Opening 1 / 10

Good evening, everyone. I'm Louisa, and I have known Greer since we were five years old. That means I have known her longer than I have known how to tie my shoes. She would want me to add that she taught me.

Part 2 2 / 10

We lived on the same street, three houses apart. On the first day of kindergarten, my mother walked me to the corner and said, 'Greer is waiting.' And she was. She stood by a blue mailbox with her backpack on both shoulders, as if she had been told to guard it.

Part 3 3 / 10

The walk to school was eleven blocks. Greer decided we should count the mailboxes. There were two hundred and twelve. We counted them every morning, out loud, for seven years, and if we lost track, we started over from the blue one. I can still tell you that the green one with the dent is number ninety-four.

Part 4 4 / 10

Think about what that means. Two small kids, eleven blocks, the same numbers, every day. Nobody asked us to. It was just our way of saying, I'm here, and I'm going the same direction as you.

Part 5 5 / 10

Here is what you should know about Greer. She writes her grocery lists in alphabetical order. She keeps a spare umbrella in every coat. She is early to everything, and she is kind about it. When someone else is late, she says, 'I just got here,' and she did not.

Part 6 6 / 10

We have gone different ways, of course. We went to different high schools, and then Greer moved across the country for a job, and I stayed. But whenever we meet, one of us says, 'Two hundred and twelve,' and the other one says, 'Start at blue.' It still works. It still means the same thing.

Part 7 7 / 10

Anton, when Greer first told me about you, she said, 'He walks slowly. He notices things.' I said that sounded like a problem. She said, 'No, it is the whole point.' The next time I saw the two of you, you were stopped on a sidewalk looking at a mailbox shaped like a fish. She was grinning. I knew.

Part 8 8 / 10

Greer, you were the first person who waited for me, and you have never stopped. When I started my first job, you called. When I had a bad week, you sent a package. When I couldn't decide, you counted with me, out loud, until I could. I hope Anton knows that he is walking beside someone who will count all two hundred and twelve.

Part 9 9 / 10

I'm not going to say goodbye to the walk, because it never ended. It just got longer. Anton, you have a lot of mailboxes ahead of you, and I promise they are all worth the count.

Closing 10 / 10

Everyone, please raise your glass to Greer and Anton. May you never lose count of the good things, and may you always start again at blue.