Today on the girl to find show, I have the exclusive honor and privilege of being one of the first people to sit down virtually with my sister Alyssa and hear her entire story of how she and her husband recently fled the country of Ukraine when Russia invaded, and what that entire process and journey looked like this. Scary parts of it, the. Bones on how my sister was nine months pregnant she shares about that and how she was fleeing her country and eventually landing in Hungary in Budapest and trying to find a new hospital to give birth. And what the future looks like for them. But throughout it all, you're going to hear a testimony of God's faithfulness and how his strength sustained her and her husband throughout this entire. Crazy process, so stick with us. You may also notice the sound may change and that's because we had to record this interview in two pieces. Two parts 2. Separate days because her sweet little baby Amelia was just not having it with us after the first portion of the interview, so we had to push pause, pick up the next day, and you may hear in the background some screams from Amelia. She's fine. She's with her daddy. He's trying to console her while we wrap up our interview. So please give us grace for that. And just for the sound quality. But I really hope. And I I know you're gonna walk away from this conversation, feeling so encouraged. As you see our God sustain a couple as they walk through a crazy, crazy time. Hey, sisterhood, it is Kristen here and I have been looking forward to this conversation for so long and I know a lot of you have too. Because you have asked us regularly how our sister Alyssa is doing. You know, how is she doing? A lot of, you know, our sister married a Ukrainian, moved to Ukraine last year and just recently had her baby, but in the. Midst of all of the. Every all the craziness that's been going on the past month with Russia invading and a lot of you have followed her story closely and have just been so encouraged by her faith in the Lord in the midst of such like, crazy. Circumstances like who knew this was gonna happen. So I am so excited to welcome Alyssa. To the girl to find show to this video, to chat about what has been going on, how she's doing and how her faith in God has really been an anchor for her in the midst of so much. Craziness. Hey, sister.

Hi, thank you for having me. And I'll just give a disclaimer. Now I've got.

A babe in my arms. And so if you see me rocking back and forth, that's why you can rock all you need. And Alyssa was telling me before we started recording. She's like, OK, I can't guarantee there might not be screams from the baby. I'm like, it's OK. Everybody loves Amelia. We love your baby and we don't mind hearing our scream.

That's fine. She's.

She wants to participate in the conversation.

Yes. Well, it's so good to see your face and to see you, little Amelia, but this obviously this moment that looks so peaceful and calm has not been the reality of your life lately. But before we jump into just you literally escaping Ukraine, fleeing for your life, trying to get to safety, I mean that whole story.

I know.

Yes, it's true.

Is insane. Take us back a little bit before that, because people who may not know your story in detail might be wondering, OK, how did this girl from? Text it which? Is where you grew up. How did this girl from Texas end up in Ukraine, right outside of the capital, Kiev. Like, how did you even end up there? In the first place.

Yes. Yeah, I feel like this. Full it's just been such a journey. The past. I don't know what year and a half maybe. So I lived in South Texas like she said and just normal girl going to church. You know, getting older, single, hoping to meet a godly guy at some point. And I the Lord. Brought this amazing godly man from Ukraine to my church in Texas and we met and started a long distance. And then eventually, you know, through COVID and all the craziness. Eventually we got married in 2021 and I moved to Ukraine maybe like 20 days after we got married. And, you know, I've lived in Texas my entire life. And so that was just the first crazy thing that happened was. Moving to another country, yeah, and experiencing new culture along with, you know, being freshly.

Married on top of it all.

That's a lot of.

Change. There's a lot of change, but obviously so worth it because he's an awesome guy and I loved him and I loved his ministry and what he was doing. So 100% worth it.

Yeah. And you've been trying to learn a new language on top of it all.

I was trying.

That was that.

A surprise for you. I know people ask us about that too. Like, how was she doing with, like, learning a new language when you got to Ukraine and we had, I actually, it was so sweet. I actually got to go to Ukraine for the trip that you got engaged on that trip. So that was.

Yes, yes. Uh-huh, yeah.

Like that was really sweet. How long before? How many months before that? From when you got married. Was that trip to Ukraine like?

I think four months.

Oh, it was fast. I didn't realize.

Yeah, it was. Quick, we just wanted to get married.

I know.

They've been apart long enough.

Yeah. So we went to Ukraine with you guys. There was like a small group of US and then you obviously, Andre, he lives right outside of Kiev, the capital. But you drove over, we all drove over to Lviv, which is a city in Ukraine, and you got engaged there.

Right.

Ohh. Like so magical in a way you know because it's such a European feeling. City and we got married or we got engaged like in a I don't even know what like town square and it just felt like I don't know something from a Disney movie. It was so, so magical. It's such a great job.

It was, and we were all hiding. And Andrew was like, do not be visible when I proposed. And So what we wanted to watch. So we were all, like, trying to, like, stay away from the town. Square but hoping. We'd accidentally maybe pick around a corner.

Like we're just, we're just a townsperson.

Yes, just just the local townspeople right there we go. So something I did find interesting when I was there though, visiting that first trip with you was how few people actually spoke English. Like you kind of like I. You know, we've both been to other.

It's pulling.

Yeah, yeah.

European cities and a lot of cities. Especially big cities, a lot of people can speak English, but I'm less surprised by how few people could actually speak English, which I know you now moving there, living there. When you first moved there, that was like, what kind of challenge was that for you?

Right, yes.

Yeah, that that was a big challenge. Very like. There are people that speak English, but. Not a lot. And so just figuring out like, OK, what are the basic words I need to know to?

Around like, OK, at the grocery store. Like, do you want a bag or no bag? OK, I need to know what that means, because every time it's awkward. And they're asking me like I.

Don't know, so learning the basic basic words basic phrases and then I mean like in our community people just kind of knew like, OK, she's she's the English speaker and we'll just do the best we can.

Another weird one from America.

Yeah, but yeah, that was it's challenging because it dies feel isolating in a way, especially, you know, I'm very relational. I like to talk to people, build new friendships and feeling like, wow, I I can't be kind of who I really am. Like, you feel like you can't, you know, be your true personality when you can't communicate with people. So trying to find like OK, creative ways to get around that and Google Translate helps.

Oh yes.

A lot to be able to communicate with people.

I know that from when we adopted our voice from Ukraine, we had the reverse problem. Right now, they're the Ukrainian speaking boys in America. They're the ones that can't understand the main language. And Google Translate was key in helping all of us.

It's a lifesaver.

But it's not the same. It's not the same as like being able to talk to people. So I remember having conversations with you early on and that was a big challenge.

Right.

