




## The Unexpected

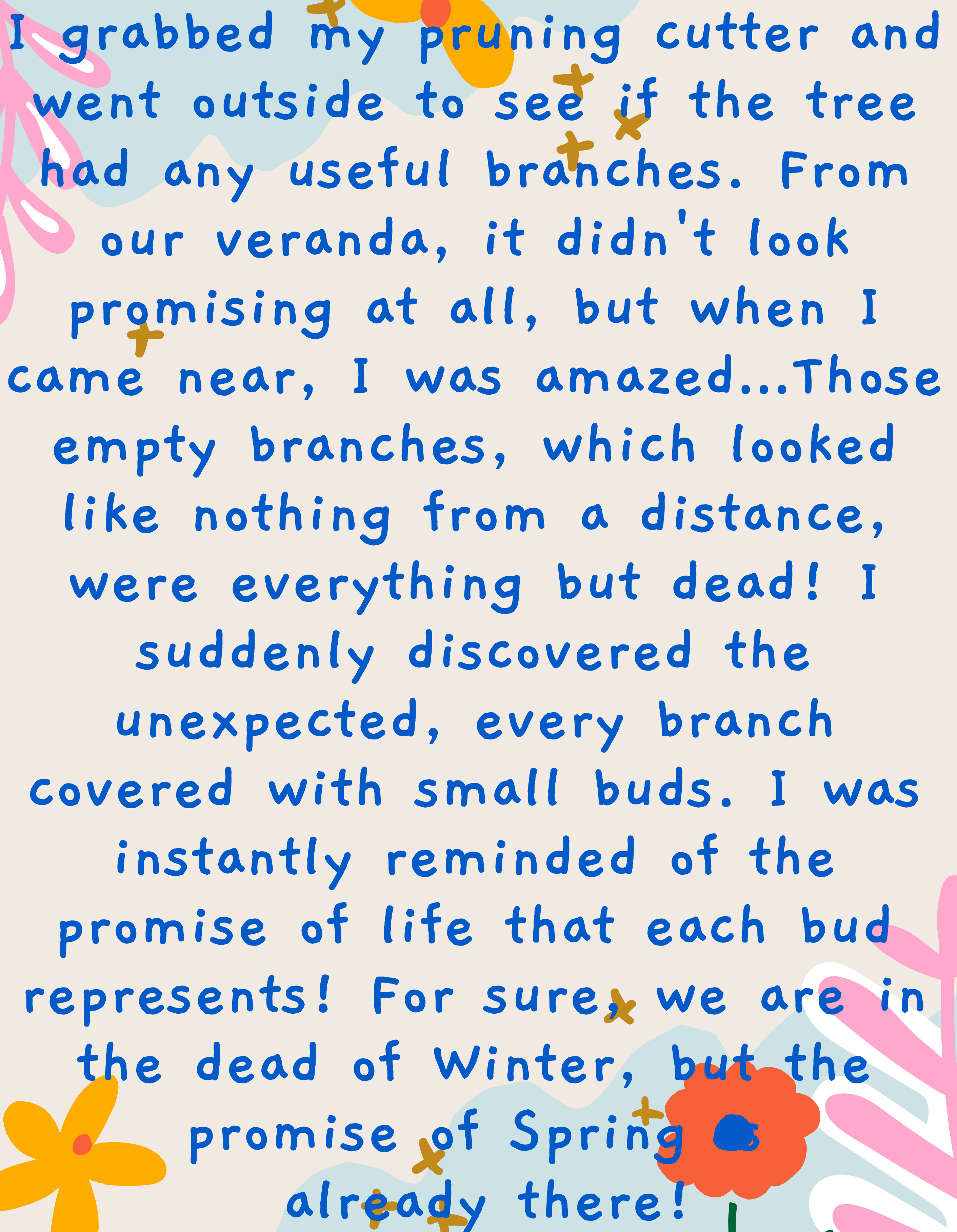
Have you lately taken time to walk around outside? Maybe in your garden or a nearby park? Our family loves exploring the beauty of creation. Many times, we have been so astonished, finding the unexpected treasures that God created. Hidden treasures of creation that just makes our hearts explode with thanksgiving and praise!






About a month ago, one of our country's intercessors called me up and asked for an Almond tree branch. It was an unexpected request, weird in a sense. With Winter fully in action, Almond branches really do not attract the eye. I was glad that we have an Almond tree in our garden and that I could be of help.

