

I don't know how appropriate it is to base my mission off of a movie that I loved before the mission, but to be honest it wouldn't be me if I didn't. I spent my whole mission comparing the gospel to my favorite movies, now I will conclude it the way I did the whole thing. I do ruin the ending.

*One of my all time favorite movies is the Secret Life of Walter Mitty. It's about a man who is more on the awkward side (hence, why I relate so well to him) and he has a pretty interesting job. He works for a magazine company and he does the pictures. He has a famous photographer that he has never met that sends him the amazing pictures for the entire magazine. But one day this not so nice guy (but one of my favorite actors) takes over the company and lays everybody off including Walter, the main character. But the new boss still needs a picture that Walter can't find. The movie really rotates around the fact that Walter is always imagining things and these adventures his mind takes him on. But now he really does have to go on an adventure to find the photographer that has the last picture.*

This is where the fun begins. This is like me. I have always imagined being a missionary. Before my mission I loved the idea and always told people I would serve one day. But then I got into adult life, was working full time living away from home and got distracted. Not that I stopped wanting to serve, I just stopped having such a drive. Then it came time to turn in my papers, I was almost reluctant, I was busy and was doing better things. I enjoyed my life. Then the spirit came in. Not that I am calling him the bad guy AT ALL! But he is the plot changer. The Lord made it very clear that I belonged on a mission so He did all He could to get me out here. So here is Walter and I, starting our real life adventure.

*Walter has to leave home and travel the world following the photographers tracks. Walter before his mission wasn't the happiest. He had a girl he liked but never the nerve to talk to her. He lived near his mom to take care of her. The only thing he had was work. And he just wasn't happy. The things he had to track the photographer with were these pictures he was given and a wallet, which was a gift from the photographer to him. Well out of frustration before he left he threw the wallet away at his moms house and set off to find the last photo.*

I left really not much behind when I came out. I didn't know real happiness. So this mission really has become my journey of finding true joy in this life and the life to come. I was given some things to try and track down happiness. My scriptures, prayer, obedience, and wonderful leaders. I left frustrated that I couldn't just solve all of my problems my way, but as we continue we see Christ's way is the only way. So we follow the tracks He lays before us.

*Walter goes and he starts to try and figure out where the pictures are. He finds that they are sending him all the way across the world. (Where? I don't remember.) When he goes he first goes to this little town where he meets odd people in a saloon. They have karaoke and are all wearing coats and awkwardly sitting there. I believe it was somewhere like Iceland. He there starts to see a glimmer of hope. He meets this man who tells him he knows where one of the pictures leads to. It's on a ship that has already left. But that he can take Walter on his helicopter. Walter was a little nervous considering the man had just been drinking, but he thought why not. Then they hit a storm and Walter had to jump off of the helicopter into the ocean and be picked up by a smaller boat. He fought off a shark (which was real, not his imagination) and then was lifted into the bigger ship that was a little more stable.*

When I got into the field I met my trainer, Sister Rasmussen. She was wild and had crazy curly hair like me. We arrived at my very first area Olympia Fourth. We had a lot of adventures being doubled in. The area was slow but there were plenty of doors to be knocked. I remember my first door I ever knocked was on Elm St. Sister Rasmussen, "This looks like a friendly road." Me, (thinks of Nightmare on Elm St.) "Sure." We laughed a lot and made plenty of music videos. But things went down hill really quickly when Sister Rasmussen got a stalker and had to be emergency transferred. I had to take over the area and get a new companion who was finishing her mission in 5 weeks. Sister Julien was absolutely wonderful though. She was such a peaceful and stable person. I learned that there are lots of ways to do missionary work with her. We gave our all her last couple of weeks and I learned

so much from her. Just like the men on the ship with Walter, they taught him and loved him even though they had just met him. They helped him figure out more of the pictures. Sister Julien taught me so much about the gospel and that is really when I started to learn to love learning.

*Later on Walter lands and gets sent off on his own again. He is on a strange island. This is where the movie gets a little fuzzy for me. But he is with a whole new culture of people.*

I was then doubled out and transferred to Lincoln, also known as downtown Tacoma. It was a lot different compared to my boonie start. There were A LOT of people to talk to! I loved it. I was loving my Tongan companion and actually teaching. We saw so many miracles together. Then I got my baby, Sister Peters. She was a whole new world. She was so ready to work and to quote the District 2 "She came pre-trained." We danced on door steps and got antied by 90 year old men. Night of transfer calls we find out we are staying together for another one, while we are stuck in this way sketchy part member families Halloween party. We decide to just get out of there and check on a referral from the Cambode sisters. We go over and knock on the door, we ask for Shanade and her roommate tells us to come in, that Shay is just upstairs. She then proceeds to feeding us heaven sent soup and a really good cool-aid that became our thing every time we went over. Shay was so prepared. We had fasted as a companionship to see a miracle and we did. Shay was baptized 3 weeks after we met her and couldn't get enough of the Gospel. Both of her parents had died and she never knew of how Christ can change us. She was proof, that no matter where you are in life you can change. You can stop what you were doing and become something greater.

