

Well, Here We Go!

*By Marilyn Reeves*

When I was a young girl, maybe twelve or thirteen, I had a vivid dream about dying, which has stuck in my memory ever since. I had stepped into a pit of quicksand (as did that poor young man in *Lawrence of Arabia*) and could feel the sand gradually covering up my head. The only thought that went through my dreaming mind was, "Well, here we go." Rather than waking from that dream feeling terrified, it actually served as a sort of comfort to me from that point on. Perhaps the moment of death wouldn't be so terrible after all, if I could maintain the level of acceptance and serenity.

Back in 1960, as I was nearing the end of my first semester at CU Boulder, I was eager to get home for Thanksgiving to see the folks. As much as I was enjoying college life, I had been feeling mighty homesick. Somehow I had made connections with another student from Salida – a boy named Larry – who offered me a ride. We weren't close friends. Larry had been a year or two ahead of me in high school, but I knew him well enough to accept his offer for a ride.

I have no recollection at all about the trip down, nor the Thanksgiving holiday I spent with my family. But I will never forget that trip heading back to Boulder.

It was starting to get dark, and by the time we reached the foot of Kenosha Pass on Highway 285, it had begun to snow. Larry's old car managed to chug its way up that mile-long incline without incident, but as we headed down the other side, the road began to twist and turn. It was difficult enough to deal with those steep grades and sharp curves under the best of conditions, but at night during a snowstorm, the conditions couldn't have been much worse.

At one point, we hit a patch of ice and Larry's car spun out of control. We crossed over into the left lane on the opposite side of the road and I knew we were going to crash! Yet the only thought going through my mind was, "Well, here we go."

But rather than meeting the Grim Reaper, we were merely jostled around a bit. There was a loud bang as we hit the metal guard rail at the edge of the road, but neither of us was injured and even the car wasn't badly damaged. It was only during the aftermath that I finally succumbed to fear and started to shake, realizing how close we had come to that ultimate 'Lights Out.'

I've heard it said that at the moment of death, your entire life passes through your mind. Some people call out to God in a final prayer. Others go out in a frenzy of panic. I just hope that when my time does come, I will feel as serene and complacent as I did that night, and the only words going through my head will once again be, "Well, here we go."