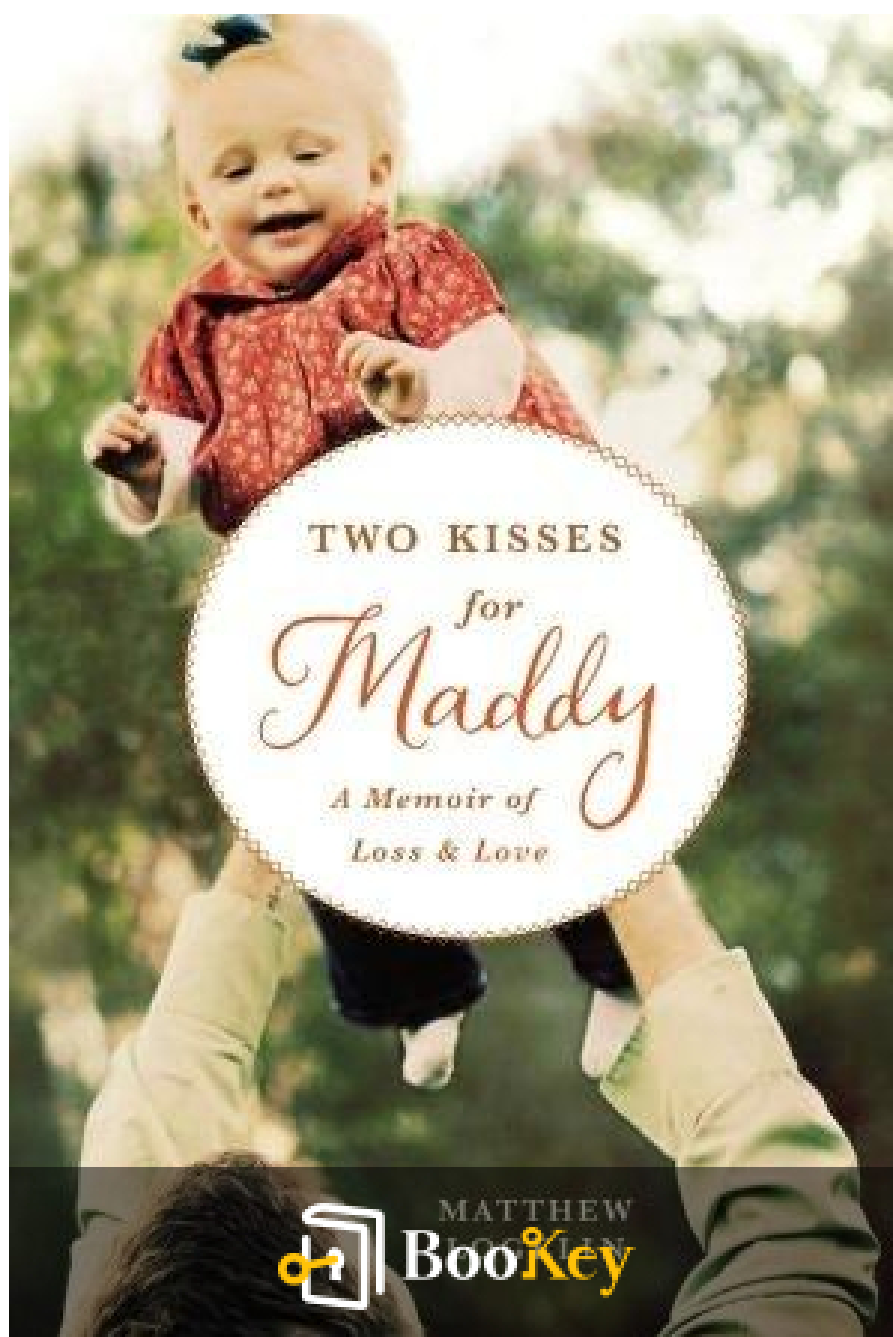


# Two Kisses For Maddy PDF (Limited Copy)

Matthew Logelin



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# **Two Kisses For Maddy Summary**

Embracing Grief and Love in a Father's Journey

Written by New York Central Park Page Turners Books Club

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## About the book

In "Two Kisses for Maddy," Matt Logelin delivers a heartfelt and candid memoir that explores the profound challenges of becoming a single father after the devastating loss of his wife, Liz. The narrative begins with Matt and Liz, high school sweethearts who envisioned a bright future filled with love and family in Los Angeles. Their dreams take a tragic turn when Liz dies unexpectedly from a pulmonary embolism just hours after giving birth to their daughter, Maddy.

Despite the overwhelming sorrow and grief that envelops him, Matt chooses to confront his pain and embrace the journey of single parenthood. He draws strength from precious memories of Liz and the unexpected support he receives from an online community composed of friends and fellow parents. Through a blend of heartfelt anecdotes, infused with humor and deep emotion, Matt navigates the complexities of honoring Liz's memory while learning to adapt to his new life with Maddy.

As the memoir unfolds, readers witness Matt's struggles with parenting, grief, and the desire to create a loving environment for his daughter. Each chapter explores the small victories and monumental challenges he faces, illustrating the resilience of the human spirit in the face of profound loss. Ultimately, "Two Kisses for Maddy" becomes a testament to love, remembrance, and the unwavering bond between a father and daughter as

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Matt forges a new path forward, filled with hope and purpose.

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## About the author

In the unfolding narrative of Matt Logelin's life, we witness his transformation from a tech industry professional at Yahoo! to a devoted single father and author. Set against the backdrop of Minnesota's picturesque landscapes, Matt's story begins with his deep connection to his wife, Liz, and the dreams they nurtured together of starting a family.

Tragically, soon after the birth of their daughter Madeline, Liz's life is cut short due to complications during childbirth. This devastating loss propels Matt into an uncharted territory of grief and single parenthood. The chapters delve into his emotional journey, highlighting how he grapples with the absence of his partner while navigating daily life with a newborn.

Matt's narrative is peppered with poignant reflections on love, loss, and resilience as he documents the challenges of raising Madeline alone. He infuses his days with joy and adventure, seeking to honor Liz's memory by creating a vibrant life for their daughter. The exploration of Los Angeles serves as a backdrop for their adventures, providing a contrast to the initial heartbreak and illustrating Matt's determination to embrace life despite its hardships.

Through their travels and shared experiences, Matt learns to cherish the small moments, embodying the strength of a loving father. With every

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chapter, readers are invited to witness not just the struggle of a man coping with unimaginable grief, but also the birth of a new family dynamic, rooted in love, memory, and hope for the future.

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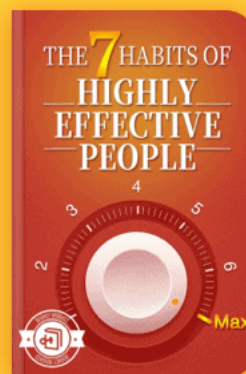
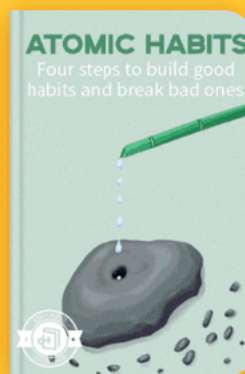
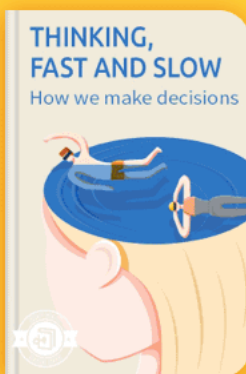
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# Chapter 1 Summary:

## Chapter 1 Summary: The Beginning of Matthew and Liz's Journey

In January 1996, eighteen-year-old Matthew encountered Liz Goodman at a gas station, an unexpected meeting that would spark a profound relationship despite their attendance at separate high schools. Captivated by Liz's charm and beauty, Matthew was undeterred by her awkward mispronunciation of his name. Their first date on January 26 marked the start of a deep connection, as they quickly fell in love even with the looming separation that college would bring.

As they embarked on their individual college journeys, both maintained strong communication, believing in the resilience of their relationship. Their mutual studies abroad in London allowed them to embrace newfound independence while prioritizing each other, reinforcing their bond through shared experiences. A memorable trip through Western Europe served to solidify their commitment and revealed their intention to remain together for the long haul.

