

LOVE

FINDING WHAT YOU NEED IN A WORLD

LIVES

TELLING YOU WHAT YOU WANT

HERE

MARIA GOFF

Foreword by BOB GOFF, husband and author

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PUBLISHING GROUP
NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE

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Printed in the United States of America

978-1-4336-4891-5

Published by B&H Publishing Group
Nashville, Tennessee

Dewey Decimal Classification: 306.85
Subject Heading: CHRISTIAN LIFE \ FAMILY LIFE \
DOMESTIC RELATIONS

Author is represented by Alive Literary Agency,
7680 Goddard Street, Suite 200, Colorado Springs, CO 80920,
www.aliveliterary.com.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 • 21 20 19 18 17

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Foreword

by Bob Goff

None of us really fall in love. We just stop making everything about ourselves, and love floods into the space selfishness leaves behind when it leaves the room. That's what happened to me when I met Maria thirty-two years ago.

I wasn't looking for a wife at the time. That is, until I met Maria—then I was looking for a wife. Here was my problem: She wasn't looking for me. When you find the right person, something changes inside of you. Food doesn't taste the same, movies aren't as entertaining as they used to be, and hanging out with your friends doesn't sound as fun anymore. All you want to do is be together with the person you've given your heart away to. I think God wired us from the factory for this kind of love and

connection. Love without connection doesn't have much shelf life. Neither does connection without love.

After trying to get Maria to like me back for quite a while, I took a knee and got out a partial, heart-in-the-throat marriage proposal to her. It was only partial, because right after I got out the words "Maria, will you . . . ?" I got all choked up and couldn't finish the sentence. You see, I'm emotionally incontinent—which is a real problem if you're a trial lawyer.

Maria leaned down and gently held my face in her hands and said, "Marry me?" I nodded yes and she nodded yes, too.

None of us complete each other, but we can add a few words to the lives of the people around us to help them understand God's bigger plan for all of us. This is what Maria has done in this book. She's offered a few words to help us understand what she has been learning from Jesus while she's been loving her family and the people around her.

I'm a lawyer. I memorize things for a living. The things I'm still trying to memorize about love and faith and people, Maria just does naturally. Don't get me wrong. She's not perfect by any means. If you give her a box of See's candy, she'll take one out, bite the bottom off and if she doesn't like it, she'll put the part of the candy she didn't

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eat back in the box. What kind of a person does that and doesn't even feel bad about it? That's just wrong.

A man named Paul wrote letters to his friends, which make up a great deal of the Bible. In one of those letters he said that God would finish what He started in us. Just like Maria finished my halting proposal, I'm banking on the notion that God isn't finished with any of us yet. I bet heaven can't wait to see what sentences He'll complete through each of us. Still, we need to start it, so He can complete it. This book is about starting where love lives—in your home, in your neighborhood, and in your life.

It's been more than thirty years since Maria and I said "I do," and she's still completing my sentences. I'm glad she does, too, because she makes mine better when she does. Authentic love does this for each of us. It whispers the words we're missing and is gracious enough to let us think we came up with them ourselves. The words in this book aren't just good. Good words are pretty easy to find. Almost anyone can come up with a few of them. These words are true, which is a little less common. They aren't just words about hopes either; they're about what happens when you actually let love invade your heart, your family, and your home. A lot of people want a great life; what I've watched Maria do is live a great life.

Maria isn't like me. In many ways you couldn't find two more different people. I'm outgoing and loud and wave my arms in the air a lot. Being around people is oxygen to me. The more, the better. In contrast, Maria is wise and brilliant and kind and shy. She thinks having me in the room is a lot of people. Seeing Maria at an event is like spotting a unicorn. Everyone likes talking to Maria because she is humble and loving and lives entirely without pretense or disguise. She doesn't need the attention or validation my own insecurity demands. She's able to do this for one reason. She knows who she is and finds her security in Jesus rather than finding it in other people's approval.

It's not easy living with a guy who lives like Red Bull sponsors him. John Wesley wrote in his diary at age eighty-three, "Laziness is slowly setting in; I am finding it increasingly difficult to get out of bed before five in the morning." I can relate. When espresso needs to wake up, it drinks me. Most of the time, I feel like the dog in the movie *Up* getting distracted by a squirrel. I get up with the chickens every day full of ideas and ready to start something new. Maria has been wise enough to pick things that last long enough for her to continue to work on each day. She takes things like her family and her faith and her friends so seriously, she's not head-faked by the transient distractions that get me off message. Unfortunately, all of this energy has been driving the people I love the most nuts. Nevertheless,

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Maria always knows the right things to say to me at just the right times. She doesn't need to fight for my attention; people who are devoted to the things Jesus talked about get it without needing to ask.

