

Type ONEderland

finding hope in the hard places

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Back Porch Publishing

CLEMSON, SOUTH CAROLINA

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Back Porch Publishing
Clemson, SC 29631
www.mywordsandwonder.com

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Type ONEderland/Elizabeth Maxon. -- 1st ed.

For Lucy, our Doodlebug

and

all the other brave TID warriors

*The world is indeed full of peril, and in it there are many
dark places; but still there is much that is fair, and
though in all lands love is now mingled with grief, it
grows perhaps the greater.*

—J.R.R. TOLKIEN

INTRODUCTION

Her name means 'light'.

When she was a baby she cried the hardest and laughed the loudest. I had friends with calm, docile children – the kind you might not even notice bundled up in their car seats on the floor next to the table.

Lucy hated car seats
and high chairs
and swaddle blankets
and anything else that threatened to confine her. Even her own skin, at times, seemed too restrictive.

The brightness of her could never be contained or ignored.

From the time she could talk she was a storyteller. She would recount actual events that impacted her with exaggerated hand gestures and animated facial expressions. She would dramatically create fictional adventures with academy-award winning skills.

I am a storyteller too. Her story is one of my favorites to tell.



Sometimes the telling of stories must wait as we shift all of our energy into the living of them. In the weeks following Lucy's Type 1 Diabetes (T1D) diagnosis we focused all of our time and energy on learning how to live a new story.

As the shock of having a child with a chronic illness wore off, I began to face the reality that my story going forward would be very different than I could have ever imagined. Her story would be different, too.

It's one thing to grieve lost dreams in your own life. It's another thing to grieve them for your children. It is painful. It is cry-until-your-whole-body-shakes painful.

I never planned on sticking needles in her arms multiple times a day

or cringing every time someone offers her a piece of candy

or reading the labels on everything in the stinkin' store

or obsessing over the number on her blood sugar monitor
 or planning for sugar crashes that could leave her unconscious
 or looking into her tear-filled eyes and telling her,
*Yes we will have to keep doing this every day for
 the rest of your life.*

I have been filled with grief.
 But the thing about grieving is that it is a process of letting go.
*Sometimes our fingers must be pried off the dream of a good
 life so that our hands are open to receive a better one.*

It's hard to believe that your 5-year-old daughter being diagnosed with Type 1 Diabetes (and a thyroid disorder) is a good thing. So I don't believe it's a 'good' thing. I believe that within it lies a better thing.

I believe that for reasons I cannot yet fully see
 her life will be more significant,
 her light will shine brighter,
 her faith will root itself deeper,
 her love will span wider,
 her grace will stretch farther,
 because her story took this turn.

I believe this because I believe Jesus meant what he said when he said...
*I came so that they can have real and eternal life, more and
 better life than they ever dreamed of.*

Whatever turns our stories take we can be sure

*that in all things God works for the good of those who love
him.*

And so I love Him.
With every turning of the page,
with every chapter completed,
I love Him.

So find a cozy spot and get comfortable. I want to share with
you the chapters of our life we call *Type ONEderland*, be-
cause even the most difficult parts of our stories contain great
purpose.

When the worst thing happens, it's never all bad.

CHAPTER ONE

BAD DREAMS

She crept up beside my bed and whispered,
I had a bad dream mommy.

Normally I would have walked her back to her room, rubbed her back and kissed all the scary thoughts away. But that night I pulled back the covers and she climbed in beside me. I knew what the day ahead would hold and all I wanted to do was hold her.

In hindsight it was God's kindness and mercy that led us to put all the pieces together once she was tucked in bed that night - before the nod of a doctor's head made it official the following morning. An observant mama and Google can make a pretty good team when it comes to medical diagnoses. As much as I hoped I was dead wrong, I knew in my heart I was completely right.

I sat down on the couch with my laptop and typed in all the symptoms we had observed over the previous three weeks.
Frequent Urination

Weight Loss
Mood Swings
Increased Thirst

I hit 'search' and every single result was the same.

Type 1 Diabetes.

It was my husband, Joey, who set the laptop aside, grabbed my hand, and lifted me from the couch and to my knees.

We have to pray.

But once our hands were clasped and our eyes were closed, his mouth fell silent. He could hardly breathe. I willed the words to come out of my tear stained face. I tasted salty water as I begged God to be light in this darkness. I offered my child to his strong arms as my own frame grew weaker and weaker.

I don't know how I slept at all that night.

They say a normal blood sugar level is between 80 and 100. When they performed a simple blood test at the pediatrician's office Lucy's was over 400. By the time we were admitted to the hospital that afternoon it had exceeded 500.

Type 1 Diabetes.

Lucy learned the term that day.

Unless a cure is found, she will live with the disease for the rest of her life.

I've always known that my children would face struggles in their lives, but I didn't know it would be something so big that began so young. Skinned knees and broken hearts are one thing, but a lifetime of finger sticks and insulin injections was something entirely different. I felt my heart cracking under the weight of this reality.

I had spent months preparing to speak at a women's retreat that very weekend. I had three messages prepared to deliver to an auditorium full of women. On the day I was scheduled to step into a retreat center I was stepping into a hospital room instead. I didn't understand.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Elizabeth is a storyteller, truth seeker, grace giver, and word weaver. She loves to journey with others from splashing in the shallow waters of this world to diving into deep truth and real community. Elizabeth routinely chooses to read a book rather than put away laundry and visit with friends rather than do the grocery shopping. This makes her a terrible housekeeper and an average cook, but her people love her anyway. She may have dirty dishes piled in her kitchen sink but you'll always find fresh flowers on her windowsill.

Elizabeth lives with her husband, Joey, and their children, Lucy and Oliver, on the edge of the woods in the college town of Clemson, South Carolina.

Elizabeth shares the words and wonder of everyday life on her blog www.mywordsandwonder.com and on Instagram at [@elizabethmaxon](https://www.instagram.com/elizabethmaxon)