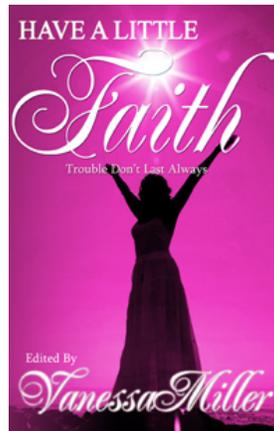


## A Few Excerpts from the Have A Little Faith Anthology



### **JUST SPEAK LIFE**

By: Lacha' J. Mitchell

I could not shake the feelings of doom for myself. The battle going on in my mind was a constant reminder that death was trying to track me down as well. Sometimes I felt as if I were running a race that I could not win. Death was everywhere, and I was in a pit of sickness, disease and despair.

Breast Cancer had made its second appearance to disrupt my life and now my baby girl was fighting for her life as well. I was in the process of fighting for my life when cancer threatened to make a home within my family until one or both of us gave up the fight. While my body was rejecting me, fighting against me, betraying me, I had to speak life in order to be there for my baby girl. Not knowing if I would live or die because treatments were halted due to my daughter's situation. I was ready to trade my life for hers if God would only take me and restore her.

Bargaining with God which is what we do, when the chips are down, when we think our talking impresses God to move on our behalf, or grant our greatest wish. My back was against the wall, and I begged and pleaded with God to turn the situation around for us.

Feeling totally drained, with no visible resolutions in sight, moving like a dead woman walking, I ended up at the sink to wash my hands and then over to RhonShays bedside. I was afraid to really look at her. Ronnie had no problems doing so, but I found myself leaning on him as if he were my crutch. Ronnie was my physical strength and I needed for him to help me keep it together. He stood at the bottom of her bed and I stood on the

left side, looking at the child whose name on the wall was the name of my child, but was swollen in the face and neck area with tubes in her nose and mouth with a machine - the respirator keeping her alive. It was her lifeline to this side of the world, but she was resting because of the heavy sedation. Crying inside because of the deformity of my child's physical appearance, screams were begging me to release them into the atmosphere. My heart crumbled like one who takes a piece of paper and balls it up in their hand. The context of my heart would never be the same if God did not step in to fix it.

Half standing, half leaning on the bedrail, I listened as the doctors told us that RhonShay could not breathe on her own after the biopsy on her chest was done. I knew that her heart could stop because they forewarned us of the risks and the danger of operating on her with such a huge mass in her chest. I chose to believe God, that He would defy the odds against her. As I watched her, I wondered if I did the right thing by her. Voices and hints of my selfishness began to flood my Eardrums and I wanted to run from all of the thoughts and just have a moment of peace to think it all through.

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## **FINDING STRENGTH IN MY WEAKNESS**

By: Helen Moss

When we wake up each morning there is the promise of a new day. There are sagacious questions. What will this day bring? What will I accomplish? What will I learn and discover? There are also the pragmatic questions. What am I going to wear today? What will I have for lunch and who will I eat with? However, my morning questions are far more in the practical realm of things—how badly do I have to pee and how long is it going to take me to get to the bathroom?

For me, the simple act of going to the bathroom first thing in the morning resembles a mini acrobatic production. First there is the actual getting out of bed which requires a slow unraveling of a spasmodic right leg and foot in order to sit up with legs dangling to get the circulation flowing. This procedure is followed by a delicate maneuver to propel myself into a standing position. After taking several deep cleansing yoga-like breaths I am ready for part two—the actual art of movement.

Now this next sequence of the morning bathroom ritual is really the trickiest. I now move into the hop on one foot, slide the other, dance. My right foot decides in the early hours of the morning that it will not set foot—pun intended—on the floor. This necessitates an intricately choreographed series of movements to get around the bed and out the door. Once at the door, it becomes necessary to reach for my walker and continue to hop/slide to the bathroom. At last...I can pee.

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### **COVERED AND CHOSEN**

By: Melinda Powell

Like every family there are some members that have character flaws. I learned that on one of my weekend visits. My cousin Shonda was designated to watch me because my grandmother and her mother were going out for a few hours. I asked her to check over my homework. She looked at my paper then quickly turned and told me, “Everything on that paper is right except your last name. Who told you that your last name was Brown?”

I replied, “That is my last name. Everyone knows that is my last name.”

Laughing at me, she said, “That is not your last name.”

I couldn’t understand why she was saying this, so I said, “It’s on my birth certificate. I have the same last name as my father, Michael Brown.”

“Michael Brown is not your father. He doesn’t even know your mother. Your last name is Kellough, Kellough is your father. Your grandfather is your father.”

I started to cry, she thought it was funny. The more that I cried the more she laughed and continued to repeat that my grandfather was my father. When my grandmother arrived to pick me up she could see that I was visibly upset. I told my grandmother what Shonda said and she told me not to pay her any attention, because Shonda is crazy.

I often wondered why I lived with Kellough, and why when anyone said anything in reference to me and Kellough, my grandmother would become extremely upset and cry. She wouldn’t cry in front of the person that mentioned it, but as soon as we would get away from that person she would cry privately. This happened so much as I was growing up; I began to resent people for saying anything that associated me with Kellough. It didn’t bother me that I looked like my grandfather because I loved both of my

grandparents. I thought that both of them were the best. It just infuriated me that every time the subject came up, it upset my grandmother.

When I returned to Kellough's I asked him why I lived with him and not my grandmother. I thought that since I was a girl I should live with my grandmother. Kellough told me that the reason I lived with him instead of my grandmother was because I was a special little girl. Kellough and my grandmother had there own special way of making me feel like they could fix anything that bothered me.

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