As graduation approached, both faced significant life decisions around their future locations. The couple's resolve to keep their relationship intact remained steadfast, despite the increasing distance. Liz dove into a career in

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management consulting, while Matthew chose to pursue graduate studies, temporarily delaying his entrance into the workforce. They both adapted to their evolving realities while continuing to nurture their relationship from afar.

After two years apart, they made a pivotal decision to cohabitate, believing that living in the same city would further strengthen their connection. Matthew relocated to Los Angeles after earning his master's degree. However, he encountered challenges in transitioning to adult life and securing employment, unlike Liz, who excelled in her demanding job. This discrepancy in their professional lives led to a new dynamic in their relationship, with Matthew struggling for stability and Liz becoming increasingly career-focused, which often resulted in their weekends being the only time they could spend together. Through these adjustments, their relationship grew in resilience, navigating the complexities of love amid the trials of adulthood.

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## Chapter 2 Summary:

### Chapter 2 Summary: Invitation and Proposal Plans

In early 2004, Matthew receives an unexpected email from his college roommate, Biraj, inviting him and his girlfriend, Liz, to his upcoming wedding in Kathmandu, Nepal. Enthusiastic about the trip, which has long been a dream of his, Matthew persuades Liz to join him, leveraging her frequent-flier miles for the journey. However, beneath the excitement of the trip, Matthew harbors a secret plan: he intends to propose to Liz during their time in Nepal.

As the couple prepares for their adventure, Matthew takes careful steps to make his proposal special. He secures a loan to purchase an exquisite engagement ring from a jeweler recommended by a friend, ensuring it aligns with Liz's dreams. The ring arrives just in time, heightening Matthew's anticipation. Upon arriving in Kathmandu, they joyfully reunite with Biraj during a lively evening filled with drinks, where Matthew inadvertently reveals his intentions to propose, momentarily jeopardizing the element of surprise.

The following day, as they explore the vibrant streets of Kathmandu, Matthew's anxiety heightens when Liz suggests returning to their hotel



rather than hiking to a nearby temple—the picturesque location he envisioned for the proposal. After some gentle persuasion, he convinces her to take a break in the shade. In a moment charged with nervous excitement, he presents her with the ring box. Initially mistaking it for earrings, Liz's emotions take flight as she opens the box, leading to joyful screams that attract the attention of nearby passersby, marking the success of Matthew's surprise.

Following the proposal, the couple decides to tie the knot in Minneapolis on August 13, 2005. Liz eagerly takes charge of the wedding planning, showcasing her meticulous nature, as they prepare for a beautiful celebration surrounded by loving friends and family.

However, the thrilling whirlwind of their wedding quickly transitions into the realities of life after marriage. A few months post-honeymoon in Greece, Liz confides her desire to find a job that allows her to spend more time at home, reflecting her wish for a stable family life. As she considers her personal sacrifices, Matthew volunteers for a work project in India, which leads to a temporary separation. They embrace the challenge by planning a reunion trip to South India, cherishing their time together amidst the distance.

Upon Matthew's return to Los Angeles, the couple takes a significant step toward their future by house hunting. Liz expresses her readiness to settle



down, and they soon find their dream home. As they bask in this new life, they receive the joyful news that they are expecting a baby, solidifying their aspirations of building a family together and marking the beginning of an exciting new chapter in their lives.

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## Chapter 3 Summary:

### ### Chapter 3 Summary

In the early days of Liz's pregnancy, she faced severe morning sickness that sparked fears about the health of their unborn child. Despite being prescribed Zofran, a medication usually given to chemotherapy patients for nausea, Liz experienced minimal relief, leading to significant nutrient loss for both her and the baby. This resulted in the baby failing to gain the necessary weight at each stage of development.

To address these concerns, Liz and her partner Matt consulted Dr. Gregory DeVore, an obstetrician known for his clinical and distant demeanor. During the ultrasound, Dr. DeVore delivered distressing news: Liz had low amniotic fluid, their baby was underweight, and complications arose from the umbilical cord being wrapped around the baby's neck. He advised immediate bed rest to reduce risks, leaving both Liz and Matt overwhelmed and frightened by the uncertain fate of their child.

After three weeks of enforced bed rest, a follow-up examination resulted in an even more alarming directive; Liz needed to be hospitalized until the baby was born. The hospital environment proved daunting, filled with intimidating medical equipment and minimal privacy. Liz endured physical



discomfort and felt the pressure of frequent admonishments from hospital staff, compounding her stress.

Despite the turmoil, Liz and Matt's bond deepened during their hospital stay. They found solace in conversations about their future lives with their daughter, contemplating her gender and what kind of parents they aspired to be. As they learned they were having a girl, these discussions provided a refuge from the surrounding challenges.

While Liz envisioned a bright, elegant future for their daughter, Matt grappled with his anxieties about becoming a parent, often using humor to alleviate the tension. Amidst the stress of hospitalization, their shared hope for a healthy baby kept their spirits afloat, reinforcing the love that had brought them together in this journey of impending parenthood.

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# Chapter 4:

## Chapter 4 Summary

### Emergency Delivery Decision

The chapter opens in a charged environment as Liz experiences a significant drop in her baby's heart rate, prompting urgent measures from the medical staff. After thorough discussions with the doctor, the decision is made for Liz to undergo a C-section, a surgical procedure designed to safely deliver the baby — a choice made especially crucial given that their daughter will be born seven weeks early. This moment is filled with a mixture of excitement and fear as the couple comes to grips with the reality of becoming parents sooner than expected.

### Family Notification and Preparations

In the wake of this decision, Matthew takes on the task of informing their family and close friends, including Liz's best friend, Anya, who hurriedly makes her way to the hospital. To commemorate this pivotal moment, he shares the news through a blog post, highlighting the significance of their daughter's forthcoming arrival. This chapter delves into the couple's shared memories, particularly their earlier discussions about naming their baby.



They ultimately decide on "Madeline" for her first name, with "Elizabeth" as a middle name, reflecting both personal significance and familial bonds.

### **Emotional Moments Pre-Delivery**

As Liz is prepped for the C-section, Matthew is engulfed in a whirlwind of emotions, oscillating between excitement and trepidation. He observes Liz, noting her mixture of anxiety and anticipation as they prepare for such a life-altering event. Their doctor, Dr. Nelson, offers reassurance, helping to calm Liz's nerves and reinforcing the support system around them.

### **The Delivery Room Preparations**

Once Liz is wheeled away for surgery, Matthew finds himself in the waiting area, preparing to enter the delivery room. Initially struggling with anxiety about the delivery process, he draws strength from thoughts of Liz's beauty and the depth of their shared experiences. This moment serves as a reminder of their journey together and a source of motivation to be present in this significant time.

### **Matthew's Inner Struggle**

As the scene shifts into the delivery room, Matthew is suddenly overwhelmed by a wave of panic. However, he combats this fear by focusing



on Liz's face and the importance of the moment. His internal struggle underscores the depth of his emotions as he vows to be there for both Liz and their newborn daughter. This chapter poignantly captures the complex emotions that come with the anticipation of welcoming their baby girl, emphasizing themes of love, anxiety, and commitment that define the couple's experience.

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# Chapter 5 Summary:

## Chapter 5 Summary

### Introduction of Madeline

In this emotionally charged chapter, the narrator, Matt, reflects on the birth of his daughter, Madeline. The narrative unfolds with a deep sense of anticipation mixed with anxiety as Matt and his wife, Liz, await their child's arrival, marking a pivotal moment in their lives.

### First Cry and Joy

Madeline's birth is marked by her first heartbeat — a loud, healthy scream that fills the delivery room, bringing an overwhelming wave of joy to Matt. He reassures Liz, who is understandably panicking, that their baby is healthy, with Dr. Nelson, the attending physician, echoing their happiness by praising Madeline's beauty.

### First Glimpse

Matt's first sight of Madeline, swaddled in a striped blanket, stirs a profound emotional response within him. He marvels at her tiny features—her hair,

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nose, and cheeks—all reminiscent of both him and Liz. Invited to cut the umbilical cord, he perceives this act as a symbolic moment of connection, even as Madeline is already taking her first independent breaths.

