

The Wrong Side of 30

**When you've been told you're
too old to conceive**



**A heart-warming story of faith and
hope against all odds**

Lynne Torrente

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CAMERAS DON'T LIE

What would happen if Jesus came to earth today? Who would want Him dead?

When a stranger comes to the town of Spring Manor, the residents are drawn to his words of wisdom and his ability to heal all their diseases. As Devlin Cole spends time with him covering the healings for the local newspaper, their friendship deepens to a point where she begins believing for the miracle she so longs for. But when a murder takes place she realizes that his stance on a very controversial matter poses a threat to certain people. Ignoring her husband's attempts to dissuade her from placing herself in harm's way, she investigates the murder. She begins connecting the dots and with her long-time college friend, uncovers shocking truths that rock her world.

Biblical fiction with a twist!

To my Precious Mommy
Now I understand!
To my Precious Daddy
Love through the Heavens!

Acknowledgements

Firstly, to God my Father for helping me pen my thoughts and journey, and being by my side throughout.

Thanks to all my friends and family who have watched this process and encouraged me to complete it. Your support is invaluable!

And thanks to my Hubby for sharing the bed with me and my laptop!

Foreword

No matter who you are, somewhere along life's journey you've had to believe in the unseen!

It is my hope that as you read this book, you are encouraged to believe once more, if you've stopped believing, that you will start dreaming once more, if you've lost your dreams and that you will lift your head to the skies and know that you are not alone, but are being guided by the Great Unseen!

If you've been given a promise by God, keep trusting Him, because in this uncertain world, He remains the only Source you can entirely trust and depend upon.

I trust that you will be changed from within,
Lynne.

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Where it all began

13 December 2001

I glanced at the wall of smiling faces and I felt sick to my stomach.. Image upon image on a tapestry of silent laughs, glistening happy eyes, and joyous moments celebrated. I felt envious and heartsore at the same time, but mostly I felt a sick jealousy. I turned away, unable to look any more at the painful reminder of why I was here. I had come for answers but wanted to run away. I was aware of my husband sitting in the chair next to me, but still I felt alone in my world of sadness.

After what seemed like an eternity the doctor walked into his office and sat down at his desk, and without sparing us a glance pulled his pen out of his jacket pocket. No introductions were made, but the barrage of questions began. General health questions were asked and I answered mostly in the negative, which was a good thing in the medical world. He suggested we do the internal examination and then carry on with discussions afterwards. As luck would have it, I had started my monthlies a day before. I couldn't cancel the appointment, as we would have had to wait another few weeks before we found another opening. I told the doctor this and he proceeded to zap the tampon out with large tweezers. The wall next to my head suddenly became very interesting. He prodded and pushed and squeezed, and then inserted an instrument to check internally. Not many words were spoken, and he gave no reassurance that everything was fine.

He pulled off his latex gloves and told me to get dressed again. My hands were shaking as I got dressed. I walked back into his office and sat down. I did not even register my husband, who had waited in the office while I underwent the examination. In silence the doctor wrote some more info into the file. He had found nothing wrong with me and everything appeared normal on the scan, and there were no obvious health issues. He sat back in his chair, looked at me and with an expressionless face said, "You're the wrong side of thirty."

I felt as if he had hit me in the chest. I was speechless at his callous remark. Tense from the physical examination and PMS, I sat in stunned silence from the cold hardness of the statement. The tears were too close to venture anything spoken. I sat motionless.

"The most productive time for a woman is from 18 to 25 years," he rambled on, totally oblivious to any emotions I could be feeling. It was evident that he was so used to this preamble that he was quite unaffected by the enormity of the matter for the woman hearing it.

"I've never felt emotionally ready for a child before," I told him, "but now I am."

He carried on writing in his file and took no time to listen or to digest my response, or even to spare me a look. "We'll need to carry out a complete observation, in case of infertility." (I don't think I like that word!). "We'll need to monitor your hormonal level to see if you able to carry a pregnancy."

I took in a deep breath of air and ventured, "How will you do that?"

"You'll need to come in at 7.30 every morning for a few days to have blood samples drawn." In my mind I could see the red pinholes of the entire month's hormonal checks. "Then we'll need to do a laparoscopy to check if the tubes aren't blocked."

I hadn't heard good things about laparoscopies. Hesitantly, I told him my reservations. I got the impression that he was getting a little irritated by my comments, but he explained that if they did not use too much air, a laparoscopy would not be too uncomfortable.

He turned to my husband. "How old are you?"

"43," he answered.

"It's different for a man." In a flash I was excluded from the conversation and I felt so alone in my chair. It suddenly felt as if I was the odd one out, as if not being able to fall pregnant was entirely my fault.

