

Kathryn Powell

MOON
over my
shoulder

Shining words of encouragement on your path
365 Day Devotional Book

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MOON over my **shoulder**

Shining words of encouragement upon your path

A 365 day devotional

Mini-book

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Why read “Moon Over My Shoulder”? I had to ask myself that very question when I felt God’s calling to write the book, and I still ask that question today. Why should you bother picking up another devotional book when you likely have at least one sitting on your shelf right now? I can only reply that many people who are currently reading it are my inspiration to continue to place “Moon Over My Shoulder” in front of you to consider. And these are but a few of the comments and reviews it has received, which I believe express it better than I can.

“This is a lovely daily devotional. Kay writes with beautiful prose. Her daily lessons come straight from the heart and always bring clarity to one’s relationship with God. I have used this book for my daily devotional, I have shared it with a friend and used it in groups at church including Stephen Ministry. It was a gift from a close friend making it all the more meaningful.” Dian

“If you’re looking for a devotional that is purposefully written, to touch each and every person’s heart, you should get this one. With personal experience weaved into an every day journey to be obedient to God. The struggle, the thought process and the total day to day walk is here. It’s much different to the main stream devotional you might read. You walk along, hand in hand, with the writer through the journey of salvation, strength, hope and freedom. From the moment I picked this up and began to read, it felt as if God was speaking to me, directly! Pick up a copy and you won’t be disappointed.” Mindy

“This author shares insights into her own life intertwined with meaningful and impactful scripture. It is amazing how many days, I have read her daily devotion and it spoke to my heart and what I needed to hear on that day. She has a beautiful way of writing and sharing her message. You will be touched and inspired each day as you read these devotions.” Bob

This book was not written because I aspired to write a book; it was written because I could not escape God’s calling to write it. It was written to draw His children into a closer relationship with our Creator, and to know Him as He wishes to communicate with us, intimately. Each page is a reminder to sit and engage with the One who knows and loves us. I pray you will be blessed and encouraged with each page of this mini-book, and perhaps the 365 day version, as well.

(The second edition of “Moon Over My Shoulder” is available on Amazon, as well as through the author and some local book stores. An index of pages is included in the second edition, as well as corrections; I am including the index here, too, so that you may peruse the year’s titles and perhaps be intrigued.)

Moon Over My Shoulder Introduction

Revisiting my stash of dusty journals, I opened the cover of the one labeled “Journal #1”, rather shocked at the inscription greeting me: “I think I need to write a book.” It was inscribed thirty years ago. The world is full of authors, and Gutenberg himself would be speechless at the number of books published since the advent of his printing press. The world did not need another book, to be certain, and it did not need mine, not even knowing what “mine” be! I thought I had no story, nothing of value to fill the pages; God said otherwise. I was wrong, so terribly wrong, but His timing was perfectly right.

Returning home on one of the first evenings of spring, I rejoiced in the warmth of the clear, dark, night with stars sparkling against a crisp, sharply black sky. Suspended just above the treetops, the crescent moon appeared as a silver bowl, hung perfectly upside down. And the words, “Moon over my shoulder” softly dropped into my spirit. I had no idea what that meant, but it was comforting and pleasant. I knew if it was important, I would not be able to put those words aside. And I could not.

Days passed and the notion that a book was in my future seemed to be linked to those words, and that I had been given a title for it. Never have I considered myself a “writer”—I am more of a “journal-er”, an observer of life, and an encourager. My Bible study group had read a few of the pages I had written, so I gingerly tossed the absurd concept out to them. I was stunned, as they enthusiastically endorsed the idea.

That night, it was confirmed, despite my reservations, that a book was in my future. I am totally and completely inadequate, broken and flawed; but as Cindy, Amy and Abbey have taught me, so are all people God has called to step into His plan; so will be every person He ever calls for His purpose. And now a completed book rests in your hands.

He has shaped and formed me to quietly share encouragement with other broken vessels and turn their hope to Jesus. Through my experience and adventures with Him, I can extend you an invitation to know Him, love Him, and receive His amazing love in return. I pray that He will become the “Moon Over My Shoulder” for you, as well.

Beautiful Legs

March 2

The photo captivated me as if time had suddenly paused. It was a stop-action photo of horses running through water, while the rain fell all around them, in a blizzard of raindrops. In the middle of the dynamic scene was a stunning set of legs, fully extended, and veritably flying over the water. Those legs were attached to a very young colt amid the fully-grown herd. I wondered at his ability to peacefully fly in perfect synchronization with the adults. What beautiful legs, carrying the small body, long and disproportionate, able to run as effortlessly as the breeze which carried the rain!

