

The Anticipation of December

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As December draws near, I can't help but find myself reminiscing about what life's journey has brought my way this past year. It has certainly been a year filled with unexpected turns, difficult goodbyes, and blessings that I will never take for granted.

Three very special, close friends entered Heaven's gates this year. My brother, too. Each goodbye carried its own heartache, leaving memories that will forever hold a special place in my heart. And then there was January, when my husband survived a heart attack. A frightening chapter that reminded me just how fragile life can be and how quickly everything can change.

Yes, it has certainly been a whirlwind of a year.

But somewhere along the way, I've learned that grief and gratitude can share the same space in our hearts. We can miss those who are no longer here, cherish the memories they left behind, and still find reasons to smile at the blessings in front of us. I won't allow grief to overwhelm my day-to-day life. That doesn't mean the sadness disappears; it simply means I choose not to let it overshadow the

goodness that remains.

I know the blessings will always be magnified in their own special way. Sometimes they come through the kindness of others, an unexpected helping hand, a prayer answered, or simply another morning together with the people we love.

And now, here comes December.

It is a whirlwind of a month all on its own. Between decorating, shopping, family gatherings, and holiday traditions, the days seem to disappear almost as quickly as they arrive. Before we know it, Christmas has come and gone, the decorations are being tucked away, and we're welcoming a brand-new year.

Perhaps that is why I want to be a little more intentional this December. To slow down when I can, appreciate the little things, hold my loved ones a little closer, and remember that not every blessing comes wrapped in a pretty package.

Life doesn't promise us an easy journey, nor does it guarantee that everyone we love will walk beside us forever. But it does offer us moments worth celebrating, memories worth holding onto, and new reasons to be thankful.

As we turn the calendar toward another December, my hope is to carry forward the love, the lessons, and the blessings of this past year.

We can’t change the chapters that have already been written, but with faith and gratitude, we can look forward to the pages still waiting to unfold.