'Cause it was hard to just build deep relationships like you wanna have a. You can't even have a deep spiritual conversation with someone if you can't speak the same language, much less like basic things. So I remember there like for you. Was that a lonely time? Like, how did you even like your trust in God? It's a beautiful, wonderful transition.

Mm-hmm. Yeah.

But like, how did your relationship with God feel like even grew during that time when you couldn't have a lot of in person relationships and that one?

Mm-hmm. Yeah.

Yes. Yeah. Oh, for sure. Yes. And I remember we definitely had some FaceTime calls about this, especially in the beginning. You know, I'm newly married. I come from this big family, you know, in Texas and this huge community. I was super involved in my church. My young adults group, small group, all the. Things and then to move to this new country and obviously I'm so happy to be with my husband and so excited about that. But you know you need more than your husband in life. You need friendships and you need community. And so that was hard feeling like, wow, I'm new here and not only the new person in town, but I can't communicate with people. On a deep level like I would love to, you know, have you know, deep conversations about how people are doing and spiritual conversations just just wasn't a possibility. And so I remember feeling very lonely at times, like, well, I'm. I'm so excited to be with my husband, but I really miss my family and I miss. My friends and. I feel, you know strange not being able to communicate with people and feeling like everyone is kind of always like ohh feeling sorry for you because you can't talk to them and and. You just feel so different. And so yeah, talking, talking to you honestly helped a lot having someone that you can. Kind of share your. Concerns with and your fears and your loneliness that helped a ton and then just taking it to the Lord, you know, like he he wasn't surprised. He 100% led me to this marriage led me to this country. And so just taking those fears and the those concerns to him and just like Lord I you are my friend in this time like you are my father in this time and help me to find creative ways that I can connect with people even if it's you know something small or something where I. Feel like oh, this is.

So random, I don't want to do this but.

Just even small ways, and I feel like God definitely did grow me and sustained me through that time and was probably prepared.

Me for even more that I didn't know about. Wow, looking back now and we'll get to that story in a minute. Just thinking of those early challenges. Just I'm sure in some ways they seem so minor compared to like the challenges that were to come. But God really was preparing you. OK, set the scene for people who have never been to Ukraine and they don't know what maybe a Ukrainian.

I know.

Right.

City or like what the culture would feel like. What did that feel like for you, one church life, and then culture? And then also where you lived? Like, describe kind of your home life? House, when you were in Ukraine, obviously right now for those listening, we're having this conversation and Alissa is not currently in Ukraine as we speak. You are in Hungary.

Right.

Yes, in a very different place, yes.

That's a whole nother story. Yeah, but take us back to Ukraine and what that was like for you early on. Just church life, culture and. Then where you lived like.

Yeah, for sure for sure, so.

It's just it's.

Not so different as you would expect once you once you start getting to know people like OK, people are people no matter where you live, you know? Yeah. But things that were different, like we lived in a small village outside of Keith. So Keith was pretty close, but still small village and small village and. Train needs really horrible roads.

It's like one of.

The big things to know about Ukraine is the roads are really bad. It's like, I don't know. Imagine some dirt country Rd. but way, way worse than that. With massive potholes that you're like trying to avoid when you're driving. So that was the reality of our road, right?

Outside our home.

But yeah, small village, we would take the metro to go downtown to take the train, which was really fun or take a bus to get places which was different from, you know, living in a big city in Texas where you just drive your car everywhere. And our church was really sweet. We went to a small church that was connected to the Christian Academy that. My husband was working. And really sweet community of believers. But yeah, small church and you know, most people don't speak English. There were some. And so I did have a few people that I could talk to, which was really nice, but the entire service was in Ukrainian. All the songs were in Ukrainian, but they would sing a lot of, like Hillsong and in Ukrainian.

So I would like pull up the lyrics in English on my phone and just like sing really quiet so not to be so awkward. Like like, let everyone everyone understood. Yeah.

Wow, that's a beautiful picture. Like every tribe, nation, and tongue praising the Lord. You had that kind of going in your own little moment there with the various languages.

You guys alright? How's it going? Yes.

But people were super welcoming, super accepting, you know, cause it's hard for them to like they they probably want to reach out and make me feel welcome. But it's hard. So the women were so welcoming, so accepting, even if they didn't speak English, you know, they would just smile or try the best they could. We would both try.

The best we could with the languages.

He knew, and my husband would translate for me during the service. So, you know, that's the additional challenge for him like. OK, here we go. So. So yeah, that was church. That was our home. Keith is a big city, beautiful, big city, very old, lots of beautiful old architecture, a lot of young people. So like a lot of fun coffee shops and restaurants. And, you know, people riding scooters just kind of typical typical big city.

Yeah, yeah. I think some people who hear your. Story probably wonder like OK, was it worth it to marry this Ukrainian man and like, change your entire life, move all the way over there to a culture that's new people that can't understand you, cuz you don't speak this language like you left everything behind. Everything you were born and raised in San Antonio, your family, your church like community.

Right. Right. Right.

Everything that's normal to you. So this guy Andre must be a pretty special guy. Well, people are probably. Thinking so, tell us. I mean, obviously it was worth it. I mean, I'll let you answer that, but what was so special about him that just obviously the Lord brought you together? He orchestrated this story. But from your perspective, like, tell us about Andrey.

Right, yeah.

Right. Right.

Yeah. Ohh, how so sweet.

I wish you were here to listen.

Like. Yeah, yes, yes. All the good things they.

I'll show him the recording later, OK?

Say well, I think. You know, I am a Christian. That's no surprise to anyone. So my faith is the most important thing to me. And when I thought about getting married, I thought about. I want a man that's passionate about the Lord. I want to live my life serving him. And if I can't be married to a guy that has that same vision, then I'll I'm better off just being single and serving the Lord. As I am and so I was really waiting for that man, that man that I saw was passionate about the Lord and something that I always really wanted was somebody that was really passionate about the gospel and sharing the gospel and discipleship and, you know, involved in ministry and just had that heart for the Lord. UM and I've met great, great guys along the way, but none that really, you know, gets. Yeah, super excited. So when I met him, I just felt like, wow, this is a man who is on fire for the Lord. He is he. So he played professional football, soccer and that's what he was doing. He was coaching and doing ministry, incorporating the gospel into his practices. He was doing, you know, international discipleship and trainings and so many things that I just thought, wow, like, he's so on fire and he's so excited. And there's just such a passion. His life has clearly been. Changed and I thought, wow, like that's something I could get on board with. That's something I could really get excited about. And also I was super attracted to him.

Like he was so good looking like this.