He twirled his expensive pen in his hand and casually continued chatting to my husband. "Men can reproduce for many years." Was it my imagination, or did my husband's chest push out just a little? Or was PMS playing tricks on me and my emotions again? I sat and listened to the wonderworkings of the male anatomy and how it did not matter how many years ticked by, the miracle of conception was almost a certainty.

I was addressed again. "You don't have to make a decision now to undergo the tests. Think about it and come and see me in the New Year," and as unemotional as he was at the outset, he concluded our meeting.

I had to get out of there. The PMS tearful state and the emotional meeting were threatening tears, and the enormous lump that was stuck in my throat stopped me from being able to say my goodbyes. I just nodded and left.

My husband broke the silence as we walked towards our separately parked cars. "I'm sure these specialists have helped many people."

I got into my car, and unable to hold back the PMS tears, quickly covered them up with my sunglasses.

"Do you want to grab a bite to eat?" he asked.

Eat! How the heck was I supposed to stomach anything after feeling that my world was falling apart? It seemed that the infertility problem lay more likely with the one who was "the wrong side of 30": of course, the woman! It's not that I was bitter: I just needed to process what had happened, and work through it on my own and in my own way.

"No, I'll see you at home," I replied and shut the car door on the world. I let those tears flow freely in the safety of my space, my car, where the world did not see the hurt that I felt.

The truth hits home

18 December 2001

I never really realized how much having a baby means to me. It's more evident now since one of my best friends has just given birth to a beautiful little girl.

It's getting more difficult to hold a baby and not feel like sobbing there and then. Of course I don't. I put on a happy face and no-one knows that behind that cheerful playful banter with the baby, I am crying inside, wishing it was my baby I was holding. It's getting harder to smile, especially when my niece's toddler runs to me to be picked up. I hold and cry and wish, and no-one knows. They all just think I've decided not to have children. "Sometimes I think you're wise not have had children in these days," they say. If only they knew. It's not a choice, not a decision, it just is.

We haven't discussed the issue of going for fertility tests any further. I don't know if we will talk about it in the new year. At the moment I am carrying these feelings and tears on my own.

It's been a few days since that visit. I've got through the weepy PMS bit and can think a bit more rationally. I've given the doctor's advice some thought and do realise that if I really want to know why I have not fallen pregnant yet, I will have to go through all those tests, but I am hoping this holiday, in which I can relax, will bring good news.

I have sort of settled down regarding this issue, but that in itself concerns me. Am I avoiding it so that it won't hurt me? I know I can't avoid it indefinitely, because I don't want another year to go by without having made some headway. The other matter that concerns me is the fact that we don't have medical aid, nor do I have a job. But I am praying that all will change in the new year and I will find work with a medical aid. I am trusting God for this.

So I am 35! It's not uncommon to hear of women older than me falling pregnant and having children. So don't look so surprised, doctor! I just wish I could have voiced more of my feelings that day, than just sitting and pretending that everything was fine, while being told that I was going to find it difficult to conceive.

Why is it that those who don't want children, or those who are unmarried, or sometimes those who have been told they can't have children, actually do? Why is it that those who do have children, seem to take it for granted, nonchalant, uncaring, unappreciative of the wonderful, absolute miracle that has taken place? They carry on with life as if nothing miraculous has happened. Do they know how blessed they are? And what about those who have a few difficulties with their newborns, and tell you not to have children? How can they say that? I tell them it's just a phase, that the baby is learning to settle down into this big new world, and Mommy is learning to settle into her new role as mommy. What a privilege to have "difficulties" like that! I wish I had them too! No-one said it was going to be easy, but hey, look around – mankind lives on, we survive.

29 January 2002

Today was a bad day! Everything got to me – my jobless status, my non-diet, overweight problem, and my "infertile" situation. What makes it worse is when I hear

the neighbour's newborn baby crying – her second child. Children in malls – sitting in their mom's shopping carts, smiling at me. It almost seems that they can see what the adults can't see—the tears in my soul. I smile, I cry, I walk on, and do the rest of my shopping. Well, I try.

Last week I went to visit my friend who had the baby girl. She is three months old now, a beautiful little cherub! My friend had kept her pregnancy a secret from me for three months, because she didn't know how I would take the news. I had told her about two years before that we were trying for a child, but it was obvious that nothing had come of this, so she didn't want to upset me by telling me she was pregnant. I'm so very happy for her. How can I be otherwise? She is one of my dearest, special friends. I do understand why she hid it from me.

My heart is aching today. Today was a bad day!

