

## The Accident

### Ulana Ratley

"Mitzy, come help me move Grandpa Joe's flatbed cotton trailer off the dirt road over to the side by the vegetable garden. I can't drive my John Deere Tractor and disk plow around it. That trailer is in the way," said James.

Then Daddy said, "Ulana, you come help too. It will be easier to move if the three of us move this trailer together."

We were going to use "people power" to move the heavy trailer. I felt like a big girl at age six to be helping my parents. Daddy walked behind to push the trailer. Mother stood in front to pull and direct it, and I went to the side of the trailer. As I stood in front of the rear wheel, I thought to myself, "I should not be standing here." It was just one of those instinctual feelings that one has, but ignores and dismisses by thinking that she is just a "worry wart." Well, I should have listened to that little voice. Suddenly my mind went blank, and I was knocked unconscious by the wheel running over me.

The next thing I remember was waking up in our children's bedroom. Everyone was gathered around me, and I was lying on the iron double bed. Mother was covering me up with a large fuzzy blue blanket. Then I passed back out. Aaron, my four year old brother, asked, "Is she dead?"

Mother replied, "No, she is just sleeping. Daddy will take her to see Dr. Davy. I will stay here at home with you and Max while Daddy drives her into town."

It normally takes about twenty minutes to drive five miles to the nearest town, Burkburnett, in our 1953 pale green Plymouth sedan. But on that day, Daddy made it in about ten minutes. He had to drive down the narrow-paved oil field road past a few other farmhouses, pastures, Hereford cattle, and pumping jacks along the way.

Finally I awoke, and this time I was lying on Dr. Davy's cold metal examining table located in his small downtown office on North Avenue D. I quickly sat up and looked around. I immediately recognized where I was. I had been here before for my shots and my ear infections. No one was in the tiny examining room with me. I could see a light coming from the adjoining room. As I stared into the open doorway, I recognized the two men standing there. I saw my Daddy and Dr. Davy looking at the enormous black, gray, and white piece of film-like material that Dr. Davy carefully held up. Dr. Davy had just removed it from the large metal tray of liquid on the table beside him. Suddenly I knew exactly what he held. It was an X-ray of my ribs. I could recognize the bones since I had seen chicken ribs when we ate fried chicken for dinner.

I jumped off the examining table. Then I ran into the other room to see my X-ray. Dr. Davy stated, "James, I don't see any broken ribs here. Ulana sure was fortunate since she is so young, and her bones are flexible."

Daddy replied, "I am so relieved and thankful that Ulana's rib cage is not broken. It is a miracle that she is alive."

I stood there and asked, "What am I doing here? How did I get here? When are we going home?"

"Ulana, you were run over when you stood in front of that rear trailer wheel. You were unconscious so I brought you here for Dr. Davy to examine you."

"I feel fine. I want to go home and play with my brothers, Aaron and Max," I replied.

Since I was awake, alert, and the X-rays looked fine, Daddy drove me home. I was fortunate that "nothing" was broken.

Mother always said that it seemed like a miracle that Daddy had been given that surge of power. As soon as Daddy saw me pulled underneath that rear wheel, his adrenalin must have kicked in him. He lifted that 1,000 pound flatbed cotton trailer and pulled me out from under it. Normally he would not have been able to lift that heavy trailer.

Later as a teenager, I kept having sinus trouble and trouble breathing. Finally, as an adult, I went to see Dr. Railsback, my ears, nose and throat doctor. He made an X-ray of my nasal area. He discovered that I had a deviated septum. He asked, "Did you ever have a broken nose?"

I thought for a few minutes, and could not think of breaking any bones in my body. Suddenly I remembered that day when I was six years old when I was run over by the rear tire of that 1,000 pound trailer. Mother had always said that the trailer ran over the length of my entire body from head to toe. It must have broken my nose when that rear tire ran over me. Dr. Davy had not X-rayed my head. So I agreed to have deviated septum surgery and also have the bump removed from my nose. I was happy with my new nose and being able to breathe normally. It gave me a boost of self-confidence. I am so thankful that my Daddy saved my life that day back in 1955.