## **NICU Concerns**

Shortly after her arrival, however, the mood shifts dramatically; Madeline must be taken to the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) for precautionary observations. This transition from joy to concern weighs heavily on both parents, forcing Matt to maintain composure amidst their uncertainty about their newborn's health.

## **Dilemma of Loyalties**

As Matt navigates his emotions, he finds himself caught in an internal conflict about where his loyalties lie: should he comfort Liz, who has just endured the trauma of childbirth, or should he rush to check on Madeline in the NICU? Ultimately, he resolves to visit his daughter first, feeling that his paternal instincts must guide him.

## **Fatherhood Begins**

In the NICU, a doctor briefs Matt on Madeline's condition, explaining the need for her to be in an incubator with breathing and feeding tubes. Despite



the serious circumstances, Matt feels a sense of relief at her stability, stepping into his role as a father with a mix of pride and apprehension.

## **Bonding and Reassurance**

Momentarily granted permission to touch Madeline, Matt delicately examines her features and counts her fingers and toes, feeling an immediate bond and profound love for his daughter. This intimate moment fuels his hopes for their future together, casting aside some of the worries plaguing him earlier.

## **Sharing the News**

Upon returning to Liz, Matt shares the news of Madeline's conditions. Although his attempt to comfort her is initially met with panic when he presents photos of their daughter, he quickly reassures Liz that they will be united with Madeline soon, emphasizing the positive updates of her condition.

## **Family Support and Next Steps**

As family members arrive to celebrate Madeline's birth, the atmosphere is filled with love and support. Matt flits between the NICU and Liz's recovery room, updating her on their daughter's progress while teasing her about the



diaper changes that await them, injecting humor into their challenging situation.

### **End of a Significant Day**

The chapter concludes with Matt feeling a mix of exhaustion and relief after a long day filled with profound highs and lows. He acknowledges that while they have much to celebrate, significant challenges lay ahead as they adjust to life with their premature daughter. The emotional journey of parenthood has only just begun for Matt and Liz.

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## Chapter 6 Summary:

### Chapter 6 Summary: Holding Madeline

Matthew awakens with palpable excitement to meet his newborn daughter, Madeline. When the nurse offers him the opportunity to hold her, he is enveloped by a surge of emotions, including joy and relief upon discovering that she is healthy. Eager to share this monumental moment, he rushes back to Liz, who, despite being in pain from childbirth, feels elated to hear about their daughter.

As new parents, Matthew and Liz dive into the logistics of parenthood. They tackle paperwork and discuss preparations for baby Madeline, oscillating between joy and anxiety about their upcoming responsibilities. While Matthew expresses confidence in Liz's natural maternal instincts, he grapples with his insecurities about being a dad.

Amid this delicate time, Matthew receives a call from his mother, asking him to select a gift for Liz as a token of appreciation for her resilience during pregnancy. However, upon returning home, he is met with a harrowing sight: their house has been burglarized. This unexpected invasion throws Matthew into a whirlwind of stress and fear for his family's safety, especially with a newborn to consider.



As they survey the damage, Matthew's anger rises at the realization that Liz's cherished jewelry has been stolen—items steeped in sentimental value. Liz, however, maintains a level-headed perspective, reminding him that while material possessions can be replaced, their health and safety are paramount. They report the crime to the police, but the emotional toll of the violation weighs heavily on them, casting a shadow over what should be a festive time filled with anticipation for their growing family.

That night, Matthew's protective instincts kick in. He lies awake, anxious about the possibility of another break-in, though he recognizes that his fears might be exaggerated. The following morning brings a sliver of relief when they learn the police have apprehended the burglars, though their stolen items remain unrecoverable.

In search of a way to uplift Liz, Matthew initially plans to bring her a gift. However, he quickly realizes that his presence is what Liz truly needs in this trying time. Opting to forgo lunch with friends, he chooses to stay by her side, reinforcing his commitment to being an active participant in their new journey as a family. Liz expresses her gratitude for his support, emphasizing the vital role companionship plays in navigating the difficulties of their evolving relationship.



## Chapter 7 Summary:

In Chapter 7, Matthew Logelin's emotional turmoil reaches a peak as he navigates the hospital, grappling with the overwhelming fear of losing his wife, Liz, who is recovering after a complicated childbirth. Despite the relief of Liz finally waking up, filled with excitement to meet their newborn daughter, Madeline, the situation swiftly takes a dark turn. As Liz attempts to rise for the first time in weeks, she unexpectedly collapses, sending the hospital staff into a flurry of activity and sowing panic in Matthew's heart.

This chapter skillfully portrays Matthew's internal battle with denial and dread, accentuated by the sudden appearance of a grief counselor and a priest, which heightens his anxiety about the gravity of Liz's condition. The confusion and disbelief he experiences underscore the harsh reality that a healthy woman can face life-threatening complications during or after childbirth.

As he frantically tries to contact family members to convey the seriousness of the situation, his feelings of isolation deepen, leaving him to confront the unimaginable possibility of loss. Ultimately, the chapter climaxes with Matthew's heart-wrenching revelation about Liz's fate; it is with profound sorrow that he comes to understand she has died. This pivotal moment not only marks a dramatic turning point in his life but also lays the groundwork for the immense challenges he will face as a widower and a new father,



highlighting the themes of grief and resilience that will unfold in the subsequent chapters.

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## Chapter 8:

### Chapter 8 Summary: The Grief of Loss

In this poignant chapter, Matthew finds himself engulfed in the tumult of grief following the sudden passing of his wife, Liz. Her death, believed to be caused by a pulmonary embolism, leaves him reeling from shock and despair. Even with his family present, he grapples with a profound sense of loneliness, magnifying the weight of his sorrow.

The chapter unfolds in the sterile environment of the hospital where family members gather, their disbelief palpable. Dr. Nelson, a sympathetic physician, shares in their sorrow. However, amidst the compassion, Matthew perceives the hospital staff's discomfort, as they avoid eye contact, treating the tragedy with clinical detachment rather than emotional engagement.

Confronting his deepest fears, Matthew is initially reluctant to face the reality of death. Yet he feels compelled to see Liz one last time. When he enters her room, the sight of her lifeless body overwhelms him with a cascade of anger, regret, and loneliness. He longs to remember her vibrant spirit rather than the painful image before him.

In the midst of his pain, thoughts of their newborn daughter, Madeline,



emerge as an unexpected source of hope. This realization propels Matthew to seek connection with Madeline, who is in the NICU. He recognizes that nurturing this new life is vital for finding renewed purpose amidst his grief.

Amidst the turmoil, Matthew becomes determined to find Liz's wedding and

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## Chapter 9 Summary:

### Chapter 9 Summary: Grieving and Healing

In this poignant chapter, Matthew Logelin delves into the profound impact of losing his wife, Liz, shortly after childbirth. The weight of his grief is palpable as he grapples with an influx of calls and messages from friends and family. Well-meaning but often awkward in their attempts to console him, they resort to euphemisms that only serve to deepen his sense of loss. Matthew feels trapped in a storm of sorrow, unable to escape the grim reality of Liz's death.

As he adjusts to his new identity as a widowed father, the loneliness and despair threaten to engulf him. He finds himself in a grief room, which was once a maternity space filled with hope, now transformed into a shrine of mourning. The turmoil within him is intense, frequently punctuated by the haunting question: "What the fuck am I gonna do without her?" Yet amidst this darkness, his newborn daughter, Madeline, shines as a beacon of hope. She embodies the enduring love between him and Liz, becoming both his reason to persevere and a source of light in an otherwise bleak landscape.

Matthew's emotional turmoil is further complicated by practical decisions, particularly regarding organ donation, a matter that requires urgency despite





his reluctance. The enormity of the decision weighs heavily on him as he navigates what Liz would have wanted. Ultimately, he chooses to honor her memory by allowing her organs to help others, transforming his grief into a measure of hope for those in need.

As the news of Liz's passing spreads, Matthew is enveloped by a network of support from friends across his life. Their heartfelt reminiscences about Liz and attempts to comfort him underscore both the enormity of his loss and the love that surrounds him. While the deluge of messages may amplify his sorrow, it also serves to remind him that he is not alone in his grief.

Amidst the logistics of planning Liz's funeral—decisions that he finds daunting—Matthew confronts the painful reality of choosing a final resting place for her remains. With the support of family, he navigates these responsibilities, underscoring the crucial role of community during such a trying time.

