

**OH LORD! She's Dying!**  
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We ran from our daughter's hospital room overcome with fear, compassion and grief, clinging to the wall for support as reality crushed our hearts in a throbbing pain. Brenda, always full of happiness and zest for life, lay pale as though she were already gone. "Oh Lord she's dying, our baby is dying!"

It seemed like only yesterday.

I was in the hospital waiting room for her baby to be born and now I wondered, 21 years later, "Why did it happen?"

Brenda's husband checked her in the hospital in Panama City, Fl. with breathing difficulty the day before Thanksgiving. The diagnosis was acute bronchitis and pneumonia with complications brought on by asthma.

She had never been seriously ill in her life, especially not asthma, now with her three months pregnancy she suddenly struggled with numerous problems.

We arrived to see her looking like a little girl propped up in her hospital bed, assuring us she was all right, with just a bad cold.

"I knew you would come and make it all better, just like you did when I was a kid," she said. However, the next day her ever present smile was gone, and a terribly lethargic condition replaced her joy; instead of getting better she was much worse.

"I seem a thousand times worse asleep because I can't see life, but when I'm awake I feel like I'm dying," she said.

We began to worry saying, "Is the hospital staff really competent? Are the doctors treating her properly? Should we take her somewhere else?"

We prayed with her, phoned the prayer chain at Immanuel, then called our friends to ask for their personal prayers.

The night shift came on duty and I said, "They won't even know how sick she is, what are we going to do?"

A respiratory therapist, examined Brenda saying "She's a very sick young lady." She seemed very upset.

Immediately a pulmonary specialist came in and the staff began working on her.

After drawing arterial blood gasses they realized how sick she was. Brenda cried, "Someone, just let me die."

The specialist said "She is on the short side of a 50-50 chance of surviving with the next few hours telling."

Sandy Greene and Carol Green came down the hall as we were going back into Brenda's room.

We were afraid, it seemed impossible to get worse at the hospital, but she was.

Labored coughing totally exhausted her and we knew she was struggling to survive.

Later everything fell apart, Brenda turned ghostly white, the specialist reappeared and people really started working on her. We knew she had taken a turn for the worse and fled from the room afraid the horror on our faces would affect Brenda when she needed to see strength.

Only Sandy was able to remain at the foot of her bed in God's reassuring strength.

God's peaceful strength flooded over us as we leaned against the cold walls for support - the crushing reality of losing Brenda was too much to bear.

We prayed apart from one another; God reassured our faltering hearts and answered our needs in the hallway.

Brenda lapsed into unconsciousness.

Later she described a sensation of floating on the ceiling and seeing three angels leaning against the wall saying, "Relax, we will handle everything."

Feeling crept into my body as I glanced down the hall past Margaret and Carol. Brenda's husband seemed defeated by Brenda's fragility and the baby's slim hold on life, both trying to receive oxygen from her failing lungs.

We bolstered each other and returned to her room as they were entubating her, giving her much needed oxygen.

Awakening later from unconsciousness she saw the nurse squeezing the "black bag" forcing oxygen into her lungs. "

Relax," the nurse said.

Things had gotten quieter as if God had it under control; her color was coming back and she smiled faintly.

She gradually improved as the oxygen was forced into her failing lungs.

Brenda's blood gases revealed a complete reversal of the normal oxygen and carbon dioxide levels and she had been only seconds away from falling into a coma.

They were fearful of how to treat her with her pregnancy and informed us, "Brenda will die unless we treat her and forget about the baby." What a terrible thing for Brenda to deal with after six months of marriage, and only 21 years old.

The swift action was dazzling to us as they worked over Brenda and moved her to the Intensive Care Unit.

Much later as we waited patiently for word the doctor assured us, "The worst is over" and he would not leave until he knew she was out of danger.

She was afraid she had been attached to a machine that was keeping her alive, so the doctor asked us to see her. We reassured her that she was in intensive care in order for them to properly watch her and her baby and for her not to let the surroundings scare her, as we tried to do the same.

Time went by so slowly.

We could only visit every four hours in pairs for fifteen minutes.

After a few visits we found her propped up in bed writing notes, (she couldn't talk with the tubes in her), to tell us not to worry, she was all right.

We slept on the floor of the tiny waiting room anyway.

