

# Foreword by Bethany Hamilton

Lauren and I sat comfortably at the nail salon getting our toenails done. Chatting away, we joked about how we should get our fingernails done for half price since we each have only one hand! One of the girls doing our nails asked if we were best friends. We laughed and told her we had just met that day.

I was ecstatic to meet Lauren. We had talked on Skype a few months earlier during a call set up by my nonprofit organization, Friends of Bethany Hamilton, which reaches out to traumatic amputees and shark attack survivors. I made plans to meet up with Lauren during a visit I was making to Texas. Before our visit to the salon, Lauren and I sat over lunch with our moms and talked about our struggles, professional ventures, food, guys, and our faith in Jesus Christ. We talked about anything and everything. We were able to relate on so many levels—first, as fellow followers of Christ, then as sisters in tragedy. It was a blast just getting acquainted!

Having gone through similar experiences, Lauren and I (and our mothers) could really identify with each other. About eight years before, I had been bitten by a shark while surfing and lost my entire left arm. I nearly lost my life as well. Now, after experiencing for myself how God can turn a terrible situation into a great blessing, I sat with Lauren. Just six months earlier she had suffered the loss of her left hand and eye. Yet

the God-given joy and strength that comes from trusting him wholeheartedly emanated from her radiant smile.

Since the day we met, I've had a chance to read *Still LoLo*. It brought me through so many familiar emotions. I smiled, laughed, and cried as I read about what Lauren has encountered. Life often feels like a long, arduous climb, and I felt much of that pain as I read all that Lauren went through—from her parents' struggles during her early childhood, to her challenges as a young woman trying to find her way in this world, to the night she lost her arm and almost lost her life.

I read with compassion about the struggles Lauren faced through all of these life-changing events. Yet in the face of so many overwhelming obstacles, Lauren, her parents, and her twin sister, Brittany, found their source of strength and hope in Jesus Christ—in much the same way that my family and I did.

The members of Lauren's family each give their own perspective in *Still LoLo*, so they tell their story *together*. It's a beautiful way to share the many struggles and triumphs this family has experienced. You'll see how God mended and healed each of their hearts again and again. You'll discover how he brought about unity and restoration through each difficulty they faced.

You'll cheer as you read how Lauren's determination and her family's love sustained her after her life-threatening accident. One of my favorite stories in the book tells about the time, just days after her accident, when Lauren deliberately took thirty steps after her physical therapist asked if she might be able to walk twenty. Because of Lauren's story, I have been freshly renewed, inspired, and motivated to take those extra "ten steps" in my own life. She is a beautiful ray of sunshine, and I am glad to have her as a friend.

As I read *Still LoLo*, I was brought back to that day I sat in the nail salon with Lauren. We looked like childhood friends as we shared our stories. I know I was encouraged by the hope that my new dear friend told me she was discovering on her journey through life.

As you venture into *Still LoLo* and learn more about Lauren's attitude toward life, I hope you will gain the strength and motivation, as I have,

to keep pressing on—no matter what struggles come your way. May you learn to live by Lauren’s definition of everyday courage: “Even when life hits you hard, keep on going.”

I look forward to watching LoLo succeed in life and hope to join her in some of her future endeavors.

Join this family on their journey, and be encouraged!

*Aloha,*

**Bethany Hamilton**

*Author of **Soul Surfer: A True Story of Faith, Family,  
and Fighting to Get Back on the Board***