Ultimately, as Matthew pours his energy into caring for Madeline, he discovers a flicker of solace and purpose. Even in the depths of his grief, Madeline represents a path forward, offering hope and a promise of healing. As he watches her breathe and grow, he begins to understand that although Liz is gone, her love will always be alive in his heart and in their daughter, guiding him as he navigates this new chapter of his life.



## Chapter 10 Summary:

### Chapter 10 Summary: Return Home

In the emotionally charged chapter titled "Return Home," the narrator confronts the haunting reality of his home after the tragic death of his wife, Liz. Stepping into the space that was once filled with laughter and shared moments, he grapples with a profound sense of emptiness. Surrounded by supportive friends and family, he feels the weight of their collective sorrow as they come together to mourn.

As he moves through the house, Liz's presence lingers in the remnants of her life—an almost empty water bottle and her medication serve as stark reminders of her struggles, particularly during her difficult pregnancy. These items evoke a flood of memories, both joyful and painful, culminating in a song that plays in his mind, echoing the deep connection they shared.

In his quest to honor Liz's memory at her funeral, the narrator decides against traditional songs, yearning for a playlist that truly reflects her spirit. He enlists the help of his friend A.J., creating a balance between their differing musical tastes to craft a unique tribute that speaks to what Liz meant to him.



As they delve into the logistics of the funeral, other family members take on additional responsibilities, such as handling financial matters and drafting an obituary. The narrator reflects on the whirlwind of emotions surrounding the brief period between the miraculous birth of their daughter, Madeline, and the devastating loss of Liz within just 27 hours—a time frame that encapsulates both joy and heartbreak.

Amidst this sorrowful endeavor, he taps into his grief by writing a heartfelt tribute for the obituary, allowing himself a moment of peace through the expression of his emotions. Meanwhile, family and friends gather, sharing food and memories, each person navigating their grief in their own way.

In the midst of this heavy atmosphere, the narrator finds a sliver of solace in his visits to his newborn daughter, Madeline. Her arrival embodies the joy of new life, starkly contrasting with the profound loss he is experiencing. This chapter underscores the complex tapestry of human emotion, where grief and hope coexist, marking a critical moment in the narrator's journey toward healing.



# Chapter 11 Summary:

## Chapter 11 Summary

In this deeply poignant chapter, the narrator confronts the profound anguish of losing his wife, Liz, while preparing for her funeral. The emotional weight of outliving her, despite his own unhealthy habits, hits him with a jarring realization that their shared dreams of growing old together have been shattered.

As he arrives at the funeral venue, he is momentarily uplifted by the vibrant displays of flowers, including a particularly heartfelt tribute from Liz's hair salon, which injects a touch of humor into the somber atmosphere. Inside, photo boards celebrating Liz's exuberant spirit showcase memories that evoke both laughter and tears, encapsulating the life she lived and the love she spread.

During the service, the narrator wrestles with his anxiety about public speaking but discovers an inner strength that allows him to share his heartfelt tributes to Liz. His candid reflections on their life together resonate deeply with the attendees, blending moments of joy with sorrow as friends and family rally around him, sharing their own cherished stories of Liz.



The gathering shifts to his home, where friends and family continue to honor Liz's memory. Yet, amidst the outpouring of support, he feels the crushing absence of his beloved wife. Overwhelmed by grief and nausea, he longs for the comforting presence of their newborn daughter, Madeline, who is still in the hospital's care.

In a touching scene at the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU), he cradles Madeline, whispering stories of her mother to her. In an emotional gesture of love, he places a photograph of Liz inside the incubator, a symbol of the eternal bond they share as a family. The chapter concludes with a bittersweet kiss for Madeline, conveying the love of both parents—an enduring connection despite the heartbreaking loss.

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# Chapter 12:

## Chapter 12 Summary

### Introduction

In this emotionally charged chapter, Matthew navigates a storm of feelings as he prepares to bring his newborn daughter, Madeline, home from the hospital after her five-week stay. His emotions span excitement, fear, happiness, and dread, all tied to the significant transition ahead.

### Leaving the Hospital

As he is wheeled out of the hospital in a wheelchair—Madeline secured in her car seat—Matthew reflects on the scene. A nurse explains the liability policy behind this protocol, but amidst his unpreparedness and sense of overwhelm, a spark of determination ignites within him. He is resolute in his commitment to care for his daughter.

### Doubts and Insecurities

In moments leading up to their departure, Matthew wrestles with profound self-doubt about his new role as a single parent following the tragic loss of

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Liz, his partner. Despite comforting reassurances from the hospital staff, he questions his readiness and competence, highlighting the heavy burden of parenting he feels he might not be equipped to handle.

### **Feeling the Weight of Expectations**

As Matthew leaves the hospital, he faces skepticism from acquaintances who cast doubt on his ability to care for Madeline. This scrutiny amplifies his feelings of inadequacy, yet it fuels a renewed determination in him to be the best father possible as he ventures into their new life together.

### **Reflecting on Loss**

The drive home becomes a poignant journey as Matthew passes the site of Liz's funeral. The weight of grief is palpable, serving as a haunting reminder of her absence during this pivotal moment. It starkly contrasts the joy of welcoming Madeline while emphasizing his lingering sorrow.

### **Homecoming**

Arriving home, Matthew experiences a shift in the atmosphere; the house, once filled with an aching loneliness, now feels vibrant with Madeline's presence. This marks the beginning of a transformative chapter in his life, where he fully embraces the challenges and joys of single parenthood.



## Support and Adjustments

With the support of his workplace, Matthew explores extended leave options to better adapt to his new reality. He considers hiring help, including

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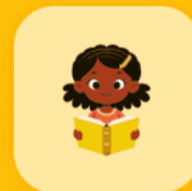
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# Chapter 13 Summary:

## Chapter 13 Summary

### Reflections on Loss and Parenting

In this chapter, Matthew delves into the depth of his sorrow following the death of his wife, Liz, and faces the daunting task of raising their newborn daughter, Madeline, alone. The gravity of his loss becomes evident as he contemplates Madeline's life without her mother, leading him to grapple with his evolving reality filled with grief. Recounting his first night with Madeline on their porch, he reminisces about the family life he had envisioned with Liz, highlighting his longing for what could have been.

### Crisis and Survival

Matthew's transition into fatherhood takes a sharp turn when an alarming incident occurs—Madeline chokes on vomit. Trusting his instincts, he springs into action, performing CPR and using a nasal aspirator to clear her airway. This frightening episode sparks reflections on how different their situation would have been with Liz by his side. Despite his fears and the emotional toll of the moment, he experiences a sense of triumph in managing to care for Madeline alone.

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## **Managing Grief and Humor**

While Matthew grapples with profound sadness and frequent tears, he strives to protect Madeline from his pain, believing that his emotional well-being directly impacts her happiness. In a bid to cope, he finds humor in the oddity of receiving condolence cards that paradoxically celebrate Madeline's birth while mourning Liz's loss. These moments of levity serve as a crucial coping mechanism amidst the weight of his grief.

## **Community Support**

As he navigates his overwhelming responsibilities, Matthew is buoyed by the support of friends and neighbors who provide meals and gifts for Madeline. He struggles with the tasks of daily life, often haunted by memories of Liz, but begins to channel his energy into completing chores, finding solace in routine as a means of distraction.

## **Financial Struggles**

Alongside his emotional challenges, Matthew faces practical concerns, particularly regarding finances. With Liz's significant income no longer available, he seeks guidance from a financial adviser and contemplates the best way to support himself and Madeline. His inquiry into Social Security



benefits evokes a mix of anger and resignation, as he witnesses the limited assistance available to widowed parents.

## **Encountering Bureaucracy**

Matthew's experience at the Social Security office underscores the struggles of navigating bureaucratic processes while grappling with the painful reality of Liz's passing. He confronts the complexities of securing financial support, all the while remaining focused on the goal of providing for Madeline during this difficult chapter in their lives.

## **First Steps in Parenthood**

The chapter culminates with a poignant moment as Matthew changes Madeline's diaper in public for the first time. Despite the chaos surrounding him and the weight of his emotions, he embraces his role as a father. Through a blend of laughter, grief, and new responsibilities, Matthew begins to carve out his path as a single parent, slowly finding confidence in his ability to nurture and care for his daughter.

