

# I. Believe. In. Shee

*Shee Marie Besch*

Some days, I allow my guarded heart to remember. The pain of loss is coupled with limited sweet memories. They bathe over me like warm sunshine on a sweet spring day. My mind wanders to the day when my brother Clint and I picked up his brand new Chevy truck from Brasher Motor Company in Weimar, Texas. In the hot Texas summertime, we rolled down the windows and turned the music up. Driving on all possible back roads, together we sang. It was late on a Friday night in May when tangles of blue, white and red lights danced on the walls of our living room. Never invited, they knocked. Frozen in time, he remains eighteen. Pictures of him age with time, but his face refuses to. I have never fully recovered from the loss of my brother on that particular Memorial Day—that was never my intention.

Intentions are golden, and innocence is fleeting. The summer sun embraced us as we tromped through the shallow creek. Being thirteen, Belinda and I had no concept that our lives would forever change in a just a few short summer hours. Sunburned and hungry, we made our way out of the red creek water and tromped on the familiar path that led to home. I remember looking down at my feet and watching as I placed one foot in front of the other, methodically comforting. With bellies full of watermelon, we entered dreamland before our heads hit the pillows. As we slept in pretend innocence, all was almost right.

Before the gentle dawn could wake us, my mother's shattered voice called out to me. Abandoning my carefree dreams, I scrambled as she spoke. There had been yet another horrific accident and my beloved father too, forever lost to me. My father was a silent giant of a man. He indulged in simplistic solitude among others when possible. On most Saturdays, he was up with the doves overseeing our bountiful garden or under the hood of a disabled vehicle, quietly searching. For a period of time, my Barbie pink world turned into silence, into coal black silence. I watched mouths move, but I understood little. I have no memory of my father's funeral. Sweet, sweet oblivion.

Years later, I have waded through this brief life and hold certain things dear. I believe in family, and I deeply crave the ones I have been blessed with. I understand that existence is brief, and that children's laughter can unlock the mysteries of your heart. My greatest fear is holding onto a loved one's hand and it not being there to hold the next. Life is not about living; it is about life. Losses of my loved ones have taught me to look in the eyes of those I adore and be courageous enough to remind them. I am thankful because everything I have been through has made me the person I am today, and I am pretty proud of that. I believe in Shee.