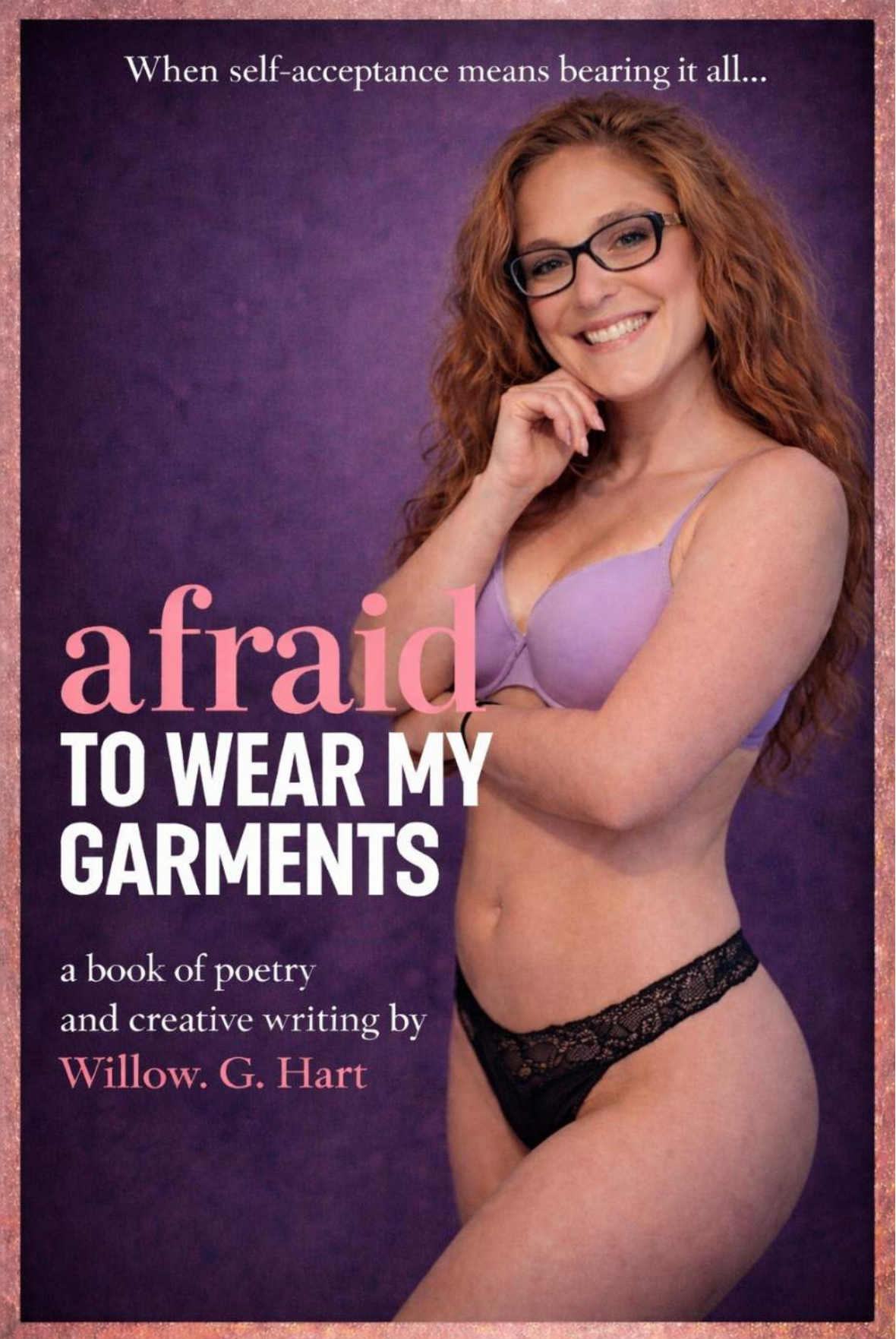


When self-acceptance means bearing it all...



afraid TO WEAR MY GARMENTS

a book of poetry
and creative writing by
Willow. G. Hart

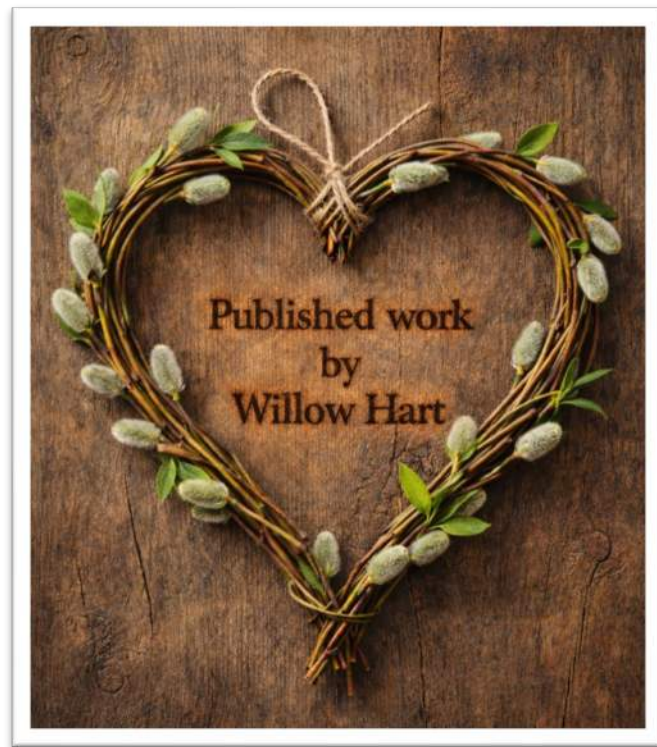
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SELF-PUBLISHED BOOK OF POETRY