*Walter than finds himself shot to another place where he gets told a volcano is about to go off and he needs to leave! He then sees the photographer taking pictures of the volcano going off. He gets so excited he tried to go after him. He swaps a kid something for a long board and tries to do it on his own. He then realizes it's not fast enough (I think that's how it goes) and a man picks him up to drive him somewhere else. They get covered in smoke but they make it safely.*

I was sent to Olympia 1/5. Back to Olympia. This area became very sacred to me. Sister Osborn had kidney stones our first two weeks together. I had just come from constant fast work to nothing. I wanted so badly to go, but I was needed by her. But that Sunday at church we met Lisa McKenzie, she has forever changed me. She had a couple of friends who had introduced her to the church and were great examples for 5 years. She was finally so prepared. When we came in we didn't have to do anything. She even went to the local Library to rent a Book of Mormon. I remember the first lesson so clearly. My companion and I were drenched because of the rain. Our fellowship was a recent convert of two week. Sister Osborn was very drugged and I was exhausted from everything. And Lisa was asking Plan of Salvation questions! So I prayed and said, "You've got this one." The lesson was perfect, the spirit was so strong and she agreed to baptism. She taught me that we may not feel worthy or prepared, but we can do it. Forsake our past and love the Lord. He has already taken our burden, we just need to let Him ease our troubled heart.

Then the volcano went off. My new companion Sister Adams needed to go home early, I had three people I loved die and then I found out I was getting transferred to become an STL in Kitsap Lake and Seabeck. I didn't even know there was a Bremerton Zone. Sister Cox was so patient and loving. If you know her you know she is perfect. We had a fast but memorable week together. I then left the Liberal land I had come to love. I knew my work was done there and there was someone up North who needed me. So I headed up to Sister Betbeze (good luck saying her last name.) I had learned that I can't do it on my own. I needed the Lord to make it through all I had and to be ready for what was about to hit me.

I went North. We were over two wards again and over 5 sets of sisters. I absolutely loved it. I was so happy there. I had taken everything I had learned and trusted the Lord could help me learn everything as quickly as possible. Sister Betbeze and I worked so hard, so we thought we deserved a baptism or even someone interested in listening to us. We then realized we are all unprofitable servants. So we gave up that attitude. And then that week Zachary calls and says he wants to get baptized. He

was amazing. His favorite thing to say, "That makes sense." We taught him for two transfers and got to see him really enter a convert not just someone getting baptized. During this time I had two more people pass away and I got Sister Stirling as a companion. Her and I were two peas in a pod, we loved each other way too much. She was that moment where Walter sees the photographer, right before it gets really bad and he barely makes it out. She ended up getting really sick and having to go home early after just two weeks together. I then got hit by the smoke. My depression came in really hard and I forgot all that I had learned. I was suffocating with doubts that there was even a God. How could He be there? He has forgotten about me, or I did something really wrong for Him to dislike me this much. I was almost ready to quit when I emailed my dad with just the hope he would say something to help. He said, "You overcome doubts, line upon line and here little there a little. And soon your doubts are replaced with knowledge and experience." That night when I went home I knelt down and with one last plea I asked God if he was even there. I could not feel Him. I then opened my scriptures with just enough faith for Him to show me this, "For behold, thus saith the Lord God: I will give unto the children of men line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little; and blessed are those who hearken unto my precepts, and lend an ear unto my counsel, for they shall learn wisdom; for unto him that receiveth I will give more; and from them that shall say, we have enough, from them shall be taken away even that which they have. Cursed is he that putteth his trust in man, or maketh flesh his arm, or shall hearken unto the precepts of men, save their precepts shall be given by the power of the Holy Ghost. Wo be unto the Gentiles, saith the Lord God of Hosts! For notwithstanding I shall lengthen out mine arm unto them from day to day, they will deny me; nevertheless, I will be merciful unto them, saith the Lord God, if they will repent and come unto me; for mine arm is lengthened out all the day long, saith the Lord God of Hosts"(2 Nephi 28:30-32.) He heard me and said I am your Heavenly Father. His arms never ceased to be outstretched towards me. That is the moment I broke through the smoke with Sister Skousen by my side.

