountain in his drug store. Ramona found it to be particularly soothing.

When they arrived at Milialni, the office staff, Assistants, and mission home staff were all waiting to welcome her home. It was good to be home, even if it wasn’t home in Roanoke. After getting Ramona and Janet settled, Sheffield meet with his Assistants, Elder Miller and Elder Davis, who had taken care of business while he was preoccupied. It helped that he had the rest of the week at the mission home.

On Thursday, the 1st of July, Sheffield and Ramona marked their one year anniversary in the mission, as they were a third of the way through. They paused to reflect back over the last year on all that had taken place. At the same time they looked forward with great anticipation to what still awaited them.

Each day, Ramona improved. Sister `Auli`i kept her on a diet of poi and other easy to swallow foods as her throat continued to heal. Gradually, her ability to speak also improved, although her voice cracked like a boy who’s voice was changing.

Since the 4th of July was on Sunday, it was celebrated on Saturday. About the only thing the Brasons did to celebrate the holiday was to go out on the balcony that evening to watch the fireworks display downtown. On Sunday, Ramona was still a little weak and didn’t have all of her energy back yet. It didn’t take her much to be convinced that she should stay home from church. However, Janet accompanied Sheffield that day. On Monday, Janet took care of some of the chores and errands that Ramona normally took care of.

Having Janet there was a big help, although she missed her kids terribly. She helped out in more ways than one. On Tuesday morning, Sister Ricks came downstairs to say that Sister Hansen had come down with stomach bug of some kind and wasn’t able to work that day and wondered what to do with the appointments they had.

Remembering the few days that she spent with Sister Rock in Keeau, Ramona said to Janet, “How would you like to be a missionary for a day. I can look in on Sister Hansen.”

“Who, me?” Janet asked.

Sister Ricks’ countenance brightened, “Yeah. Thats a great idea.”

“But I don’t know the first thing about being a missionary.” Janet protested.

“You leave that up to me. I just need someone to accompany me.”

“Well. Alright.” Janet agreed. “I guess I could do that. Jerry is always talking about his mission. This way I can get a better idea of what its like to be missionary.”

“You better make sure its alright with the President.” Ramona suggested.

Sheffield had been in his office while all of this went on. Sister Ricks and Janet went to his office and Sister Ricks, said, "Excuse me President Brason, but Sister Hansen is sick today. Sister Brason said that she could look after her and that Janet could be my companion for the day. Is that alright with you?"

"Sure. I think its a great idea. As long as Janet is okay with it." He said looking at his daughter.

"I think it would be fun."

"Alright then, go get ready."

Janet was already ready for they day so all she had to do was to go upstairs and change her clothes. A few minutes later, she came back downstairs with her scriptures in hand. "I'm ready." she announced. A moment later, she and Sister Ricks walked out the door.

Because of Janet's two years at Ricks College in Rexburg and had stayed with Beverly Rowan's grandparents, they found that they had a lot in common even though Janet was seven years older than Sister Ricks. She and Beverly were actually second cousins so Janet knew a lot of her relatives, including her grandfather who was a brother to Beverly's grandfather.

They popped in for lunch and then for dinner. Janet seemed to be enjoying herself. During the morning they had taught a lesson to a nine year old girl who was now living with her grandparents. Her parents were in the middle of a divorce when she turned eight and her baptism was a low priority at the time.

Later in the day, they called on a couple who had attended the World's Fair in New York and had filled out filled out a self referral. They had particularly been impressed by "Man's Search for Happiness" and wanted to know more. Sister Ricks taught them the first discussion on the spot. Janet marveled at easily Sister Ricks was able to teach.

During the afternoon, they had a gap in their time, so Sister Ricks picked a street and they began knocking on doors. Again Janet was impressed at how easily Sister Ricks was able to approach people. They even got in a few doors and made a couple of appointments to come back later.

Then, as they approached one door, Sister Ricks said, "How about it Sister Gover, would you like to try this one?"

Janet swallowed hard and agreed to give it a try. After knocking on the door and waiting for someone to answer, the knot in her stomach tightened. Then a woman about her age with three little children clinging to her answered the door. Janet felt an instant connection with her and found that when she opened her mouth, she knew just what to say and got invited in.

They began by talking about their children. This time it was Sister Ricks who sat back and listened as the two mothers bonded over what they had in common. Then Janet noticed the pictures of her children on the wall, there were four of them. She asked about the fourth child to learn that it had died six months earlier and she and her husband were still grieving over their loss.

