

A FREE CHAPTER — WITH THE AUTHOR'S COMPLIMENTS

YOUR NEXT IS NOW

A Call to Stop Waiting and Start Living Your God-Given Purpose

Inside: Chapter One — The Seduction of Someday

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BEFORE YOU READ

A Word From Reuben

Friend — the chapter you are about to read is the first of eleven, and I chose it for this sampler deliberately: it is the one that names the enemy. Not laziness, not lack of vision, not even fear exactly — but a single, respectable, devastating word that has quietly stolen more callings than failure ever will. I have watched it operate in Kampala leaders meetings, London church offices, and Kigali conference halls for two decades, and I wrote this chapter to hold its funeral.

Read it with a pen. It ends — as every chapter in the book does — with questions that sting a little, a prayer, an assignment with a deadline, and a declaration to read aloud. **Do not skip the apparatus. The chapter will inform you; the apparatus will change you.**

And if, by the final page, something in you has stood up — the rest of the journey is waiting. You will find where it lives at the end.

Your next is not somewhere out there. It is already here.

— Reuben Chief Guma

CHAPTER 1

The Seduction of Someday

“You may delay, but time will not.”

— Benjamin Franklin

“Why do you boast about tomorrow? You do not even know what a day may bring.”

— Proverbs 27:1, paraphrased

Some years ago, after a leadership session in Kampala, a man in his fifties waited until the room emptied before approaching me. He was successful by every visible measure — well dressed, well spoken, well established. He shook my hand and said, “Pastor Reuben, everything you taught tonight, I have known for thirty years. I have a book in me. I have always known I would write it someday.” Then his eyes filled, and he said the sentence I have never forgotten: “I am now realizing that someday was never a real day.”

He was right. And his discovery is the whole burden of this chapter.

Someday Is the Only Day That Never Appears on a Calendar

Take out your calendar — the one on your phone, the one on your wall, whichever one runs your life. Look at it closely. You will find Monday there, and Tuesday. You will find the fourteenth of next month, your friend’s wedding, the quarterly review, the school holidays. You can find every day that has ever existed or ever will. But search as long as you like, and you will never find someday. **Someday is the only day of the week that never appears on a calendar — which is precisely why we love scheduling our obedience there.** Nothing booked on someday can ever come due. Nothing promised for someday can ever be broken. Someday is the one appointment that never sends a reminder, never arrives, and never asks why you missed it.

This is what makes someday so seductive. It is not laziness — the people who live on someday are usually the hardest workers I know. It is not lack of vision — they can describe their dream in high definition. Someday is something subtler: it is a way of keeping the dream alive without ever exposing it to risk. It offers the emotional rewards of purpose — the identity of “someone who is going to write a book,” “someone who is going to start the ministry,” “someone who is going to make the change” — without the vulnerability of actually being tested. At first glance, someday feels like a sanctuary. It offers breathing room when life feels overwhelming. It removes the crushing weight of immediate action. It wraps us in the comfortable illusion that we are being wise, strategic, spiritually mature.

But here is what I have learned after years of watching dreams suffocate in the waiting room:

Someday is not patience — it is paralysis.
Someday is not wisdom — it is warfare against your purpose.
Someday is not rest — it is resistance.

Under its gentle surface, someday is a thief — and worse than a thief, a landlord. It does not merely steal your today; it charges you rent for the protection it offers. The rent is paid in three currencies. First, **your confidence**: every postponed obedience quietly teaches your soul that you are the kind of person who does not follow through, and that lesson compounds. Second, **your credibility**: the people around you eventually stop believing your announced intentions — including, most dangerously, you. Third, **the assignment itself**: because callings, like fields, have seasons, and a seed held in the hand through planting season is not being protected. It is being wasted.

The Word: Thirty-Eight Years Beside the Water

Return with me now to Bethesda, where we left a man lying in the introduction. Jesus has just asked him the question that ignores every excuse ever constructed: “Do you want to get well?” And now listen — really listen — to the man’s answer, because it is a masterpiece of the genre we all write in: “Sir, I have no one to help me into the pool when the water is stirred. While I am trying to get in, someone else goes down ahead of me” (John 5:7).

Notice three things about this answer. First, **it does not answer the question**. Jesus asked about wanting; the man responded with logistics. This is what a rehearsed explanation does — it deflects the question of the heart onto the circumstances. Second, **it is entirely reasonable**. He is not lying. He genuinely has no one; others genuinely do get there first. The most dangerous excuses are never false. They are true things promoted to a position they were never meant to hold — the position of final authority over your life. Third, and most sobering, **it is polished**. You can hear the wear on the words. He has said this before — to visitors, to fellow sufferers, to himself in the long afternoons. Thirty-eight years is enough time to refine an explanation until it sounds like wisdom. Some of us have been polishing ours for decades.