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# Chapter 14 Summary:

## Chapter 14 Summary

### Memories and Grief

This chapter delves into the emotional landscape of Matthew, a widower navigating life after the death of his wife, Liz. As he raises their daughter, Madeline, he often grapples with memories of Liz, feeling a profound disconnect between his inner sorrow and the seemingly normal world around him. This juxtaposition leaves Matthew feeling alienated and lonely, emphasizing the complexities of single fatherhood in the shadow of loss.

### Interactions with Strangers

Matthew's daily life interactions reveal a spectrum of societal perceptions. While many strangers make hasty judgments about his situation as a father, some offer empathetic gestures that resonate deeply with him. Brief encounters at places like the bank and Home Depot illuminate a shared experience of grief among people who have faced similar losses. These moments provide Matthew with unexpected but meaningful connections, reminding him of the universal nature of sorrow.





## **Public Perception and Assumptions**

Walking with Madeline, Matthew is acutely aware of the scrutiny from passersby regarding his parenting role. He feels the weight of societal expectations, especially when strangers inquire about Madeline's mother. These situations highlight the biases surrounding single fathers and force Matthew to confront societal preconceptions about family dynamics and parental responsibility.

## **Building a Support Network**

In the wake of losing Liz, Matthew actively seeks community support, leading to connections with other parents online. He contemplates starting a parenting group to share insights and experiences with those facing similar challenges. This initiative not only fosters a supportive community for Matthew but is also crucial for Madeline's growth, helping to instill a sense of belonging as they both navigate their new reality.

## **Blogging as Therapy**

To process his emotions and track his journey with Madeline, Matthew turns to blogging. Initially skeptical about its effectiveness, he discovers that writing serves as a vital outlet for his grief and a way to document their family life. The blog evolves into a cherished family journal and a means of

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connecting with a wider audience, providing both solace and community.

## **Acts of Kindness and Giving Back**

Encouraged by the support from his blog readers, Matthew learns to accept kindness and generosity, inspiring him to extend that compassion to others. He begins to donate surplus items to shelters and individuals in need, finding a renewed sense of purpose in these acts of giving. This process becomes an integral part of his healing journey, allowing him to honor Liz's memory by helping those in distress.

## **Conclusion**

Navigating the intricate path of grief and single fatherhood, Matthew learns the importance of community, empathy, and shared experiences. Through unexpected connections and an evolving support system, he embraces the challenges of his new life while cherishing Liz's memory, demonstrating the profound human need for connection, especially in times of struggle.

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# Chapter 15 Summary:

## Chapter 15 Summary

In this chapter, the author offers a heartfelt exploration of his journey through single parenting while navigating the complexities of grief after the passing of his wife, Liz.

### Parenting Insights

The author finds strong similarities between his spirited daughter, Madeline, and her late mother, highlighting Madeline's inherent need for attention and affection. Initially, he seeks parenting guidance from various sources but gradually comes to trust his instincts, adopting an improvised, adaptable style reminiscent of the resourceful character MacGyver.

### First Dodgers Game

A pivotal moment unfolds when he takes Madeline to a Dodgers game—a cherished dream he once shared with Liz. In a comedic twist, he forgets to pack a bottle for Madeline's formula but cleverly devises a makeshift solution using a water bottle and a sterilized lapel pin, feeling a rush of triumph as he navigates this challenge.





## **Growing Confidence**

As he gains more experience, the author's confidence in his parenting abilities flourishes. Regular reassurances from Madeline's pediatrician regarding her health bolster his sense of competence, while the positive feedback from friends and family strengthens his resolve as a dedicated single parent.

## **Shift in Perspective**

Through his writing, the author begins sharing his insights and experiences on parenting via his blog, aiming to connect with other mothers and fathers who feel isolated in their challenges. He recognizes the universal struggles both men and women face in parenting, fostering a sense of unity and validation among readers.

## **Community and Support**

Building a supportive network, the author becomes a confidant for fellow young widows and widowers coping with their grief. While revisiting his own painful memories can be emotionally taxing, these shared experiences foster a deep bond, providing solace and mutual support during difficult times.

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## **Friend Visits**

As his friends visit, their hands-on support with Madeline surprises him and shifts the dynamic of their conversations towards parenting. This newfound focus signifies a mutual commitment to his journey, underscoring the importance of community in his life.

## **Emotional Struggles**

Despite the positive distractions offered by friends, memories of Liz remain stark reminders of his loss. A jarring call from United Airlines about a Hawaiian trip they had planned together thrusts him back into sorrow, momentarily shattering his confidence and forcing him to confront the enduring pain of his grief.

## **Future Planning**

Mindful of the impending anniversary of Liz's death, the author seeks solace in familial connections. Reaching out to Liz's family, they collectively agree to embark on a trip— a decision that emphasizes the significance of shared experiences during trying times. This ultimately leads them to make plans for a getaway to Banff, symbolizing healing and hope as they navigate their intertwined paths of grief and support.



## Chapter 16:

Chapter 16 begins with the protagonist deeply immersed in the grief that envelops family and friends following the untimely death of Liz, a pivotal character whose absence leaves a profound void. With Liz's cremation leaving no traditional site for mourning, the protagonist, alongside friends Tom and Candee, decides to hold a second funeral in Minnesota to provide closure for those who were unable to attend the initial service.

Initially, the protagonist is reluctant about organizing this second funeral, especially concerning his daughter Madeline, who, at her young age, does not fully grasp the gravity of the situation. After discussing the matter with Dr. Hartstein, he ultimately concludes that it would be best for Madeline to stay behind for her health and well-being, despite his longing to have her with him during this painful process.

The emotional farewell to Madeline is a poignant moment; as he watches her leave with friends, he is overwhelmed by a surge of loneliness and despair. The swirling emotions make it difficult for him to maintain composure in public, highlighting how deeply Liz's absence has impacted his life.

Returning home after saying goodbye to Madeline, he is confronted by the haunting silence of an empty house, where every corner is filled with memories of Liz. The weight of grief settles heavily upon him, intensifying



the sense of loss.

As the second funeral draws near, the protagonist grapples with the challenge of delivering another eulogy. Despite the discomfort it brings, he understands the necessity of honoring Liz's memory in front of their

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# **Chapter 17 Summary:**

## **Chapter 17 Summary**

### **Transition to Single Fatherhood**

In this chapter, Matthew confronts the profound challenges of life as a divorced father, learning to navigate shared custody with his daughter, Madeline. Their trip to Minnesota for his cousin Josh's wedding emerges as a pivotal moment in his evolving identity as a parent, moving away from the idealized vision he once had of family life.

### **Journey to the Wedding**

Despite the emotional weight of attending Liz's second funeral, Matthew is resolved to uphold a promise Liz made regarding the wedding. As he prepares for Madeline's first flight, a blend of excitement and anxiety fills the air, underscoring his meticulous planning for unforeseen issues. Surprisingly, Madeline's behavior during the flight is calm, allowing them to focus on the journey ahead.

### **Social Dynamics and Grief**

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Upon their arrival, Matthew feels the awkwardness of being perceived as a ghost by old friends who are uncertain about how to engage with him in the wake of Liz's death. However, connections with supportive friends like A.J. and Nate provide comfort, helping him navigate the social landscape and allowing him to participate in the weekend festivities, despite the emotional weight of the wedding ceremony itself.

### **A Shift in Family Dynamics**

The wedding serves as a catalyst for Matthew to reevaluate family relationships in a post-Liz world. His bonding time with Madeline not only strengthens their father-daughter relationship but also rekindles ties with family members. Shared meals and interactions with both sets of grandparents highlight the importance of nurturing connections that had previously been neglected, emphasizing the value of family in times of loss.

### **Coping with Loss**

Upon returning to Los Angeles, Matthew grapples with the heavy emotional reality of their home, now tidily organized—a stark contrast to the chaos that followed Liz's passing. Familiar items in their bedroom evoke deep grief, making her absence painfully palpable and reminding him of their shared life together.