*Walter is then brought to this point where he doesn't know where to go so He goes back to the very start. He goes back to his mom's house. He is looking at one of the final pictures and sees that one of the pictures were taken of his mom's piano, turns out she knew where the Photographer was the whole time! (At least that is what I think happened.) So he takes one more flight to this other mountain place where he has to hike all the way to the top and overcome lots of exhausting measures. He meets mountain people who are very laid back and nice. I think at one point though he almost gets himself killed. Then he finally makes it to the Photographer! He is taking a picture of a White Mountain Cat (or something like that.) He tells Walter to be very quite and don't make a noise. And then he doesn't take the picture. Walter asks him why. He says, "Because the most beautiful things don't need the attention."*

I was shipped down South, to Elma ½ with Sister Rosenvall. This was recovery time. I had to overcome a lot of anxiety and impatience with myself. I wanted to be perfectly happy once again. Rose was so loving and we laughed all of the time. We went on nightly runs (I ran and she drove next to me.) We knocked and melted in the heat. We listened to a lot of JamesTheMormon (before it got banned.) Everyone there was so laid back and sweet and I was able to confide in a lot of people and help them along the way as well. Sister Thurber then finally, after forever of waiting, became my companion! She was a very peaceful person as well. We both faced the same things and learned to hold each other through it. We were able to hike even further and make it to the peak together. We weren't expecting our transfer call to be our peak, me staying and getting Sister Hughes and her going to Minter Creek, but we both now see how great the Lord is and how well he knows us. Sister Hughes is my White Mountain Cat. I finally really made it to the Lord, who is my photographer and learned true happiness. Her and I became best friends and enjoyed every moment of the work together. We worked like crazy and I made way too many short jokes. She can keep up though. I was told by President Blatter to put on my running shoes and he was right. She is the perfect example of a great missionary that doesn't need the attention to be perfectly obedient. She just is. We became more than obedient, we became

consecrated. We worked because we love Jesus Christ, not because we have to. I know that during our time together we really did our best and a piece of my heart will always be in that transfer.

*Walter then asks the Photographer where the final picture is that he really needs. The Photographer proceeds to tell him that it was in the wallet. He hadn't given him the wallet as a gift, it was to protect that final picture. Walter then realized he had thrown it away and he was stuck. The Photographer then goes and plays soccer on the mountain with some natives and Walter just watches. He then goes home to his mom and tells his mom and his mom gets really excited. She pulls the wallet out of her drawer and hands it to him. He couldn't believe it. He opens the wallet and there it is. So he runs and delivers it to the new boss and goes to continue his life. He then gets with his dream girl and they fall in love. While they are walking, Walter and her see that the last magazine came out, with the picture they had been waiting to see. The picture was of Walter sitting in his favorite spot reading and eating.*

So here we are, my final transfer with Sister Stephens in the Mountain View ward, and I learned my final lesson from Linda Anderson. She was told she was going to Hell from another church and had lost hope and didn't believe she was worth anything. Then a member introduced her to us and we told her who her Father in Heaven was. She finally saw hope in herself because He never lost hope in her! Happiness is with our Heavenly Father and His son Jesus Christ. I have had happiness the whole time. It was given to me in so many ways and I just had to be the one to open my eyes. I was once with Him and He knows me. "We love him, because he first loved us" (1 John 4:19.) "Adam fell that men might be; and men are, that they might have joy" (2 Nephi 2:25.) It is a commandment that we have joy. How do we feel joy? "Wherefore, fear not even unto death; for in the world your joy is not full, but in me your joy is full" (D&C 101:36.) In Him is our joy full. "And behold, I tell you these things that ye may learn wisdom; that ye may learn that when ye are in the service of your fellow beings ye are only in the service of your God" (Mosiah 2:17.) We feel joy when we serve with all our heart, might, mind, and strength, because when we serve we are with Him. Give your all. No matter what comes in your path don't give up hope. Christ is our hope and He will never give up on us. I love this work and my heart breaks that this precious time has come to an end. But I, and all of you, need not fear, because we are meant to feel joy in ever circumstance. What comes next can only be good, because the Lord's will is good. I know the Gospel has been restored and how humbled I am to have worked under the Priesthood and have such wonderful leaders who hold it. I love the Book of Mormon. I know that is the only way I have come this far and will continue onward and upward. Be bold and loving and trust and know that He is God. Emmanuel, God with us. I say these things, and conclude my blessed mission, in the name of my brother Jesus Christ. Amen.