Janet told of her own experience in losing Anthony five years earlier. She talked about the assurance that she had that she would have him again in the next life because of the eternal nature of families. The woman, whose name was Mildred, took great comfort in that. So much so that she wanted to know more and invited them back that evening when her husband would be home.

That evening they went back out after dinner and had two teaching appointments, including Mildred and Timothy Garcia. Mildred had told her husband all about the visit that she had earlier in the day with the lady missionaries and they were eager to learn more. Janet related more about the experience that she and Jerry had and how their understanding of the plan of salvation made an unbearable situation not so final and gave them hope.

The Garcia's were of Portuguese decent and were naturally Catholic. They had been regular attenders until they became disillusioned when the priest told them that their baby was condemned to hell because it had not yet been baptized before it died.

After Janet had got their attention and interest, Sister Ricks taught them the first discussion. They seemed to accept everything that was said with an open heart and even accepted the invitation to attend church on Sunday and set a return appointment for the next week.

Their second appointment that night went very well too. This was a fourth discussion to another little family who had been fellowshipped and referred to the missionaries by another family in the ward. Janet was amazed when Sister Ricks got to a certain place in the lesson and challenged them to baptism, a challenge which they accepted.

When they returned to the mission home later in the evening, Sister Ricks told her senior companion all about their day and particularly the evening. In relating it to Sheffield and Ramona, Janet said excitedly, "Now I know why Jerry is always talking about his mission. Now I can say that I was a missionary for a day."

The next day, Sister Hansen was feeling better and was able to resume her duties and Janet was not needed. She and Ramona saw Sheffield off as he had a round of zone conferences on the other islands, beginning in Maui Wednesday and concluding in Kona on Saturday, to be followed by a district conference in Kona on Saturday and Sunday. This was the first time that Ramona didn't accompany him.

She remained home to continue her recovery, but was feeling enough better that she and Janet spent a day shopping downtown. Later in the week, they drove up to Laie to see Doctor Goodland. He felt that she had progressed quite well and her throat had healed sufficiently that he went ahead and removed the stitches.

She was concerned about the change in her voice. It had become deeper and somewhat raspy. Doctor Goodland couldn't promise her that it would return to normal, but now that she was able to speak without the soreness that she had been having, there was hope that it would return to normal.

After seeing the doctor, they spent the rest of the day with Takara. Now that her stitches were out, Ramona was glad to once again eat solid food. To show just how glad, she took Janet and Takara out to lunch. While lolani watched her kids, the three of them attended the temple together.

On Sunday, Ramona and Janet went to Church, beginning with Sunday School. Janet was pleased to see Millie and Tim Garcia there. They had kept their promise to come to Church. Sister Ricks was quick to go out of her way to greet them and introduce them to Sister Hansen. Likewise, Janet introduced them to Ramona and invited them to come and sit with them.

During the opening exercises of Sunday School, Ramona found that she was unable to sing. Not only did her voice sound off, but she wasn't able to make the notes that had come so naturally to her. She hoped that this was something that would pass.

After the opening exercises, Janet accompanied Ramona and the lady missionaries to the Gospel Principles calls. Again they sat with the Garcias. The other family that Janet had gone to with Sister Ricks was also there.

Since Sheffield was in Kona, President Galloway had invited Ramona and Janet to Sunday dinner. Dwight and Cindy lived in the neighborhood known as Salt Lake near the airport where he worked. It was a little ironic, since they were from Salt Lake City. Their home had an expansive view of both downtown Honolulu to the east and the sugarcane plantations of the central plain of Oahu to the north.

After dinner Ramona and Janet returned to the mission home and later in the afternoon attended Sacrament meeting in their ward. Part way through the meeting, Sheffield, who had returned from his conference, slipped quietly in the chapel and sat with them.

That evening at home, Ramona was particularly pleased to show him her scar. She pulled down the high collar that hid it and said, "Doctor Goodland said that it should be pretty much unnoticeable in time."

"That's good." Sheffield replied. Then he added, "You sound different."

"I know, and I can't sing either. I sound like I have smoker's voice. He couldn't promise me that it would go completely back to the way it was."

Ramona and Janet went on to tell him all about their week and he then told them about his meetings. They made the most of the evening, since Janet was to go home the next day. As much as she had enjoyed her time there, she missed Jerry and the kids.

Satisfied that her mother's was ordeal behind her, the next morning she she packed her bags and Sheffield and Ramona took her to the airport to see her off for her flight home. After the hugs and goodbyes, she turned around before heading through the gate and said, "I'll see you at Christmas."

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