Let's be honest.

40 athlete like OK, it's hard to find the full package and so I'm willing to move. I'm willing to move for that. Right. Yes. And I I remember talking.

With you early on and like. You're like it's my mission and my purpose as a Christian. It doesn't change like it's the same. And so marrying a man and moving. Yeah. There's. There are some sacrifices. There are things that obviously change that you're giving up, but you're also gaining about your mission as a Christian is the same. And you and Andrew both to this day have such a gospel centered mission.

For sure.

Mm-hmm. Right.

Of like outreach and ministering and loving people and sharing the gospel with them, that whether you live in Texas or in Ukraine or now in Hungary and you're not sure what the.

Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

That holds. It's like your mission still remains the same, and that's just, like, such a beautiful right and biblical motivation. And that to me, when looking on at your story, I was like, wow, she's willing to move wherever the Lord wants her to move because she has the heart, like the mission. And that's what drives her. So I know that was really encouraging to me. And I know a lot of people that were looking on.

Right. Totally.

Mm-hmm. MHM.

OK, so we have a little bit of the setting. We have a little bit about Audrey, where you lived, what life was looking like. Amelia wasn't on the scene yet, we know. That much, but tell us about some of those early months. So you were in Ukraine for in, like, living in your house in Ukraine. For how many months before the Russian invasion actually took place? How long was that time? Was it like?

A year? Yeah, good question. So we got married January 2021 and then I moved there and then we, so we celebrated one year anniversary in January and then February 24th we had to flee so.

OK.

Yeah, basically, I don't know. It's basically a year of living.

It was basically about a year and you found out you were pregnant with Amelia. Was that about three months into your marriage, four months?

Yeah, it was pretty soon. Yeah, maybe about four or five months into our marriage, we found out and we were. We were so excited. We wanted kids, and neither of us are spring chickens. So we were ready to start trying.

Yes. Oh my goodness. And now you're holding her for people who are listening and not watching. You can go check out this on YouTube to see Alissa holding baby Amelia. We see her little hand. Yes. Like the little hand resting on.

I know.

You. That's so sweet.

We're hoping she just doesn't scream.

Yeah. Oh, she's doing amazing. I'm so impressed. OK. So tell us what life. Was like during those months. And like you, life was pretty normal. But there were rumblings about Russia, like you had heard some things people were talking. Obviously it wasn't like a non conversation, but what was just like everyday life for you.

Mm-hmm. Yeah.

Oh for sure. Yeah, for sure for sure. Yeah. So even before I moved, I knew that there had always been some sort of, like, conflict between Ukraine and Russia, but it didn't seem like anything at the moment was super serious. Like, OK, there's been for sure there's been conflict in the past, but things seem pretty settled. Right now. And and as time went on while living there, it became more apparent that Russia had some ideas about invading Ukraine, but we didn't know how serious it was because, you know, there's been this threat for probably as long as Ukraine's been around, you know. And so you just you can't live your life in fear. You can't constantly be fleeing your home. You know, it's like this is where you live. This is your house. So just because there's a threat doesn't mean you're gonna. Flee your home.

Right.

And so they were building up their army around our border, but we didn't. Know like, OK. Is this just show just to show up? Or and they're trying to intimidate us? Or is this something more serious? So that was a big conversation. As time progressed of, like, OK, should should we stay? Should we leave? We weren't really seriously considering leaving because, like, OK, well, you know, it doesn't seem serious yet, but, you know, talking to our community and. Hearing what other people were doing and just like, OK, kind of that conversation was on the table. Like, OK, if things got serious, kind of, what would our game plan be? What would that look like until at some point, probably as it got closer? February I decided I wanted to pack like a go bag, like an emergency bag because I was like, you never know what might happen, and I'd rather just be prepared. And so, you know, I I don't even remember what I packed like blankets and matches and things that later on were not helpful.

At all.

Ohh no.

Like I needed more socks.

Underwear. Not mountains, but anyway. Yeah. So just being kind of being prepared. So we had an emergency bag. We we had some plans in place, but we never seriously thought we would need to leave.

That's interesting. Yeah, and it had. Been happening like you're saying for so many years. Obviously they were placing more and more troops on the border. So OK, people were getting.

Right.

Right.

Concerned, but I think a lot of us, especially in the West, looking on, it's easy to have opinions, right? And there were all sorts of opinions I heard flying around here in Texas, just even on the Internet, like people need to do this. And then it's like it's easy to have all the.

Right. Ohh yeah. Mm-hmm.

Strong opinions, and let's say. They should have done this, but we were living there and there has been this kind of constant tension between Russia and Ukraine.

Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

And it is your home like you're living in your house. Like, imagine anyone listening or watching. You're in your house like this is where your livelihood is your work, your food, your clothes, everything. You can't just every other week, pick up and leave where you're gonna go. You're gonna pay for an area and you're gonna try to find friends somewhere to stay with. Like, what if you have like animals and your work, how do you work? How do you make money?

Right, yeah.

Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

I just think people have opinions, but they're not as informed and you, being someone who is living in it, you face that reality every day of like, OK, we can't just pick up and leave everything behind for like long periods of time. Like, that's just not reality for everyday living. So you guys were having conversations, but at the same time, you didn't feel.

Right. Right. Yeah, for sure.

Like you were threatened in those moments. And so you chose to stay along with pretty everyone else in your community, right?

Hmm hmm.

Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

Everyone, nobody. Nobody in our community was leaving and we were. We were talking to everybody, getting wisdom, getting. All the advice. And nobody was leaving. And the other thing is we were in keep, you know, we're in the capital of this country. Like, when has like capital in this day and age ever just been directly attacked, you know? Like that's just unheard of. It's like Washington, DC like being attacked. Like, you would never think like, oh, maybe they're skirmishes other places but not your. Capital. So we felt like, OK, we feel very safe in the center capital of Ukraine, we weren't, we just didn't feel concerned at that point.

Right.

Yeah. And I know even talking to Andre, cause you guys came back during that time for a visit to the states. I remember having conversations like, oh, like, how do you guys feel about this and what are you thinking about that? And I remember Andrea was saying, you know, our concern isn't so much for Kiev, but it is for more the eastern and southern portions of Ukraine. There was kind of. It sounded like a consensus amongst a lot of Ukrainians that if Russia invaded, it wouldn't necessarily be a full on invasion, but maybe more of the southeastern regions of Ukraine. So even that was also something to be considered where you lived. You were feeling like, OK, this is probably the last place that we would be concerned about.

Yeah, right. Yeah, exactly. Right. Hey. Yeah. Oh, for sure, yes.

