Grace

Sometimes, I am utterly amazed that
the lovingness in my heart often
expands into a vastness that exceeds my own body’s limitations,
pours out the corners of my eyes like
subtle waterfalls smoothing craggy rocks over
time into smooth surfaces upon which the deepened soul can
gently land.

It astounds me, sometimes,
In moments of clarity that
a child so humiliated
bent over across her father’s bed,
naked and exposed to the splinter-belt that bruised purple the tender behind
into pain that recapitulated for days on end
and made sitting in class, without wincing, torture -
That this child
became a woman with such a huge capacity to
love tenderly and fully and
to hold both her body and his in the preciousness of
caring.

At 19 and utterly lost,
vanished into the illusion of energy and happiness of
that brilliant, crystal white demon who seduced me with one breath,
had me wrapped around her craggy, dehydrated finger.
A thousand others could not extricate her tenacious claws,
in spite of desperation for freedom.
But, on the third month of domination,
I sacrificed her to the porcelain whirlpool and
hurled her back to the bowels of hell,
alone
without me.

A thousand others could not break her grip.
What was my will and fortitude in that moment,
if not Grace?

It could have turned out much differently.
There are others who have suffered less than I,
who collapsed under the weight of violence and
abandonment and
who’s fragile innocence was torn
asunder.
But,
For some unknown reason,
the thunder in my soul,
somehow,
demanded that I raise the spirits,
like Jesus raising the dead.

I wonder, sometimes,
what is the difference between me and the millions of others
who could not rise up from the mangled mass they’d become
following a life of such intense violence and such little
human
comfort.

I think,
perhaps,
it was that moment when I was maybe 10 years-old.
That day I snuck out of the house in the rare Southern California
torrential rain,
when the gutter drains at the bottom of the hill
unaccustomed to such volume
could not accommodate the bigness of the clouds releasing their fullness
just as my body could not contain the fullness of the joy that
unexplicably
took me over like the holy spirit,
like David dancing before the Lord with
all
his
might.

There, in the whirling limbs and beaming face lifted,
I became the sky, the clouds and rain,
It was then,
God entered my body as euphoria
and the seed of hope embedded deep within my core.
That one extended moment of joy.
What was that,
If not Grace?

It took me years to finally understand
It was not the countless “yous” were the source of my suffering.
Now, it is god and me and
We are the source of my own happiness.

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