

There are More Books to be Added

*By Sheila Johnson*

Fifteen years ago I sojourned to Singapore with a group of dear friends. As golf enthusiasts and lovers of Asian culture, we took a side trip to Malaysia to enjoy the lush greens. The night before our mid-morning tee time, we ate, drank, and laughed into morning. With only a few hours of sleep, I ferried with the bunch to Malaysia, but could not fathom walking eighteen holes with so much wine, food, and sleep remaining in my body. When we arrived at the hotel where we would catch another ferry, I landed in an over-stuffed chair where I perched, slept, and journaled. The seven happy golfers ventured off to tell tall tales of making par, argue over lost balls, and lie about their total number of strokes. I was exempt and began to enjoy the solitude and beauty of that exotic paradise.

Awakened by a gentle shake on my arm, I looked up into the somber face of my husband. Anxious about what I might hear, I perked up. Evidently, my friend Yvonne left the group on the fourth hole. Everyone assumed she had gone to the ladies' room. After not returning for three hours, Connie found her speechless and crouched on the floor over a toilet. She was quickly transported back to the hotel where I was. There were no nearby hospitals, except for the emergency room located in the basement of that same hotel. The on-call doctor, Dr. Muramata, was on site that day. She took one look at Yvonne, and determined that she was too sick to make the trip back to Singapore without medical attention. Yvonne had eaten stale tuna out of a can at her Singapore home prior to the trip and had food poisoning. With zero availability at the hotel for eight people, I, being a chaplain, volunteered to remain with Yvonne overnight until she was released the next day. The others returned to Singapore.

Dr. Muramata holding her Bible in one hand and guiding the gurney on which Yvonne rode with the other hand, and I, descended into the basement in an elevator. We walked down a very dark, grey hallway into a small, exquisitely clean room equipped with very sophisticated medical devices. Dr. Muramata quickly hooked Yvonne up to the oxygen and began giving her fluids intravenously. What ensued over the next eighteen hours was no less than a miracle.

In her broken English, as Yvonne slept off the poison, Dr. Muramata explained to me that in addition to being a physician, she was also an ordained Christian minister who secretly led a congregation of over a thousand people every Sunday evening in the basement where we were at the time. She walked me down a corridor not far from the ER, which expanded, into a huge area containing several mats. She understood the possibility of persecution and/or death in Malaysia for owning a Bible, preaching the Gospel, and speaking the name of God or Jesus. She was a brave woman carrying out her calling of physical and spiritual healing. We were kindred spirits who lived thousands of miles apart and finally met on that day. We communicated through our laughter and through our prayers and later through our emails.

The next day, Yvonne's health had been restored and all three of us had been renewed with courage and strength. We shared tears of joy. Now we share memories. We wished we could write our story and put it in the Bible. Maybe it's already there.