31 January 2002

Another whole month has passed and nothing has happened in the baby-making department. Wait, let me rephrase that, nothing has culminated out of the baby-making process.

I have given some thought to having the tests done, but as quickly as I have thought about it, I have decided against it, because we don't have medical aid, but then again, medical aids don't normally pay for fertility tests. Today I read in the newspaper of a couple who, after trying for a baby, gave birth at age 45. So I guess there's always hope.

I had my hair highlighted today to help me feel a little better. It has helped, if only a little.

No jobs on the horizon either.

Tomorrow I'm going to plant some seeds. I'm trying to do things to take my mind off my weight problem, the other issue that is depressing me. I would feel a lot better if I got rid of about 10kg. None of my good clothes fit me.

Mark 24 says that we are to ask and we shall receive. "Lord, please grant me a perfect, healthy baby that I can hold in my arms, love and treasure and raise in Your Words and life. Hubby will make a wonderful dad. I would dearly love to see my mom's face when she sees my baby. I am asking all these things in Your Holy Name. Amen." So be it! (Mark 11:24: "Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.") What has been in my mind often is that I need to start thanking God for my perfect, healthy baby, instead of being depressed and moping around. I need to start praising God for all His blessings bestowed on me.

This was all confirmed in our pastor's sermon this morning. He said we need to praise God for what we've asked Him. I really believe his message was for me. God is surely good and has not forgotten me.

My birthday is coming up soon. It would be really nice if I could get a baby for my birthday present!

Today I again looked at all the ideas and dreams I had a few years ago. Somehow they fell by the wayside. I need to bring my ideas around my ministry before God, and then I need to get some action behind the idea. Ideas in themselves are no good. But ideas in action are powerful and can accomplish much.

15 February 2002

Last week I started my diet, weighing in at 72kg. I need to take control of this area. I have no control over my job situation, nor do I have control over my pregnancy situation. I do, however, have and can gain control over my weight problem. Today I take control over this area. I ask God to help me because “I can do all things through Christ.” (Philippians:4:13:” I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.”)

We need to realise the things we can and cannot change and those things over which we do have or do not have control. As we make small changes with the things that we can control, we are encouraged to tackle other areas, and when we look back, we will be amazed at what we have achieved overall.

Something else that I have control over is my relationship with my Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, so I am making a choice to get closer to God and rediscover that wonderful relationship I had with Him in the past. Already I feel more free.

On the job-hunting side, I’ve sent off my CV to a company which has a few vacancies, so I pray that my CV finds favour and I get a call for an interview. Wouldn’t that be grand, and even more so, if I could land one of those jobs?

Well, if ever I was “the wrong side of thirty”, then that’s certainly true today, as yesterday was my 36th birthday. Maybe the right side of 40, but hey, age is relative, and is a state of mind. You’re as young as you feel.

I would have liked to have been able to tell everyone at my birthday party, “Guess what? I’ve received the most special birthday present – I’m pregnant.” That would have been great. But another year, another birthday has passed and still no “present” to announce. I don’t feel depressed about it, perhaps just a little sad, perhaps a little numb.

The seeds that I planted are growing. This is a real pleasure to observe. I know the God who gives those seeds life, can give and will grant me my seed as well. I do believe this. I pray to Him as I water my seeds every day. I will have to transplant them soon. I sowed the seeds a little too close to each other. But hey, I’m still learning the ropes in my new-found interest. I have never been interested in gardening before, but I felt I needed to take my mind off the fact that I am still trying to find work, and to keep me from going insane.

It’s truly amazing that within that tiny seed lies the potential for a flower, shrub or tree. I guess it’s much the same with us. So much potential lies within each one of us; we need to “water” ourselves so that we can flourish and become all that God intended us to be. What does God want me to be? What am I supposed to be doing with my life? One would think that at this point in my life, I would know the answer. Perhaps the answer isn’t vague or hidden as I sometimes think it is. As long as I am striving for an answer, there’s hope!

20 February 2002

I’ve totally decided against having the fertility tests done. I have left this all in the Great Physician’s hands. He created me; He will create and give me the little life my heart and soul long for.

I have peace about not having the surgery done, for two reasons. One is not having a job to pay for the tests, and the second reason goes beyond what is seen, to The One who has promised me the baby I yearn for.

Two years ago, more precisely, on 21 May 2000, our pastor concluded his sermon, looked at my husband and called him forward to the front of the church. He went to the front and the pastor motioned for me to join him. I stood beside him facing the pastor, not knowing why he had called us out.

“You’ve been trying for a baby.”

My jaw dropped to the floor. Startled, I replied, “Who have you been talking to?”

