

# Searching for Home by Jill Weatherholt

## Excerpt

Meg's mind drifted to the day she discovered Luke had left. He'd written a three-page letter, but she'd never read past the first two sentences. Those six words had turned her world upside down. I'm sorry. I have to go. At the time, she didn't need to know anything more. Or maybe she didn't want to know. He was gone and there was nothing he could say that would change that fact. She'd stuffed the unread letter into her diary, where it remained.

Out front, the school bus's brakes hissed and the horn honked, pulling Meg back into the moment. "Kids! Grab your backpacks. The bus is out front."

The girls giggled while they skipped down the hall toward the front door.

"Bye, Aunt Meg." First Tia and then Tilly hugged Meg. "Love you," they both chirped.

"Have a good day, sweeties. Where's Tuck?"

The girls shrugged and rushed out the door.

"Tucker—come on, honey. You're going to miss the bus."

Meg waited until Tucker appeared. The child walked toward her with his head down. Once at the door he stopped and turned. "My stomach hurts."

Here we go again. The same routine each day. Tucker complained of a tummy ache and she'd reassure him it would go away once he got to school. "You'll be okay, sweetie." Meg bent down and kissed his cheek. "Have a good day. I'll be here when you get home."

He trudged out the door and toward the bus. Meg's heart ached for the child. Could the stomachaches be real? Was he afraid to leave the house because he feared when he got home, she wouldn't be there—just like his parents? Gina, what were you thinking? Why didn't you try and seek professional help after Greg left?

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