Good Grief Travel

A Reader's Guide

by Derrik Dyka

A note before you start. I didn't write this to tell anyone how to grieve. I'm not a map — if anything, I'm evidence there's a way through. So this guide won't ask you what the book means. It'll point you at a few moments and then get out of the way. Take what's useful, leave the rest. The best conversations in here probably won't be about me at all.

1. Early on, I'm standing in a hotel room in the biggest city I'd ever been in, feeling completely outside of it — watching life happen instead of being in it. Have you had a version of that? Where were you standing?
2. A stranger at Breakfast Story tells me grief and travel don't make sense together, that I'm just running. I don't argue. What did that exchange stir up in you?
3. I wrote that it's terrifying to love people after you've watched your person die — that I put on a little armor. Did any of that feel familiar?
4. My sons kept telling me to go, and Sunn had already told me to stop working and live. Who in your life has told you to go — and did you believe them?
5. I carried something to a village in rural China and left it there. No photo, no audience. Is there something you've been needing to carry somewhere and set down?
6. Thirty years of mutual admiration between me and an old classmate, and neither of us had ever said it out loud. Who's the person you've never told?
7. “Some tethers you have to make on purpose.” A lunch once a year, on the calendar, doesn't move. What's a tether you'd make on purpose if you decided to?
8. Dinner with Derrik was never about the food. It was about the room filling with people who wouldn't otherwise be together. What would it take for you to set the table?
9. There's always another door — across the world or across the street, same door, one just costs more. Where's a door near you that you've been walking past?
10. The book ends by pointing back at your own life, not mine. What's the one small thing — a text, a lunch, a yes — you'd actually do this week?

FOR ANYONE RUNNING A GRIEF GROUP

These questions go to tender places. Let silences sit. Nobody has to answer anything. The scene in the book is the safe way in — let people talk about the moment on the page before they talk about their own, and resist the urge to fix each other. The goal is a room where people are glad to be there. That's the whole book, really.

TELL ME HOW IT WENT

If your group reads the book, I'd love to hear about it. Send a photo and one thing the book opened up for your group to **goodgrieftravel@gmail.com**. I read every one.

WANT ME TO JOIN?

If your club would like me to drop in for a few minutes by video to talk about the book, I'm glad to. Reach out at the same place — **goodgrieftravel@gmail.com** — and we'll find a time.