These had to be words from God, as we had not told a soul, either family or other churchgoers, that we were trying for a baby.

Pastor watched us closely and said again, “Have you been trying for a baby?” I’m sure that he wanted us to confirm and confess that this was true, in order for him to continue.

My husband answered, “Yes, we have been,” and I quickly agreed.

Pastor then proceeded to pray over us for this to happen. I was excited and full of joy. God had told our pastor the deepest secret desire of our hearts. I believe that He will grant us this wonderful miracle. God’s timing for everything is always perfect. If we weren’t ready for this before, we certainly are now.

And so I leave this matter in God’s hands. If He has promised, and He has, then He will be just and faithful to give us the promise, without my having to go for the tests. I feel in my heart that this is the right thing to do, to leave it to Him to sort out.

Today I am feeling a little low. Not sure if it’s to do with the intense summer heat we are experiencing or the cold that I have contracted. Perhaps both. I wish I could forget about the monthly and stop checking for it. The thing with time is that it drags when you want it to pass quickly (as is my case), or it flies when you need to make the most of the little time you have.

I heard next door’s baby crying today and wondered if mine would be crying soon. I wonder how my friend’s baby is doing. I should phone, but today I don’t have the energy. Perhaps tomorrow. I would love to see them both again soon.

23 February 2002

I’m back to keeping the tampon manufacturing companies in business today. The “wait and see” time is over and the cycle continues. I don’t feel too sad; I guess because the “not knowing” is worse than the “knowing”. It has arrived. I don’t have to wonder if I am late or overdue. The answer is in. I’m not! But I will continue thanking God for His provision and reminding Him that His word says “He will supply all my needs according to His riches in glory.” He has also said that He does not lie. His word is true Yea and Amen! So be it and You have promised, Lord. Goodnight; I now lay me down to sleep.

(Philippians 4:19: “But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.”) (Titus 1:2:” In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began.”)

25 February 2002

Today is our 13th wedding anniversary – perhaps this 13 will be lucky for us! I feel better today. Why is it that some days the broody feeling is so intense, and other days, like today, I don’t really mind not being pregnant? I suppose it is has to do with hormones and one’s cycle.

23 May 2002

Today I heard that I've got the job that I really wanted. Praise God! My priority now is to get into my new job and learn everything about it and the company. It's now foremost in my mind, and the baby issue is on the backburner. Perhaps when I've settled into my new job, the overtures will begin again!

27 December 2002

Another year can be ticked off the calendar. No baby, but I have so many blessings to be thankful for.

I have been at my new job for six months now. The learning curve has been steep and there have been some tough times, but God is good. 2003 will have to be a lot better, though.

Well, no baby, as I said, but I am glad, as I had to have a hemorrhoidectomy. What excruciating pain! If I had not had the op, I would not have been able to carry a baby with the agonizing pain I experienced. Perhaps this is God's way of preparing me and fixing me up for the challenge of carrying a baby.

The broodiness has left entirely. Perhaps it's because I have a job and my mind has no time now to think about this. Although I suppose it's difficult to ignore when your niece's little one runs to you to be picked up. I guess if the truth be told; my heart still yearns and cries. I have just told it to cry a little quieter, so that I can carry on with life. It's been a month since the operation and I have not healed entirely. Not the most pleasant experience I've had!

14 March 2003

I just heard a minute ago that my niece is expecting her second baby. Her daughter is now three, so it's a nice gap. It makes me sad, as I have been thinking along those lines again. I think that I do want a baby, but have got so clever about hiding the fact, I think I have even fooled myself.

24 August 2003

Today we had my niece's stork party for her second baby. She's having a boy. Her first is a girl who is nearly four years old. I felt a small twinge of sadness when I saw all the cute baby clothes, but would not allow myself to think further.

19 October 2003

My niece had her baby on 3 October. The cutest baby boy I have ever seen. I am very happy for them.

What did push my buttons again was hearing last week that my other nephew's wife is expecting their first baby. This affected me. I have not been the same since.

Did I mention that my boss's wife is expecting their second one? I am surrounded by reminders of how I have failed!

The clock ticks on

5 January 2004

The new year might have arrived, but my period hasn't.

I can't take the waiting and wondering any more as I sneak into the bathroom with the pink package. I snip open the foil sleeve and take out the plastic wand. It's now or never. I have to know. The not-knowing is torturing me. I have never used one of these tests, so I read the instructions a few times to make sure I don't mess up.

Nervously I bend and aim the stream onto the end of the wand. My legs feel quite weak with excitement and fear. I close the wand and leave it on the horizontal area as instructed. I wait once more. The five minutes have elapsed.

