

I'm Still Growing



by: Jessica Barnes SDG

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As with Elijah

Inspired by 1 Kings 19:11-13

You are a good and gentle God.

You come in whispers,

Eager to show your face.

Yet careful not to crush us

With your overwhelming presence.

As waves in a tide you wash over us,

Carving away all blemishes

And then lulling our hearts

With warm blessings,

And fresh air.

We may not see you,

But you make your presence known

In the wind

In the earthquake

And in the fire.

But in the still small voice, you come.

You are always reaching for us

Despite our doubts

Sinking and swelling below the surface.

Knowing the stones we cast

When we are a stone's throw away

From being there ourselves,

You created us still.

You knew we would crumble but

You were already working

on the clay to mend,

Insisting we are yours

And we will rise again.

Babel

Inspired by Genesis 11:1-9

I built my dreams upon the Earth.

I wanted to meet you,

 To see you,

 To feel you.

For you to say

‘It’s okay,’

And to hold me close

Once again.

But my visions incarnate fell away.

I found myself within a vacuum.

 I could not breathe.

 I could not see.

The lights in the distance that

I so long yearned for

Blurred into nothingness.

Yet a celestial hand came

And brought me down to Earth

And before me lay my God

Slain

 Sacrificed

 And sanctified

Using his body as a bridge to cross

That vast void between us.

I found Him on the other side

With open arms

And open smile.

Warm hearts met

And He wiped my tears

For all my dreams

I cried so long for.

Then I smiled

Because my one true dream

Was fulfilled at last.

Bottled Up

A heart unsatisfied
Paces the floors tonight.
Closed doors
To keep out the noise
Of pent-up frustration.

This house is a bottle.
Feelings stuffed inside,
Shoved under the bed
For another night.

Oh the letters I wrote,
Feelings to convey
That which could not be heard
In this weary state.

The morning sobers all things
Of the night's aches and pains,
The scars,
The shame.

Forgiveness offered
With hesitation,
For nights to come
With no cessation.

Clothed in Righteousness

What is this thread?
This string?
This cloth?
From the beginning you
Wove us to be beautiful.

Then we tore at your tapestry
Your beautiful design,
But nothing could ruin your work.
You kept weaving.

The mother clothed her child
In rainbows and dreams
His brothers sold his soul
And slaughter sheep
To hide their deed.

The fabric may be stained
By the sons of this Earth,
But what they mean for harm
You use for your good work.
You kept weaving.

Famine comes but you prevail.
This forgotten son stored the bail
Of wheat, the ransom
For the nation's greed.
This torn dream
You use for good indeed!

Seasons pass,
And they forget
Raising up kings that
Thought naught to clothe its people
But the Father kept weaving

He sent the Lamb that covers all
The one that's wool spun the Earth
And yet the earthly "king"
Clothed the Lamb
Only to crucify and condemn
The one who came
Not to condemn, but mend
The frayed threads

To its creator.

And the Lamb dyed crimson there
The stain of its sons
Dawn the new hue
For a Son of many Sons.
And the Son kept weaving.

Glass House

Glass House,
Glass Floor,
Iron Ceiling,
Melting Walls,
All the space in the world,
And no place to live

The Crack in my Heart

I feel forgotten.
So many other things demand your attention
and I know it's all for your good.
But I sit and wait patiently on this shelf
Hoping you'll remember your promise.
I risk death to see you.
I understand the other things are important but
I just want you to miss me like I miss you.

Monster

from Colored Ice

They say I lurk in the corners
And under your beds.
I whisper the thoughts
That run through your head,
But the stolen trinkets
Are your misplaced thoughts.
Your machinations
Are of your own twisted being.
So let me sleep here
Where the dusted hares lie
And remember that the monster
Is already inside.

Jacob

Inspired by Genesis 32:22-29

I know I have done wrong by my brother.
I know I have whittled this shell to dust.
Look at me,
This man, this cowering creature!
Awaiting the darkness to come

Take the love of my life:
My child, my wife,
My gold, my treasure
For I fear for my life -
Oh what have I become?

Even in the darkness,
I fight you.
I cannot rest until dawn.
There, you humble me -
Broken and crippled.
There I know I've seen God.

Regret

I tread upon the earth with laughter.
Alas these fumbling legs
Mangled that which I
Solemnly tried to protect, yet
Owning up to my mistakes I feel
Rendered desolate, stomach twisted
Reeling with thoughts of remorse,
Yearning to be close again.