## Adjusting to New Norms

Matthew struggles with the lingering echoes of Liz's presence in the arranged household spaces, intensifying his feelings of longing and loss. As he comes to terms with his new identity as a single parent, he grapples with the importance of honoring Liz's memory while forging a new path forward. Ultimately, he opts to sleep on the couch, establishing a physical and emotional distance from places that serve as painful reminders of his grief.

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## Chapter 18 Summary:

### Chapter 18 Summary

In this poignant chapter, the author grapples with the heaviness of grief during an anniversary trip to Canada with Liz's family. As they visit scenic locations like Sulphur Mountain, he reflects on their second anniversary, struggling to recall the details, a testament to the lasting impact of Liz's absence. The outing pushes him to confront his fear of heights, a challenge Liz had always encouraged him to face. While he feels a sense of accomplishment in overcoming this fear, his mind remains a tumult of memories and sorrow.

During a dinner in Banff with Liz's family, he feels profoundly isolated. The lack of acknowledgment for both Liz and their anniversary only amplifies his loneliness, leaving him longing for shared recognition of their loss. Overcome with emotion, he steps outside with his daughter Madeline, allowing himself a moment to grieve.

Seeking comfort, he wanders to a bar alone. Here, he encounters well-intentioned yet painful questions from strangers about Liz, which serve as stark reminders of his heartache. Though drinking offers a brief escape, it's tempered by a deep disconnection from his surroundings and a yearning



for others to truly understand his pain.

As the chapter progresses, the author and Madeline find themselves at the Waldorf Astoria in New York City, a place filled with cherished memories of Liz. A bittersweet moment occurs when Madeline rolls over for the first time; he feels a mix of pride and heartbreak as Liz is not there to celebrate this milestone. Despite the challenges ahead, he clings to a sense of hope for their future together, believing they will navigate their journey with resilience.

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# Chapter 19 Summary:

## Chapter 19 Summary

### Reflection on Loss

In this chapter, Matthew grapples with the stark void left by Liz's absence, particularly during poignant milestones such as her birthday and their anniversaries. These moments heighten his feelings of incompleteness, bringing back memories of Liz's unwavering support, especially during her last birthday when he had to leave for work—one of the many sacrifices couples make for their responsibilities.

### The First Birthday Without Liz

On September 17, the day marking Liz's birthday, Matthew strives to create a semblance of normalcy for his daughter, Madeline. He spends quality time with her, feeding and playing, while battling the heaviness of his grief. The heartache of celebrating this day without Liz is palpable, yet he attempts to uplift the day by arranging a dinner with Anya, one of Liz's close friends.

### A Birthday Celebration

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They choose a restaurant that Liz cherished, a bittersweet reminder of happy times shared. In an effort to honor Liz, Matthew keeps a promise to replace her stolen jewelry by purchasing a necklace for Madeline. As he reminisces, he finds himself overwhelmed by emotions in a familiar place, painfully aware of the absence of his beloved wife.

### **The 5K Run to Honor Liz**

In a bid to celebrate Liz's memory, Matthew organizes a 5K walk/run event for September 20, inspired by the strong support network cultivated through his blog community. This initiative aims to raise funds, drawing participants from near and far, united in their remembrance of Liz. He reflects on the generosity shown by his online supporters, providing not only emotional but financial relief during such a trying time for him and Madeline.

### **Running for Liz**

During the run around Lake Calhoun, a cherished location tied to Matthew and Liz's past, he confronts both physical challenges and emotional nostalgia. Each step reminds him of happier moments shared with Liz, intensifying the bittersweet experience of honoring her memory while pushing through his physical limits.

### **Community Support and Generosity**

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Following the successful event, which generates over four thousand dollars, Matthew is filled with gratitude. In a selfless act, he decides to donate the funds to those in similar need, illustrating the profound impact of compassion in his life. This decision signals not just appreciation for the support he has received but also a desire to uplift others experiencing hardship.

## **A New Beginning**

As the chapter concludes, Matthew contemplates establishing a nonprofit organization to assist others in similar situations. This thought marks a pivotal transition in his healing journey, hinting at a shift from mourning to a life of giving back. The chapter underscores themes of community, resilience, and the possibility of new beginnings arising from loss.

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## Chapter 20:

In Chapter 20, the author captures the profound sense of emptiness and loss following the death of his wife, Liz. As he wakes up each day without her, he reflects on the small, loving rituals they shared—moments like kisses goodbye and casual conversations—that have now vanished from his life. Despite the overwhelming grief, he resolves to move forward, recognizing the importance of re-establishing a connection with the outside world.

Having dedicated months to caring for their daughter, Madeline, the author realizes he must also take on additional responsibilities, such as organizing his life and planning for the future. This includes exploring options like life insurance to ensure Madeline's security and well-being as a single parent. The weight of his new role becomes increasingly clear as he confronts the reality of raising a child alone.

As he prepares to return to work, anxiety and apprehension fill him, particularly about placing Madeline in daycare. The thought of separation triggers sorrow and fears of losing the precious bond they share. Fortunately, with support from Liz's friends, he finds a daycare that resonates with him, which he hopes will provide a nurturing environment for their daughter.

Returning to his office at Yahoo!, he feels like an outsider in a life that has moved on in his absence. His colleagues treat him with a newfound caution,



mindful of his grief. While sorting through emails, he stumbles upon the final messages from Liz, which brings an emotional wave of nostalgia and sorrow as he remembers their cherished moments together. The emptiness of his cubicle serves as a poignant reminder of his loss, yet he strives to create new, meaningful memories with Madeline while holding onto the past.

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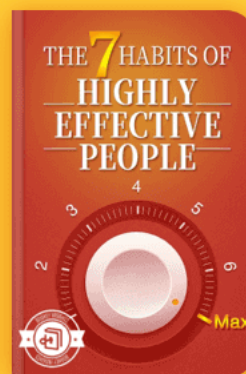
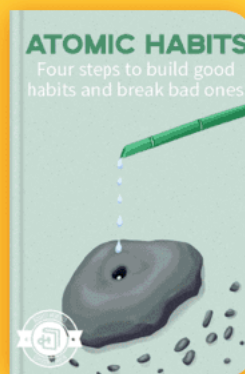
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## Chapter 21 Summary:

In Chapter 21 of "Two Kisses for Maddy," the narrator, who is navigating life as a single father after the death of his wife, Liz, shares a poignant account of shopping for clothes with his daughter, Madeline. This newfound joy in spending time with her stands as a testament to their evolving relationship in the wake of loss. As he picks outfits for Madeline, he carefully selects pieces he imagines Liz would have chosen, recognizing how important it is to honor both of their influences on their daughter. This moment reflects his commitment to keeping Liz's spirit alive while ensuring Madeline's identity is shaped by the love of both her parents.

As he transitions into his new routine, the narrator balances his professional responsibilities with quality time spent with Madeline. Their regular outings not only strengthen their bond but also serve as a beautiful homage to Liz, blending shared interests and values into Madeline's life. These outings become a vital part of their healing process, showcasing how love can persist even amidst grief.

The chapter further depicts his emotional refuge at Amoeba, his cherished record store, where collecting music becomes a way to escape the overwhelming sadness of Liz's absence. Although Tuesdays once brought him joy, now they serve as bittersweet reminders of his loss. However, bringing Madeline along transforms the experience, evolving it into a shared



love for music that strengthens their connection.

During a particular shopping trip to a children's boutique, the narrator faces the challenge of selecting a dress he believes would meet Liz's approval. Despite initial hesitation over the price for a child's dress, he ultimately buys it as a heartfelt tribute to Liz's memory, showcasing his deep-seated love and the lengths he will go to honor her legacy.

Through these experiences, the chapter poignantly illustrates the father's resolve to raise Madeline in a manner that respects her mother's memory while navigating the complexities of single parenthood. The mixture of joy, responsibility, and sorrow encapsulates the essence of his journey, making it a profound exploration of fatherhood after loss.

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## Chapter 22 Summary:

### ### Chapter 22 Summary

In this chapter, the narrator grapples with the profound loss of Liz, a woman whose voice he mourns deeply. He keeps a painful reminder—an old video of her in the hospital—which he avoids because of the heartache it invokes. He expresses a hope that one day his daughter Madeline will want to hear her mother's voice. Yet, the thought of this familiarity terrifies him, as it is intertwined with sorrow.

