

*A miraculous journey from paralysis to praise*

# I STAND

A TRUE STORY

PAM MORGAN  
AND BRENDA BLACK



*NEW FROM JUBALEE PRESS...*

# I STAND

*The miraculous journey from  
paralysis to praise*

BY

**PAM MORGAN**  
**AND BRENDA BLACK**

PREVIEW CHAPTER

# Famous Last Words

*...don't take a single day for granted.  
Take delight in each light-filled hour...*

ECCLESIASTES 11:8

*June 4, 2000 -*

*"91/94, you have a stat run MVA. Your time is 15:51."*

Radio static crackled behind the dispatcher's urgent voice.

The paramedic grabbed his gear and hurried toward the ambulance at Bates County Memorial Hospital in Butler, Missouri. Bursting through the bay doors, he slid into the passenger seat on a balmy June Sunday where his EMT partner already waited with the motor running. Sirens blared as they pulled away. He recorded the time - 3:53 p.m. - and turned up the volume on the VHF radio scanner hoping to hear more detail from the Sheriff's office.

*"There's a 1050 on the Miami Creek Bridge, a J-2, possibly a J-4."*

They knew the codes well - injury accident, possibly a fatality. Pressing calls were the nature of their job. They knew there was no time to waste. Speeding down southbound Highway 71 toward

the Miami Creek Bridge, every minute counted. Delays could mean the difference between life and death.

As they neared the bridge, traffic slowed and surrendered to the emergency entourage. Suddenly a white van, flipped on its side, popped into view. Behind it, a battered, roofless utility trailer slumped on 3 wheels. At 3:58 they pulled beside the wreckage and jumped out. A state trooper pointed toward a bloody heap against the concrete barrier.

“Your fatality is over there on the bridge,” he directed.

The experienced paramedic didn’t doubt the trooper’s words as he neared the body. Obviously thrown from the vehicle at high speed, this woman most likely died on impact. He quickly brushed the bystanders aside and knelt down beside her. In all his years of service, he never saw anyone survive injuries as severe as these, but touching the woman’s shoulder, he was taken by surprise.

“Please God, help me...,” she gasped.



I don’t remember my desperate plea for help that day. All I recall is the peace I felt in the hours beforehand. In the prime of my life, I never could have predicted how everything would change in a brief second.

My husband woke me that morning after only four hours of sleep. Rising before the sun wasn’t unusual on weekends. Our concert schedule typically required it. But the outdoor music festival we hosted the day before ran later than expected, and we were pooped. Nevertheless, we had to get moving as this morning’s concert was two hours down the road. So we piled our sleeping daughters, Kayla – five years old, and Alisha – twenty-one months, into the van. Grass glistened with heavy dew, and birds chirped cheerful good-mornings, eager to meet the day. We, on the other hand, were too tired to return the greeting.

Exiting our subdivision, we prayed, “Lord, thank you for yet another opportunity to serve you today. Guard and protect us as we travel...” A couple of hours later we pulled into the drive of

Merwin Christian Church. Reverend Alan Black, our good friend, greeted us in the parking lot. Four years ago, we held our first concert here. How ironic that we would return where we began on this day.

Alan and his wife, Brenda, are among our closest friends and join us in an accountability group of five couples we fondly dubbed “RELIEF.” No relation to the familiar antacid commercial exists, although the guys readily joke about it. We girls roll our eyes and pretend not to find our husbands’ fifth grade humor all that funny. After all, it’s a woman’s duty to at least appear sophisticated and refined. But no, the name is actually an acronym for Ready Encouragement Lies in Excellent Friends. We have grown so comfortable with one another, we can joke like children, laughing until it hurts, and still challenge each other with deep, spiritual truths. In today’s world, such relationships are indeed a relief.

Most of our accountability group joined us for worship and lunch. After all, few could pass up Brenda’s home-cooked lasagna. The morning and afternoon passed all too quickly in the company of good friends, and before our hearts were ready to leave, the clock reminded us our day was not done. Another concert in Stockton still lay ahead that evening, another hour and a half down the road. At three o’clock that afternoon we headed for our Ford Econoline once again. I strapped Alisha, sweaty, tired, and cranky, into her car seat. Phil started the engine and turned the A/C on high.

“Would you like us to take the girls?” Allyson asked as I hugged her goodbye. “You can pick them up on your way home. It’s on the way.”

Dave and Allyson live on 40 acres with their two boys, who are the same ages as Kayla and Alisha. They raise horses, cows, cats, and at the time Colin, an old yellow lab who just wanted to nap and be loved. The girls would feel at home there and find lots to do, but my maternal instinct kicked in. Kayla and Alisha were exhausted and showed it. They were often hard to handle when fighting sleep.

“No, thanks,” I said hesitantly. “We better take them with us.”