I marveled at our Creator's imagining such a creature and forming its magnificent structure, such that even a very young horse could keep pace with the adults. Those beautiful, straight, long legs enabled that baby to wrap itself in the protection of the herd, and with such grace and beauty, as to be nearly angelic.

Our Creator also imagined beautiful legs for the creation He patterned after Himself, man, made in His image. Our legs are made to walk with Him, to run after Him, and to follow Him. At first, we stumble along, unsure of our footing, falling at times like that newborn colt. As we grow in faith, our legs become stronger; and we can follow through the rain, storms, and unsure footing. Each step strengthens our next. Soon, we are doing what we are created to do, to run on beautiful legs!

Just as that colt was not meant to run alone, so are we created to run together as believers, to protect and encourage the young among us, and to keep pace with the Holy Spirit. Running with Him means that even when we feel vulnerable, we can trust He is with us. In sadness, He is present. In His presence, there is peace. As that colt followed the lead stallion, so we can follow our Savior confidently, on beautiful legs.

"You made him a little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned him with glory and honor." Psalm 8:5

"But those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint." Isaiah 40:31

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A Chipper Morning

April 18

Very early on a Saturday morning, too early in my opinion, my phone rang, and I was informed that the tree removal crew had arrived. A very large pine tree had fallen from our neighbor's yard and hung itself in the top of our River Birch during a storm. At seven AM on a Saturday morning, I repeat, they descended on my yard with chain saws and chipper roaring.

I was fascinated by one very nimble man, with a blazing chainsaw in hand, who walked the inclined trunk like a cat balancing on the back of a living room couch. He sawed off each limb as he made his way rather quickly up the thick trunk, jumping up and down gingerly to test its stability near the top. Men scrambled about under him dragging each branch to the monster chipper, which greedily devoured each one.

The last step in the process was cutting the huge trunk, surprisingly beginning from the bottom instead of the top. Step by step, they sized up the lengths to be cut, drew their blades through the wood, and the tree that was so tall slowly shrank, as though melting in the early morning sun. Another machine picked up the pieces and loaded them into the massive chipper, as my mouth dropped in awe; that chipper swallowed even the massive trunk sections, making them disappear almost immediately. The early morning rise was worth every minute, just to watch the chipper in action.

I gazed in fascination as it occurred to me that God disposes of all our sins just like that massive chipper, as thoroughly and dramatically. When He says He casts our sins as far as the east is from the west, it is as though they are thrown into that giant wood-chipper; and God's ability to remove sin makes that chipper look pretty lame. Jesus paid a hefty price, one that is inconceivable to our understanding, making us free of our sins once and for all.

If you tend to keep remembering your sins, just picture the giant wood-chipper. Toss those sins into God's gracious hands! He has already disposed of your guilt through the blood of Jesus, and your sins were shredded and hauled away, never to be remembered again. Make it a "chipper morning" as you begin your day, fresh and whole in the love of Jesus.

"The Lord is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love. He will not always accuse, nor will he harbor his anger forever; he does not treat us as our sins deserve or repay us according to our iniquities. For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his love for those who fear him; as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us." Psalm 103:8-12

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A straight, but bumpy, road cut through prime farm acreage, delivering me to one of my most happy places. The summer visits to my great aunt and uncle's house featured a wrap-around porch. Its gray painted wood floor sat high enough off the ground to accommodate the dogs, searching for cooler ground. I loved it because my feet dangled freely. On that porch, beans were snapped, June bugs captured, and if lucky, a cool breeze occasionally brushed my skin.

The family of seven children, all girls, to my great uncle's dismay, were mostly grown up and married, so the mouths to feed were vast on Sundays. Everyone migrated to the porch to eat, talk, and play games. Laughter was as gentle, and persistent, as the breeze rippling around the porch, until my younger brother asked to ride the pony. A plump city kid on a pony was a bit too tempting for one of the male in-laws. After my brother was firmly seated in the saddle, he slapped the hindquarters of the pony with his hat.

That pony shot off in a full gallop around and around the farmhouse, with my brother wild-eyed and hanging on for dear life! A mixture of fear and laughter followed that pony around the porch. Some feared for my brother's safety (mostly the women), and some found the situation incredibly funny (you guessed it, mostly the men). I will never forget my grandmother laughing uncontrollably, while I wondered if I would have one less brother on the way home. When they were finally able to end his wild ride, my brother dismounted, white as a sheet, but never shedding a tear.