Maria says I'm addicted to happiness. She knows all about personality profiles and reminds me often of which one fits me. Until I met her, I thought an Enneagram was a breakfast cereal. When I say something that's just a little too happy for the circumstances or get distracted by my own enthusiasm, she'll say, "A *seven* always does that." Perhaps. Still, she helps me get ready in the morning so I don't run out the front door with one pant leg tucked into my sock. Apparently, *sevens* do that too. We're not trying to figure each other out; we're trying to find each other out. Figuring each other out sounds like a project; finding each other out sounds like an adventure together.

We all sort through piles of other people's words every day, sometimes without even knowing we're doing it. The best words don't really find us; we find them. Eventually, we pick a couple for ourselves and start using them to describe what matters most to us. Once we've picked all of the words we have time to pick, we call it our life. I've been trying to pick better words. Kinder and more generous words. Most of the best words I've found about love and faith and family I've learned from Maria.

There are plenty of things I don't know about. I don't know what makes us yawn or why some people are right-handed and others left, or why you can't fold a piece of paper more than seven times, but this I'm certain of: We'll be known for our opinions, but we'll be remembered for our love. Maria has spent her whole life loving people, and it's what she'll be remembered for. She's helped our family pick more accurate words and less distracting ones, more encouraging words and less critical ones, more authentic words and less phony ones. She didn't do this by telling us what to say, but by showing us how to live.

I'll tell you one last thing about Maria. One time when I was stuck while I was working on a writing project, she sent me this text message: "Every word in the universe is hoping you'll pick them." Kind words from the people we love have the power to help us all understand who we are and what we want our lives to mean. Of all of the words ever spoken, the words in this book are the ones Maria picked for us. They're good, they're true, and they will lead you home. Let me introduce to you the most humble and impressive woman I've ever met in my life, my wife, Sweet Maria Goff.

Introduction

When I was young, there was a small pond near our home. I would drop small sticks in the water and watch them lay suspended on the surface. The ripples would go outward as I would lean over, blow a puff of wind, and then watch the mirror-like surface go dark with small ripples and carry my stick to the other side. This wasn't any old piece of wood; it was a courageous vessel—able to stand up against the tallest seas the pond could throw at it. In my young mind, I was the wind, I made the waves, and I was the boat.

Over the years, more wind blew in my life, just like it might have done in yours, and I discovered that I was neither the wind nor the waves nor the boat. I was just the confused kid on the edge of the pond looking at my reflection and trying to understand who it was that I was looking at.

I didn't write this book because I think we need more information, more steps, or more instructions on how to

lead a meaningful life. Instead, I think we all can benefit from times of honest reflection. It's not often that we have the chance to lean over our own lives and try to make sense of them.

The pages in this book are the vignettes of my life I came across when I began leaning over mine and took a hard look at who God had made me to be. To do this, I couldn't just look on the surface, I had to go deeper. Not surprisingly, I've learned a couple things while doing this. I've been reminded that we are not the things we've done nor the things which have been done to us. We're not the successes we've had or the painful mistakes we've made. Instead, each of us is a reflection of Jesus amongst all of these things that have occurred in our lives. My hope is that you find some portion of your unique and God-given reflection in these pages just as I did while writing them.

The stories in this book are about the people I love the most and what I've learned from them. It's about blowing it and having a patient God remind me that it's His pond we're playing in, not ours. It's about finding the courage to launch more sticks when the ones I valued the most were lost at sea. I wrote this book because I decided that getting to the other side of the pond was worth the effort involved in the crossing and that the way across lies beneath the surface.

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We all have a couple versions of ourselves, perhaps more. One is the kid with the stick, a chest full of wind, and a childlike faith. This is the version of ourselves that some of us have cheerfully found and others have reluctantly lost. Paul said in one of his letters to a friend named James that sometimes life is like looking in a mirror and then forgetting our appearance. I think I know what he meant. I remember as a young person seeing myself in the reflection on the surface of the water. I saw someone who was young, cheerful, full of energy and hope and courage. Soon, the busyness of life happened and I forgot what that person looked like. To be honest, I welcomed this because I'm not proud of what many of my younger years held.

