

# Going Home to Heaven

A new novel by Jean Victoria Norloch

## Chapter 21

### Little Things

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So here I sit wondering like you where do we go from here? When all is said and done, when all is written where is it we will be?

From here we go forward and when we get to where we're headed we'll be free. That really is all you need to know to keep you moving.

It's a long process, this evolution of humanity so don't expect it all to happen overnight. It doesn't work that way. The world was created for the living so live we must. God did say 'the beauty of the human spirit' and though I know there are those who do not hold out much hope there is much of that beauty to see if one looks with open eyes.

So while you are out there taking a long hard look at what is not working in our world don't forget to stop long enough to appreciate what is working. I call them the little things, because it is not only the big self sacrificing acts of giving that show us love and compassion, it is the little everyday sweet things that the people in our lives do to ease our burdens that truly define the divine spirit of oneness.

Little things; when you really want that cup of coffee but you are stuck at work, somebody not only brings you one but they turn down your offer to pay them back. Little things; you run out of change for laundry, your neighbour gives you a bunch of loonies and won't accept anything in return. Little things; you are hurt and can't quite keep up at work, but your team picks up the slack and when you thank them they simply smile and say you'd do the same for us.

Look around you when you leave your house today and see how many of those little things just happen to pop up. If your hands are full and a stranger opens the door, that's a little thing. If you aren't feeling well and the people you live with do more around the house so you won't have to expend energy you don't have, that's a little thing. When some stranger on the bus gets up and offers an elderly person a seat, that's a little thing.

We had an argument the other day the demon and I, and I have now seen with my own eyes just how deadly dangerous this entities anger can be; of course as usual it wasn't directed at me but still...

He told me after he had calmed down that he absolutely does not see any goodness in people, that for every seemingly kind act he has witnessed there is always a self serving purpose behind it. I asked him if he'd ever seen love and compassion, he said no not true love, not selfless love, not love freely given expecting nothing in return. I argued that I had seen it many times and would have made the attempt to prove it but his next words stopped me in midsentence.

“If I have seen love it is because you have shown me love, if I have seen compassion it is because you have given it, but I have only seen it in you, and you are not like them. One person is not enough, one person will not save this world, one person can't change their future, one person can't save them”. For one of those rare amazing moments, this demon, this creature who has absolutely no faith in humanity looked very sad and lost and it was in that brief flash of time that I realized in his own way he too cares for you all...

You know I hate it when he's right, but this time other than his statement that it will take more than one I do not think that he could be more wrong. So this chapter is dedicated to that idea, it is the argument I never had the chance to verbalize and it helps me understand why I had to come back.

Here is what I've seen through my job as a server in a local restaurant, if this does not show the selfless nature of the human spirit than I am at a loss for what will.

A young couple come in, they have their meal, enjoy their evening but when it comes time to go the man discovers he can't find his wallet. He goes to the car thinking he left it there but no luck and now they are starting to look a bit panicked. The young lady doesn't have her purse, it's her birthday and it was supposed to be his treat. He begins to explain it to me but before I have the chance to offer to cover the cost of the meal a woman from the next table quietly reaches over and lays the cash to pay for the meal into his hands.

I remember him being completely shocked, speechless for a few minutes until he finally managed to mumble a thank-you. Then he gave the money back...

He spoke to management and left his ID, then went to get the cash. I remember asking her after they had left why she had done it. I thought at the time that she knew them but she had answered no, she just felt it was the right thing to do. That was over a year ago, and since that day I have seen her often but never mentioned it until last week, when I sat with her for a moment and told her I had written my first book, and was now working on my second. I explained that I was planning on putting this story in it. I was touched by the tears shining in her eyes. A simple thing, an offer to pay for a meal and maybe now that one simple act will be read by many who will see how a simple kind deed can touch more than one heart.