Redeemed

In Reference to "The cracked jar" by Paulo Coelho
Although the cracked jar cannot hold water,
many flowers bloom in its path.

Cinderella for Bubble Boy

I hate this thing inside of me -
This mental incapacity
I think but I cannot say.
I dream but I cannot do.
You sit there right in front of me.
Your smile is what sets me free.
Your eyes bring hope that won't decay.
I want to say I love you.

You told me the other day
That you found someone
You want me to meet.

Who is it?
She takes my grunt as permission to proceed.
She brings in him.

Many times I wish to cry out.
Many times I wish to protest.
The preacher asks are there any objections.

I stand and say I do.
Yet I am here sitting to this day.
No words but grunts and awkward giggles.
No one hears me.

Lightning

from Colored Ice

Energy gathers in my breast
When I see your face.
My stomach feels unsettled
My skin starts to sweat.
I can't help the deep laughter
Booming from my lungs.
There is pain because
I want to see you
Yet we are so far apart.

I can't take it anymore.
Heat surges through me
Illuminating the lonely night.
I reach out for you
And our fingers touch.
Only for an instant
But fire consumes you.
I watch in horror from above
As you waste away.

Through the ashes
I watch you grow.
The distance gnaws at my soul,
Yet I remember in disgust
At what I am.

Swollen sadness
Leaks as I'm about to burst.
My laughter turns into a cry -
Outrage fuming from deep inside.

Untitled (Originally written in snow):

She is the snow of a new morn.
How dare I trample upon her.
And yet as I sit here writing,
I have tarnished her purity

Pretty Dresses

Pretty beads everywhere
A dash of sparkles in their hair
The twinkle in each young girl's eye
That can still be seen in each aged sigh

That feeling that you're beautiful
A bestowed value upon their heads
A fallacy of persuasion
Spoken with nothing said

But the smile in each eye
And in the aged sigh

This value never questioned
-Why?
Why don't they know they know their inner value?
-Priceless.

A love so powerful has bought them
When a bond so strong has kept them
Redemption is left
All ugliness has gone

In Whose Eyes

I am not a mistake.
I am not too young,
Too old,
Too big,
Too small,
These pimples mean I'm growing
Maturing into something more
These wrinkles are from years of laughter
Born in pain and triumph.
My weight does not reflect my worth
It does not tell the story of who I am
Or who I should be.
I will not give into the lie
that I am never good enough

For God made me for a purpose.
Let no man throw accusation
Of any inadequacy I bear.
Only the judge may say my sentence,
And I have chosen my advocate,
His son, whom has taken away all fault
Claimed it as his own,
and slayed it on the cross,
And there it shall lie.

To whose eyes do I look for worth?
The God who made me,
And he tells me I'm beautiful,
Holy and dearly loved.
I may have run away from home
But nothing can come between
The love of the Father for his Child.

In him I find value,
In him I find peace.
Despite all uncertainty and self-doubt
He reminds me
Through the rain that washes away
all suffering and strife
That I am constantly being made new
And he is smiling upon me
Looking forward to the great plans he has for me
And awaiting the day when I return home.

Rain

The sky is falling!
The sky is falling!
Look Mama!
The sky is falling!

Oh Darling girl,
My darling girl,
The sky is weeping,
That is all.

The sky is weeping!
The sky is weeping!
Mama, why is the sky weeping?

Oh Darling girl,
My darling girl,
The days are long and bitter.
And yet today,
It weeps to see
once more your darling smile.

Rain on My Parade

Inspired by 1 Kings 18

Rain Down Oh Mighty God!

Your people came searching for a miracle

They come for the carnival

The lights, they seek the fire

Reaching towards the flame

You shed down light upon the land

Your fire awakens its people

And in the center of this circus,

Unmasks the ring leader

The the jugglers

The fire breathers

Those walking by a thread

Searching

Caught up in an act

Looking for something more

Not the fire but the rain

Pouring in abundance

On a barren land

Compelling all the people to look in awe

Allowing the silenced to cry

The dirt runs down

The land made dry

The memory of your miracle

Embodied in a flower

To bloom and fade

And yet the aroma lingers to this day



Elephant in the Rain

Tat

Tat tat, tat

The gentle rain tickles savannah trees.
The skies open and
The heavens pour out what is better than gold.
Haphazardly sliding along my skin,
It trickles down to my toes and
I feel the earth move beneath me.

