

THE JOURNEY THROUGH THE LAND OF THE "UNIMAGINABLE STARTING OVER"

"Everything good or bad in my life had started and ended within the limits of that town. It was over now, though, and a new chapter was beginning. Nothing would ever be the same as it had been before. I just hoped this chapter wouldn't be the final one in the book."

— Rose Wynters, Phase One: Identify

If someone would have told me that I was going to lose my children a year ago I would have laughed. If someone would have told me a year ago that I was going to lose the community that raised me, I would have chuckled. If someone would have told me a year ago that I was going to lose my home and all of my possessions, I would have snickered. If someone would have told me a year ago that I would be stalked mercilessly by hackers, I would have mocked them. If someone would have told me a year ago that my best friends would turn against me, I would have rolled my eyes.

It is a not a year ago, it is now. Losing everything is far from funny. My world spun off its axis and I found myself in a place called "the unimaginable starting over." This sad and painful land of staring over is where I now reside. It is a confusing place where I have no true north and navigating through its corridors feels impossible. The simple task of going to the store is an all day journey. The roads are steep and slippery in this new place. Some days I cannot make any headway up these slippery steep roads and I remain in the same place. Other days I make small progress only to find myself sliding backwards the next day.

The people are different here. They are not familiar and they do not recognize me. I don't recognize me in the mirror either, and I don't know where or how I ended up here. I only know how to take one breath at a time in this place. One breath ends and then the other starts, and then I can take the next one. The air

smells clean here and I like the air. I like to take one breath. I don't know what else I like here, but I do know it has good air.

The clocks work the same here, and I can watch the minute hand move on the dial. I can breathe one breath after another breath until a minute passes, and then sure enough when I do it again another minute passes. The time does move forward and the sun rises and sets here just like it used to at my old home. There are no planes or trains that can take me home. This is a place where I breathe the good air and this is where the time goes by one minute to the next. This is where I am. This is a place where the time works the same.

The landscape is filled with beautiful gray shadows. Everything makes a shadow, some big some small, they revolve around the clock. I like the shadows and the air here. I have always loved the gray shadows, I remember thinking that there is magic inside of them when I was a little girl. I move slowly here towards the shadows in my new land. I cannot climb the steep slippery hills, and I cannot seem to navigate around them. I will breathe, and take one minute at a time. I can admire the shadows even if I cannot seem to reach them.

They don't have computers here. I am scared of the computers and the fear tries to steal my air. How do I find my way through this strange place without a computer? The computer is a place for answers, I could use some answers. I am confused, I need to find some answers somewhere. The scary black box is full of answers and information.

I will learn how to not have answers. I am doing it now, one day at a time with one breath at a time. I am so scared of the computers when they have the bad inside of them. The computers can take away things and can hurt me. The computer took a lot from me at my old home. The bad that lived in the black box took pieces of my life and changed it. The bad on the inside pretended to be me and hurt me without hurting me. The bad on the inside of the black box made me look crazy to the people I used to know. I don't want a computer with the bad that steals me ever again.

I don't have the computer phone here either. The computer phone had the bad on the inside too. They both hurt me. The computer phone made my children mad at me. I can't think about my mad children because it makes the air not flow

through my lungs. No mother should have mad children because of a computer phone that is filled with the bad and the ugly. No mother should have children that won't speak to her. I need one more breath, I need to see shadows, and then maybe it will be time for the next minute to start.

The nights here are quiet but not peaceful. My true north is not here. I can see stars but my north star isn't in this sky, it is back at the home that used to be mine. I had better shoes for steep slippery hills at the home that used to be mine. The shoes I have here are not fit for the slippery hills. The shoes I have now keep my feet flat on the ground. Flat grounded shoes are not good for climbing slippery hills. I must find another way to get up those hills. I do like the way the shoes feel on my feet, but I don't like the sliding part. I can feel the heartbeat of the earth pulsing through my feet with these flat shoes that are slippery.

There is music in this new place. The music helps me in the night. It doesn't take place of my true north star, but it fills my head with harmony. Music makes the hurt not hurt quite so much. It helps me to take in the air that smells good, and then the minutes will move on the clock. I know that when the minutes move on the clock it means that the sun is coming up eventually and the dark will go away. I breathe, listen to music, and watch the clock make minutes until the morning comes.

The food tastes different here in the land of the unimaginable starting over. I don't want any food here even though it tastes good. The food does not want to go down my throat because my throat is busy taking in the air. It slowly moves in and out of my lungs through my throat. Food would block this good air. My body is smaller here but it has the air. I like to look at the shadows. I moved slowly toward one and almost got to it. The flat shoes with the heartbeat of the earth in them work well for shadow hunting as long as I stay off the slippery hills. I began to hope for the next time the sun will come up. I was hoping the minutes would hurry along. I haven't hoped for anything to hurry along in a long time.