And then Jesus does something remarkable. He does not solve the man’s stated problem. He does not carry him to the pool, recruit helpers, or hold back the crowd. He ignores the pool entirely — because the pool was never the point — and issues a command that makes no sense to a paralyzed man: **“Get up! Pick up your mat and walk”** (John 5:8). Get up: the very thing he cannot do. Pick up your mat: dismantle the bed you have made inside your almost, so there is nothing to lie back down on. And walk: leave the waiting community whose whole identity is the stir of the water. In one moment, thirty-eight years of someday ended — not because circumstances improved, but because a man obeyed a voice while still feeling unable. **The healing was not in the pool. It was in the getting up.** It always is.

What if the Voice is saying the same three words to you right now — about the book, the business, the reconciliation, the ministry, the move? Get up. Pick up the mat. Walk.

Why We Stay Stuck: The Four Fears Beneath the Waiting

Let us strip away the religious language and get ruthlessly honest, because someday always has an engine underneath it, and the engine is fear. In two decades of coaching rooms I have found four species of it, and it is worth identifying yours by name, because a named fear loses half its power.

Fear of failure. We are terrified of trying and falling flat — of discovering that our dream does not match our ability. So we keep preparing, perfecting, revising, waiting for some magical moment when we will feel bulletproof. That moment never comes, because courage is not the absence of fear; it is action in fear's presence. Psychologists have a name for the pattern: loss aversion — the well-documented finding that human beings feel a loss roughly twice as intensely as an equivalent gain. Applied to purpose, it means your brain will always overweight what a step could cost you and underweight what the step could give you. Your fear is not a prophecy. It is an accounting error.

Fear of visibility. Some of us do not fear failing as much as we fear being seen. Stepping out means being watched, and being watched means being criticized, questioned, misunderstood. So we hide behind “I’m not ready” when we really mean “I’m not willing to be exposed.”

Fear of responsibility. Walking into your purpose changes everything. It demands time, consistency, growth, and the surrender of the comfortable margins of your life. Some of us keep waiting because we know that stepping into now will require us to level up, show up, and stay up — and that standing commitment terrifies us more than any single act of courage.

Fear of success. This one surprises people, but I have watched it bury more dreams than failure ever could. Success brings weight: expectations, platforms, scrutiny, the pressure to do it again. Some people are more comfortable with the safety of almost than the responsibility of accomplished. If that is you, hear this gently: the weight you are avoiding is the very glory you were built to carry. Eagles are not burdened by the size of their wings.

From the Field: Sarah’s Thirty-Eight Years Took Only Three

I once mentored a young woman named Sarah — her real story, her name changed — who had survived addiction, abuse, and a suicide attempt. Her testimony was raw, powerful, and undeniably anointed. Every time she shared even fragments of it, people were moved to tears, to freedom, to faith. But she always followed her sharing with the same refrain:

“I’m not ready to tell my full story yet. Maybe someday, when I’m more healed, more stable, more... ready.”

After months of this pattern, I gently asked her, “Sarah, how will you know when you’re ready?” She paused a long time, and then said something that broke my heart: “I don’t know. I just keep waiting for the feeling.”

There it is — the whole theology of someday in one sentence: waiting for a feeling that was never going to come, because readiness is not a feeling that precedes obedience; it is a capacity that grows from it. What Sarah did not yet know is that her story did not need to be polished to be powerful. Stories are not powerful because they are finished. They are powerful because they are true. People did not need her perfection — they needed her authenticity. Not her arrival — her journey. Not her someday — her now.

Months later, Sarah finally said yes to sharing her full testimony at a small women’s gathering. That night her raw honesty shattered the room. Women wept. Chains broke. Healing happened — in others, and, she told me afterwards, in her. The waiting had never been protecting her healing. Obedience completed it. Her Bethesda lasted three years instead of thirty-eight, for exactly one reason: somebody asked her Jesus’ question, and she finally answered it with her feet.

The Brutal Arithmetic of Delay

Let me give you the most uncomfortable exercise in this chapter. Take the thing you have been postponing and put a number on the delay. Not “a while.” A number. Two years? Seven? Since university? Now multiply the delay outward, because your someday has never been only yours: every year the book stayed unwritten, its readers stayed unhelped. Every year the business stayed unlaunched, its employees stayed unhired and its customers stayed unserved. Every year the reconciliation stayed unattempted, the relationship compounded its interest in the wrong direction. **Delay always feels private and is always public.** The man at Bethesda thought he was the only one lying on that mat. He was wrong. Everyone his healed life would have touched was lying on it with him.