An elderly gentleman dining at our restaurant had a massive heart attack. Our boss worked tirelessly for 20 minutes doing CPR until the ambulance came but was never able to revive him. We all assumed the worst and our boss I am sure was tormented by the realization that this man could not be saved. Yet a week later the man's son came in to thank our boss for his efforts and to explain that the gentleman in question had lived for days after his heart attack. His family had the chance to say goodbye and for that the son was very grateful. It was remarkable to me that he had taken the time out of his own grieving to understand and act on the

very real probability that his father's death had affected more than just him and his family. I told him so and thanked him for his kind words to our boss.

An elderly couple had a small accident in our parking lot; the lady had tripped and fallen and the gentleman had tried to catch her. They came in bruised and bleeding one extremely busy afternoon and waited patiently for a table. Our young hostess, harassed and surrounded by more than a dozen people asking for seats didn't notice, but a customer passing by did. He came over to ask if they were ok which caught my attention as I was rushing by. I dropped what I was doing and went to work cleansing the gentleman's hands, taking my time to bandage them up and stop the bleeding. I had a full section, and it was a very long time before I was able to get back to my tables yet not one person complained. In fact when I apologized to them they told me not to worry, they had seen what I had done and they were more than willing to wait. I did however do something that day that I am not proud of; I scolded our young hostess for not taking care of the elderly customer and told her she had a lot to learn about compassion; it was something I felt horrible for days after yet a month later I walked by her while she was tending to yet another elderly customer who had injured her hand. Our young woman was kneeling by the table, patiently and gently applying ice to the woman's fingers. I whispered to her that she was a sweet girl and she offered me a little smile. I can't say my words to her the first time were right, because it is never right to judge but I can say I am happy that I was just more than a little wrong about this girl's willingness to care. The elderly couple did come back two weeks later to thank me, and the gentleman proudly showed me his hands, they were fine; no marks, no scars, no infection and as he said no worries.

I recently got an injury that makes it difficult to do my job yet I still have bills to pay like everybody else and so have been trying to continue to work. My co-workers have shown me what it is to hold somebody up until they can again walk on their own. They lift things for me, do all the things for me that really I can't do for myself. My boss, who could have told me to stay home until I am better, instead goes out of his way to explain to customers that I am only able to use one hand and ask them to be patient; they are.

I have seen one young man from a table on one side of the restaurant put down his own plate of food then follow a complete stranger around plate in hand helping her get what she needed. We are a buffet and she was an elderly woman in a wheelchair struggling with her attempts to move the chair and balance her meal. I watched him walk by her, notice her, turn around, put his plate down on the nearby counter and go to her offering her his assistance. I watched as he spent time with her, getting her what she wanted then bringing it back to her table for her. Only after she was seated did he go back to getting his own dinner. I asked her if she knew him and she told me no – but added that she would like to because isn't he a sweet young man. I had to agree.

What about the waitress, a single mother struggling to pay her bills who went out of her way to buy 15 crossword books in large print for one of elderly customer because he was going into the hospital for surgery. He loved crosswords, his family was very far away and his eyesight was horrid. His name was Bill, her name was Jackie and I hope someday she sees this and realizes how big a difference the little things make.

And you see, that's the key, if you are looking for the answer to life's dilemmas; if you are looking for the Holy Grail, God's light as it were, the salvation of mankind. You will find it in the little things; the random acts of selfless kindness...

Sure these people could be angels, they could but they aren't. I know an angel when I see one, they give off a bit of a glow to the well trained connected eye and none of these people were angels. They were just people, ordinary every day, work for a living, struggle to survive people.

And they are why we are here.

Not one of those people knew I was watching, they had no idea I'm a writer or a messenger of hope and they would probably not care. I do. I care a great deal for every person out there who displays compassion and understanding for no other reason than that is simply who they are. I care, my soul cares, my spirit cares and my creator cares. Perhaps you also should care because they are the ones who will save this world, they are the reason humanity has a chance to survive. To those people I say thank-you for all the little things you do every day to bring light and love into our world. Thank-you.

Oh yes and how could I forget this...