Some of us can relate to my brother's brisk ride on a runaway pony. Life slaps the rump of our horse with events unanticipated, and out of our control. We hang on for dear life and feel the ride will never end. Fear grips our hearts and we can see no way out; there is no rescuer in sight. And if you haven't experienced that kind of event in your life, it is only a matter of time before you do. Jesus himself promised that in this life we will have troubles, trials, and tribulation; if he didn't escape it, neither will you.

But here is the good news for runaway events in your life: God knows about it, loves you, and is ever-present. He wants His best for you, His best being a close relationship with Him. Is He waiting for you to ask Him for help? Is this event for your ultimate good? Is He teaching you to trust only Him? Only you and He can answer those questions. However, I do know that He always has a reason for the ride, and a plan for our rescue, if we will only turn to Him. God always has good intentions toward you, so take hope—all wild rides end eventually!

“So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.” Isaiah 41:10

“Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.” Philippians 4:6-7

The Crowd of “Me”

August 23

Their noxious cries were a bit unsettling when I first encountered the brashly chattering seagulls, dipping and diving around me as I walked the beach. They were loud, unruly, and frankly, a bit scary, especially if you have ever viewed the horror movie “Birds” by Alfred Hitchcock. Unfortunately, I had. Many visits to the beach ensued over the years, and I became accustomed to the brash birds. With each trip to the beach, the seagulls became less frightening and more laughable.

A children’s movie accurately portrayed the comical birds as flying about, crying, “Mine, Mine, Mine!” as they competed for food. I always thought their cries to be, “Me, Me, Me!” but so close to reality were the content creators that I will not quibble. The gaggles of seagulls bear a stunning resemblance to people, which is perhaps why I found them eventually comical. Aren’t we similar in our struggles to obtain what we think we should have or what we deserve? We compete so strongly for status, to possess that which we do not have, or recognized in a world of blank faces.

I have made enough trips to the beach to have made wonderfully pleasant memories, but I can retrospectively consider the seagulls in my life. All my dipping and diving, flying hard to catch the tiniest morsel, crying loudly, “Me, me, me!” wears me out and accomplishes little. Occasionally, I obtain enough reward to keep me flying, but I often have to ask myself if it was worth it. Of the things I wanted or believed I could not live without, I eventually discovered most of them counted for nothing.

Jesus encountered the crowd of “me’s” every day in His ministry walking the earth, people starving for His attention, miracles, and answers. He fed them the Word of God. Some recognized the truth, some stayed for the food alone, a few took what He offered and left the crowd of “me”. They surrendered “me” to the Son of the Living God. “Me”, “mine”, and “self”, yield to “Yours”, “Your will”, and your assigned cross to carry. But in that yielding, what freedom follows!

God calls us to surrender, not to take away from or to deny us, but He calls us to surrender to have it all. In our surrender, we are given peace, life more abundantly, love unconditionally, and forgiveness without limits. In Christ alone we have the freedom to fly above the “crowd of me”, to soar above the fray, even as we walk amid it.

“For my Father’s will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.” John 6:40

“Jesus answered, ‘I tell you the truth, you are looking for me, not because you saw miraculous signs but because you ate the loaves and had your fill. Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. On him, God the Father has placed his seal of approval.’” John 6:26-27

As dogs are prone to do, Coco took off running as soon as she found a crack to squeeze through, onto the porch, then into the unfenced open spaces. The allure was too overwhelming, and call as I might, the wayward Maltese bolted toward the street. I called her name and took off running--- the opposite direction! There was a method to my apparent madness, and sure enough, she changed course, chasing me as I ran toward the house. Though she believed she was running wild, she was actually running toward safety.

As I am prone, like every human being on earth, to do, I also tend to attempt squeezing through the cracks of boundaries God sets for me, aiming for the wide-open spaces of independence. Control is the insidious fruit we each covet, and God's boundaries, even of barest restriction, are sufficient temptation; and any open door of opportunity will suffice.

The Holy Spirit will sometimes chase me down, occasionally bringing me down in a full tackle, and still other times, lure me home ever so gently. But He will always pursue me, whether by whisper or by storm, returning me to the safe confines of His pasture. He does it jealously; the purest desire for my safety and security are His greatest concerns. There is no distance He will not traverse, no depth He will not plumb, nor temptation He will not reveal for what it is.