By Willow G. Hart

JANUARY 2, 2026



PRINTED BY STAPLES

FOR MY FAMILY.

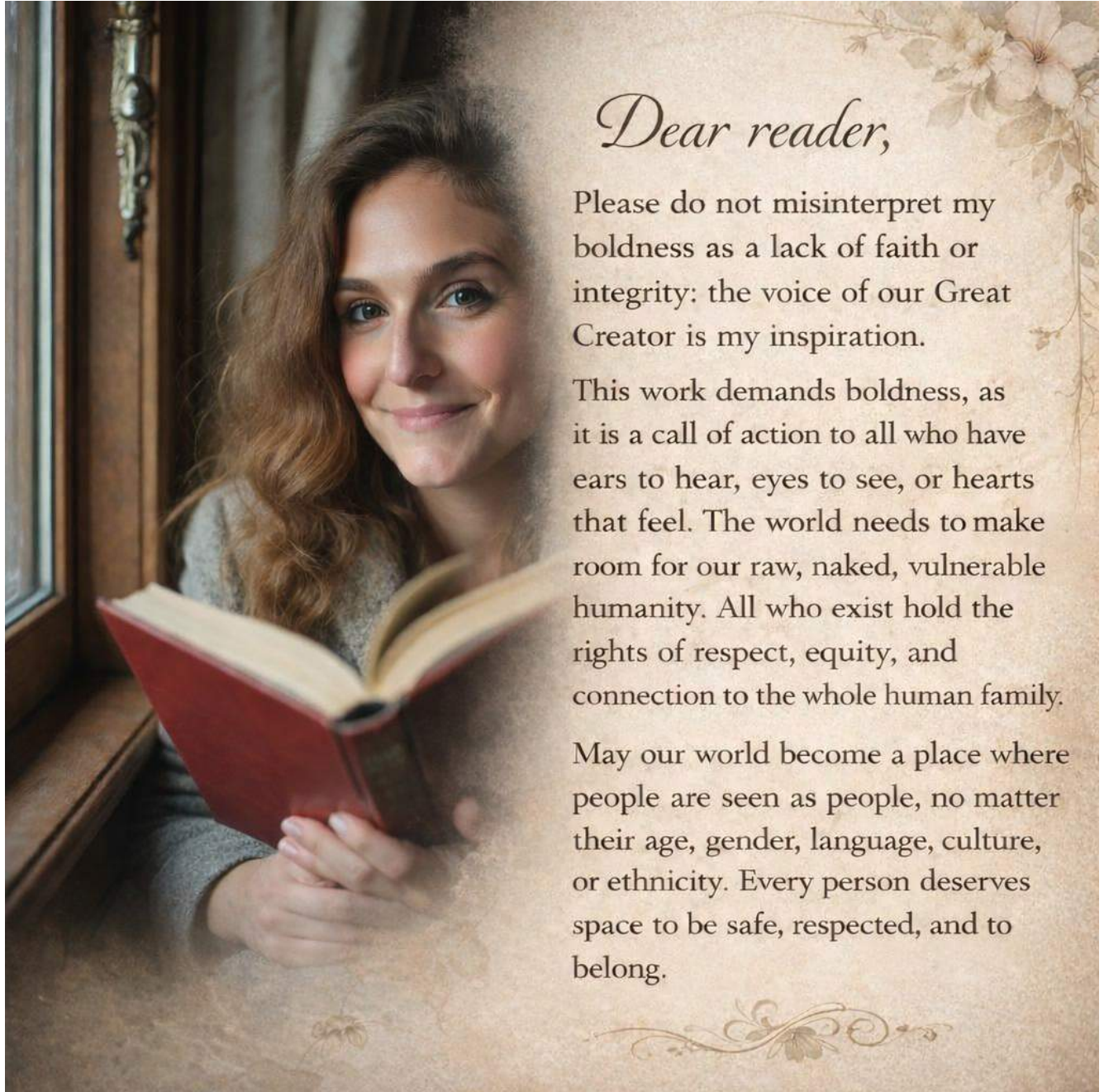
FOR MY PARTNER.

FOR THE PROFESSORS WHO BELIEVED IN ME.

MAY THIS WORK MEET YOU EXACTLY WHERE YOU ARE,
AND INSPIRE FAITH, LOVE, AND HONESTY.