OK.

The other piece of this story, which is just like God's timing on things. Sometimes we go. What is that? You were pregnant. And as it's getting closer to Amelia's due date, little did you guys know that that was actually getting closer to when Russia was going to launch a full on invasion of Ukraine? So walk us through. Maybe a few weeks before that you're you're probably about eight months pregnant at this point. And what were you thinking? What were you guys doing? What did life look like?

Hmm hmm.

Yeah. Yeah. So I was super pregnant and preparing to have our baby, you know? So we were going to our appointments in Downtown, key meeting with our doctor, planning for our. We were setting up our nursery and. We had bought. Her little bed and all of her little things. Our friends did a little baby shower for us while we were there. The women from the church to a little baby shower for me. So for me, it's just I was living my life as I had always loved it. And. My husband was doing ministry and doing soccer and you know, we were just just living our normal lives and we knew as as it got closer so. We knew that there were more action started to happen in the East SE, and so that was like, OK, now we're a little bit on a little bit more high alert, but still like we're in keep and nothing is going to happen here. So we just planned planned on staying and giving birth. But little did we know that wasn't God's plan for us.

Yeah. And I remember you were telling us even the hospitals were saying, you know, even if Russia invades, like, we will still be functioning, we will be here for you. No need to worry. You can have your baby. I mean.

Yeah, yeah, yeah. It's our doctor, like, oh, it's just politics. Don't worry about it.

Weren't they giving you reassurances? It there's no problem the hospital, even if something happened, the hospital will all you know, will continue to work. So we're thinking like, well, I mean, our doctors saying this, so probably this is sound advice. Yeah, exactly. And that's so like people looking on detached from the real everyday life like that was how a lot of people were thinking and. Feeling about it, the political perspective and you know, it's not like we're not. We're gonna be fine. We're gonna be fine with kind of like the vibe. So, yeah, I think a lot of people were a little bit caught off guard by what happened. So take us forward a little bit to the moment when you first. Realized that Russia was actually launching a full on invasion.

Yeah. Yeah. So that's like the keyword is like full on attack. We like we said, no idea. No idea that that was gonna happen. I mean we.

Saw that we saw the.

Troops and we understood that, but we just. Thought like this this is.

The you know.

We're living in a modern day and age like. Another country doesn't just. Do a full on attack. Of another country like, that's crazy. So it was the morning of February 24th. And we, you know, the night before we went to bed like normal. And that next morning, I woke up at like 5:00 AM and noticed that my husband wasn't in bed next. To me, which is odd. We don't normally wake up that early and and so I'm laying there like ohh maybe he just went to the bathroom, but he wasn't coming back. And so I was thinking like, that's strange what's going on. And then I. I heard like a really loud noise and I thought like, OK, what was that like? That's really strange. But we we live next to a like, a place where there are like some construction trucks and like, OK, maybe that was them, but my heart's like starting to pound. And I'm thinking like, this is scary, like, what's going on. And then as I'm laying there, I hear another really loud like clear explosion bomb going off somewhere. And, you know, I had seen, like, some sort of streak of fire or something going, passing my window. And I was just terrified, like, so terrified. I mean, just to be honest.

You know, like we as Christians is like ohh we the the.

Strong faith. It's like I was so terrified. I had no idea what was going on, and it was just so scary. So here I am. You know, like almost nine months pregnant, hearing this huge explosion near my home. I ran downstairs and I'm like, well, you know, asking my husband. Like what's going on? And I hear, like, more explosions. MMM. And it's like just the most terrifying thing you can imagine. You know, it's just so scary. I felt so sick. I thought I was gonna throw up. And so I'm.

Did you know at that moment? Oh, yeah. You're you're asking him. OK.

Asking what's going on.

Yeah, but I.

Knew, because, like, you know, this had been the talk for however long, right? But. And so I knew, I knew like, oh, my goodness, how is this happening in in Keith? You know, this is. Unbelievable. And so I'm asking him, like, what's up? Running and he was like, you know, watching the news. And he let me know like they have launched full attack on all of Ukraine. And so they had strategically, I guess it was drones or something, I don't know. They had sent bombs to all of the major cities around Ukraine, which is terrifying, you know. And so. He's watching the news and we're trying to figure out what to do and so I'm, like, grabbing the emergency bag. Like, OK, I'm getting out of here. I'm so scared. This is terrifying. Like, are there gonna be troops at my door? You know, like, will the OR are we gonna be, like, shot? Like, what's gonna happen? You don't know. And it's dark and it's scary.

Right.

So he's like, OK, why don't you go get your emergency bag? And like, why don't you go pack some more things and, like, try and be calm. And so he calls his parents, who are in a in another city and like, hey, y'all should come to us because this is probably safer than where you are because they were on the east. So he told them to, you know, like get a train here as fast as you can. And so I'm packing the bag. He's calling them, but we were still waiting, you know, to try and figure out, like, OK, what actually is happening? We didn't want to just, like, rush out the door without full information. So he was, you know, talking to people, calling people, watching the news as the morning went on, trying to figure out like, OK, what's?

Right.

Actually happening in our city and our country.

So you're trying to get information and Andre, who is he getting information from? How is he finding out? Was he watching the news? Like, how did he know what was happening?

Hmm. Yeah. So he's watching the news. He's calling other people talking to other people. And I guess they they were saying, yeah, it's, it's this kind of attack on all of the major cities and which is terrifying. It's just so, so terrifying to think, like, wow, your capital city is under attack and you don't know what.

You don't know.

What's going to happen? It's so scary.

Right, you literally you have no idea. Are you gonna leave your house? Are there gonna be, like, military tanks rolling down the streets outside of your village? Like, will we even make it out alive? Like, at this point in time? Yeah. It's like you're safe now. But in that moment, you really had no idea if you were even gonna make it out alive or what. The journey. The process.

Right, yeah.

Was gonna look like so.

Right, exactly.

You guys did end up leave. Thing. But you didn't go together.

Right. Yeah. So his mom decided she was going to come to us. She was coming from the east. She was going to take a train. His dad decided to stay at their stay with their apartment, and she would come. To us. And so I I was just so scared, to be honest. I was very terrified. You know, I'm pregnant. I'm thinking like I. I'm terrified here. Like, this is so so scary for me. And and you know, my husband is much more calm and like, OK, let's think this through. Let's figure out what's going on before we just rush. And so it's kind of all happening at the same time. He's he's thinking like, OK, we need to wait until, you know, my mom gets here so that we can at least make sure she gets to us and then we can kind of regroup from there. But she wasn't going to get there until that evening. And I'm thinking like I am I.

