

**Little Laces**  
by Caitlin Draper

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When I was 4 years old, my mom would take us to the park ('us' being my two brothers and I).

I was a precocious kid.

Am I allowed to say that about myself?

Well, I was.

And I noticed other kids had something I didn't: this thing called a *dad*.

I loved to interact with these suburban, middle-aged men — and I was very proactive about it.

I would strategically untie my shoe and approach the nearest dad of my choosing, look up at him with innocent eyes, and ask him to tie it for me.

I would then make full use of the opportunity to strike up a conversation with him and milk a few minutes of his attention for all it was worth.

The first time my mom observed this behavior, she was amused.

And then she was terrified.

There I was, wandering off at opportune moments, politely inviting someone to kidnap me. And it was becoming a pattern..

I was a miniature con woman with tunnel vision.  
I surveyed the area upon arrival, holding my hand above my brow like a visor.

Shameless, but still knowing enough about plausible deniability. “What? It’s sunny.”

She had to watch me like a hawk or I’d make a beeline for whichever male figure caught my eye.

Eventually I was too old for that kind of behavior to be cute and I had to find other, more subtle ways to meet my paternal needs.

But realistically speaking, those needs were never remotely met.

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Fast-forward to my mid-twenties,  
I became something I never thought I would be:  
a Christian.

At one point, I stayed with an older couple I’d met at church, who were small-group leaders. It was during the early stages of COVID quarantine, so the weekly meetings were held over Zoom.

I believed—and still do believe—in the operation of spiritual gifts (1 Cor 12:1-11 NIV) and in heeding the warning to not disregard prophecies or stifle the Holy Spirit (1 Thess 5:19-20 AMP).

On the other hand, I also believe in reserving a healthy skepticism and being careful to “test the spirits” (1 John 4:1 NKJV) but I was open-minded.

At the end of those meetings, there was a block of time reserved for prophesying, sharing words of knowledge, and other revelations.

Mind you, with the exception of the couple I was staying with, no one in the group knew me. I was simply a guest for a few weeks, and usually a quiet one.

One woman confidently announced that she had seen a vision meant for me.

She wasn’t sure what it signified, but she saw “hands tying a child’s shoe.”

I thanked her, despite the fact that I had no idea how it was relevant to me, if it even was.

Later that night, after I turned out the lights and got into bed, it dawned on me.

The Holy Spirit has a way of bringing things to our remembrance.. (John 14:26 ESV)

It was my Heavenly Father reminding me of those days at the park, and saying something along these lines:

“I’ll play that role for you. You don’t have to go searching elsewhere (or endanger yourself) to find it, ever again. No matter how old you are, you’ll always be my little one.”

Were all of my wounds instantly healed?  
No. But it was an emotional and significant start.

It left me in awe of the way our God speaks, how he remembers even the tiniest details (as small as a child’s shoelace), and how deep his love runs.

A few months later, I moved to a different state.  
I visited a new church one Sunday and to my surprise, it was Day One of a sermon series called “Perfectly Fathered.”

That ministered to me deeply too.

One of my favorite worship songs is called ‘Good Good Father’..

That is exactly who I’ve found Him to be.

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A father to the fatherless... is the Lord in His holy habitation (Psalm 67:5 NIV)

...you received God’s Spirit when he adopted you as his own children. Now we call him, “Abba, Father.” (Rom 8:15 NLT)