I slide past my friend who gives me a knowing smile
I splash in the flood and all its chaos.
I see my elders' wrinkled brows
But I simply wiggle my ears and
Trumpet them to join.

Cold?
Maybe.
Destructive?
Sure.
Messy?
Definitely.

But when it rains,
Let it pour
And I will dance.

Wool and Fodder

Little one little one where do you go when it's cold?
to where do you lie your head?
My child responds: I lie on a pillow made of snow,
under the stars I make my bed.

It is here your good work is done
And not in a tower made of gold
I pray for your provision Lord
For when the winds begin to blow upon the dead

Who will provide for this child of mine?
Who will clothe and feed my sheep?
I'll pay thou ransom my whole kingdom
To those who give my child somewhere warm to sleep.

Even my babe was in a manger
Even the shepherds gave their share
Where are my other children now?
To where do they disappear?

Tetelestai

I am tired.
I am tired of the long nights I spend
Restless toiling, drinking, searching,
Wanting more and
Finally succumbing to the night.
I am tired.

I am sick.
I am sick of all the faces
Giving me hope
Saying I am valued
Then throwing me away.
I am sick.

I am angry.
I am angry that they abandoned me,
Swept away by society
And slandered my soul with profanity.
I am angry.

I am hurting.
I am hurting from this pain
I try to focus on the joy,

To share one's life, to share one's love
But inside I am hurting everyday.

I remember.
I remember every face
Every child whom I can make smile
With the gift I have been given
They remember and it feels
So good to be remembered.

Despite this I also remember
The sick, the anger, the hurt, and I
I am so tired.

I give my everything
And it always seems as though
It is not enough.

I do not know there is one,
One who sees me in the morning
And in the haunting nights.
One who rises to paint the morn
And stipples the starry nights.

He loves to see me give my all
And to Him it is enough
And He gives me His everything, His life.
It is finished, he tells me.
You are mine and mine alone.
Tetelestai.

But what can one give in return?
I am given Davinci's Mona Lisa
in exchange for his apprentice's first piece.

What value do you see in me?
In a lifetime I could not repay
The one who paints the sky.
To have your life freely given
Traded in exchange for mine.

I look up into the abyss
And know He's looking back,
Not lurking, waiting to see me stumble
But reaching out,
For He had already come,

And will come again,
And will send a thousand angels in between
To get me to notice
Even an inkling of the love He has for me.

Loved.
I am loved,
Not seen for who I was
But what I am in Him
Holy and dearly loved.

He is deeply pleased with me
And he notices the little things
And the big things,
How many hairs are on my head,
A sparrow's life taken in the night.
My hurts, my pains, my anger, my joys,
My mistakes and my successes.
He cries with me in the valleys
He laughs with me on the mountains
And most desperately,
He wants to hear from me,
For I am remembered.

I am His creation,
One he can never, will never disown
For I eternally bear his image,
And for Him, He would die
To reconcile any separation between us.
We bit the apple in our doubt of His love for us
And yet he descends from his throne
To call us home.
I am home.

Rapunzel

Her golden countenance glistens
As her mouth conveys a bird's morning hymn.
She greets you and the world is well,
But inside you feel the tides swell
And rock her very core
For you know she's bleeding.
You can see her limp.

But her eyes are ferocious.
They'd fight for your life in a heartbeat.
She'd see you smile if it cost her breath.
If only she'd turn that power for herself.

You want to hold her and her broken wing,
To see her fly again
But only she can choose to fly.

She waits in the cage.
You do not understand.
You are an outsider,
An onlooker,
Someone at the window
Who was blessed to hear her merry tune.

Submit to God

You have already chosen me
Why worry about my inadequacy?
You have already known me
Well before you paid for my work with your blood
You bought me for the highest price
when the world claimed my fate was already set in stone
I am your child
One you could never
Will never
Turn your back on.
You know my weaknesses
Like Moses,
my words fail me.
Like the kings,
I am prone to jealousy, greed, and pride.
Like the sons and daughters of Abraham,
I am prone to forget my Father
Like your disciples,
I fall asleep on the job.
Like Thomas,
I doubt your great works and your great love.
And yet,
despite this lack of faith,
You are faithful.
You have remembered me as your child
And redeemed the blood line and inheritance of humanity
by sacrificing your own.
You are a good good father.
And I am loved by you.