Just can't stay. Here I'm just so scared.

And so. But he was like, OK, let's just wait. Let's just see. What's gonna happen? Wait till my mom gets. Sure. And. And so at at some moment during that morning, one of my friends called me, who lived in my neighborhood. So like my neighbor slash friend, and she called me and said, hey, I'm leaving with my kids and my husband, and we're taking two cars, and we're going to western Ukraine. We have an extra seat. But like, you have to come now, like. I'm gonna be driving by your house in the next minute and either jump in or dump. So, like you can you can decide. And so I'm.

Talking to Andrew, like, what do you think? What should you know? Should I?

Go should I not? And he just 100% left it up to me. Like if you would feel safer going with them right now to the West then 100% go. I'll wait for Mom. And so I grabbed my emergency. Bag that I had. Packed and I grabbed my hospital. Bags and I literally just jumped in her car and we just took off. Started driving as quickly as we could to western Ukraine.

And in the. Car. It was the mom. Your friend who's Ukrainian but speaks really good English. And was it her three daughters?

Yes, yes, yes. Uh-huh.

Yes. So we had two cars, her husband and their three daughters and me. And we're just booking it, but you know. So many people obviously were also wanting to leave at that exact same moment, so there was tons of traffic. The gas stations were, you know, you couldn't even go there was such huge lines. They were running out of gas and then they were putting up military checkpoints as well. And so you had to go through those. It's just scary because you're you're driving through these. Other cities that have also been at. Act and you don't know. Like, OK, what are we going to run into something? Is there maybe some attack they don't know about. And we're going to run into it. So it was scary. You know, we're praying the whole way. Like, wow, this is scary. We don't. Know we don't know what's going to what's going to happen.

I cannot imagine that is so terrifying. So, Andre, so now you here you are basically nine months pregnant. I mean, you were Josh. I have nine months. Andre stays home to help his mom, gets his safety.

Yeah, right.

To get her settled and he's planning to meet up with you at some point. But you're heading. You're heading off to western Ukraine like you don't even know exactly where you're going. So this drive, I mean, how long were you in the car? And where were you guys headed? Did they? Did they even know at that point where they were trying to go?

Yeah, right.

Yeah. So they were hoping to go to, I think the original plan was to go to levies. That was one city at the time that hadn't been. Intact. So that was the plan. So it but it just ended up being just just a wild, crazy ride. So we tried going to one place. Then we tried crossing decided. OK, let's cross the border. So then we decided we were gonna try and cross the border, but that didn't work because the lines were not moving and they were miles and miles and miles of cars. And so then.

And was that trying to cross the border into Poland? Was that the first attempt?

Yeah, it's a Pollard. Mm-hmm. So then we're like, OK, that's not gonna work. And so then we're like, OK, let's drive South into the mountains and we'll go into the mountains and we'll stay.

OK.

There. And so it just was wild. So from the time we left that morning until the next day in the morning, we finally got to these people's house that we were going to stay with. And I think I was in the car for like 19 hours. So pregnant, you know, it just was so crazy. And I know that 100%.

Oh my goodness.

God gave me the energy and the strength because that's really hard to be that pregnant sitting in a car for that long with few bathroom breaks and like high levels of stress. And like not a lot of food because you got to keep driving. And so I just know, like, well, there's no way I could have done that unless the Lord was strengthening me supernaturally. Because it's just crazy.

It's. Yeah, it's. Like I do not wish that upon anyone. You were. We were following your story throughout this process, obviously trying to communicate with you. Pray for you. Like as much as we could. And I just cannot even imagine. And you're separated from your husband. So on top of all of it, you don't even know. Like, OK. Is he OK? Is he gonna be OK? How are we gonna reunite? So how? What did that look like?

Right. Yeah, yes.

You and Andre to actually get back together.

Yeah. So it's so crazy. So I was in the mountains like.

Like I said.

And he waited for his mom to get her home. She stayed with her dog home, and he started driving to come meet me so we could be together wherever. You know, we. We ended up. So he started driving. And I I remember people texting us asking about the gas. Like how do. You all have enough gas like you keep driving. This is but how? And you know, I don't know. I feel like maybe it was a small miracle from the Lord that we never ran out.

Of gas.

But we were able to have like fuel the entire time, which was crazy and we did have extra gas. But yeah, I don't know. I feel like it was just sustained, sustained dust in that. So he started. Yes, exactly.

It's like he multiplied your portions, you know?

So I like. I was saying I was super worried because I didn't know as the day and the hours were progressing, if things were gonna get more dangerous on the roads because you just don't know. It's there's so much uncertainty when things are unfolding that quickly. So I was just praying like crazy that God would protect him and that we would be able to get together because I was super worried. Like here I am so pregnant and I don't want my husband getting captured or thought or something.

Did y'all have really quick? Did y'all have phone communication like texting and calling during this time or not so much?

Yes, yeah, we did. But I think my phone was like dying the whole time or it died at some point or something, you know, everything. It always happens that way. Like, of course, you don't remember to bring a charger and you don't have one, but yeah, we were able to. We were able to communicate. So he started driving. That's super far the mountains from where we from where we live to the mountains is a super far drive.

OK.

He started. Driving, he was able to stop at a friend's house and get a little bit of rest there, and then he headed my way and finally we were able to meet up in a really small village at, like a friend of a friend's grandmother's house and just the whole that whole story is just crazy. The connection. We had with this family and then we were able to, you know, find safe shelter in this tiny village at this grandmother's house. And and it was just so amazing to finally be back together. You know, you have all that, like, worry and just fear, hoping everything's gonna be OK. Gonna just finally be reunited. Was just so so special.

How did you first see him when you reunited? Because it had? Been a couple days right by this point.

Yeah, it, yes, a couple days, not a lot of sleep.

From the time you left.

Yeah. Yeah. And so he, I, I, the friends dropped me off at this sweet grandma's house, and they had different plans. So they were like, OK, we'll, we'll drop you off there. We've got our own plan. So they let. And then I guess later that night he or, yeah, later that night he ended up coming. And it was just so special, like.

Ohh my husband. You're alive and God protected you on.

This long journey to me, so it was so special to be back together and just I'm. Just I don't. Know I'm so thankful for these sweet grandmothers. They just took us in. They didn't even know us complete strangers. They took us in. They fed us. They took care of us like we were their own children. It was just so precious.

Wow. And were you guys still in the mountains at this point? I can't remember or. Were you in a different region?

Yes, we were, yeah, kind of in that same region, a really, really safe area.