And hear the deeper spiritual truth beneath the arithmetic: the brutal reality most people will never tell you is that you do not need another confirmation. You need courage. God is not withholding a sign; you are withholding a yes. He has already spoken through the desire He authored, the gifts He deposited, the doors He has cracked open, and the holy restlessness that made you pick up this book. At some point, asking for more confirmation stops being reverence and becomes negotiation — a respectful-sounding way of saying “not yet” to God.

But the arithmetic runs in both directions, and this is the hope hidden inside the warning: **obedience compounds exactly as ruthlessly as delay does.** The same mathematics

that turned the man's one missed stirring into thirty-eight years will turn your one obeyed evening into a momentum you cannot yet imagine. The first page written tonight makes the second page easier and the tenth inevitable; the first honest conversation unlocks three more; the first shaking step onto the water rewrites what your soul believes is possible for the second. This is why Scripture is so strangely insistent about small beginnings — “who dares despise the day of small things?” (Zechariah 4:10) — because heaven's economy has never priced obedience by its size, only by its start date. You cannot make up the lost years, and the enemy would love you to spend today grieving them; that is merely someday wearing mourning clothes. What you can do is change which direction the compounding runs — tonight.

THE DEEPER TRUTH

Someday is the only day that never appears on a calendar. Whatever you schedule there, you have decided — quietly, respectably, and completely — not to do.

“Therefore, as God's chosen people... whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus. — and do it. Now, as you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts.”

— Colossians 3:17; Hebrews 3:15, adapted

THE TURN — PUT IT IN MOTION

1. Name your someday. Write the postponed thing in one sentence, and beside it write the number — the actual years or months you have been carrying it.
2. Give it a real date. Move it from someday to a day: an entry in your calendar within the next seven days, even if the entry is only the first fifteen-minute step.
3. Take the mat-lifting step tonight — not this week, tonight: send the message, register the name, book the meeting, write the opening page. Then tell one person you did it, so the obedience has a witness.
4. Retire one rehearsed excuse. Write out your Bethesda answer — the reasonable, true, polished explanation you give — and beneath it write: “True. And no longer in charge.”

DEEP ENCOUNTER — JOURNAL & PRAYER

1. *What is your thirty-eight-year answer — the explanation you have repeated so long it now sounds like wisdom? Write it word for word, then read it aloud and ask: is this a reason, or a residence?*
2. *Which of the four fears — failure, visibility, responsibility, success — is the true engine under your someday? When did it first take the wheel?*
3. *Who, specifically, is waiting on the other side of your obedience? Name them, even if you have never met them.*

PRAY THIS

Father, I confess that I have scheduled Your assignments on a day You never made. Forgive me for calling my fear wisdom and my delay devotion. I hear the question You are asking me — do you want to get well? — and today, with shaking legs, my answer is yes. Give me the courage to get up, the resolve to pick up my mat so I cannot lie back down, and the faith to walk before I feel ready. My next is not somewhere out there. It is here, and so are You. Amen.

DECLARE IT ALOUD

*I am done boasting about tomorrow.
My dream has a date, and the date is not someday.
I do not need another confirmation. I need obedience — and today, I obey.
I am not the next. I am the now.*

But the moment you finally stand up, a second thief is waiting — and this one does not attack your schedule. It attacks your reflection.

THE JOURNEY CONTINUES

Someday's Funeral Was Only Chapter One

If this chapter found you — if you recognized your own rehearsed answer in the man at Bethesda, your own fear in the four beneath the waiting — then hear this plainly: **the book does not slow down from here.** Chapter One named the thief. Ten more chapters dismantle the rest of the machinery that keeps gifted people lying beside their pools — and then build, discipline by discipline, the life that moves.

What the Full Book Walks You Through

Part I — The Lies That Keep You Waiting: the identity theft of comparison (and the sideways glance that costs the race) · the myth of perfect timing (and how to tell waiting on God from hiding behind Him) · the comfort zone — the only prison where the inmate holds the key · and perfectionism — polished seed in a barn that grows precisely nothing.

Part II — The Company and the Crucible: the power of proximity, and the four seats every leader's fire needs filled · converting your waiting room into a war room — the trowel in one hand, the sword in the other · and your mess becoming your message: how the wound, surrendered, becomes the well others drink from.

Part III — The Life That Moves Now: stewarding the small before demanding the stage — why God grows His oaks downward first · obedience beyond logic — letting down the nets because He says so · living like your next is now — the daily liturgy that carried Daniel to the lions' den with his courage pre-formed · and a conclusion that returns to Bethesda one last time, with a commitment page for you to sign.

Every chapter carries the full apparatus you just worked: the story, the Scripture walked slowly, the honest psychology, the Deeper Truth, the deadline-bound assignment, the prayer, and the declaration. Eleven chapters. One unbroken argument. **You are not the “next.” You are the “now.”**

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For coaching conversations, team training, or speaking enquiries: booking@reubenguma.com.

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