

HOMELESS WITH 4 CATS

On **1/12/2021** the Lord gave me a vision of me stroking my cat's head with a pen. **End of vision.** That vision reminded me of a homeless woman I met in November of 2019. I first noticed her sitting under an awning in front of a store that had gone out of business. As I slowly cruised by to survey the situation, I noticed all sorts of paraphernalia strewn around her - sleeping bags, blankets, a utility wagon, and even cat carriers. Cat carriers? Intrigued, I decided to investigate.

Darla (not her real name), was newly arrived in town and homeless. I asked her if she had cats. She said that yes she had four "babies", two in each carrier. I offered her some food from my goody bag that I always kept well stocked for the homeless. She informed me that she only ate organic, but the Kind bars would fit the bill. I noticed she was wearing a green beanie with a pompom on top, but no gloves. So I asked if she needed gloves. She said yes, so I gave her some. Then she commented that her beanie made her scalp itch. I said I had a spare beanie too.

A few days later, I saw her again. This time I noticed she was wearing a white beanie. The green beanie and the black one I gave her were nowhere in sight. I asked what happened to the other two beanies. She said that she had returned them to Walmart. The next time I saw her, the white beanie was gone too. I asked her if she had returned it too. She said yes.

Once she asked me to return a blanket to Walmart for her. I asked her why couldn't she return it herself since she was in there every day. She said that she had been "banned" from making any more returns at Walmart. I asked why and she said that they told her that she had "exceeded her quota of allowable returns". I couldn't help it, but I found this quite amusing. Then she picked up the blanket from off the ground, gave it a quick shake, and said she had her receipt. I told her no because the blanket had been used and I did not want to return a used product.

Another time Darla commented that she really wished she had a 2-person pop-up tent. So I went to the camping store to find one for her. They were out of 2-person pop up tents, but they did have a 2-person tent with stakes that advertised a quick 10-minute assembly. When I gave it to her, she said that it was too hard to assemble, she needed one that was fast and easy to put together. I said that Jerry (not his real name), a homeless guy that we both knew, would help her assemble it. She said "Did you think I was going to put it up in the woods? It was for my cats on the pavement. I can't go into the woods! I'll get raped!" Then she kept repeating over and over that she would get raped in the woods. I assured her it was just a simple misunderstanding and that I didn't realize the purpose of the tent.

As I was driving away, she ran after my car, waving her arms to get me to stop. She said that she had noticed me driving Jerry around in my car. I said yes, I was taking him to church for bible study. She said "You should never ever let a homeless person get into your car. It's not safe". I reminded her that only a few weeks before, she had asked me to drive her someplace. Unfazed, she continued that she didn't trust Jerry and I should never let him in my car. I told her that she didn't need to worry because I was covered in the blood of Jesus and He was going to protect me.

Once I put some hot coffee in two stainless steel thermoses and offered them to Darla and Jerry. Darla asked if the thermos was new. I said no. Then she told me that "it was a rule that all homeless people need their own thermoses" and that it was not

sanitary to reuse thermoses. I said that I ran them through the sanitizing cycle on my dishwasher and that I had drunk from those very same thermoses. Again she insisted that all homeless people need their very own thermoses. After mulling it over, I realized that she was probably right.

One day as I was talking to Jerry, I glanced over and saw Darla sitting at the store front with all her stuff strewn around her. A few minutes later I saw Darla pass by with all her paraphernalia loaded up sky high on her wagon. Her stuff was taller than she was! It was an engineering marvel – all that stuff expertly balanced on one little utility wagon.

Not long after that I received a very disturbing phone call from Jerry. He said that two men had driven up in a pickup truck the night before and stolen her utility wagon. I went to investigate. Darla told me that she was awake when it happened and even managed to record their license plate number. She said there was a cop in the adjacent Walmart parking lot and she had reported the incident to him.

That incident really upset me. How could two grown men who had homes and beds to sleep in every night, steal from a homeless woman who slept outside in the cold on concrete? It was hard enough to imagine one man which such a hard heart, but to think that two of them had conspired to do this, was unconscionable to me.

Soon after that, Darla said she needed to leave the area and move across town. I think the theft really spooked her. Since all her stuff would not fit in my tiny car, I told her I would try to find someone to transport her. So I reached out to a local pastor, who said he would help her. When I stopped by a few days later, she was gone.

SCRIPTURES

ISAIAH 10:2 To rob the needy of justice, And to take what is right from the poor of My people, That widows may be their prey, And that they may rob the fatherless.

ZECHARIAH 7:10 And oppress not the widow, nor the fatherless, the sojourner, nor the poor; and let none of you imagine evil against his brother in your heart.

ISAIAH 59:6 Their webs shall not become garments, neither shall they cover themselves with their works: their works are works of iniquity, and the act of violence is in their hands. 7Their feet run to evil, and they make haste to shed innocent blood: their thoughts are thoughts of iniquity; wasting and destruction are in their paths. 8The way of peace they know not; and there is no justice in their paths: they have made themselves crooked paths: whosoever goes in them shall not know peace.

PROVERB 6:16 These six things does the LORD hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him: 17A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, 18A heart that devises wicked imaginations, feet that are swift in running to evil, 19A false witness that speaks lies, and he that sows discord among brethren.

PSALM 50:16 But unto the wicked God says, What have you to do to declare my statutes, or that you should take my covenant in your mouth? 17Seeing you hate instruction, and cast my words behind you. 18When you saw a thief, then you consented with him, and have been partaker with adulterers. 19You give your mouth to evil, and your tongue frames deceit. 20You sit and speak against your brother; you slander your own mother's son. 21These things have you done, and I kept silence; you thought that I was altogether such a one as yourself: but I will rebuke you, and set them in order before your eyes.

