

Lucky Underwear – first draft (625 words)

By Sue Jeffrey

It was 1984 and I was in the car with my teammate, Jane, on the way to play cricket. I didn't have a car and was dependent on getting a lift to the game so Jane volunteered. Jane was a bowler and I was the wicket keeper and we both played for the University of Queensland B team. We had a great time chatting about all kinds of things as we drove to the playing field. The sky was blue and the sun was warm on my skin. The car window was open and the breeze helped blast away the Brisbane humidity. It was a lovely day to play sport – and we were happy because we had a good chance of beating the other team.

We began to discuss strategy. How could we win? What was our edge? I'm not sure which of us started it but for some reason we began talking about luck. Most sporting people are superstitious and cricketers are no exception. When now retired Indian batsman, Sachin Tendulkar, played he *always* put his left pad on before the right one. Former Australian cricket captain, Steve Waugh, was once given a red handkerchief by his grandmother. He made sure that it was in his pocket every time he played, for good luck. On this sunny Saturday I confessed to Jane that I was wearing the same pair of undies and socks as I wore the week before when we won, so that they would bring us good luck this week. I emphasised that I *had* washed them. Jane laughed and admitted she'd done the same thing. We giggled for a few minutes then Jane tilted her head in a thoughtful way and said, 'Mind you, I shouldn't be superstitious because I'm a Christian.'

My immediate internal response was *not another one*.

I was surrounded by Christians. My main group of friends at University included two Catholics, a Baptist, a Pentecostal, a member of the Apostolic Church and an atheist. By that stage I believed there was a God because I could see his hand in nature but I wasn't sure if I wanted to 'follow Jesus'. I guess you could say I was a theist. But something was drawing me. The Christians in my year had a light in their life that I didn't have – and my atheist friends didn't have.

In that moment I could see that Jane had the same light in her.

We drove the rest of the way to the game in silence as I thought through the implications of my discovery. *If she's got this light too then I have to take this seriously. I have to research this properly. I want this light in me.*

I often wonder if she thought she'd offended me with her words. I never told her that that conversation was the turning point in my life. That it made me determined to seek Christ until I found him and his light. I didn't become a Christian straight away. It took several months of serious seeking before I asked Jesus into my life and found his light in the person of the Holy Spirit. By then the cricket season had ended and I'd lost touch with Jane. I wonder sometimes if she thought I went quiet because I was offended that she said she was a Christian.

Sometimes as Christians we think we have to be gifted with wise, persuasive words if we want to change someone's life. We have to know the four spiritual laws or whatever the trending equivalent is in the church we attend. My experience is that while wise words have their place, they are no substitute for love, an open heart, and God's Holy Spirit.