

## Preface

LOCKED AWAY IN THE SECRET parts of my heart were emotions and feelings from my early twenties. I share a provocative collection of poetry and letters that vividly displays the canvas of my heart, my innermost thoughts of feelings and emotions about my dad, my dating experiences as well as my personal life experiences immediately after becoming a born-again believer in Jesus Christ.

Even though my dad and I did not get along, we had several things in common: I am a poet and a public speaker. My attempts at writing poetry started when I was in high school. I found it very comforting to have my nose in a schoolbook. In addition, I was an overachiever and involved in a plethora of activities. During my childhood and adolescent years, I faced much opposition and criticism. My family and the people at school constantly mocked and criticized me. It was during my tumultuous twenties that my repressed feelings of resentment, anger and hostility produced a toxic out-pour. Oddly enough, I discovered I was able to write. This allowed me to assign a voice to my inner pain. Therefore, writing was a verbal and non-verbal outlet for me to express my intense feelings and emotions.

In the fall of 2015, I sat down with a potential dating prospect to share my life experiences with him. To my surprise, he quickly became infuriated with me because he was convinced that I talked about my faith in Christ too much! I must admit that I did not expect this type of reaction from him. The truth is I take my faith in Christ as a badge of honor, and I was unwilling to yield to sexual immorality.

His unwarranted response made me think to myself: “what if I took the time to explain to him who I used to be. Maybe this would help him understand me and respect my convictions.”

Soon thereafter, I was led by the Holy Spirit to dig into my past and to share my failures, heartaches, mistakes, feelings, and experiences that molded me into the person I was before Christ. These difficult mental and emotional events in my life led to my supernatural encounter with Jesus Christ. My supernatural encounter with the Risen Savior miraculously transformed me into the godly woman I am today.

What started out as a friendly email conversation, rapidly evolved into a collection of poems and letters that I firmly believe reveal Jesus Christ to people in a real and tangible way. My life is a testament of God’s unconditional love and forgiveness: a major underlining theme throughout the Bible. Every burden and difficulty I experienced and have overcome has allowed me to understand and to relate to others. Not only that, but my personal struggles helped me relate to the pain, the disappointments and frustrations many people are plagued with today. If you are reading this book, it is my goal to be authentic, open, and honest as I deliver a narrative that is INTRIGUING, CAPTIVATING, TRUTHFUL, AND ENCOURAGING. I am compelled to share my personal hardships and problems in such a way that readers realize they are not alone. I want readers to know for themselves and see and believe that true liberty and freedom is only found in a SURRENDERED AND INTIMATE RELATIONSHIP with our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.