I turned to find Alisha already sound asleep, confirming my

decision. I didn't want to wake her now. A decent nap was exactly what she needed, and with the car seat straps snug against her chest, I could rest easily, confident of my daughter's safety. My little "Houdini" hated confinement. Usually she maneuvered herself free of the car seat straps behind my back during the ride. Relieved, I shifted focus to my eldest daughter, still wide awake.

"Kayla, do you want me to sit in the back with you, until you fall asleep?"

Kayla nodded and bounded onto the back sofa seat.

"Babe, you drive...I'll fall asleep if I do."

Phil agreed upon my promise to crawl up to the front passenger seat once Kayla fell asleep. Exhausted himself, I knew he needed help staying alert.

I climbed in behind Kayla, frustrated to see that all except the center seat belt had fallen through the cushions. I didn't feel like twisting myself into a pretzel on the floor to retrieve them. *Oh well*, I thought and sighed. *I'll only be here for a few minutes.*

I strapped the lap belt around Kayla and pulled it snug to her hips. Then sinking into the soft sofa seat to her right, I waved goodbye to our friends still standing in the gravel drive.

"Rock and roll!" Jamie Jones shouted with a twinkle in his eye.

They waved and turned toward the house as we embarked onto the two-lane blacktop. I leaned my head back against the headrest; letting the cool breeze flow over me from the vents overhead.

*This feels so good*, I thought, *I'll close my eyes just for a minute.*

Fifteen minutes later Phil glanced into the rear view mirror as he merged southbound on 71 Highway. I was limp with sleep. Kayla rested peacefully against my shoulder and her eyes bobbed heavily to a close. All was quiet.

*So much for conversation to keep me awake*, Phil thought. He accelerated to 70 miles per hour and switched to the smoother ride of the left lane, setting the cruise control. The radio was out of the question - too much noise for his resting family. Phil turned the A/C thermostat to the coldest setting.

*There...frigid air should help...I can make it.*



About six miles south of Butler, Phil glanced at the clock - 3:51 p.m. - right on schedule. He yawned. The steady drone of tires on the pavement was tranquilizing. Phil tried reading road signs, billboards...anything to stay awake. Approaching the Miami Creek Bridge on the right, a large red cardinal painted on the side of a vacant semi trailer advertised a local tree farm.

Phil blinked, struggling to resist his heavy eyelids. He blinked again. And again, slower this time. His eyes lingered shut a few seconds longer. Forcing them open, he flinched to see the guardrail looming directly ahead. Quickly he jerked the wheel back toward the narrow highway. It was too late. The front left tire ascended the metal rail and flew off as it slammed back to the ground. The speed and force of the hit was so extreme, the van toppled over on its side. Phil's window shattered as it slammed to the ground. Screeching concrete raced beside his ear until the van slid to a stop across the two lane bridge. The bumper barely kissed the creek's concrete barrier, the only thing that divided them from dropping into the rushing water below.

In an instant, all was deathly quiet except for the sound of Phil's heartbeat throbbing in his ears. Unbuckling his seatbelt, Phil placed his feet where the driver's window had been and stood on shaky legs. Alisha's car seat lay face down behind him. Still strapped inside, his baby girl was now wide awake and afraid. She started to cry. Phil set her upright and carefully made his way to the back sofa where Kayla hung from her lap belt.

"Where's Mommy?" Phil asked, anxiously releasing his other whimpering daughter and holding her close. I was missing, and the rear left window, now against the ground, was gone.

"I don't know," Kayla cried.

"Watch your sister while I go and find Mommy," he said.

Phil set Kayla down and reached for the doors overhead. Pain stabbed his shoulder, but he ignored it. He had to get out. Gravity pushed the heavy doors closed again and again until rushing adrenaline finally fueled him to fling them open. Phil forced his

six-foot-one-inch, 250 pound frame up through the escape hatch, swung his feet over the side, and jumped to the ground.

A young man was already there, eager to help.

“My daughters are still in there,” Phil said, “but I need to find my wife.”

“She’s behind the trailer,” he said. “My wife knows CPR and is with her. Go, I’ll get the girls out.”

“I’ll be right back,” Phil called to Kayla and Alisha, trying to comfort.

Phil found the young woman leaning over my crumpled body against the concrete barrier of the bridge. She and her husband watched the whole thing in horror from the car behind us. Instinctively they pulled over. At the sound of crying children, he rushed to the van. She hurried to my side, prepared to perform CPR, but stopped herself. Although I wasn’t breathing, she knew the slightest movement could be disastrous with injuries so excessive. Only one option remained. Dropping to her knees, she prayed.

“These babies need their mommy, Lord!” she begged, hearing our daughter’s young, fearful cries.

Within seconds, I coughed and started to cry.

“Don’t move,” the young woman said.

A Missouri State Trooper spotted the wreckage on routine highway patrol when cars ahead suddenly veered onto the shoulder. Immediately he summoned emergency assistance and pulled over to divert traffic. As he jumped out of his patrol car, another woman darted across the divided highway.

“I’m a nurse,” she said.