The enemy sets traps, and the Spirit exposes them; facades which appear solid, He will tear down. There is only one reason for Him to go to such lengths---love. Jesus expressed that love by laying His body on the cross, willingly, knowingly, purposely. He saw my need for a Savior, a rescuer, and a protector for this sheep, who wanders obliviously or intentionally, in rebellion or blindness. And His grace covers it all.

Like Coco, who does not know the hawk's threat or the coyote's hunger, I rarely consider the dangers of sin, or the evils lurking in the darkness of my wanderings. Only a little smarter than my ten-pound dog, I would do well to recognize my propensity to wander. The older and more seasoned I become, I "come home" quicker, running toward His safety. Thankfully, my heavenly Father knows how I am made, calls me back faithfully, and keeps me from running wild when it counts the most.

"So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall! No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it." 1 Corinthians 10:12-13

"But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed." James 1:14 NKJ

Catch Me, Dad!

October 1

One of our pastors recently delivered his oldest son to the dorm of his new college. While waiting, he and his seven-year-old son walked around the campus. Discovering a high, brick, retaining wall edging the sidewalk, the boy could not resist walking the top span of bricks. His dad shadowed him on the sidewalk below when suddenly his son exclaimed, "Catch me, Dad!" He leaped into the air, flying into his father's startled arms. What he didn't know was that his father, looking up, was gazing suddenly into the sun, unable to see him at all! Amazingly, he was still able to catch him.

The child trusted in his father's ability to safely retrieve him from mid-air. That level of trust must delight our heavenly Father, as well. It is reassuring to know that our actions never surprise Him; He is never caught off guard. We, as humans, tend to limit God, seeing Him as we are, not as He is. When we read about God in the Bible, stories don't seem possible or real, but archaeology and experience will bear them out as truths and principles, revealing the character of God the Father, who intervenes in the lives of His creation.

Over seven billion people inhabit the planet and He knows each one, not solely by name or appearance; He *knows* each one. He knows the number of hairs on our heads, our thoughts before we think them, our words before we speak. He understands our weaknesses and has endowed us with our strengths. He guides our steps, establishes kings, and subdues nations. Planets and galaxies retain their places, meteors swim in an ocean of stars, and black holes reside where He has ordained. An infinite, ordered, majestic-beyond-our-imaginings God is in meticulous control, but His defining quality is love for those created in His very image, mankind.

Why does He care...why should He? I won't ever understand or fathom the answer, but I can guess that it is because God's creation of this dimension is very personal. He loves that which He conceived, created, and cares for, us who were made in His very image. We were created by Him and for His pleasure---it's personal, and it's called love; so much love that He would enter this realm, living and dying as one of us. It is love so personal that He invites us to call him "Abba, Father". When I call to Him, "Dad, catch me," my needs will never catch Him off guard. He is the Father who loves me, and I can trust Him without fail.

"The Lord is gracious and righteous; our God is full of compassion. The Lord protects the simple hearted; when I was in great need, he saved me." Psalm 116:5-6

"You will keep in perfect peace him whose mind is steadfast, because he trusts in you." Isaiah 26:3

"For I am the Lord, your God, who takes hold of your right hand and says to you, do not fear; I will help you." Isaiah 41:13

Passengers lined the deck of the Department of Wildlife boat in eager anticipation as it chugged across the gray lake waves in early November. The shore was vacant, the trees naked of their summer foliage, and the waiting list had been long. Now, we were hopeful, everyone scanning the treetops and sky in search of our target, American Eagles nesting in the wild. As our guide rotated, pointing to the outcrop of rocks and bare trees, we fixed our binoculars on an eagle, perched on its nest with wings up.

As it launched itself overhead, it circled high momentarily. Suddenly losing altitude and flattening against the wind, it swooped over the water, low and close. The wingspan of better than six feet carried it just enough above the water for its feet to snag the fish it had in its sight. How exciting it was to see that beautiful, graceful eagle on-wing, close-up in my lens.

It is just as powerful and beautiful for the Lord to witness our reliance on Him. But in our weak moments, trying times, and periods testing our souls, our wings can hang limply at our sides, our confidence shattered, and our souls weary. We feel we may never fly again, wounded and confined to a nest of pain.

Sorrow overwhelms our souls. Rejection and failure drain our courage, rendering us hopeless and without direction. But if we will peer over the waters of our pain, looking to Him, we will see that God has placed our sustenance in it. Eagles live for flying, but they live *through* fishing; both require perseverance and training. Jesus calls us to lift our wings, offering Him the situation, then trusting Him for the rest.

