

Making Things



By Andrea Clay¹

I was just a girl of 14 when I met Gabriel. He wasn't much older, and was struggling with growing up, like me. We became friends and had lots of fun together.

What came between us, I can't remember. There were harsh words and tears. The image of his rain-soaked hair and the tears sliding down his cheek is seared on my mind. I wanted to make things right, but lacked the courage and didn't know how. The situation seemed too complex to salvage. Gabriel and I grew further apart.

Years passed, and I didn't hear much about Gabriel. Then in April 1998, mutual friends let me know that Gabriel was in a coma. He had fallen 30 meters while mountain climbing. My heart stopped. I knew in that instant that I would never see him again. The doctors did what they could, but Gabriel died a few weeks later.

For some time afterwards I would lie awake at night, wishing I had resolved our differences and seen our friendship through. I was sure that any chance for that was now past. I wondered if he had forgiven me for the hurt I had caused him. I wondered if, when he looked down from Heaven, he could see and understand the pain in my heart.

Then one night I got the answer to my question. It wasn't a long or elaborate answer, but it was everything I needed to wash away the regret I felt. I distinctly heard a voice in my head—Gabriel's voice—say, "I *always* considered you a friend!"

Tears filled my eyes. I knew all was forgiven. My heart was at peace.

I vowed then and there to never again end a day without making things right with those I may have hurt or offended. I may never have another chance. Today may be my only opportunity to show someone I care, to say "I love you" and make things right.

I say to you that whoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment. Therefore if you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.

—The Bible, Matthew 5:22–24 NKJ



Stephen Brown tells of a new owner of a Rolls Royce whose car broke down in a remote area of France. He called the dealership. They flew a repairman in to fix his car. The next day it was running again, and he was on his way. Months later, since he had never received a bill, he wrote the company to thank them for being so responsive when his car had broken down in France. Rolls Royce wrote back, "We have no record of any Rolls Royce ever having mechanical problems."

When God forgives you, He comes and restores that which is wrong. And His love keeps no record of wrongs.



The difference between holding on to a hurt
Or releasing it with forgiveness
Is like the difference between
laying your head down at
night
On a pillow filled with thorns
Or a pillow filled with rose petals.

—Loren Fischer

¹Andrea Clay is a volunteer with The Family.