

By Mireille Rouffet

It was 1973. Struggling with some challenges, I deeply desired to know God, so I decided to read the Bible. One day I read about Solomon's temple in 2 Chronicles 2–5, and I felt that such a holy place could be on the earth. So I fasted and prayed that I might be guided by the Holy Ghost to find it. I felt that if I found a temple, I would be able to tell one of the Lord's servants about my problems, and he would help me solve them.

So I set out to find a temple. At the time I lived in Fontenay-sous-Bois, a suburb of Paris, so I started driving toward the city to find a temple. I saw many buildings, including churches and synagogues, but I did not find a temple. Upon returning home, I prayed and wondered why I couldn't find a temple. Wasn't I pure enough? Or was I simply unprepared?

I SET OUT TO FIND A TEMPLE

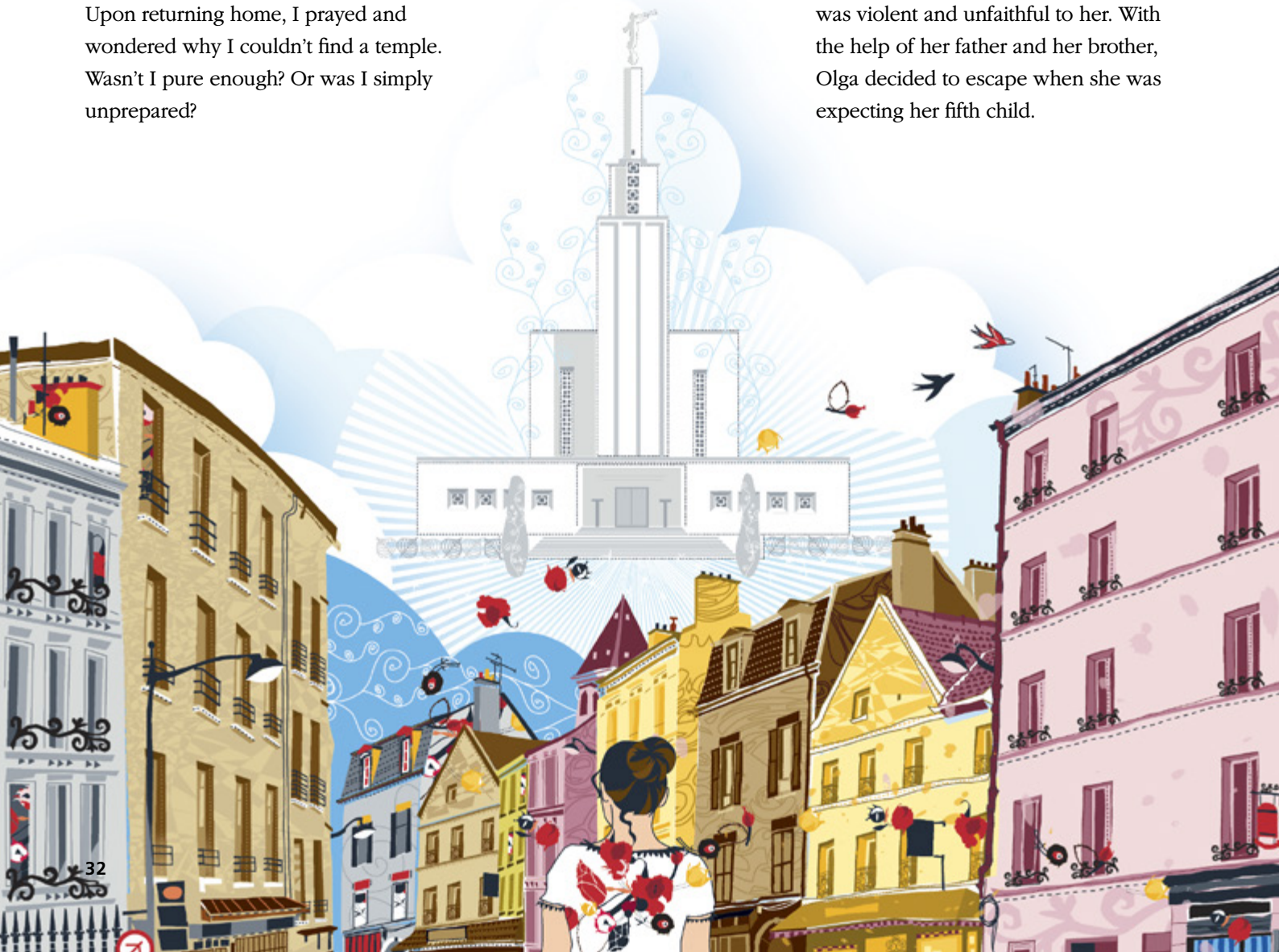
*I was searching for
a holy place and
ended up finding
a way to be part of
an eternal family.*

I forgot all about my failed search until sister missionaries for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints came to my home in February 1980. They taught me that the closest temple was in Zollikofen, Switzerland—the Bern Switzerland Temple.

I was baptized on April 12, 1980, and I went to the temple for the first time just over a year later, on May 5, 1981. There I was able to do the temple work for several women in my family, including my grandmothers, aunts, and cousins.

Of these women, the only one I had known was my cousin Olga.

Olga, who was from Italy, married at a very young age, but sadly, her husband was violent and unfaithful to her. With the help of her father and her brother, Olga decided to escape when she was expecting her fifth child.



She went to live with her parents and brother. After the birth of her child, Olga passed away. Olga's parents never recovered from the shock of her sudden death.

While I was performing the ordinances for Olga in the temple, one word kept coming to my mind: *mission*. But I was puzzled—I was busy raising three children by myself, and I couldn't possibly go on a mission.

The answer came several months later. One day my cousin Renzo told me that Olga's mother, my aunt Anita, had passed away. Suddenly I recalled that I had completed the temple work for Olga on a Tuesday, and her mother had passed away the following Friday. With great emotion, I felt impressed that Olga had been eager to receive her temple ordinances so she could welcome and teach her mother in the spirit world. Perhaps that was Olga's mission.

But I had a mission to help my own parents as well. I had tried to talk to them about the Church on several occasions, but they hadn't been interested. So after my mother and father died, I did the temple work for them as soon as I could.

When my parents were sealed, my heart was pounding, and my eyes filled with tears of love. I was then sealed to my parents. I could not stop thinking about my mother, and I wanted to embrace the sister who had been proxy for her. I thanked her for representing my mother. The sister too had tears in her eyes, and she thanked me for the experience. Even though I didn't know her, we felt like members of the same family.

My parents were then sealed to *their* parents, and Olga, whom I represented in the ordinance, was sealed to her parents, my uncle Marino and aunt Anita.

Every time I recall those experiences, I am overcome with emotion. I think about Olga, and I hope she is fulfilling her mission on the other side of the veil. Because of temple ordinances, I am no longer the only member of the Church in my family. I believe that my parents accepted the ordinances performed for them. I am filled with joy and thank the Lord for making it possible for me to establish an eternal family through the blessings of His holy temple. ■

The author lives in Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes, France.