When we cannot understand the next step, keep flying in the direction in life that He has already revealed. When we cannot see a clear direction, wait for the next “fish”. God looks ahead of us and will always show His eagles the way to go; He will give us strength when it is time to launch out on His capable wings.

Adult bald eagles can fly above the rain clouds, up to 10,000 feet high. And as we lift our wings in trust, our Father in heaven will enable us to fly to whatever height He has called us. He alone knows all He has planned for us and will give us the strength and ability to do it. Do not doubt; just fly. Trust Jesus. Wings up, child of God!

“Why do you say, O Jacob, and complain, O Israel, ‘My way is hidden from the Lord; my cause is disregarded by my God?’ Do you not know? Have you not heard? The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He will not grow tired or weary, and his understanding no one can fathom. He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak. (Emphasis mine) Even youths grow tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall; but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles, they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.” Isaiah 40:27-31

Lost and Found

December 10

The weather was suddenly changing, with temperatures dropping from the sixties, down into the twenties within the span of a few hours. Wrestling with the downdrafts of the chimney as he attempted to build a fire, my son did not notice my six-pound, half-blind, thirteen-year-old wayward Maltese dog wandering out of the door. Upon arrival home from work two hours later, the temperature had dropped to 40 degrees and it was dark. That was when I noticed that Tiffy was gone. My heart sank as we searched the house and found no trace of her.

My son and I began the search outside, under bushes, under the deck, around the drainage ditch---to no avail. I knew the conditions were not conducive to survival; she had no spare fat, a short coat, was wet, nearly blind, and in the dark. She had been gone almost three hours already, so I was nearly without a crumb of hope. Flipping the switch of my flashlight off, I walked back into the house, resigned to the loss. At that moment, I experienced a strong impression to check under the shed, which I relayed to my son. Watching as he maneuvered the beam of light from one end to the other, Tiffy was not there.

Suddenly, he stood up and walked around to the back of the shed. There, a very large opossum greeted him, and a rabbit; then a little, white dog wandered toward the shed where he stood. As he enfolded the wet, shivering animal in his arms, carrying her into the house, I was in awe that she could still be alive. And I was in awe of my God, who preserved that tiny dog for hours, protecting her from predators and exposure to the deadly elements. As I sat in front of the warm fire drying her, I could only thank the God who cared so much for me that He would bring Tiffy back, returning her to my arms. Just twenty hours prior, I had lost Molly, Tiffy's best Maltese friend, to complications from surgery.

I couldn't help but compare myself to Tiffy, wandering away from a secure home with God, battered and drenched with sin, cold and shivering with no hope. Jesus sought me out, cradling me in His strong, secure arms, and carried me home to the Father. If Tiffy had not wandered toward the shed, our last hope, she would have died, exposed, alone, and in the darkness. I am so thankful that when Jesus called me, I finally listened and found His saving arms, too.

Following a warm bath and good night's sleep, one would never know how harrowing a plight Tiffy had experienced. She will probably forget it ever happened. I, however, cannot forget my plight without Jesus; I need to forever remember what it was like to be without Him, lost with no hope, and condemned to death. To remember is to be grateful, forever grateful, to the One who seeks and saves.

“For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost.” Luke 19:10

Weeks ahead of Christmas, cookies were baked, decorations for the celebrations hung, and Christmas carols welcomed through car speakers, sung with great enthusiasm. Gifts were thoughtfully gathered and gracefully wrapped. But the Christmas Day table was the crowning glory of our celebration, our finger food bounty, laid out all day to graze upon without more labor than adding or subtracting lids. However, my favorite part of Christmas had already passed. It is Christmas Eve that stirs my heart.

Christmas Eve is my “holy time”, the most extravagant meal of the year set on the table, even if I eat it alone. The best plates and silverware come out only on that day. The meat is the best I can afford, and the side dishes cooked for that day alone. Dessert is a cake created over decades of refinement in my kitchen and eaten only once a year. And it is all done to remind me, that there was one day that God gave the One closest to His heart to save my own.

It is Christmas Eve. It is the mysterious Light birthed into darkness. It is an eternal King born into poverty. It is a mother and father, first-time parents, seeing the face of their son, with wonder at how God could reside in such fragile form. It is the Prince of heaven’s passage from glory into obscurity, adored by donkeys and sheep instead of angelic beings. It is God’s holiness and purity confined to a world of degradation, and dirty shepherds straight from the fields. It is the poignant moment in time that divides history from “God afar” to “God with us”.