The trooper tossed her his medical kit.

A pool of blood surrounded me and rippled over the asphalt into a nearby drain. The two women knelt beside me as Phil paced between me and the van.

“Forgive me, Lord, I fell asleep,” he confessed, torn by which direction to go – toward his wife or back to his daughters?

“Get down here and pray with us,” the nurse said, overhearing.

“Is she alive?” he said.



“Yes, she’s breathing.”

Phil made his way through a maze of scattered speakers and broken glass and got down on his knees. He watched as I gasped for air with each breath. At the sound of our terrified daughters, Phil quickly realized he could do nothing more for me. They, on the other hand, needed him desperately. Safe in the care of a grandparent-like couple who supplied cookies and band-aids, Kayla and Alisha yearned for Daddy’s familiar arms.

“God, this is out of my hands,” he surrendered. “You’ve got to take care of Pam now.”

As soon as he retreated, a woman stopped and introduced herself as a respiratory therapist. Immediately following her, a man approached, explaining he was an anesthesiologist.

Minutes later an ambulance screamed to an abrupt stop. Astonished that I was alive, the paramedic urged the others to back away as he took charge. The EMT followed close behind spouting instructions into a radio.

“Dispatch; unit 1, our time is 15:58. Call Lifenet. Have them head to the hospital.”

Two more ambulances arrived on the scene. The paramedics and EMTs gently rolled me on my back.

At this point, I remember feeling as if I were dreaming. I don’t recall the trauma; I simply recognized a flurry of activity and an array of indistinguishable voices. Birds sang, leaves rustled in the breeze, and hard concrete hurt what I thought were sunburned shoulders. Confused, I wondered, *why am I outside?*

“Mrs. Morgan,” a man’s voice said distinctly, “can you tell me what happened?”

*Who is that, and what is he talking about?* I thought.

“I...I can’t breathe,” I said.

The medic noticed a softball-sized hole in front of my left shoulder. It extended deep, through tissue and muscle, exposing blood vessels and bone. He suspected air had seeped into my chest cavity and collapsed my lung. They had to get me to the ambulance immediately.

Doing all they could to keep my arm from falling off as they

moved me, the paramedics wrapped a c-collar around my neck and stabilized my body firmly to a backboard. In the ambulance, one of them placed an oxygen mask over my nose and mouth as the other sealed my shoulder the best he could. He inserted a 14 gage needle between two of my left ribs, and instantly, a puff of air burst from the valve. His hunch was right. I began to breathe easier. Still, time was of the essence. I was going into shock.

“94 to 88, I need a driver over here stat,” one of the paramedics blurted into his radio.

At exactly 4:12, Phil watched the ambulance race away with his wife’s life in the balance. Suddenly aware of the tension which gripped him, and depleted of the adrenaline that pushed him to ignore it, Phil drew in a deep breath.

“Are you sure you’re OK?” an EMT said.

Intense pain in Phil’s shoulder consumed him, and everything started to fade. He sat on the concrete barrier and leaned back, starting to faint.

“Whoa!” the EMT said. “Let’s get you and your daughters to the hospital.”

Phil and the girls arrived at the ER as trauma staff wheeled me in at 4:19. Kayla and Alisha were taken into a closed, soundproof exam room twenty feet from me. Phil occupied an adjacent ER bay to my left, separated only by a curtain. He cringed at each moan and wail of pain.

“Why does it hurt so bad?” I cried.

Unbeknownst to me, my body was covered with intense “road rash.” In addition to the huge hole in my shoulder, large hunks of skin and muscle were ripped from the left side of my face and head, exposing my skull. My upper ear was sliced in two. One eye swelled shut, and pieces of my scalp and both eyebrows were gone. Knees, legs, arms...most of the skin that remained was stained black with asphalt.

Doctors and nurses continuously asked me questions to determine the degree of my injuries. When I failed to recollect any details of the crash, they feared the worst - brain injury. Although I seemed coherent and passed all motor, verbal, and eye response

tests with a perfect score, amnesia of the accident and a soft swollen spot on the back of my head raised serious concern. Transferring me to a specialized trauma care facility in the city was imminent.

At 4:30 a nurse wheeled me toward the LifeNet helicopter. She paused at Phil's bay. Drawing close to encourage me with a reluctant goodbye, Phil was relieved to see that I recognized him.

"I'll be with you soon," he assured. "Everything's going to be just fine."

Famous last words.

***For the first time ever,  
read the COMPLETE story  
of Pam's miraculous healing  
and return to ministry!***

**Order your autographed  
Hardcover copy today  
and get a 20% discount!  
For a limited time - only \$20!**

**CREDIT CARD ORDERS:**

**[www.PhilandPamMorgan.com/Store](http://www.PhilandPamMorgan.com/Store)  
or call 888-523-4492**

**CHECK OR MONEY ORDER:**

**Phil & Pam Morgan  
P.O. Box 1991  
Lee's Summit, MO 64086**