

Prologue

In the prologue titled "Be Ready When the Luck Happens," the author reflects on a significant memory from a chilly fall day in 1965. They describe visiting their boyfriend, Jeffrey Garten, a charming sophomore at Dartmouth, while they were still navigating their relationship. The author arrived dressed for socializing, but Jeffrey wanted to embark on an outdoor hike at Balch Hill in Hanover, New Hampshire, which she perceived as an intimidating mountain.

Dressed in a pair of Jeffrey's blue jeans—an intimate exchange for her seventeen-year-old self—the author reluctantly followed him up the hill but soon felt exhausted and declared she could go no further. This moment was challenging for her, shaped by a childhood where disagreement was often met with strict consequences. However, despite wanting to please Jeffrey, she felt the urge to assert herself.

Jeffrey urged her to keep moving, even playfully attempting to push her up the hill, which incited laughter rather than compliance. This humor prompted the author to consider a different approach; instead of climbing straight up, she walked back and forth across the path, taking her own route. Expecting anger from Jeffrey for not following the trail, she was surprised to find him laughing at her cleverness.

From this experience, the author distilled two valuable lessons: first, life will present many challenges akin to Balch Hill, often filled with unexpected turns and hurdles. Second, they learned the importance of having someone supportive by their side during these challenging times—someone like Jeffrey, who brought laughter, understanding, and acceptance. Ultimately, this moment solidified her fondness for him, leading to their marriage three years later.

The prologue serves as a precursor to a larger memoir, framing personal growth through the lens of pivotal moments and relationships in life. The author's eagerness to share her story hints at a deeper exploration of these experiences throughout the narrative.