I found a small piece of hope in this new place. I had the hope for the sun to come up after all of the minutes were finished for the day. I had forgotten how to feel hope... Hope is something that I couldn't find in the old home that has all my

things. I used to search for it in the old home, but I couldn't allow myself to want things. Yet, I found some hope in the land of the unimaginable staring over place. Now I have the good air, the minutes, the pulsating flat shoes, and hope. I am going to hope for the shadows when the minutes make the sun come up after the minutes are finished.

The quest to reach the shadows and the find answers that they held made the minutes go by faster. The air was moving through my lungs more rapidly as the days passed and I began to feel comfortable in my new shoes. I felt solid and one with the ground for the first time. I enjoyed the pulse of the earth massaging my feet, it made me feel comfortable and safe. I was not going to trip or fall over. I liked solid.

Hope was one of the best gifts that I received while I was on my journey in the land of the unbelievable staring over. Hope is something that gave me drive and motivation. I hoped for the sun to rise and I hoped to be successful in my quest to reach the shadows. I began to find a sense of routine once I had the hope. The fear that lives in the dark and confused place was not the only one living inside of me any longer. Hope had joined the fear.

I don't know how many times the sun came up, or how many minutes went by when I finally completed my quest to reach the shadows. I had made it there was all that I knew. I made it there with my flat solid shoes and hope was holding my hand. Hope and I had together entered the shadows.

I have always loved the way the shadows shape and form the clouds, how they cool the morning sunrise, how they take the hard edges off the trees. The shadows give depth to the objects that surround us. The cool calming blue gray has the ability to calm the soul.

Hope and I had made it to the shadows. I was hesitant to enter this magical place that I had sought for such a long time. Having hope with me gave me courage. I had hope that maybe I would find some answers, that maybe I would find a place where I belonged.

The shadows are not as intimidating up close as they are from afar. I felt calm as I approached the edges of the cool gray. I felt more welcomed with every step

into their cool walls. I was not afraid any longer. The shadows took away the fear. I think maybe fear is not allowed in the illusive shadows, or maybe fear is afraid in the land of shadows. Either way fear had finally vacated my precious emotional space. My heart was not as heavy, and the air was moving easily through my lungs.

The gray areas inside the shadows are filled with all of the beauty of the world that people forgot to look for or had forgotten about. There are endless possibilities inside the cool shadows of the morning and the long shadows that fill the late evening time before the stars come out. The gray is where the most beautiful forgotten pieces of souls are stored. The misunderstood is in the shadows, the wrong judgments are there, and the overlooked are there as well.

The shadows are not hard to find, but they are misunderstood and possibly feared by some people. Their calm beauty is taken for granted, and their importance to balance the harsh edges is rarely acknowledged. It takes effort to enter their special dimension, for access is not granted unless they have Hope guiding them.

I found another special new resident to occupy my emotional space in the shadows. I found faith. Faith brings many gifts to every soul that it enters. Faith has a strong presence and sorts through all of the mismatched emotions, and puts them back together with special glue. Faith reorganizes all of the storage closets and small spaces that have become cluttered. She becomes the schoolmaster of the emotional space. Faith runs a tight ship and does not have any tolerance for any runaway delinquents like confusion. There is a zero tolerance bullying policy against uncertainty when Faith is in charge. Faith and Hope are good friends and work well together. Their system of reform has a one hundred percent success rate.

Hope and Faith understand the gray areas. They know the hidden treasures that can be locked inside of a soul. The absence of black and white in the shadows allow these gifts a palace to reside. Faith and Hope report only to God. Their standards are held by him and need not be questioned.

God loves all of his creations and has a plan for all of us. God does not like to watch his children not fulfill the destiny he has planned for them. He will do

all he can to make sure that each of us has the support needed to be what we were intended. He sends in his most powerful workers in times of distress to do some housecleaning and guide us to where we can be whole again.

The beautiful gray shadows that encompass our worlds are occupied with the maybes and the misunderstood. God is the one who judges what is right and wrong and decides guilt, but some people like to try to take over his job. This is why there are so many wonderful treasures hiding in the shadows. The beauty that cannot come out in the sun because someone told them that it was not ok, went to the shadows and hid. God will send hope as a tour guide and once you get there faith will jump on board.

With these two new roommates everyone is beautiful, and everyone is exactly as god intended.

My children are still estranged from me. We are not reconnected as we should be yet, but Faith and Hope are working overtime to make sure that they come back to their mother. My children need to visit the shadows with me when they come back, and hope has promised to be the tour guide.

Wrongful judgments hide in the shadows. Once judgments are made they cannot be undone. It doesn't matter if the judgments that are made by man are right or wrong. For the minutes still only go forward, the past cannot be undone. The tomorrows and the next minutes are all that matters.

My heart is big, my intentions are pure, and the love I have to give does not have any boundaries. I am what God intended and I will never not be true to that person again. He made me this way for a reason and my gifts are unique. With these gifts, Faith and Hope, I am able to be what he intended.

The journey through the land of the "UNIMAGINABLE STARTING OVER" has been a blessing.