OK. And then? The next part of the journey begins. So you. Yes, we reunite. You know, it's still not safe. Like you're starting to realize, right, like anywhere in Ukraine isn't really that safe. As you're hearing the news and reports of continued bombings around all of Ukraine. And So what were you guys thinking now as a couple? Like, what kind of conversations did you have?

Right, yeah. Right.

Yeah, it was hard. So I felt very strongly that I wanted to leave, which makes sense because I'm not from Ukraine. Technically, you know, I'm not Ukrainian and I wanted to be in a place that I felt really safe and and obviously Audrey being Ukrainian. Didn't want to leave. He wanted to stay. And, you know, be with his people and his country. But he also wanted to make sure I was really safe and our baby was really safe. That's like his first priority, obviously, to keep his family. You could have your baby any day, like you were far enough along. You were how far out from your due date at this point in time?

Yes, because at this point.

Right.

Oh man, I think I was. Mid 38 weeks. Wow. Yeah. So at any point early and you don't know if like the stress is gonna push.

Yeah, at any day? Yeah, any moment.

You into labor.

No kidding.

So yeah, he like both of us. Our first thought was like, OK, we need to make sure our babies safe. It was just if it was just us. That's one thing, but now we've got this child and I need to be in a safe place. It's not great for labor. If you're feeling super stressed and unsafe. So we had to have some hard conversations and figure out like, OK, what, what do we want to do? What can we do? What are our options? And so of course, these sweet grandmas, we're like you.

Could stay with us and you can give birth here. In this little village.

But you don't know how things are going to progress, and you don't want to be in labor. Or delivering in a place that could be, you know, getting bombed or whatever. So we made kind of the hard decision to leave Ukraine, which was difficult for both of us because this is this is our home, you. Know this is everything. Being we've, you know, built in our marriage like our whole married life, we've lived together in Ukraine and we have our House and our dog and his parents and his parents had decided they did not want to leave, kind of no matter what. So they were for sure staying so they were like, we'll stay with your house and your dog, it's like. OK, well. I guess that's taken care of as we made the hard decision to leave. And pretty much just packed our bags and started driving that night. It was a hard decision.

And packing your bags. Packing your bags means like the few things that you were able to grab on the way out was Andre able to bring anything else? Yeah. Was he able to bring anything else for you since he came a little bit.

Yes, the few things that we had, yes.

Or for Disney bags.

After you or.

Yes. Yeah. Thankfully, yeah. Thankfully, no. I know. Right inside out. No. Yeah. So we didn't communicate about that though. I just, I, I don't know. Maybe had told him, like I have nothing. So he was super sweet and brought me a bunch of stuff, but I hadn't communicated with him what I wanted. So he brought me.

Did you still have like? The one pair of underwear.

What he thought. I needed which is always just so so funny.

But yeah, he did bring me extra essentials because the things I.

Had in our.

Go bag were not helpful at all like Buck Weed and matches and you. Know head flashlights like.

This is not what I need in this moment, but I would be. Prepared if I. Were stranded on the side of the road.

You never know.

Yeah, you never know. So anyway.

We grab our bags, we head in, you know, we put put our bags in the car and we start heading out and you know, it was a really hard moment because the friends that we were staying with, she felt really strongly about us not leaving. And so that was just super. It was already a really hard decision for us to leave.

Oh wow.

And then with this sweet friend, you know, started crying and just felt very strong about us not going. She felt like it wasn't going to be safe. And I was. Pregnant. And so I just remember as we were driving away, I just started crying because I'm, you know, it was just such a hard moment of, like, I don't know what to do. And I feel so torn. But I feel like this is the right decision. So we kind of got through that first moment and we we head out and. It's just I don't. Know it's just scary driving in that circumstances. Everyone's got their lights off in their homes. It's super dark everywhere. There's not a lot of people on the road. Obviously there's no planes flying. It's just kind of kind of eerie feeling. And so we start heading towards the border.

Oh wow.

And we've got to go through some mountainous regions and a lot of military checkpoints, which is just, I don't know, it's just a scary experience. And so we drive all.

So wait quick.

Of the night, yeah.

Question. Were these Russian military checkpoints or Ukrainian checkpoints, Ukrainian checkpoints and what were they? Were they checkpoints that were quickly set up because of the invasion? Or is this just normal checkpoints you always have?

These are, yeah, yeah.

To go through.

No, no. So they'd just be like in the middle of the road, you know, like in the middle of a highway or a road, they would have all these barricades and all of these, you know, military people with guns, and they would. Need to check your. Passports and ask where you're going and what you're. Thing which makes sense because they want to make sure that there aren't. You know, I don't know, enemy people traveling back and forth, but it's just scary, you know, it's the whole feeling is like, wow, I've never experienced anything like this in my.

OK.

Life. Yeah. So we head out on. The road and. We're driving all through the night, all through the next morning. And then you know, just so many miracles, the way God worked the way he provided for us and led us and brought people into our life and just the exact right moment. To help us. You know, with things we weren't certain about crossing the border and where to stay and what to do and how to do it. He just, I don't know. We just feel like he brought us his angels and guided us exactly where he wanted us. And so that next day by God's miracle, we were able to cross the border. And get into safety. But you know, it's just it was really, really hard. And even as we were crossing the border and I'm sitting there, I'm sitting there in the car. I just remember really just crying and feeling so. Ohh, just broken in that moment like not not like my heart was breaking like I'm leaving this country that I love. And you know everything that we had prepared for our baby in our home, our little nursery and you know, all the little things that you had prepared so thoughtfully for her and you just have to leave it. All behind and it's it's so hard. It's such a hard decision to make and. You just you don't know. Like, am I making the right decision, am I not? But it's in those moments. It's like you can only do the best that you can with the knowledge that you have and you just have to trust that. OK, we're we're making the wisest decision we can. And we're following God's leading as best we can. But you can still be doing all of that with, like, uncertainty and.

For sure for sure.

Year. So it was really, really tough, but finally getting to a place of safe. He was huge, was huge for us.

Wow. So tell me about that moment right after you crossed the border from Ukraine into Hungary. I remember you told when you shared your story for the first time with our family. You had some big kind of unexpected emotions that you were feeling. What were you feeling?