Sometimes we try to forget our past. We mask it, or medicate it, or try to ignore it completely, but we can only outrun it for a while. Eventually, we need to return to the pond, see our reflections again, and understand who we are now, by remembering where we've been. It takes some heavy lifting to do this, and I've needed to do the majority of it from my knees. But understanding who God wants me to become has been worth the work, because it made me look beneath the surface of my life. I hope there will be something in this book that will help you look beneath yours, too.

Most of us don't even remember when we walked away from our pond. We don't know why it happened, but we

might know *how* it happened. Perhaps we stopped dreaming. Maybe we suspended our belief in the goodness of God. Somehow we stopped letting our small sticks set sail. We stopped trusting the wind to get us to the other side, and we settled for life on the surface rather than finding it in our depth. The reason for this is simple. Going deep can be scary. Remembering some of the snapshots in this book has unraveled me at times. It has been all at once beautiful and painful, and I've felt myself sinking more than once.

It's not the first time someone has experienced the same sinking feeling I've experienced, of course. It happened to a man named Peter when Jesus invited him out on the water. He stepped out on the surface of the water, but he didn't stay there long. It wasn't on the surface where Peter found his need for Jesus; it was only when he started going a little deeper that he became desperate enough to call out to God for help. The same is true for you and me.

I don't want to live life on the surface anymore. I'm willing to bet you don't, either. The thought occurred to me that some of these reflections might sink me if I wrote them down, because then I'd need to deal with them. I also realized the greater possibility that calling them out just might save me. When I hesitated, I reminded myself that it's in the sinking where we find our rescue. Like Peter, it's getting beneath the surface that lets us realize our absolute need for a Savior.

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There's another version of ourselves that lies somewhere under the surface. It's the one shaped and scarred by tremendous joy and painful loss. It is equally us, it's just a different version. This version of ourselves is not one we're accustomed to letting people see, because it resides in the recesses of our lives. It takes time and energy and moments of deep reflection for us to see this version of ourselves. It's not the depth that blocks our view; it's the clutter on the surface that does. It's our instinct to flee, to escape pain rather than confront it. But it's in the engagement that we continue to grow.

It's been a while since I've been back to that pond. I knew if I went back and took a good hard look, I'd expect to see a much older version of me, but I'd also hope to see a wiser one, too. There have been many changes in my life over the years. Perhaps the largest one has been that I'm no longer looking at the reflection on the surface to understand my life, my faith, or anyone else's. I've been looking a little deeper.

The stories in this book are what I've found out about my own life. They're in no particular order; they're a scrapbook full of snapshots, not an encyclopedia about my life. They include both joy and pain and everything in between.

I've learned that we each need to see what's at the bottom of ourselves to understand more fully what everyone else sees on the surface. This book is my attempt to find my

way back to the pond again, to look into it a little deeper and see a reflection of Jesus instead of just seeing all of my failings and flaws. It's also a standing ovation to all of you who have had the guts and the grit to return to your own ponds and launch a couple sticks across it. It's a prayer for those of you who, like me, have taken on a little water on the trip, and it's an invitation for all of us to lean in over our lives and begin to see ourselves the way Jesus sees us.

The pond isn't just the surface or the bottom. You aren't either. Most of what makes it up lies somewhere in the middle—between the clutter on the surface and the depth of the bottom. This is the exact spot where Jesus continues to stand in all of our lives. Right in the middle.

It's where love lives.

CHAPTER 1

The Lodge

We've changed a lot since the night the Lodge burned down.

It's odd how much I still remember about that night. It makes me wonder if God spends much time thinking about who we were and all of the details surrounding the difficulties we've experienced in our lives. I know He could remember everything if He wanted to, but I can't help but wonder if He thinks that the fires we've endured don't matter as much as the future He's promised us. Certainly God uses everything in our lives; nothing is wasted. But among His favorite questions for us isn't where we've been and what we've been through, but "Where do we go from here?" Like the disappointments we've all experienced, what stands out in my memory of the fire are just a few snapshots. The phone call, the family gathered close, standing next to the charred foundations, and the smell of

smoke. I think God wired a lot of us to remember just a few parts of our pain, because He knows we don't need all of the details to remember the lessons we've learned.

We're making plans to rebuild the Lodge one step at a time. We don't know for certain what it will look like, but my bet is that it's pretty close to what we had. It was a bad day for us, to be sure, but not as bad as it was for Lloyds of London who insured the Lodge against fires. It could have been so much worse. Our agent said in jest they'd insure us again if we promised not to have any matches or fireplaces or stoves or careless painters on the property.

