Working draft

Digital reading PDF

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One Memory, One Chapter

A fictional sample of a MemoirWell digital book

MemoirWell demonstration

Private family edition

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Private family edition

Prepared with MemoirWell

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Contents

Chapter 1. Saturday at the Kitchen Table 1

Saturday at the Kitchen Table

Our kitchen table stood beside the back window. It was just wide enough for two plates and a newspaper if you folded the newspaper in half. On Saturday mornings my father sat nearest the window and I took the chair with the loose rung. I would hook my heel over it, although I had been told not to. The kettle stayed on the stove until one of us remembered to turn it off.

I think I was about eleven when he first let me mend a puncture in my bicycle tire at that table. I cannot place the year. The bicycle was second-hand and the pump had a wooden handle. Those are the details I remember. I do not remember what we had for breakfast, or whether my mother was in the room, and I would rather leave those spaces empty than fill them in.

We put the inner tube into a basin. I turned it slowly under the water while he watched for bubbles. When we found the hole, he dried the rubber and passed me a little piece of chalk. My circle was much bigger than the hole. Then there was sandpaper, glue and a patch from a tin. I wanted to put everything back together right away. He pointed to the instructions and we waited.

The patch did not hold the first time. I remember being cross, mostly because I had already imagined riding down the lane. We took the tube out again. I cannot recall what my father said, but I remember that he stayed at the table. That is the part I would want my children to know. He was not a man who explained his feelings easily. He could, however, sit beside a disappointed child and help find the hole a second time.

The kitchen was changed years later, and I do not know where that table went. Whenever I mend something now, I still like to clear a small space before I begin. Sometimes I put a sheet of newspaper down, even when the job does not really need one.