Yeah, it was such a feeling of like, I'm leaving everything behind. And that was so hard because, like I said, it was a really hard decision. It we were. So torn to know what to do. And just knowing like I am leaving all of this, my home, my, my in laws are puppy. You know, so many things that just like all those little things and the big things and not knowing like when when will I ever come back to this and now I'm my baby won't be born in Ukraine which was something you know. Obviously we were really excited about she's half Ukrainian. So for her to have that heritage and now to know. So none of that's going to be happening. All of our plans, all of our, you know, the things we were dreaming about that is going to look completely different and now we're in this, you know, foreign country that we don't know anything about. But at the same time, there was this piece of knowing, OK, this is the best decision. That we had to make for our family. So it was just so tough on all.

Ohh, I cannot even imagine. And there's also the uncertainty of. Will we ever be able to go back? What is our country? What is the country we know and our House, our city, our village. Like as we know it. What what is gonna be left like? There's so much uncertainty of the future. And will we ever go back? Will life ever be the same as we've known it? So you guys crossed the border into Hungary.

On all angles.

Right. Exactly, yeah.

Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

And you had to. Right. And that is kind of became your landing spot. You're still there. So what has life looked like? Well, well, tell us about the birth really quick. That's a crazy thing. I know. Any woman who's had a baby is probably thinking, talk about your birth plan being thrown upside down like you had research you had visited and you were ready in Ukraine and talked about, like, you're about to have a baby.

Right, yeah. Yeah. Oh, yes. Oh yes.

And you don't even know. Now you're in a new country. You don't speak Hungarian. Neither does Andre. It's a new language to deal with. New hospitals and new healthcare system. Like how in the world did you find a place to have your baby? What did that look like?

Right, right.

Yes, I mean it's it's so crazy it's a, it's a immediately you have so many decisions you have to make. Yes. And you have so little time because the baby can come at any point. So we got settled in into Budapest and then immediately started researching, looking into hospitals, looking into you know. Options and midwives and doctors and everything, but it is overwhelming and kind of our dream birth and we really wanted to have a natural birth. And it was interesting because the the C-section rate actually in Hungary is really, really high. And that's that's wonderful if you, if you want that or you need that for an emergency or whatever. But if that's not what you want, you wanna go a natural route. It was really difficult and kind of scary too, as we're visiting these hospitals and they're sharing with us like, oh, our C-section rate is 90%. And we're thinking like.

Oh man that.

Doesn't leave us a lot of options. There, like a lot of chances to have the natural birthday line, so that alone. Was really tough. So just like ohh man going from hospital. Hospital talking to all the doctors. But then finally, you know people were so, so sweet. I just got to say people on social media were so kind to give us, hey.

I'm from Budapest. Here's.

Some advice on hospitals or doctors. I used this midwife and I really had a great experience, so that was super helpful. So somebody mentioned a hospital and said, hey, I gave birth. At this hospital, and it was. A really wonderful natural experience. And so we ended up visiting and just fell in love with it. We found a wonderful midwife that spoke English and she was super supportive. And the craziest thing. So we talked to the doctors and we were actually the first Ukrainian Ukrainian refugees that were coming to this hospital after this whole war situation. And so they were so kind. And said that they wanted to. Give us this entire experience.

Oh. Oh my goodness.

For free, which was so fun, like kind of as refugee status. So that was just like another blessing, another miracle. Just one more thing. We didn't have to worry about, which was such a humongous blessing. So yeah, we found the hospital we wanted. We found the midwife we wanted. And honestly, I feel like God just blessed us so much with a really easy.

That's amazing.

Labor really easy delivery. I mean, as easy as birth can be. Being you know, for all the stress that I had and all that I went through, I feel like it could have my body could have done so. Many different things.

OK.

But it was super fast. Super easy, no problems with baby, no problems with me. Massive blessing. Just I didn't know for her to like. Is she going to have some sort of problem because of all the stress? But. It's super healthy, baby. And just wonderful awesome experience overall. So thankful. Yeah. Cute.

Huge huge answer. To prayer, such an unknown. So you guys are still in Budapest and things in Ukraine are still very uncertain, although there has been some change for the positive but also some for the negative.

Hmm yeah.

It's kind of. Still not a great situation for going back, and So what does? What does the future look like for you guys at this point? I know you're just kind of. Waiting and trying to figure things out as you go to some degree. But.

Yes. Yeah. So our future is uncertain to say the least. We would love to go back to our home. Obviously we want to see his parents. We want to see our puppy, we want to go to our home. We want to take Amelia to kind of her homeland. But it's just. Too dangerous right now, there's still an ongoing war. There are still fights happening, bombs being dropped, and so it's very dangerous, so it's not a place we want to take a baby by any means. So we are here for now, Andrew, of course, as the amazing man he is is not able to sit still but has just jumped right in to doing ministry here, helping refugees, going to the border, taking people. And just today like. Just I don't know. Just what a sweet guy. You know, you don't know how crisis might affect your marriage or might.

Affect you as individuals.

But I feel like it's just brought out even even more in him that I love. So even today he was like, I have to go. I need to go take some go pick up some milk at the store to bring to this refugee family that has a baby and they need some. Milk for their baby and I'm thinking like.

My husband's so sweet.

So he's jumped in to kind of whatever ministry and service he can do here in Budapest. But yeah, for the time being, we're here. We might go back to the States and be able to visit family, but yeah, we're here trying to be faithful, to serve the Lord in any way we can. Praying.

Yes, yes.

Daily that God will stop the evil that is happening in Ukraine and allow the good and the right to win. So we can go back and our people can have some freedom.

Yeah. One of the things that we actually write about so in our book, not part of the plan which you know about and your whole life we could have, we can just do Part 2 and it can just be about your life, not part of the plan, trusting God with the twists and turns of your story. But it's interesting because in our book, we actually talk about your story. We talk about the different paths that God has for each of us and how often.

Right.

The path as it unfolds of our life is so different than what we imagined, and that was just when we were writing about how you met this Ukrainian and married him and moved overseas. And at that point, that was the twisted turn that nobody really saw coming. And now there's like an entire new layer, new element on top of that, that's still.

Right. Right.

Being it's a journey that you're still on. So how has your trust in God been an anchor for you throughout this whole process?

Yeah, for sure. I can't imagine going through this without having faith in the Lord. You know, I just can't even imagine that because we know that no matter what happens, God is with us. He's leading us, he's guiding us. And even even if the worst happened, you know, say we were tortured or we were killed or something terrible happened. Our ultimate hope is not in our country, our home, our, whatever, our ultimate hope is in Christ. And we know that no matter what happens, even if we were to die, that we would be with him.

Right.

And obviously we're not. We're not hoping to.

Be tortured or to die?