Nothing remains of the Lodge. The intensity of the fire even destroyed the foundations. That takes a lot of heat. But you know what? I'm kind of glad it did. If there were even one old charred beam still standing after the fire, I'd be tempted to use it to rebuild.

We do this all the time in our personal lives, too. We keep scorched pieces from our biggest failures and incorporate them into our lives as we rebuild ourselves. It's not a good construction practice with wood, and it doesn't make for a good future when we do it with our lives, because it only reminds us of our past. Sometimes we're best served to start all over. This takes getting the foundations out, too. This doesn't mean we get rid of our faith; far from it. We do this because sometimes God wants us to rebuild our lives from scratch. It's what I've done a couple times.

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Maybe you have, too. We start over in our lives the same way we'll start over at the Lodge—we'll make it a holy place again, nothing more and nothing less. Sometimes getting there requires clearing absolutely everything away from what we had, or who we were. Doing this is both simple and hard, yet we all get to decide whether we'll do what is required. And for the courageous at heart, we simply start again.

When we've suffered loss, starting again always feels like a gamble. Will we risk it all, knowing it might all just burn down again? Each of us has to decide if we'll ante up and play another hand, or push away from the table and call it a day. I don't think God gambles. He doesn't need to. He sees the future and because He does, He already sees the beauty we've yet to find in the rebuilding. He doesn't just make beauty from the ashes; He makes something far better. He shapes us into who we're becoming.

Sure, we could fill in the charred hole where the Lodge once was. We could make a sand volleyball court or put in a deck and some picnic tables. We could make it look like there was never a loss there. I've done that in my life more than a few times. We asked our grown kids what they wanted to build in the place where the Lodge used to be and with one voice they said they wanted to rebuild it. We all wanted back what was lost. It's a question worth asking for each of us, after we've had a setback or two in

our lives, whether they are big or small. Do we want what we've had, or do we want something different for our lives? Sometimes different isn't better—it's just different.

The Lodge is a place we built in Canada, which has become a place of rest for all of us. It isn't the easiest destination to visit. In fact, it's pretty difficult to get to. The only way in is by boat or seaplane. There are no roads or power lines or water lines for a hundred miles in the shortest direction and a thousand miles in the longest. We make our electricity from a river, which carries the snowmelt off of a glacier on the property to the edge of the ocean where we live. We get our water from one of a dozen waterfalls on the property. We grow vegetables in our gardens and catch fish and crabs from the ocean inlet behind the Lodge, which is more than a thousand feet deep. The only reason Bob ever flies out of the inlet to the store is to fill up on ice cream and Pop-Tarts. I know. Don't judge him. Our only neighbor for ten thousand square miles is the Young Life camp next door called Malibu.

This part of the world is beyond beautiful. The azure sky, snowcapped mountains, giant cedar trees, and miles of far-reaching inlets are unlike anything I've ever seen. Photographs don't capture the magnitude of pure beauty. The mountains on our property start at sea level and soar

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to over ten thousand feet in some places. At our home in San Diego, we discover a seagull or two and are wowed. Up at the Lodge, there's a forest full of animals. Bears, bald eagles, and baby seals are common sights, and it's not unheard of for a pod of orcas or a gray whale to make a silent and grand appearance.

We bought this property years ago, and it's been our life's work to build a place where people can come and get the rest they need. We've deed-restricted thousands of acres of forest in the inlet so they can never be commercially logged. Most of what we don't own is known as "Crown Land" and will never be owned by anyone but the government of British Columbia. We built the Lodge itself to have dozens of places for people to sleep. We constructed it out of beautiful, huge cedar logs. Each one was hewn by hand in a yearlong painstaking process with a drawknife. Each log perfectly fit to the log below it. Not even an ant could fit through a crack in the massive three-story building.

At the camp next door, hundreds of high school and college volunteers spend their summers serving the thousands of high school students who come to Malibu as campers. These volunteers wash dishes, clean toilets, cook, and mow lawns at the camp. With very little sleep, they try to make each week for the campers the best week of their lives. What I've always liked most is how they show God's love by what they do more than what they say. The

campers aren't the only big winners; the volunteers are too. They develop friendships and make memories, which will last them a lifetime.