The next day in a "regular room," virtually over her trauma, Brenda was smiling as her old self.

The small hospital seemed in a buzz over the miracle for the young mother-to-be.

We were not aware of the encompassing love poured out on Brenda's behalf until later. Both doctors briefly left the hospital for a nearby church to pray together for her healing. Her regular doctor had called in a specialist when he knew he needed help, both called upon God. People in four churches of different denominations prayed diligently for her.

It seems most of the nurses working around Brenda were devout Christians who prayed for her healing and the well-being of her baby.

The lady across the hall said, "We are all praying for her, the nurse came by and asked everyone in the hospital to pray".

"Oh how powerful", I thought, "the sick praying for the dying young mother."

Even as she slept in the Intensive Care Unit she said, "I would wake up to find people I didn't know holding my feet praying for me, then walk out the door, without a word."

Brenda was released from the hospital six days after she entered; it was joyous occasion indeed after such a harrowing experience. The doctors prescribed medication and assured us it should never happen again.

Christmas, was a happy day although we were again concerned with her frequent coughing. The next day Brenda was treated as an out-patient for a bronchial asthma attack. She went home with an oxygen bottle to help her breathe, however she was rushed back to the emergency room three hours later with a diagnosis of Acute Respiratory Distress Syndrome.

Frantically we again drove to the Panama City hospital, but couldn't see her for 2 hours. She had received four hours of emergency treatment and they couldn't risk moving her.

As we went in to see her the doctor was at her side looked almost as bad as she did. "She is not responding to the same medication," the doctor said. "Pray, that's the only thing left to do, nothing else is working. She is terribly sick even worse than the first time. This time she is in complete respiratory failure, and is being kept alive only by forcing oxygen into her lungs."

Brenda was so lifeless, the IV's, the oxygen, her skin turning purple, the doctor leaning against the wall praying, was almost too much to bear.

Suddenly she began banging on the side of her rails as though she were fighting for her life. It would have been much easier to give up, but she fought, as she described it, with a "sudden ball of energy from God" that made her want life and her baby.

Soon they were able to move her to the Intensive Care Unit, again her blood gases had virtually reversed, and her acid levels were below that of a body in the morgue. However, she was soon out of the woods and worried about everyone else, writing notes to convey a new joy that we recognized as euphoria from the trauma she had endured.

The next day they moved her to a private room, continuing her on IV's and oxygen vowing to keep her there until all problems were solved.

The doctor said, "I don't think any of us can survive another episode like this, especially me."

They tried reducing the level of medication for the baby's sake, although fear of damage already done from the frequent x-rays, lack of oxygen, and previous medication at this point didn't seem to matter.

She had a mild attack New Years Eve night, the next morning we celebrated with noise makers and balloons; the long bout and worry for her baby was taking a toll on her.

Three days later, she was released from the hospital with the understanding that she come to Destin while adjusting to the stringent schedule of her medication and see three specialists in Fort Walton Beach.

The doctors said she had a controllable situation if she took her medication properly. They told

us, "There is less than a 1% chance of anyone in the pregnant population developing asthma during pregnancy, and almost no record of anyone with as severe a case such as she has developed."

"I watched as the doctors ran a sonogram of my baby, it had it's thumb in its mouth and seemed so content and healthy," Brenda said, " I cried tears of joy."

May 7th, we tried not to be afraid as the phone rang, but after all that had transpired we were. It was Brenda's calling as they were going to the hospital to have the baby.

We worried when she remained in the labor room over 10 hours; however after 15 minutes in the delivery room Baby Carolyn Danielle Jones was born at 5 lbs 4 ozs and 19 1/4 inches long, with not even so much as a birth mark to mar her perfection.

Incredible joy flooded my heart as I watched that tiny little miracle display all of the normal movements and much more as if God were showing us how great the miracle really was.

God had assured us that He would knit her anew; and He did!

"We cried more than the baby did," Brenda and her husband agreed. They were so happy and relieved.

Carolyn and Brenda left the hospital three days later to begin a normal life. Brenda, only takes occasional medication for an asthmatic condition, and Carolyn Danielle is truly a gift from God, perfect in every way, looking like an identical twin to her mother when she was, "our baby."

How wonderful it is to be in God's family, especially in a crises!