But we know that ultimately he is in control and that in the end evil is not going to evil is not going to win, and that we know the we know the end of the story, that Christ is victory. Serious, and it may seem hopeless now, and it may seem like, wow, there's so much evil that is happening, but we know the ultimate victory is with the Lord. If you have your hope and your trust in. Him and so. Just knowing that, seeing the way that God worked so many small and big miracles through this whole journey. It just brought. So much peace to our heart. Like, WOW, we are not alone in this, even as we're escaping. And it's scary. And we feel maybe alone on the road and it's dark. We know that God is, he's still with us and he has not abandoned us. He hasn't forgotten us. And so it does give me hope for the future knowing that. He's been with us this far and he's not going to leave us anytime soon.

Wow. Such a powerful testimony. It's easy to talk the talk, but when? When our life brings us trials that are really hard and there is so much uncertainty, everything we thought we had control of, we now know clearly we don't. We never had control. But it becomes very obvious, especially something like your situation. And I've heard from so.

Right.

Many people through girl to find just friends, direct friends in my community and my church just saying, wow, what a testimony. Watching your and Andres story as you guys were very open about the trials and the struggles. I know you were sharing some video updates kind of throughout the process. And I've just heard from so many people and I'm sure there are so many more that I haven't heard from. And this even includes. Unbelievers, so people who do not profess faith in Christ but who have lived on as they've heard about your story through different news outlets. I know you guys were kind of hot in the news there for a little bit because it is just such a crazy story. This Texas girl marries Ukrainian 9 months pregnant.

Yeah, right.

Hmm hmm.

Trying to be and just the testimony for the gospel, which is just so awesome to see how many even unbelievers were able to look on at your story. See your face, see your hope in God in the midst of so much chaos, a situation that would cause anyone to lose their mind in the sense of just filled with anxiety filled with fear. And there were for sure, scary times.

OK.

Yeah. Yes.

That, yeah, your ultimate faith. The hope is in the Lord, and so therefore it's like death, which is the worst thing, right that could happen, you know, in a sense like that wasn't your greatest fear. Like you guys were just such great testimonies of trusting the Lord with whatever outcome. So I'm thankful and my faith has been encouraged by your story. And I know anyone listening right now who maybe didn't know a lot of your story. Is really encouraged. So in closing I will let you go get to your. Sweet baby who I know once you. How can people pray for you?

Such a great question. Yeah. So like I said, our future is uncertain. We don't know what's going to happen. We are strangers in a strange land. We are not in our home. We would love to be in our home. We would love to continue ministering to our Ukrainian people in Ukraine. So just wisdom I think is the biggest thing. Wisdom to know what to do as things unfold. We really want to be wise. We don't want to just rush into something or rush back because we just want to be home. But we really want to make the wisest choice. And so whether that's staying here, whether God wants us to go somewhere else. We're not sure. So just to just to have wisdom as as things unfold to know what's the best decision to make for our family. And I think for more, I'm more of a personal note for me, just the adjustment to being a new mom. It's been it's been tough, as anyone knows, lots of sleepless nights. And the adjustment to having a small human on you 24/7 and how that changes your relationship with your husband and just who you are as a person, it feels like you're kind of evolving and changing. So just that I would be faithful in this season knowing it's just. Season and not anxious for something else or trying to kind of escape it, but just really embrace this season for what it is and enjoy every small moment, every sleepless night. Yeah. And just that my heart would be in the right place during this. New season of motherhood.

That's so good. Where can people connect with you if they want to follow along from now on, where can they find you on Instagram?

Yeah. So my Instagram is missus Alissa Petrenko. And that's spelling is weird. So Mrs. ELLISAPETRENKO, and we'll include this in the show notes in the in the description. So people can find it.

Wow, this has. Been so encouraging. Thank you for taking time to share with all of us. I loved getting to hear your. Story from kind of beginning to end, I know there were so many more details you weren't able to share so many questions. I wanted to ask, but I was like, for the sake of time, I'm gonna have to skip it. But that was so good, so encouraging. So hopeful. Just finding our hope and trust in the Lord. And if you're listening to a list of story right now and you are going through something hard in your life, something unexpected, A twist and turn, maybe not fleeing a country for your life, but something hard, you know, a breakup or a chronic illness that you're struggling with, not getting into the college you wanted, you know, struggles in your marriage or maybe you're longing for marriage and you're single or infertility. So many things can happen in life. That don't go according to our plan. I really want to encourage you to consider grabbing a copy of not part of. The plan, trusting God with the twists and turns of your story because this book is 1 written out of my own journey of infertility for 10 years. Learning to trust God. Bethany's journey of singleness, like I said, Alissa's story, the beginning of her story we share about in this book as well, and I know it will be such a huge encouragement for you as you are longing to have a deeper trust in the Lord. You hear a list of story and think I want that kind of faith. I want that kind of trust. God wants you to have that as well. And as we learn from his word, which we unpack so much scripture in this book, not part of the plan, I know it will bring so much hope and encouragement to you in your journey. And you can find it at girldefine.com slash. Trust Alyssa. Thank you so much. We'll definitely have to do a Part 2 as your story continues to unfold. And I know you might be making a trip to the states with your little sweet baby here soon. I. Hope so. I'm dying. To meet her in person. But I love you so much. Thanks for coming.

On thank you all for having me. It was so special to share. I think this was the first time I've actually really. Shared my story so it was so special. Thank you.

I know.

All for having me.

What I feel so honored. What do they call that when you get? Like an exclusive interview, I feel like.

Only for my family.

Only for your sister? Yes. OK. Well, love you so much. And we are all pray. For you guys. Thanks. Bye. Wow, I don't know about you, but I was so encouraged hearing Alyssa's testimony and her journey of trusting God through so many ups and downs. If you were encouraged by this and you appreciate the content that we're creating here at girl to find, would you please wherever you're watching or listening it, give us a 5 star review or give us a thumbs up if you're able to do that. It might seem like a small effort on your part, but seriously, it is a big deal. It helps this episode get more exposure the more people interact with it, and it helps other women find this channel and come across biblical truth where we are teaching about God's word and the amazing, awesome God that we serve. So please help us spread the word. Share this with. Friends and also if you have not heard about our book, not part of the plan or have not read it, if you are going through something hard in your own life, something unexpected, grab a copy. You will be so encouraged by every chapter in that book. Maybe you have a friend going through something hard. Do it together and if you're like, well, my life is pretty good right now. There's probably something coming down the road. Hate to say it is just how life works, so grab a copy to be prepared for when that twist or turn comes so you can be anchored. In the truth of. God's word. I love you, sisterhood. Thanks so much for sticking with me till the end. And I can't wait to see you next time.