A dozen or more times each summer, we invite all of the camp volunteers to come over to the Lodge. We fill them up with cookies, iced tea, banana bread, and hugs. But our real joy is to see them find some well-deserved rest. I've lost count of the exact number of people we've welcomed into the Lodge, but it's been thousands. It's hard to take a break on a day off at camp if you can still hear and see others working hard. So, we invite the volunteers over to come aside and rest. The Lodge is a place to leave our shoes at the door, curl up on dog beds, leather sofas, and overstuffed chairs. It's a place to take the time to stop and breathe.

Because we know what we had, what we lost, and what we want, we'll start again. We'll cut the logs, stack them high, and fill the new Lodge with new memories. We decided there's not much we'd want to change this next time around. Maybe we'll put in a couple fire sprinklers, but who knows. While I'm not certain about all of the details of the reconstruction, here's what I know we'll do. We'll build something that will serve who we've become, not just repeat who we were. The biggest mistake we could all make in our lives is to rebuild things we've outgrown or to live in constant fear that we might lose what we have all

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over again. It won't be the fires that destroy our lives and our faith. It will be obsessing over not getting burned again that will.

Early on, I thought it was a little strange when people described Jesus' message as "good news" when what Jesus actually said is if we followed Him we'd suffer loss. Tremendous loss. A lifetime full of it. More than we can ever imagine. Painful, searing, dream-crushing losses. He said if we did it right, it would eventually even cost us our lives. If that's the good news, it kind of makes you wonder what the bad news is. There will be people we put our confidence in who will fail us. There will be relationships which should have gone wonderfully right, and they will go horribly wrong. What I'm learning is that the good news in our faith isn't found in avoiding the pain, but in living through the loss, walking through the ashes, and stacking the logs once more knowing they could burn down again. What has been growing inside of me is a confidence that whatever it is we put our efforts into, it's God's, and He can do whatever He wants with what we build in our lives.

We have a routine before heading up the inlet every summer. It's been the same whether we had a Lodge there or a pile of ashes. The transition to get up to Canada always includes a lot of planning and packing and filling a landing craft full of food, supplies, and clothes. Some people are good at transitions. I'm not. My best excuse is that I am a

nine on the Enneagram scale. Apparently, nothing sucks the life out of nines more than transitions. Moving from place to place pushes all the wrong buttons inside of me in just the right order. Still, I know what it's meant to our family to spend our summers together in Canada, so I'm happy to do the work. I'm willing to leave places I love to be with people I love more. I wonder if Jesus felt a little the same leaving heaven to be with us.

Arrival day in Canada means unpacking and storing everything and then assessing just how harsh the winter was on the property. There are always a few broken branches on walkways and in flowerbeds, pine needles in the rain gutters, and loose rocks that have fallen on the roads. We affectionately call doing all of this work "waking up the Lodge." While none of it is easy work, it's good for the soul. We all need to wake ourselves up once in a while, too. To take a good look at what's accumulated in the seasons of our lives and deal with it. Oftentimes I don't want to do this. You may not want to, either. But, we need to do it anyway. Don't be afraid to roll up your sleeves and move some of the debris or knock down the cobwebs that have amassed in your life and your faith over time.

This year, when we packed to leave for Canada after the fire, I wasn't sure what we would need. On the one hand, since we lost almost everything, it was pretty easy to figure out what should be on the list to bring—everything.

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On the other hand, it wasn't easy, because what we really needed was to go and be sad and grieve for a while. I didn't know how to pack for that.

A number of years ago, we had built a small house just down from the Lodge and named it the Writer's Cabin. It's hard to believe, but almost a decade after its construction, we had never spent the night there. A few friends have stayed there over the years to work on songs or write books, but we would only visit to drop off cookies and check in on them to make sure the slow writing process hadn't killed them. Now, without the Lodge, it was our time to move in there. What we found when we got to the cabin was that it had everything we needed. There were a couple plates, some silverware, and a trustworthy coffee-pot. We were reminded again about the beauty of simplicity in our lives. These lessons often come at a staggering personal cost but are worth every penny.

We have friends who live on the Lodge property year-round. Some people would call them caretakers, but they're much more than that to us. Thankfully, Paul and Dorothee were in one of the other buildings on the property when the fire happened. Losing the Lodge was hard on them too. They led the original crew who built it. After the fire, they thoughtfully helped haul away most of the charred debris. It was a miracle that the fire consumed the Lodge and left everything around it intact. There were fuel tanks with

thousands of gallons of aviation fuel, diesel and gas less than one hundred feet from the fire. If the tanks had gone up in flames, so would the entire forest. I call it a miracle. I am not exactly sure how angels work, but I keep imagining a team of them, covered in soot, standing shoulder to shoulder with singed wings keeping the fireball from destroying the forest and surrounding buildings.