That baby was born to die, not because He had sinned, but because I did. He was born that I may live. The gift of God’s Son is one to a world of darkness, death, misery, and hopelessness, to even those who hate Him. It is the very invitation to approach His table of peace, laden with all the celebratory feast of His kingdom. The choicest fare awaits all who will accept His forgiveness, to any who will repent.

At the Father’s table, the feast of Christmas is overflowing. At His table, He invites us to linger in His presence, indulge in His Spirit, to taste and see that He is good. He has overlooked no detail at His table. And He invites us to the celebration of the real Christmas gift, a lifetime, an eternity with Immanuel, God with Us.

“Therefore, the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son and will call him Immanuel.” Isaiah 7:14

“For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.” Isaiah 9:6

In the darkness, and even on some sunny days, the moon is quietly present. It was created with the sun, a provision for light in the night, shining softly, not interfering with sleep but enhancing it, a nightlight in the sky. It is a timepiece to mark the days and months, a guide to mark events in our lives. It is the silent companion of the boisterous sun and yet a reflector of it. The sun warms our spirits, and the moon calms our fears. The moon is hidden for part of the month, yet it is never gone.

I would never have chosen the moon to describe God's presence in my life. The moon seems too tranquil and passive, yet it is the gentler revelation of Him, which was necessary to soothe my crushed spirit and allow Him into my night. Many moments in my life were marked by His quiet presence and tender beckoning. He was my provision during the dark events and became my night light. When I could not receive His brilliant presence, He sent it by softer rays into my soul. When I could not understand His ways, He simply calmed my fears; and though He seemed mostly hidden, He was never gone.

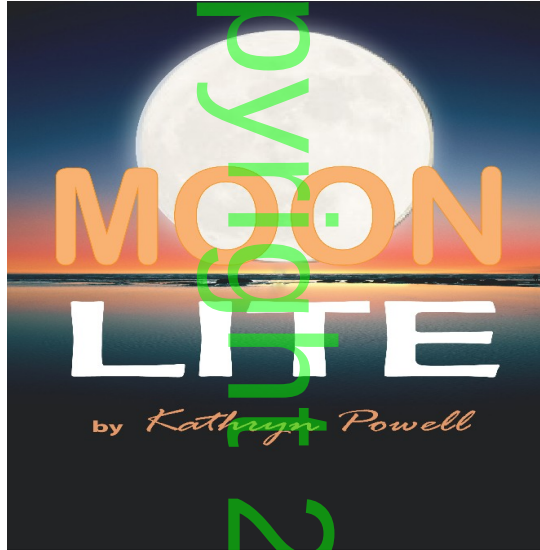
Many Christians have little understanding of the God they proclaim and acknowledge. But I would challenge each reader to embrace Him, run into His outstretched arms, and search His face for expressions of His love. He is not distant, nor haughty; He is humble, kind, forgiving, and accepting. Thankfully, He is also patient and merciful. My heart grieves for those who know not how dearly they are loved. He is not an exacting taskmaster, nor a tyrant, not a slave master, nor a harsh boss. And though He may be the strong sunlight to some, I find that He is mostly the moonlight that hurting and weary souls seek.

So, I invite you to step in closer, whisper His name, and allow Him to envelope you in His loving arms. Allow Him to be the tender Presence you have been seeking. You will find His peace there, and He will be your night light, too. I cannot fathom life without Him---He has been the Moon Over My Shoulder all along.

“When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, the moon, and the stars, which you have set in place, what is man that you are mindful of him, the son of man that you care for him? You made him a little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned him with glory and honor.” Psalm 8:3-5

“The day is yours, and yours also the night; you established the sun and moon. It was you who set all the boundaries of the earth; you made both summer and winter.” Psalm 74:16-17

“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.” Matthew 11:27-30



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- 11 777 Letters
- 12 The Perfect Couple
- 13 Be Mine
- 14 Hearted
- 15 Healer
- 16 The Quilt
- 17 Morning Glory
- 18 Deep Fire
- 19 Snow White
- 20 Threads and Cliffs
- 21 Time to Reflect
- 22 Where the Sun Shines
- 23 The Right Key
- 24 Clothed in Green
- 25 Perfect Example

