

MIKE was on parole, fresh from his prison experience, yet growing in the new relationship with Jesus Christ he had found there.

SHELA was confined to a wheelchair, having spent her life within the boundaries of the muscle disease that crippled her body.

HE knew life on the streets and within prison walls—the ugliness and rage that would haunt his days.

SHE knew a loving family that had adopted her in infancy, caring for her multiple needs and raising her alongside their four birth sons.

MIKE was old beyond his years, discovering for the first time the security of loving relationships.

SHELA was a teenager, enjoying high school and friends.

HE found God in his late thirties, broken and bitter, needing a Savior.

SHE found Him as a seven-year-old and said He made her “all clean”.

MIKE spotted her at church, a wasted figure, with a quick, “joy-full” smile.

SHELA smiled at him, unfazed by his criminal past.

SHE seemed to him as imprisoned by her body as he had been by those walls.

HE seemed to her a cocky sort of guy who wasn’t bothered by her handicaps and made her laugh (an easy thing to do).

THEY became friends—these two shades of God’s grace.

MIKE and his girlfriend took Shela window shopping and out to eat.

SHELA liked Mike’s girlfriend and they, too, became close.

SHELA began college with its unfamiliar barriers and new challenges.

MIKE began a committed courtship, amazed at God’s goodness.

MIKE and his fiancée asked Shela to be in their wedding.

SHELA shared their joy and excitement and became part of their lives.

MIKE and his fiancée included Shela in their wedding plans as they waited for the Big Day.

SHELA could not know that her Big Day was coming, too.

MIKE AND HIS BRIDE walked down the aisle, but Shela wasn’t there. The hospital had beckoned one last time.

THEY left the church and brought Shela’s bridesmaid’s bouquet to the emergency room.

SHELA cried.

MIKE AND HIS WIFE began a home of their own.

GOD called Shela to her home prepared by Him.

New beginnings for them both.

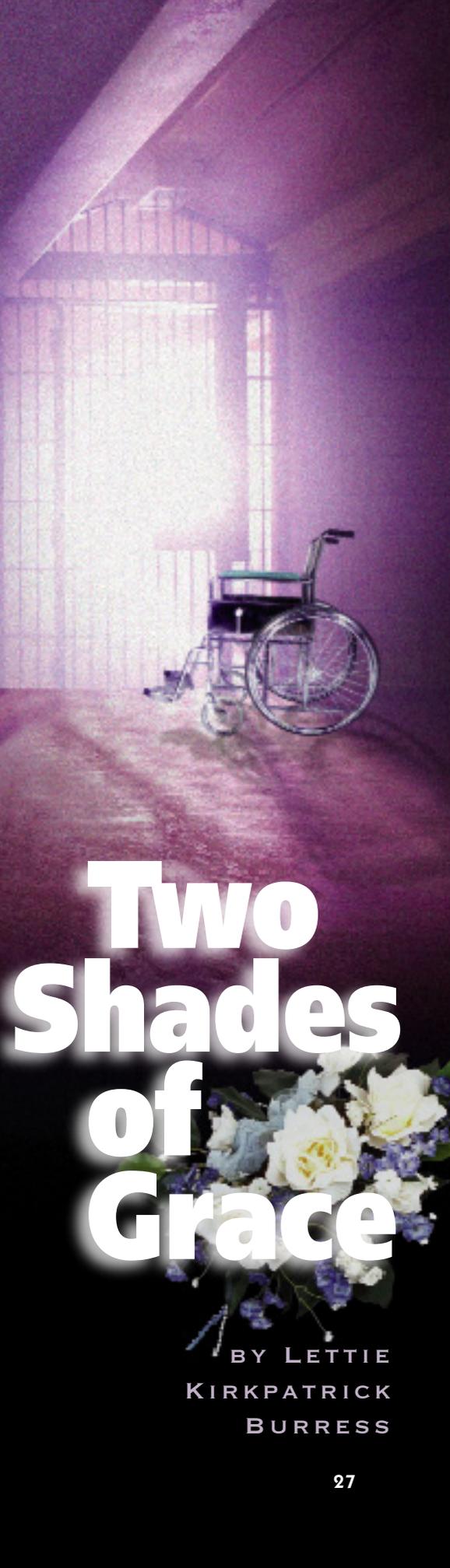
MIKE said Shela had been the freest person he’d ever known.

SHELA said goodbye to us, hello to Him.

SHELA was my daughter.

MIKE is my friend. □

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Two Shades of Grace

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