There is a man who comes into our restaurant, our society would call him challenged, his name is Ernest and I do not think he has any idea what kind of impact he has on the people he meets. You see he is always smiling and he quite literally brightens any room he walks into. I promised him I would write about him in the second book, and a chapter on little things would not be complete without me saying how much he changes my life for the better when he comes in to see me. We also have on staff a very special man, his name is Wesley and he is simply put a very simple man and to me one of our most important staff members because he too is always smiling. I have never, ever seen him frown. These two beautiful people never complain and for me they embody all the amazing little things that make life and the living of it an absolute joyous experience.

Nearing the end of this chapter I realize that though I said in the beginning there would be no formal dedication for this particular book I have to at the very least dedicate this my most important chapter to the people I work with. You can find them all at Tuckers Market Place on the corner of Warden and Eglinton in Toronto ON – and now you know also where to find me – but that's ok, I might be gone by the time you get to read this one...

Yet gone is not forgotten.

Here is what I will take with me on the day I finally leave. A group of people who held me up, wiped my tears away, kept me whole and strong even when they had no idea what I was doing or why.

The girl who took time out of her life to help me organize a fundraiser, the mother hen who told me today it's ok because you still have us...

The young lady who brought me Kleenex when she saw tears in my eyes, the other who brought me tea when I was sick. The boss who gave me time off to write and the staff that welcomed me back when I wandered in from my adventures overseas. The poor soul who does

my schedule, he tries so very hard to work around my crazy life and not ask for too many favours. The lovely lady who wrote me a note that I keep on my fridge which tells me not to give up and keep doing what I do. The smiles I get every day when I walk in the door; the hugs either to say hello, say goodbye or to let me know I'm not alone. The very strong willed young lady who asked once for some big sister advice and then took it, which makes me giggle because she never takes advice from anyone. The people who support my work both as a writer, and as a humanitarian. The one who always – and I mean always answers the question of 'how are you' with 'very good when I see you here.' The one who always calls me 'my lady', the young men who always make me smile with their quirky nature and silly games. The fool who sings songs throughout his shift making us all smile, customers included ( he always reminds of the Celtic God Loki ) – a young woman who read my first book and sent me the most beautiful email to tell me it had touched her heart. The other who gets a kick out the fact that I act like a little kid every time somebody says they are touched by the words I write, she says my eyes light up and I bounce around like a young girl who just got a new doll. Oh my goodness there are so many, so very many there who have touched my life in ways they never dreamed. The freak who gives me a hard time every day I walk in if I don't go straight to him and give a quick kiss on the cheek to say hello. The crazy pregnant lady who lifts trays she should not lift because sometimes my body is just not quite as strong as it should be. I get sick often, they tell me it is because I do too much but where I work apparently that's ok because when I am sick they always seem to find a way to get me through my day. Oh and of course our boys in the back who have to suffer their entire shift wet and dirty to clean our dishes so we can do our job; they sing a lot those guys do and their songs and raps always bring a smile to my face. If I have missed anybody don't think for one minute you have not touched my spirit, even the silent ones, who never say much but who let me know with a little smile that they care make a huge difference in how I view the world; the world that through my writing I get to share with others.

Perhaps they think I do not notice; I mean I can at times be distant, moody, and even irritable because when I'm there I am so very human. Maybe though that's because they are my family and when you are with your family you don't feel like you have to hide who you are. Well I did notice, so this chapter is for you guys, because if ever there was a place that exemplified the true nature of the little things it is the place I work. I'm a writer and I don't always take time out in my everyday ordinary life to verbalize how much they impact my life. It is by way of the written word I have a chance to let them know that what they do matters and makes a difference. I have had a crazy busy year, what with one book just out and another being written and all the other things in between that you the reader will learn about soon enough but I am taking the time now, as I get close to finishing this my second novel, safe and secured in the loving hands of the friends and family who have been unbeknownst to them the core of my strength for the last four years. You *are* the little things which in my world is an extremely big deal...

You see I was watching, and now the world will know just like I do how very special you all are...