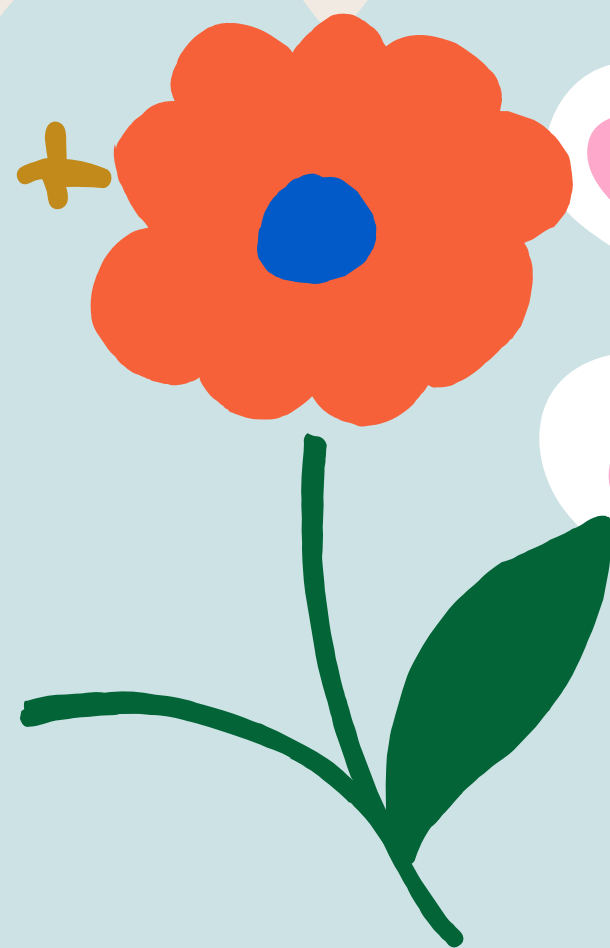
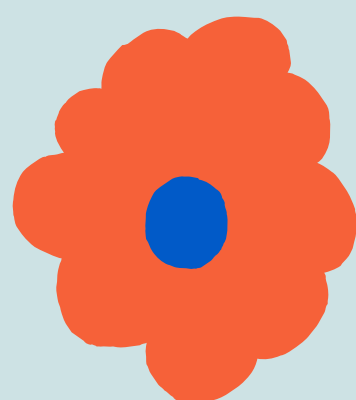




The background is a light blue and white pattern with various floral and leaf motifs. There are several yellow flowers with red centers, pink flowers with white centers, and pink leaves. Small gold plus signs are scattered throughout the text.

I grabbed my pruning cutter and went outside to see if the tree had any useful branches. From our veranda, it didn't look promising at all, but when I came near, I was amazed...Those empty branches, which looked like nothing from a distance, were everything but dead! I suddenly discovered the unexpected, every branch covered with small buds. I was instantly reminded of the promise of life that each bud represents! For sure, we are in the dead of Winter, but the promise of Spring is already there!




In the past month we encountered the devastation of sudden riots, looting and violence in our beautiful country. Together with the reality of Covid-19 and lockdown level 4, we could easily say, a Wintertime for South-Africa came with everything that reminds us of death and destruction. With this vivid picture of sadness in our minds, it is difficult for us to see the purpose of these events and even more, to anticipate life after death and destruction.





But, if you come closer, if you stand nearer to those who encountered these events, you will hear of the unexpected, the promises of life, in the midst of the storm. From far away, we see the destruction, but up close and personal, we hear the testimonies of God's people.






We hear stories of people coming  
alive, as they help one another  
in their moments of despair.

People who rose up from the  
ashes of their realities, singing  
songs of praise to our God.




Neighbours sharing what they  
have with one another. Like  
never before, calming the storm  
in our country with real love in  
action. God's people rocking up  
at hospitals to worship God and  
bring Jesus peace to  
those who are ill.






Much like the Almond branch  
covered in buds in the dead of  
Winter, these testimonies are the  
signs of the unexpected promises  
of God within seemingly  
hopeless. Because of the  
unexpected blessings within the  
storms of life, we have Hope.


The Promises of our God who  
heals and restores far more than  
we can ever anticipate, are not  
absent, they are here, in our  
midst for all to see.






Come closer, come and hear  
God's whisper in the night and  
the Lion of Judah's roar in the  
storms we experience


Let us anticipate life, joy, peace  
and victory while it is still  
Winter. With our God, Hope  
arises in the hearts of His  
people, unexpectedly!







Habakkuk 3:17-18 Though  
the fig tree does not bud  
and there are no grapes on  
the vines, though the olive  
crop fails and the fields  
produce no food, though  
there are no sheep in the  
pen and no cattle in the  
stalls, yet I will rejoice in  
the Lord, I will be joyful in  
God my Saviour





by Heleen Kelber -



MWC Pretoria





This tree  
was  
planted  
41 years  
ago by my  
Dad.   
And was  
budding  
early   
August 