

DR. GREG S. REID AND JEFF LEVITAN

*the*  
**Tokens**

*11* Lessons  
to Help Build  
the Foundation of  
Success  
and Find Your Path  
to Greatness

WILEY



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# Chapter 1

## Secrets in the Walls

**T**he trip to town had taken Eric longer than he'd expected. He had set out that morning to run to the hardware store to get some more supplies for the cabin, but one thing had led to another. After a quick stop at the bank, he pulled into the grocery store to replenish some staples—coffee, eggs, bread, and something to throw on the grill for the next couple days should do it. Then he received a call from his boss and had to make a quick run to their job site to meet the drivers who were delivering the roof shingles they needed first thing Monday morning.

When he turned off the main road, it was already midday, and Eric was thinking about how half of his

day had been wasted. Another weekend was flying by and he wasn't making much progress on his grandfather's old cabin, but it was a labor of love—particularly because as a boy, during the summers, he had spent a month there with his grandfather. He had enjoyed every minute spent fishing with his grandpa, and now that his grandfather was gone, he intended to spend even more time there. In fact, he was renovating it and building an addition onto the back to make it even larger. When he was finished, the cabin and the acreage it sat on were going to be Eric's home.

The unmarked road was little traveled and, with the exception of the people who owned the other cabins along the lake, traffic was rare. The road twisted and turned, giving the properties even more privacy as it took the residents further into the countryside, which was as scenic as it was reclusive. As Eric's truck wound around a curve, he noticed a car pulled up into the cabin to the north of his grandfather's property. That's funny, he thought. I've been staying here for a couple months and have never seen anyone there before.

On a whim, Eric turned into the gravel driveway. As he neared the cabin, he noticed an elderly man sitting on the front porch, who quickly rose to greet him.

"Hi, there," he said. "Eric Schultz—I'm staying in the cabin just down the road. I haven't seen you here before, so I thought I'd swing by and introduce myself."

"Good to meet you, young man," the gentleman said. "The name's Carl—Carl Vaughn."

"It's great to have a neighbor. I've often wondered who lived here—do you live here? Or is this your summer cabin?"

“Well, I guess you could say it’s like a summer cabin. Actually, my friends and I have been coming here to hunt and fish for many years. It’s going to be sad to the see the place go, but it’s time,” Carl explained.

“Oh, are you going to sell the cabin?”

“Well, I don’t think there’s all that much to sell. The cabin itself hasn’t been updated since I bought it 40 years ago. It’s probably not worth anything to anyone, except myself. So I figured I’d knock it down and sell the land. It’s a nice piece of property, and I’m sure some young person like yourself could build something nice here and start anew.”

“Tear it down?” Eric asked, shocked. “But these old wood cabins are historic. They belong here. Besides, they don’t make them like this anymore. As a matter of fact, I’m adding on to my grandfather’s cabin and want to keep it as authentic as possible, but there’s no way I can match the old logs and stones. The old wood floors are in decent shape, but some boards are rotted. If I could save them, I would. But it’s not looking good. There are just so few places like these old cabins anymore.”

“I admire your passion, son,” the old man said. “But the place is getting to be an eyesore. Besides, I just don’t have a use for it anymore. Unfortunately, a couple members of the old gang have passed on. The rest of the fellas have retired and settled down. Over the years, we’ve come here less and less. We haven’t hunted the land in years, although last year we threw a hook and a line in a time or two. In reality, the last time we all got together it was mostly for sentimental reasons—a trip down memory lane, so to speak.”

“Mr. Vaughn, I’d hate to see the cabin get torn down. I’m a builder—a craftsman in the construction trade—and I could help you get this place fixed up if you’d like,” Eric offered.

Carl stood and opened the door. “Please, come in. Let’s get out of the sun and talk.”

They sat at the kitchen table, and Carl poured them each a glass of iced tea.

“I’d like to thank you for your offer,” Carl said. “But I want to get the property ready to sell. You see, I recently sold my business, and my wife and I are relocating. It’s time to enjoy our time together and spend it with our grandchildren. I will admit, though, that I’m going to miss this old cabin,” he said, looking around. “Oh, if these walls could talk.”

“Oh, yeah? I take it you and your friends had some good times here,” Eric replied.

“Yes. Good times, indeed. You see, this place wasn’t just a fishing cabin. It wasn’t just any old cabin—it was the people in the cabin that made it what it was. We hunted here, we fished here, and we made plans here. Big plans, mighty big plans.”

“What kinds of plans?” Eric asked.

“You name it, we planned it. Businesses were born here, son. Ideas became multimillion dollar inventions. At times, there was more motivation, inspiration, and debate in this room than there was when the Cubs finally made it to the World Series. Eric, while most guys leave a fishing trip with tall tales about the big one that got away, we left this cabin with tall goals that we never let go of. Oh, if these walls could talk, the tales they would tell ...”