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Snapshots of Happiness

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Snapshots of Happiness

NICOLE BLUM

I believe that there is no such thing as “happily ever after.”

When I was a little girl, I loved to curl up on the couch and watch my all-time favorite Disney movie, *Snow White*, with my father. I always begged him to fast-forward through the scenes that made me cry or want to cover my eyes but I never let him fast-forward through the part when *Snow White* and her Prince ride off into the sunset together to live “happily ever after.” I would sigh dreamily as I imagined my own Prince Charming sweeping me off my feet someday and wondered aloud if *Snow White* and the Prince would really live “happily ever after.”

My father tried to explain to me that *Snow White* and the Prince were not actually going to live “happily ever after.” He said that some days *Snow White* and the Prince would be happy, and other days they would be sad. He also told me that there would be no one event, person, place, or thing in my life that would make me “live happily ever after.” He warned me that if I went looking for that one event, person, place, or thing, I would never be able live “happily ever after” because I would always be so busy waiting for something better to come along.

At the time, I did not understand what my father was saying. Of course *Snow White* and the Prince were going to live “happily ever after.” They were going to get married and spend the rest of their lives together in this big, beautiful castle surrounded by everything they had ever dreamed of.

Thirteen years later, I have come to realize that what my dad said makes a lot of sense. There is no such thing as “happily ever after,” there are only moments or – as we refer to them in my family – “snapshots” of happiness. I do not live my life always looking toward the future because I know that I will be much happier if I just stop and enjoy myself right now.

Many people think that once they fall in love with that perfect man or woman, they will “live happily ever after.” Some people think that once they become a doctor, lawyer, teacher—whatever—they will earn a good living and “live happily ever after.” Others think that once they retire and move some place warm, they will “live happily ever after.” But the truth is, none of these people will ever “live happily ever after” and by the time they realize that, it will be too late. The key to happiness is not a great marriage, a dream job, or a waterfront condo in Florida. It is knowing that, even though “happily ever after” does not exist, snapshots of happiness do.