As the days pass, Liz's cell phone continues to ring with calls from friends unaware of her passing, intensifying the narrator's grief. He faces the daunting task of informing them of her death, which only amplifies his emotional burden. A call from a detective regarding Liz's stolen BlackBerry jolts him into the chaotic reality of his life since her death. He recalls that her phone had been taken during a robbery, a fact they remained oblivious to at the time.

The trip to the police station to reclaim Liz's phone becomes a turning point for the narrator. When he holds the familiar device, an avalanche of emotions crashes over him as he comes to grips with the fact that Liz will never again be there to see the jewelry he hopes to recover. The absence of



her belongings deepens his despair, making him confront the aching void her death has left.

Ultimately, he reflects on the entrenched presence of Liz in his life through her phone. The prospect of canceling her phone service looms large, as he fears it may feel like erasing her memory. However, he realizes that his connection to her persists in his daily thoughts and writings. Facing the clutter of reminders from their past life, he slowly accepts the idea of letting go.

A stranger's interest in Liz's car prompts further contemplation about selling it. Initially resistant, he starts to see the vehicle as a painful reminder rather than a cherished tribute. This realization culminates in his decision to part with the car, marking a significant step in his journey toward healing.

Standing before the car one last time, he reflects on the memories it encapsulated. As he bids it farewell, he feels more frustration with himself than sadness, indicating a shift in his grieving process. When he returns from a trip to find the car gone, this absence symbolizes a newfound semblance of closure.

In a poignant act of remembrance, the narrator chooses to inscribe significant dates that symbolize Liz's enduring presence in his life. Although he releases physical objects tied to her, his love and memories remain,



fortified by his connection to Madeline and the permanent tattoos he chooses to honor her. The chapter concludes with a sense of resilience, as he understands that while he may let go of material reminders, the essence of Liz will always remain with him.

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## Chapter 23 Summary:

### Summary of Chapter 23: Reflections on Grief and New Beginnings

In this chapter, the narrator grapples with the emotional weight of the holiday season as he navigates the absence of his late wife, Liz. With Thanksgiving approaching, he is reminded of the bittersweet nature of family gatherings, particularly as they prepare to introduce their young daughter, Madeline, to family traditions. Memories of past holidays spent with Liz resurface, evoking a mixture of fondness and deep sorrow.

The family dynamics have shifted significantly since Liz's passing, transforming this year's Thanksgiving into a poignant moment for collective mourning. The narrator takes it upon himself to keep Liz's spirit alive by encouraging family members to share memories about her. This intentional act provides a sense of connection for Madeline, reinforcing her bond to her mother even in her absence.

On Thanksgiving Day, the family's meal becomes a tapestry of mixed emotions—laughter interspersed with tears. The narrator finds solace in watching Madeline engage with her relatives, yet he simultaneously reconciles his own grief. As stories of Liz are shared, the gathering beautifully illustrates the interplay of joy and sorrow, allowing everyone to



honor her memory.

In the wake of the holiday, the narrator plans to fulfill a promise made to support those who are also grieving, which involves donating funds raised in Liz's memory. This gesture not only serves as a tribute to Liz but also brings him a sense of purpose, grounding his grief in acts of kindness.

Later, the narrator visits Bob, a friend facing similar loss after the death of his wife. As he delivers a monetary donation, the encounter deepens their shared understanding of grief. Bob's vulnerability and gratitude highlight the importance of community and support, underscoring how these shared experiences can help individuals cope with their sorrow.

As the holiday season comes to a close, the narrator returns home with Madeline to an emptiness that echoes Liz's absence. Standing in their bedroom, he reflects on the past while contemplating the future. Despite the initial feelings of desolation, there is also a sense of growth and the potential for new memories to be made.

The chapter concludes on a hopeful note with a phone call announcing the birth of a friend's child. This news symbolizes the continuity of life and the possibility of joy emerging even amid grief. It serves as a poignant reminder that while Liz may be gone, love and connection endure, offering the narrator a glimmer of hope as they begin to navigate their new reality.



# Chapter 24:

## Chapter 24 Summary

### Reflection on Christmas Without Liz

This chapter delves into the narrator's poignant struggle with the profound loss of his wife, Liz, as he faces the Christmas season alone. Although the world around him buzzes with festive cheer, he is enveloped in a deep sense of emptiness and regret. As memories flood his mind, he reflects on his previous reluctance to participate in their holiday celebrations, particularly those that brought Liz immense joy. This introspection highlights the stark absence of her presence, making the season feel hollow.

### Struggling with Holiday Traditions

Recalling cherished family rituals, the narrator shares memories of ornamenting their Christmas tree and stringing lights, activities that Liz had eagerly anticipated. With their daughter Maddy now by his side, he is determined to revive the Christmas spirit for her, yet he grapples with the weight of Liz's absence. Choosing a tree becomes a symbolic act, representing not just a holiday tradition but the love and happiness that Liz infused into this time of year.





## The Emptiness of Family Gatherings

The chapter contrasts the warmth of past family gatherings with the painful reality of celebrating without Liz. As he visits friends, their joyful

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## Chapter 25 Summary:

### Chapter 25 Summary

#### Family Traditions and Challenges

The chapter begins with the narrator reflecting on his long-standing connection with the Goodman family, particularly during their annual vacations in Mexico, which he has joined since he was nineteen. While his childhood was filled with simple outdoor activities, these family trips became a cherished tradition that reinforced their bonds despite geographical distances. This year, however, he faces the emotional weight of experiencing the trip without Liz, his late wife, and is returning to face Tom's extended family for the first time since her passing—a collective confrontation with loss and memory.

#### A Dual Purpose Trip

Despite the sadness enveloping the occasion, the trip serves a dual purpose: it offers a chance to bond with his daughter Maddy in the places Liz cherished, while also marking the launch of the Liz Logelin Foundation, an initiative established to honor Liz's memory through philanthropic efforts. The narrator wrestles with the conflict of enjoying a vacation against the



pressing responsibilities of coordinating foundation activities, such as phone calls and meetings, all while trying to remain present for Maddy amidst the sunny beach setting.

## **Memories and Feelings**

As they travel to Tulum, the narrator reflects on the town's transformation, a poignant reminder of time's relentless progression without Liz. He is filled with longing to share with Maddy the ancient ruins they once explored together, which encapsulates how these shared experiences shaped his worldview. However, the nostalgia is bittersweet, as he struggles with fragmented memories of Liz, anxious that they might fade further with each new moment created without her.

## **Unresolved Questions**

During a meal at an open-air restaurant, the narrator contemplates the memories of Liz that he fears might be slipping away. He faces the inevitable moment when Maddy will ask about her mother, fully aware that each new memory deepens his sense of loss. The tension between savoring the present and mourning Liz's absence looms heavy over the meal, casting a shadow over their joyous surroundings.

## **Engaging in New Experiences**

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Later, they visit a lagoon where Liz once reveled in snorkeling, and he acknowledges the painful contrast of being there without her. With the responsibility of ensuring Maddy's safety weighing on him, he battles his sorrow and recalls how Liz always encouraged him to face discomfort head-on. This theme of resilience resonates as he takes a deep breath and ventures into the water, seeking emotional respite beneath the surface.

### **Seeking Peace in Action**

As he dives into the lagoon, a sense of peace envelops him, reminiscent of the joyful memories he shared with Liz. The act of swimming allows him to connect with those precious moments while simultaneously engaging with Maddy. Through this experience, he strives to create a nurturing and loving environment for her, all the while honoring Liz's spirit and legacy. This journey is not just a tribute to the past but a step toward building a brighter future for him and Maddy.



## Chapter 26 Summary:

### ### Chapter 26 Summary

#### Cycle of Light and Dark

This chapter emphasizes the duality of existence, represented by the cycle of sunset and sunrise, symbolizing the coexistence of sorrow and joy. The author decides to commemorate his daughter Madeline's first birthday separately from the anniversary of his late wife Liz's death, highlighting the need to honor each occasion distinctly and create unique memories tied to both events.

#### Traveling for Celebration

In a bid to celebrate Madeline's milestone, the author organizes a trip to Akumal, Mexico, inviting friends A.J., Sonja, and Emilia. This location is infused with emotional resonance, as it recalls cherished family vacations spent with Liz. Although he forgets to pack the birthday cake mix, he shifts his focus to crafting an enjoyable experience for Madeline, prioritizing presence over perfection.

