



### Blooming with Proof

**C**ONFIDENTLY, I CAN SAY THAT THEY HAD not been there the day before. I know this because my eyes had been scanning the scene each day, wondering how, when or even if they would appear. Yet, there they were. As I was driving away from the office on a Wednesday evening, heading toward an after work meeting, they appeared, one after another on the trees lining Mission Avenue. Everywhere I looked, there were buds and blossoms!

It had rained heavily the evening before, throughout the night and well into midday. Most of the rain had stopped, however, gray skies and the occasional sprinkle remained, like a fireman, staying behind to mop up the scene of a fire and to make sure the work is truly done. The rain must have done its trick though, nourishing the buds enough to give them the strength to take that last step, bursting forth onto the tree branches.

Where only empty branches and the grayish brown bark of the trees had been visible just days before, there suddenly was an additional splash of color. On some of the trees you had to strain your eyes to see the buds, but on others the blooms were vibrantly dousing the branches in color.

Outside of my office window is a grove of aspen trees. Not too shabby of a sight to behold each day at work! I realize I am extremely blessed to have such a beautiful view to glance upon throughout the day. While some people are holed up in cubicles and fluorescent-lit offices, I am able to turn my head to the left and gaze upon these tall trees that, even as I am typing this, sway gently in the breeze. I realize I look out through that window often throughout the day. When I am thinking about how to craft a story on which I am working; when deciding what content to put in the next issue; when

wracking my brain for a creative approach to a problem and coming up blank. The trees are my go-to spot upon which to settle my eyes and think.

Since I look at them so often, I am extremely aware of their branches: in the summer they are heavy with lush green leaves; in the fall they turn a brilliant shade of golden-yellow; in the winter, their branches sit empty and gray.

That last description is the scene I've been witnessing outside my window for what seems like forever. The snow left us long ago, and there have been a few days that flirted with warmer temperatures, but there has been little sign of life in those trees. We seemed to be suspended in time, somewhere between winter and spring; confidently past the worst of winter, but with little indication there would be a breakthrough to spring. As I looked at those branches, recently, I saw absolutely no way it was possible that they would one day be alive with greenery and leaves again. I didn't see any signs of things happening, of work being done or of progress being made to move us forward to where I wanted things to be: green and lush.

Life is so often the same way. We look at a situation we are wrestling with in life, and it seems hopeless, beyond repair and dead. We do not see any way in the world that things can change. There appears to be no option for life to be breathed back into it, no hope for redemption and no signs of good things to come. And so, feeling defeated and hopeless, we too often give up, expecting to only experience the absence of leaves and the presence of bare branches in life, rather than the blossoms and buds we desire; the sign of redemption and hope.

Here's the part we often fail to understand. Just because we don't see *how* something could happen doesn't mean it *won't* happen. And just because something hasn't happened yet, doesn't mean it won't happen, and that it won't happen suddenly and beautifully. All things are possible if you believe, you just have to have faith.

So, as I drove down the street that evening and took in the sight of blossoming trees – trees that had been through the cold of winter, the drab weather and had faced storms of gray skies and pelting rain – it reminded me that the storms we face in life are not meant to hurt us. They are meant to stretch us, to improve us, to help us grow and experience beautiful blessings.

Just when you feel you are beyond weary from the wait; when you think you can't make it, you can't wait any longer, you can't muster hope any more and you don't dare to dream, at the point, when it seems there will never be a way, often times is exactly when the miracle is provided and the answer is given.

Life is full of blessings, and miracles happen every day. Need proof? Just look out your window; they're blooming all around us.

*Blythe*