- 26 Just One
- 27 Party Line
- 28 Saving the Best for Last

March

- 1 Chance of Showers
- 2 Beautiful Legs
- 3 Place at the Table
- 4 New Normal
- 5 Clear Vision
- 6 The Switch
- 7 Butter Is Better
- 8 Fear Not
- 9 Piggy-Back
- 10 What's for Dinner?
- 11 Simple Bliss
- 12 Just Humbled
- 13 Drawing the Line
- 14 Spotlight
- 15 The Way Home
- 16 Little Miracles
- 17 Today's Forecast
- 18 Incalculable Gifts
- 19 Full Bloom
- 20 This Is Your Captain Speaking
- 21 Snail's Pace
- 22 Hands-On
- 23 Do You Know Who You Are Dealing...
- 24 The Greatest Asset
- 25 Pride and Prejudice
- 26 Road Trip
- 27 Speechless
- 28 No Small Wonder
- 29 Waterfalls and Whales
- 30 Just Asking
- 31 Many Robins

April

- 1 This Moment
- 2 Tornado!
- 3 Too Many Mockingbirds
- 4 Right on Time
- 5 Building Plans
- 6 Day by Day
- 7 Extreme Opposites
- 8 A Face I Will Never Forget
- 9 Car Quest
- 10 Free to Be Loved
- 11 Dropping Anchor
- 12 The Sink Hole
- 13 Wit's End
- 14 Entitled
- 15 Monkey's Transformation
- 16 A Perfect World
- 17 Tomorrow
- 18 A Chipper Morning
- 19 Shifting Light
- 20 My Father's Child
- 21 Mary in the Morning

- 22 Forever and a Day
- 23 Vital Nutrients
- 24 The Power of One
- 25 Small Fish, Big Ocean
- 26 Left Behind
- 27 Six Cylinders
- 28 In Due Time
- 29 Custom Made
- 30 Predictably Unpredictable

May

- 1 Many Umbrellas
- 2 Ripples and Storms
- 3 A Long-Distance Relationship
- 4 Trevor's Hat
- 5 The Whispers in the Storm
- 6 Wait
- 7 Stranger in the Mirror
- 8 Perfectly Ordered
- 9 This, too, Shall Pass
- 10 The Expiration Date
- 11 Be the Weed
- 12 Evening Light
- 13 Taming the Beast
- 14 A Perfect Day
- 15 Life on the Edge
- 16 Perfect Connection
- 17 The End of the Beginning
- 18 The News You Never Hear
- 19 Most Beautiful Baby
- 20 Don't Weary
- 21 Field of View
- 22 The Beautiful Desert
- 23 A Choice Family
- 24 Whitney's Piano
- 25 A Happy Ending
- 26 Pig I Will
- 27 Battle Plans
- 28 Companion Planting
- 29 Buttoned
- 30 Cow Birds
- 31 A Full Cup

June

- 1 The Beach House
- 2 Family Feud
- 3 A Breath Away
- 4 Strawberry Fields Forever
- 5 Over-Comer
- 6 Still Standing
- 7 Here I Am
- 8 Car Polish
- 9 Ride to Crazy
- 10 The Best Resort
- 11 The Top of the Heap
- 12 Sky Sculptures
- 13 Carried Away
- 14 Straight Rows
- 15 A Teacup Full
- 16 Foul Ball
- 17 Dead End

- 18 Place of Peace
- 19 Edna's Beauty Shop
- 20 Monkeys on a Ship
- 21 The Sweet Illusion
- 22 The Tablet
- 23 Eight Days a Week
- 24 City Kid in Cowboy Boots
- 25 Alive to Tell About It
- 26 Summer Sanctuary
- 27 Daybreak and Broken
- 28 Easily Distracted
- 29 Parade Review
- 30 Weather or Not

July

- 1 Carousel
- 2 A Crumby Life
- 3 You Are
- 4 Independence Day?
- 5 That None May Be Wasted
- 6 Saturated
- 7 The Evening Rainbow
- 8 It Just So Happened
- 9 What's the Price?
- 10 Diligent Weeding
- 11 Buried Treasure
- 12 Flying High
- 13 The Happy Ending
- 14 Already Tomorrow
- 15 Chiggered
- 16 The Perfect Time
- 17 Storm Waves
- 18 Container Retainer
- 19 Night to Day
- 20 Depth Defying
- 21 Oblivious
- 22 Layer Upon Layer
- 23 Wild Ride
- 24 Grandpa's Blessing
- 25 Snip, Snip
- 26 A Friend
- 27 Air Borne
- 28 Remember the Mirage
- 29 Soft Serve
- 30 Fill 'R Up, Pete!
- 31 Head Space