#### Feeling Capable

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Throughout the trip, the author strives to manage logistics on his own, seeking a sense of control and competence as a father. While surrounded by friends, he finds moments of joy interlaced with memories of Liz, drawing solace from their shared experiences and the support of his group.

### **Madeline's Birthday**

On the day of her birthday, Sonja surprises the author by baking a cake, enriching the celebration with warmth and joy. However, this special moment also brings a wave of bittersweet emotions as he feels Liz's absence acutely while also celebrating Madeline's growth over the past year.

### **Reflections on Loss and Growth**

The day following the celebration is a reflective one. The author grapples with a complex mix of grief for Liz and gratitude for the time he has spent with Madeline. He recognizes that while Liz's memory will always be a part of him, he has a responsibility to embrace life and cherish the love they shared, alongside the joyous moments he now experiences with his daughter.

### **Promise to Keep Moving Forward**

As the journey concludes, the author acknowledges that grief is an ongoing

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process but resolves to keep Liz's memory alive. He makes a symbolic gesture by moving his wedding band, signifying his commitment to embrace the future for both himself and Madeline. This act represents his determination to navigate through sorrow while honoring Liz's legacy, paving a way forward that honors the past while welcoming new beginnings.

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## **Chapter 27 Summary:**

### **Chapter 27 Summary**

#### **Celebrating Madeline's Birthday**

This chapter explores the emotional intricacies of the narrator's experience as he prepares to celebrate his daughter Madeline's first birthday, only a year after the tragic passing of her mother, Liz. The narrator understands that this event requires a delicate balance: while it's crucial to honor Madeline's life and achievements, he also feels the poignant absence of Liz, grappling with the weight of grief even as he aims to create joyful memories for his daughter.

#### **Preparations and Party Planning**

In an effort to make the day special, the narrator's family rallies together to help with the party arrangements. His parents contribute by renovating their home and managing the cleanup, emphasizing a strong support system during this challenging time. Despite facing minor setbacks—a missing cake and a couple of distressed goldfish—the festivities unfold with a vibrant



spirit as friends gather to celebrate. The atmosphere is alive with laughter and chaos, marking the most significant assembly of loved ones since Liz's funeral.

## **Mixed Emotions**

Amid the revelry, the narrator faces a tumultuous mix of emotions. As he witnesses the joyous activities—children playing, friends chatting, and laughter echoing—he cannot fully shed his sorrow for Liz's absence. Each moment of celebration is tinted by wistful recollections of his late wife, creating a bittersweet backdrop to Madeline's special day. He channels his energy into ensuring his daughter feels loved, but the shadow of loss constantly lingers in his heart.

## **The Cake Ceremony**

The heart of the celebration culminates in the cake-cutting ceremony. Madeline's innocent delight as she digs into her birthday cake is a highlighting moment, filled with sticky fingers, frosting-covered cheeks, and contagious laughter. The narrator's heart swells with pride and affection for his daughter, and he momentarily forgets his grief, immersing himself in the joy of her discovery. This simple, joyous act symbolizes a rite of passage for



Madeline and serves as a reminder of the beauty of childhood.

## **Reflections on Time and Healing**

As the festivities draw to a close, the narrator reflects on the tumultuous year that has passed—marked by profound sadness intermingled with the blossoming joy brought by Madeline's presence. He contemplates the future with a mix of hope and nostalgia, envisioning a path where Liz's memory can coexist alongside Madeline's light. The chapter concludes with a tender farewell to the past, as he engages in a ritual kiss—a gesture that affirms the unbreakable bond between mother and child, evoking both love and remembrance as they embrace the beginning of a new chapter together.

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## Chapter 28: Dear Madeline

In Chapter 28, titled "Reflection on Love and Loss," Matthew Logelin pens a heartfelt letter to his daughter, Maddie, reflecting on the profound changes she has brought to his life over the past three years. He expresses deep gratitude for her presence during his darkest times, sharing how her existence has helped him process the memories of her late mother, Liz.

Matthew narrates their shared experiences, taking Maddie to various meaningful locations, including Los Angeles and Paris—places that evoke cherished memories of her mother. These journeys serve not only as a way to honor Liz's memory but also as a means for Maddie to forge a connection with the mother she barely knew.

Throughout the letter, Matthew highlights the small traits and gestures that Maddie exhibits, which remind him of her mother. These similarities reassure him that Liz lives on through Maddie, granting him solace in knowing that her spirit continues in their daughter.

As he reflects on this legacy of love, Matthew expresses a fervent hope that by sharing their travels and memories, Maddie will come to understand the depth of her mother's affection and the bond they share. Despite his enduring longing for Liz, he insists that he wouldn't trade his relationship with Maddie for anything.



The chapter concludes with a poignant toast to Maddie's future, filled with joy and possibility. Matthew playfully acknowledges her growth into adolescence, simultaneously celebrating their shared journey and looking forward to the bright future that lies ahead for his daughter.

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# Chapter 29 Summary: Acknowledgments

## Acknowledgments Summary

In this chapter, the author conveys heartfelt gratitude to a diverse group of individuals and organizations that played a pivotal role in the book's creation.

**Key Contributors** are highlighted, including Rachel Sussman and Eve Bridburg, along with the dedicated team at Zachary Shuster Harmsworth. The author offers special thanks to Sandra Bark and editor Amanda Englander for their unwavering support and motivation throughout the writing journey.

The author extends appreciation to **friends and family**, particularly friends in Kathmandu and Bangalore, such as the Bista family, who provided kindness and support over three years. Medical professionals, blog readers, and volunteers from the Liz Logelin Foundation are also recognized for their contributions.

**Community support** is notably acknowledged, emphasizing the emotional and mental support received from various friends and families during challenging times, illustrating the importance of a robust support

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network.

The author reflects on the **inspirational sources** of their creative process, mentioning musicians, writers, and experiences in different cities that sparked inspiration. This highlights the deep impact of art and community on their life and work.

In **final thoughts**, the deepest gratitude is reserved for Elizabeth Goodman-Logelin and Madeline Elizabeth Logelin, whose influence has been central to the author's identity and purpose, underscoring the intimate connection between personal relationships and creative expression.

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## Chapter 30 Summary: Photographs

In Chapter 30 of "Two Kisses for Maddy," the narrative shifts to a collection of photographs that poignantly encapsulate key moments in the lives of Matthew Logelin and his family. This visual journey serves not only as a tribute to his late wife, Liz, but also celebrates their daughter, Maddy.

The chapter opens with the memories captured at Matthew's high school graduation celebration on July 16, 1996, set against the vibrant backdrop of a concert in Minneapolis. This moment marks a significant milestone in Matthew's life, symbolizing hope and new beginnings.

As the photos progress, they delve into adventures in nature, notably a memorable hike outside Whistler, Canada, on June 25, 2003. This excursion showcases the couple's shared love for the outdoors and their adventurous spirits, contrasting with the upcoming life challenges they would face.

The narrative continues with festive scenes from New Year's Eve in downtown Los Angeles (December 31, 2003), highlighting the couple's joy and togetherness during celebratory moments. These gatherings serve as reminders of the joyful times that laid the foundation of their family life.

A particularly romantic photograph captures Liz at the proposal spot in Kathmandu, Nepal, on June 19, 2004, a site rich with emotional significance



for the couple. The juxtaposing photo of Liz and Maddy at the same location years later (November 9, 2009) underscores the continuity of love and family ties, despite the heartbreaking loss.

Wedding memories from the rehearsal at the Calhoun Beach Club in Minneapolis (August 12, 2005) reveal the couple's joyful union, while travel highlights from their honeymoon in Greece and visits to the Taj Mahal and Peru illustrate their shared passion for exploring the world together.

Finally, the chapter captures intimate moments of family life, depicting everyday activities with Maddy, from holiday celebrations to simple outings. These images collectively narrate a story of love, resilience, and the enduring bonds that remain even in grief.

Overall, the photographs serve as a powerful testament to the importance of cherishing memories and the love that unites Matthew, Liz, and Maddy, illustrating their journey through both joy and sorrow.