Two pink lines! I reread the package to make sure that I understand correctly. Two pink lines indicate a positive outcome. I feel my eyes opening wider with astonishment.

"I am pregnant!"

I can't contain myself. I laugh and cry simultaneously. I can't believe it. I do believe it. I want to shout with joy. I want the whole neighbourhood to hear, but I have to contain myself. I can't wait for Hubby to come home to tell him the news. I feel like phoning him but want to see the look on his face when I share this wonderful news.

I stare at the plastic wand that confirms the fantastic news. I read the instructions over and over, just to make sure that I am 100% correct about the outcome.

"I am pregnant!"

The hours drag by slowly until I hear the familiar sound of keys unlocking the back door. The waiting has nearly driven me nuts.

"Hello my love," and I place the plastic wand in Hubby's hand. He looks back at me with a frown. "It's a

pregnancy test and do you know what it says? It says I'm pregnant! We're going to have a baby!"

A shocked silence greets me as he scrutinises the object in his hand.

"It's true. Two pink lines mean it's positive. Can you believe it?" I don't think the smile on my face could get any bigger.

His shock gives way to a smile and we hug each other until I think my ribs are going to break.

FINALLY, it's my turn. My turn to buy cute little things. My turn to have MY stork party. My turn to feel the little bump grow into a large wonderwork. My turn to have people ask me when my due date is.

6 January 2004

I made an appointment to see my doctor today and he suggested a blood test to see how far I was. Now I just wait AGAIN for the test results.

It's afternoon and I have heard nothing from my doctor's rooms. Hubby and I have been running some errands so I decide to phone from my cell phone in the car.

"Hello. This is Mrs Torrente speaking. I had blood tests done to confirm a pregnancy but have heard nothing. Can you tell me anything?" I ask the receptionist.

"No, but I'll put you through to Doctor," she answers.

“Hello, Doctor. I can’t take the waiting any more. Have you got some news for me?”

“Yes, Lynne, you’re five weeks pregnant,” he replies.

There! It sounds more real coming from a medical professional.

“That’s wonderful! Thank you so much, but can you do me a favour and tell my husband? He’s still in shock and it’ll help hearing this from your mouth.”

I hand the cell phone to Hubby and watch his face beaming as he hears the news straight from the doctor. It’s a joy that I have never seen him have before. This is a wonderful moment. We’re going to have a baby!

11 January 2004

“Congratulations,” I told my niece at the braai we were having at my sister’s house today. She had just found out that she was pregnant and about six weeks, if not more.

“Thank you,” she replied and we released each other from a big hug. My heart was just about popping because I was aching to share the news, and I could see from Hubby’s face that he felt the same.

“Well, you’re not the only one that’s going to have a baby, you know,” he said.

She watched his face closely. “What do you mean?”

“We’re going to have a baby too!” I said, and we hugged each other again.

My sister jumped up and squeezed me tightly. “That’s fantastic news,” she said. “Allround celebrations! This is wonderful!”

With cups of tea in hand, we shared the wonderful prophecy that we received years ago about how God was going to grant us a baby and now the time had arrived. God was honouring His Word.

The day progressed and we chatted and enjoyed the braai and the sunny day outdoors with the family.

Nature called and I got up to go the bathroom. I couldn’t believe my eyes. Streams of blood. No, this couldn’t be happening. Not now, please, not to me! But there it was. Rivers of red and it didn’t stop. I started crying. I didn’t want to leave the bathroom. I would have to face the people. I didn’t know what to do, but knew I couldn’t stay there indefinitely. I got up and composed myself and went back outside to where the merriment was. I sat down in silence. I couldn’t speak. Hadn’t we just shared our wonderful news with everyone? And now this. No, this could not be happening, but yet I knew it was.

I didn’t say anything and the time came for us to leave. As I said my goodbyes to my sister, I knew I had to tell her. I did not want her thinking I was still pregnant. “It’s not going to happen for me any more,” I whispered into her ear as I hugged her goodbye.

“No!” she cried. “It’s not fair! No!”

I held her tightly and I could feel her heartfelt sorrow for me.

“It’s OK,” I replied, “don’t cry.” But deep down it was not OK. I was trying to console her sadness while my own heart was being torn in two. We backed the car out of her driveway and I watched her wipe away her tears as she walked back inside.

17 January 2004

I had a difficult day today. I was depressed and sad and angry at myself, because I felt that it was my fault that I lost the baby. Perhaps I should have done something differently? Maybe I did something wrong? I should have ...

Thank you for reading. If you've enjoyed this sample and would like to read further kindly visit www.angelrays.co.za and order.

God bless and Angelrays love to all.

Lynne Torrente