

## Chapter 5

### At Anaheim

*“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the LORD,  
“plans to prosper you and not to harm you,  
plans to give you hope and a future.”*

(Jeremiah 29:11)

The trip from Dallas to Anaheim went by like a movie on fast-forward. Traveling with a group of happy women—all chatting and laughing and discussing experiences I could not relate to—left me out of the conversation most of the time, as I had expected. I listened. I smiled when appropriate. I took deep breaths that I hoped no one noticed. I looked around for someone outside our little group to strike up a conversation with but ended up just trying to quiet my thoughts, slow my beating heart, and get through it the best I could.

On the plane, there was some talk of who was sharing a room with whom, but when we arrived at the hotel in Anaheim, Deborah and I had already been assigned to a room together. This surprised me because I thought she would want to spend this extra time with a couple of her Fort Worth friends that she didn’t get to see very often since moving to Dallas. After all that Deborah had done for me, I had high hopes for the relationship I longed for and was excited that we would have some time by ourselves. I could only hope that God was interested in healing our strained relationship.

After the flurry of getting settled and eating dinner, we finally crawled into our respective beds, and she turned out the light. It was dark and quiet. I took another deep breath and began to rehearse the day’s events in my mind when she whispered, “Daphene, are you asleep?”

“No. Are you?” At that moment I felt like we were two little school girls at their first sleep-over who were about to share their secrets and then promise to be forever friends. She went on.

“I have something I need to say.”

There was a long pause. I held my breath, expecting her to say something wonderful. “I know that you want me to tell you how much I love you . . . but, really, Daphene, I just don’t. I know I should, but I can’t deal with the way you live your life. I always thought you would change.” She hesitated. “But you haven’t. I’m so tired of being disappointed.”

I muffled a gasp to catch my breath, not wanting to hear another word. The silence intensified. I could feel it. My mind went blank—what could I say to her after that? It was true. My life was a mess. The silence settled in. I don’t know when she fell asleep, but I lay weeping far into the night, wondering why in the world she had bothered to buy my ticket, take me shopping, and then drag me all the way to California to break my heart. All I wanted was for her to love me. But instead of loving me, she was disappointed in my character and disgusted with my lifestyle. *Was I really that terrible?*