August

- 1 Sun Blind
- 2 Windswept
- 3 For A Season
- 4 Adrift
- 5 As Far As I Can See
- 6 Switch Grass
- 7 God's Treasure House
- 8 And They Moved On
- 9 Choppy Waters
- 10 Me Tarzan, You Jane
- 11 Going Places
- 12 On the Edge
- 13 White Picket Fences
- 14 An Unexpected Gift

- 15 Recovering Addict
- 16 Sticky Flip-Flops
- 17 Living Color
- 18 Magnifying Light
- 19 Pure Delight
- 20 It Balances!
- 21 Tempest in a Teapot
- 22 Limited Time Offer
- 23 The Crowd of "Me"
- 24 Microwave or Crockpot?
- 25 Essentially Happy
- 26 Promises, Promises
- 27 Big Fish
- 28 Turning Up the Heat
- 29 Today's Menu
- 30 Unforgettable
- 31 War of the Worlds

September

- 1 Driving Me Crazy
- 2 Choice Moments
- 3 Unbridled
- 4 Open-Line Friday
- 5 Star-Struck
- 6 Apple of My Eye
- 7 A Stitch in Time
- 8 Drips and Drops
- 9 But Wait, There's More!
- 10 This Changes Everything
- 11 The Art of Self-Defense
- 12 Light Hearted
- 13 Better Together
- 14 Under the Hood
- 15 The Princess Bride
- 16 Interior Designer
- 17 Like Father, Like Son
- 18 The Great Divide
- 19 Squirrel!
- 20 Running Wild
- 21 The Employer
- 22 The Power of "Then"
- 23 Too Hot to Handle
- 24 Pinky Promises
- 25 Seven Truths
- 26 Land of Opportunity
- 27 One Tree
- 28 The Never-Ending Story
- 29 The Beginning of Wisdom
- 30 Anna's Friend

October

- 1 Catch me, Dad!
- 2 Perfect Vision
- 3 No Shortcuts
- 4 The Road Ahead
- 5 This Is a Test...
- 6 Under Fire
- 7 All Grown Up
- 8 Framed
- 9 Power Lines
- 10 The Gold Standard

- 11 Protected and Perfected
- 12 Fine China
- 13 Special Forces
- 14 On Demand
- 15 Cup Without a Handle
- 16 Runaway
- 17 Worlds Apart
- 18 The Voice
- 19 Highest Frequency
- 20 Untangled
- 21 It's All in the Name
- 22 Window Dressing
- 23 Checklist
- 24 Screen Shot
- 25 Out of My Hands
- 26 On Display
- 27 What's in Your Wallet?
- 28 The Good Fight
- 29 Red "X"
- 30 Clarity
- 31 Pieces and Plans

November

- 1 Fog on the Mountain
- 2 Just Keep Swimming
- 3 Unseen Cargo
- 4 Cold Feet
- 5 On Top of the World
- 6 Wings Up!
- 7 By Invitation Only
- 8 Love AND Like
- 9 Destinations
- 10 Absolutely, Positively
- 11 Bobbleheads
- 12 Be Prepared
- 13 Lover's Leap
- 14 Unstoppable
- 15 Always and Forever
- 16 Pierced for Life
- 17 Priceless
- 18 Friends for Life
- 19 Bread Alone
- 20 Sight Seeing
- 21 Coming Home
- 22 You Are Not Alone
- 23 Used up
- 24 Mind Games
- 25 Oh, Taste and See
- 26 Broken, but Not Destroyed
- 27 Leftovers
- 28 Convergence
- 29 Out of Control
- 30 The Pilot Light

December

- 1 Cross-Eyed Christmas
- 2 Happy Holidays
- 3 Gift of a Lifetime
- 4 In High Definition
- 5 Background Noise
- 6 Nutcracker Sweet
- 7 No Substitutions
- 8 The Gift
- 9 Three Letters
- 10 Lost and Found

- 11 Traveling Light
- 12 The Original Story
- 13 Special Access
- 14 Counter Intelligence
- 15 Transformer
- 16 Space X
- 17 Monopoly
- 18 The Perfect Gift
- 19 Rabbit Cookies
- 20 No Vacancy
- 21 It's A Wonderful Life
- 22 Forged in Fire
- 23 Unfathomable
- 24 Wise Men
- 25 The Christmas Table
- 26 The Dog Ate My Homework
- 27 Fear Factor
- 28 Destiny
- 29 Consider It Done
- 30 Moon Over My Shoulder
- 31 Happy New Year

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