

# EXTREME GRACE

## The Attack of the Killer Carts

BY DICK DUERKSEN

I was at Wal-Mart, no longer shopping, but returning to my car, which was parked a healthy walk across the lot. My arms were full of nuts, cereals, and spaghetti sauce, and the requisite afternoon thunderstorm was at least ten minutes away.

Then I was attacked.

A North Dakota wind snuck over to central Florida and dove into the parking lot. All around me things began to move. Two McDonalds cups. Napkins. Empty boxes. Half a news-paper. And eight shopping carts.

I ignored the cups and paper, and watched the carts. Each one seemed guided by a CIA drone plane. They snaked across the lot, heading inexorably toward the three cars parked on the outskirts of Costco. Three attacked my car. Two others targeted a new Nissan Z-car, and the others charged a Mercedes.

I sprinted to the car I share with Sun Trust Bank, set down the groceries, and began intercepting the oncoming carts.

They were moving fast. Not just quickly. HOT and HEAVY!!

As I deflected the starboard cart, another one slammed into my shin, leaving a Tiger Balm bruise. One of

the carts that had been going for the Z saw that I was (sort-of) winning, and adjusted to take me out.

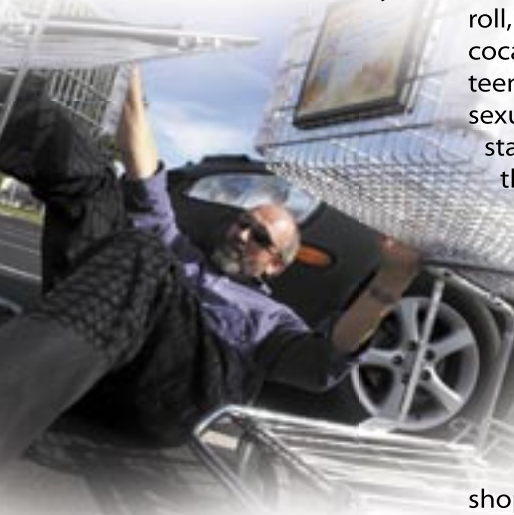
The next few seconds I dove, bumped, tipped over, and otherwise

attacked the attackers.

Then the wind relaxed and the life went out of the carts.

There was a big dent in the side of the Mercedes, and a scratch on the Z's front bumper. Four carts lay dead at my feet.

I sat beside them and contemplated my life. Almost everything possible had gone wrong that day, and now even the shopping carts were after me! I wanted to cry. And I wanted to shout and dance a victory dance over the carcasses of the enemy.



I am amazed at how many demons the devil must have dedicated to my ruin, and at how many things they can make go wrong on any given day. I'm also amazed at what weird jobs they have!

Some are committed to breaking things I need—like lawnmowers, light switches, bicycle tires, and toilet tanks. Others masquerade as drivers who do not use turn signals, pushy telemarketers, and neighbor dogs that bark incessantly. And, even as wind-driven shopping carts.

And it's not just me they're after! We're each on his list of legal targets, personally selected for *ATTACK!*, and assigned a minion of smart-aleck demons and big-fisted bullies.

They're everywhere, energetically chasing away patience, and pouring us full of frustration, irritability, and hopelessness.

I'm amazed at the devil's prowess. BUT, I'm also amazed at God's resourceful response.

"There's nothing the devil can do," God promises through 1 Corinthians 10:13, "that you and I cannot handle together. Trust Me! I'll never allow him to push you beyond your limit. Whatever he throws at you, I've already prepared a way out and will help you come through it."

"I will never let you down."

Not when the shopping carts roll, or the dogs bark, or the cocaine dealers return, or your teen mentions that she's become sexually active, or the car won't start, or *whenever* the demons throw their weight your way.

"I will never let you down."

Not even when you're holding hands with the enemy and sprinting off to do his bidding. *Even then!* God extends his personalized "Way Out."

"I will never let you down."

I sat beside the tumbled shopping carts and thought about the battle.

Then I remembered the 75<sup>th</sup> Psalm, leaned back against the car, and smiled. "When the earth goes topsy-turvy and nobody knows which end is up, God nails it all down and puts everything in place again. He says to the smart alecks, 'That's enough,' and to the bullies, 'Not so fast.'"<sup>1</sup>

"I will never let you down."

<sup>1</sup> Bible texts are paraphrased from *The Message*.