Each time we walked past the crater where the Lodge used to be, we hauled away a little more of the charred bushes, trees, and pieces of melted metal and glass. Doing it all at once would have been too much for us, but doing it a little at a time was better. I think we're all this way. Most of us can deal with our losses a little at a time. Going slow gave me the time to find an object buried in the dirt, pull it out, and try to figure out what it used to be. For some reason I don't fully understand yet, I needed to identify each of the things I found before I could get rid of them. Was it part of a light fixture? A piece of the stove? Hardware from a door? I felt a special kinship with one bent and scorched snowman cookie cutter found in the rubble. It was as if we both knew we'd gone through a lot of trauma. I'd stand there, turning each thing I found around in my hands like they were a puzzle piece, until I could figure out what it was and where it had been before everything went up in flames. I think I had to accept what was lost and properly say goodbye as a necessary part of moving on. To a greater

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or lesser degree, we all need to do this with our sorrow. We have to figure out what it was that we lost and then name it. Even more important than naming it is letting it go. Our motto after the fire became this: “We’re sad, but we’re not stuck.”

We got the whole family together at the place where the Lodge once stood and had a small memorial service. We named things we lost, remembered the beauty of the people who had come over the years, and said goodbye to the Lodge that had been a witness to it all. We reminded ourselves that memories aren’t flammable and reassured ourselves that there would be more to come. We know these new memories won’t replace the old ones, but will stand beside them as silent witnesses to the goodness of God and the resilience hope gives us all.

Every time a wave of emotion hits me, I’m still surprised. Just when I’m feeling a little bit stronger, the tears come and then disappear just as fast. We don’t need to understand what we feel in order to experience it deeply. Life can be painful. It’s what we do next that becomes who we are. What some of us do is medicate our pain with activities and routines. Some of these serve us well and others don’t. Find the ones that help you get more real and do plenty of those. Don’t let pain keep you from going to

deep places, from doing some work on your hurts so you can get on with the important business of living the rest of your life. Sad is okay, stuck isn't helpful.

One thing about pain is that we don't get to decide when we'll deal with it. When the most severe pain arrives, it demands center stage in our lives. Mine hit the hardest when I was pruning the bushes and trees that had been planted next to the Lodge. I'd pruned and clipped them yearly before the fire. Some of the plants had survived the blast of heat and some didn't. I spent hours apologizing to them for letting this happen. Even odder was the lawn in front of the Lodge, which still stretched out like thick green carpet in front of the now empty space the Lodge had occupied. I watched Bob lovingly mow the lawn because it still needed to be done, and the tears would come again. I quickly realized that these things we were doing weren't random chores; they were our personal offerings.

One day as I walked past the burnt foundations I came upon a deer and her fawn. They had wandered in among the rubble and were standing side-by-side. Their noses were up in the wind and their ears perked as they turned their heads toward me in perfect unison. They looked as confused as I was when the fire happened. *What the heck happened here?* is what their expressions seemed to say. I felt like I'd let them down. I whispered back, "Sorry,

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guys,” then reminded myself that the beauty of the Lodge and surrounding trees would return again someday.

Loss visits all of us. None of us gets to opt out. Rather than praying that I never experience loss again, my prayer has been that God would show me what’s possible on the other side of the loss. While we’re waiting to find out what God might have for us, we might be sad for a while but we’re not going to be stuck. We’re going to move forward. Love keeps us going and hope moves our feet.

I’m not much of a basketball player, but if I was, I wouldn’t let the fact that I had missed a shot keep me from taking the next one. Don’t let the fear about what you’ve lost keep you from risking and reaching in your life. Here’s the question I think God asks all of us at some point: What’s your next step? None of us know what God might do next, but we get to decide what we’ll do next. Get back in the arena. Press into the pain. Find new building materials and get back to your life.

The fire might have taken the structure and all of our belongings and precious treasures. Even so, God didn’t burn our Lodge down to show us His power. He didn’t need to. He had already wowed us with our family and friends a long time ago. What I think God does is to allow each of us to go through difficult times to show us His presence through it. It’s as if He reminds each of us in our most difficult circumstances that the most beautiful

LOVE LIVES HERE

waterfalls only happen in the steepest places in our lives. Every time I would look at the gaping hole where the Lodge once stood, I reminded myself that love *still* lives here. Because love doesn't need a building, and it never has—it just needs us.