

I WONDER HOW I WILL MAKE IT THROUGH

I surrendered to God

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Self care articles for the bereaved

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WHEN I MET THE ONE, I MET THE MAN I KNOW I WILL MARRY

We met at church. I love sharing my faith. I feel the love. The love is amazing and captivating. The two of us make musical love chords. We play unique strings of liberty every day. On my 27th birthday, he took me to a nice Japanese restaurant. We laugh. We talk. We gaze in each other's eyes. I close my eyes. I am blowing out the candle on my surprise dessert. I smile at him for the last time.

I love this man, but he dies from a brain injury. He is 36 years old. I am 27 years old. I feel broken, alone, and forgotten. My mind and emotions are spiraling. They intensify like a rollercoaster!

Death hits each person differently. A ton of bricks hit me. I turn to my Christian faith. It is not for the reasons you may think.

I am angry with God. I question God's methods. Why were my prayers not heard? Why do I have to live with this pain? These questions play in my head. They are a song I put on repeat. I fight to understand why God allows all of this to happen. The fight lasts for a year. I keep going to church. I pray. I look for answers. I found nothing.

The year comes to an end. I give up. I release my white flag. I surrender to God.

Then, my life starts shifting. I gain peace. I have joy. I learn to love again. I smile again. I live again. Grief challenges you. It challenges my faith. I begin focusing more of my attention on God. My pain soon dwindles. I feel its pressure less and less.

After a year of growing in my faith, I socialize more. I go to an open mic night at a church. It is in Columbia, SC. I stand in front of unfamiliar people. I share my grief story. I perform my poetry. There is a young man staring at me the whole time. We make eye contact. We talk to each other during intermission. I sense a connection. Still, I think we will only be friends.

We make plans in a week to meet at a bowling alley. The goal is to get to know each other. I arrive at the time we decide on. He is twenty minutes late. I am about to leave. Suddenly, he comes walking to the front door of the bowling alley. I am upset. A strong part of me wants to leave. He insists on me staying. I oblige him. My anger leaves quickly.

We do have a great time. Six months later, I became his wife. Once we are two years in marriage, I will fulfill my dream of being a professional poet. My husband supports me every step of the way. I believe in myself more. Eventually, my husband began handling my photos and videos for the Traci Neal Speaker Poet brand.

I go from performing poetry at local venues to radio to other media publications. Traci Neal Speaker Poet brand continues growing! Television is coming soon. I believe this with all my heart. I have radical faith. I keep overcoming obstacles, even when I wonder how I will make it through.

Greatness comes in grief.

Grief builds champions. Your capabilities have no limitations!

Death moves swiftly. Death slows down the beat steadily. Death is real. Like death, grief reveals mindset. Grief shapes us. It molds us into new creatures.

When we go through the grief process, we grow. Everyone has a story. I hope mine shows how grief grows greatness.

The grief process is painful. It is never a perfect picture. Go through it. Keep pressing on. Begin to look within. Win your race. May grief grow greatness in you.