

Make a Resolution to Dream Again

I have started and stopped and deleted posts about a million times in the past few weeks. I meant to write about our Christmas and how I spent my month off of work, about Steve and his journey, about my shiny, new in-development *grandbaby* (eek!) ... so many things. But words felt slippery and pale.

Any attempt to rope them together and form complete, cogent sentences was—and I do not overstate this—absolutely dismal. Not just in terms of the writing (though the writing was bad, bad, bad), but also in terms of how I felt as I trudged through the tunnel of emotions and angst that seems to lead from where I am right now to anywhere I want to go.

Want to remember something good from the past? Gotta go through the tunnel. Attempting to dream about the future? Tunnel. Figuring out how to manage life in the here-and-now? Well, I think that part actually *is* the tunnel.

I'm not apologizing for not writing and I know nobody is wringing their hands, wondering what in the world is happening in my life. But I sometimes wish I was able to record this season more consistently. Not for you, but for me. For my family. For a day when it won't be as painful to look at. But the fact remains, I didn't. Not in journals. Not on napkins. Not on this blog. There was virtually no writing in December.

Quick recap: Christmas was good. My time off has been ... hard. New Year's was ... especially hard. I've always loved the newness of New Year's. I love setting goals and dreaming dreams and making new, fresh systems which I probably won't sustain, but it's fun to create them. I'm a dreamer/planner by nature and I love fresh starts. Mondays and New Year's were

made for girls like me.

But this year it was sort of awful because this year, it's just been really hard to dream. Reasons abound. You can probably figure them out even better than I can, but I've felt very stuck in a land with no dreaming.

Right now, my family feels wedged in a narrow passageway between earth and heaven, unable to move forward or go back. People—countless people—encourage me to absorb every moment, to savor this time and I appreciate the sentiment, but I'm telling you, it's harder than it seems. It's like labor.

You know it's leading to something so beautiful—fresh, new life—and you even know somewhere in your pain-addled mind that the process itself is beautiful, but had someone told me to relish every moment of those contractions I would have punched them in the eye. Watching my beloved suffer as he is right now is ... um, wow, I have no words.

Watching his body betray him as he desperately tries to hold onto the things that make him real and alive and Steve is more painful than I have ever imagined anything could be. That's not to minimize the grace that God has given us to endure this—it's there and I can feel it—but I would be lying if I told you there were no moments when I feared the grace would run out before the day was done.

Many days, I fear it will run out before the day has begun. Every night, we are exhausted and thankful that we made it through another day. Every morning, I beg for strength for the hours ahead. No drama here, I promise, just real talk from our real life.

All that to say: I felt fairly stumped as I attempted to establish some New Year's goals or resolutions. I read several blog posts from people I respect, some convincing me I should achieve more in 2015, and others telling me to *do* less and *be* more.

Some inspired new fitness goals. Some laughed calorie and carb-counting off the to-do list. None of them were wrong, but none of them were me. What did happen in reading other people's resolutions, though, is a determination inside of me to flat-out refuse to live a life with no dreams. Without vision, we die. We fall asleep with our eyes wide open.

So, I guess my first resolution of 2015 is simply the decision to dream again. To look through the tunnel and into the future, understanding it is murky and muddled, but it is still mine and I am still alive and life is for living. I've opened the door to vision that seems small (watching all of *Friday Night Lights* with Steve) and vision that seems big and impossible (spending some extended writing time in Italy).

I'm dreaming through prayer and my Pinterest boards. I'm dreaming with trusted friends who hold my heart and secrets safe. And I'm dreaming with Steve, who knows me better than anyone and understands my need to toss some lifelines out beyond our stormy seas and onto the unnamed, unknown shoreline. He more than anyone is able to help me weed out the flimsy, flighty stuff that sparkles on the surface but produces little and get through to the meaty and meaningful stuff that he knows will produce something eternal and deeply satisfying. I am soaking in his wisdom and so thankful that I have it while I look out into the great unknown.

That's my update. It's not pretty, but it's real.

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