



Into a Reluctant Sunrise

Andrea L. Lingle

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When Andrea L. Lingle, a Christian mother of three, learned that the baby she carried in her womb had died, her once firm faith in God turned to ashes. *Into a Reluctant Sunrise* is her story of how, despite her devastating grief, she came to embrace the gift of each new day.

The memoir is moving in revealing how Lingle, a Sunday school teacher and the wife of a minister, learned that faith isn't a guarantee against tragedy. Wounded and brought down by the death of the daughter she'd named Gwyneth, her questions lost their politeness and turned fierce: How could anyone love and serve a God who lets such things happen? Does God care about people's suffering? Does God even exist? With her spiritual practice reduced to "the equivalent of a newborn's blank, uncomprehending, undemanding stare," Lingle writes that it was Jesus, and his love for children, who brought her back.

"Jesus gives us a way to blindly grope our way towards a God we were never intended to grasp," she writes. Trying hard to let God go, she discovered that, no matter what had happened, a life with God in it was still the better choice. "I will never understand the bones beneath the water or the ashes on the wind," she writes, "but I will follow the one who loved the children as I do because it is my only way."

Into a Reluctant Sunrise touches the heart of a human dilemma: love and loss will always be entwined. Lingle admits that it was not easy to learn to be the parent of a dead child, but feeling Gwyneth still near her, and hearing a small voice ask, "Can you love me like this?" her reply had to be, "Yes. I can."

KRISTINE MORRIS (July / August 2020)

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