A LETTER FROM THE AUTHOR



Dear reader,

Please do not misinterpret my boldness as a lack of faith or integrity: the voice of our Great Creator is my inspiration.

This work demands boldness, as it is a call of action to all who have ears to hear, eyes to see, or hearts that feel. The world needs to make room for our raw, naked, vulnerable humanity. All who exist hold the rights of respect, equity, and connection to the whole human family.

May our world become a place where people are seen as people, no matter their age, gender, language, culture, or ethnicity. Every person deserves space to be safe, respected, and to belong.

Introduction

This book is a collection of layered poems and short prose pieces written by the author, Willow G. Hart. Like the image on its cover, each work stands as a quiet yet resolute act of public protest, as an offering of truth that challenges rigid patriarchal systems which, when misused, repress and subordinate members of the human family. These writings seek to illuminate minority issues that continue to shape and, at times, harm the everyday lives of people in Canada.



The author wishes to be clear in her intent: this work is not a rejection of patriarchal systems in their entirety. She acknowledges that all systems and frameworks, patriarchal or otherwise, can function with integrity and effectiveness when guided by healthy, responsible, and unbiased leadership. Too often, harm arises not from structure alone, but from a lack of awareness, compassion, and accountability. Many individuals remain unaware of the impact and consequences of their actions on others, even when those actions are deeply felt.

Hart writes from the perspective of a white, colonial settler in Canada, through a feminist lens. She respectfully acknowledges and honors the First Peoples of the North American continent, recognizing their enduring stewardship of the land. She expresses gratitude for the temporary use of land gifted by the Creator and extends this work with humility, awareness, and respect. While she hopes these writings will be received with openness by people of all backgrounds, she also recognizes her own limitations and the inevitability of human error.

The intention of this book is to encourage thoughtful reform within systems of both church and state. Much of the work speaks directly to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, reflecting the author's personal faith affiliation. This focus is not born of rejection, but of intimacy and accountability. Hart does not take issue with the Church's core gospel principles or its emphasis on truthfulness; rather, she addresses the toxic cultural patterns that can restrict gender, ethnicity, and class, and in doing so, limit both individuals and collective spiritual growth.

Through these pages, the author hopes to invite readers, particularly those within Christian traditions and her own faith community, into greater awareness of the cultural biases that shape belief, belonging, and power. Above all, this book is an offering: an invitation to listen more closely, to see more clearly, and to imagine systems that reflect the full dignity, worth, and humanity of all people.





Not a question of faith,
but a call to action...



"Afraid to wear my Garments"

If I put
my garments on,
This body,
They will steam, crawl up my neck, wrap
Silently, slowly around my throat.
Compressed embrace, unyielding chains
They will say, "this is love."

Who is they?

Growing-taut-tight, taught by a book.
"These are good..." they say
"To be one with us, you must wear:
High heads, stiff necks, solid virtues,
In the marrow and in the spine.
You must hold rigid precepts in your hands, Stand
firmly in this place, with your feet.
And with your body, be thorough in your worship. To
get into his castle, wear his armor.
To walk in through his doors and enter at his gate,
you must model for others how
The arms grow heavy with his labor, to
make the brain worthy of his love.
You must coerce the heart, the breasts, the genitals, that ass...
Ensure all is virtuous, forever more."



Change me garments, strangle me; assure.
Make me sing, "Oh, Beautiful Zion!"
Stressed, strained, stretched. Verify that I'm your own.
Eyes, look up, see my beautiful garments?
Becoming, always becoming,
Holy, white, and glistening,
Their arms wrapped all around me...

My heart cries out like a child,
searching, ear/nest, genuine.
Dear Savior, can you hear me?
See this sweat and feel that heat?
So many fingers pointing, voices whispering.
Their venerated stories beat my heart.
So many hands, drag me up with firm forgiveness,
Substantiating me as their own.
Force me, take me, swallow me up into broken pieces,
Gulped me down like the throat of that whale,
Who swallowed Jonah whole,
In the deep, raging-blue sea.

Eyes turn away, do not see
People dying, flies, flees, disease, snakes, naked starvation,
Sing, "...forward saints! No toil, no labor, fear."



Feel that desert heat, against the skin. Feel

those sharp rocks under that wagon. "Pull

harder Saints!"

It's all their fault for not praying

Harder, with more conviction.

So many frozen bodies.

Babies, women, children, left by footsteps in the sand.

Two sets, one set, none.

Nothing left but bones,

The meat eaten away by scavengers,

Left to rot.

**"WOMAN, ANGEL OF THE HOME, BE THOU PERFECT, WEAR
HIS BEAUTIFUL GARMENTS, WORK TO THE BONE, LIKE SO
MANY BEFORE YOU.**

**ANIMAL, NATURE, SUBORDINATE CREATURE, DRY THOSE EYES.
WORK ROBOT, BASK IN HIS GLORY.**

TAKE HIM INTO YOU: HIS BODY AND HIS BLOOD"

Heart don't feel

Ears don't hear

Eyes don't look, for yourself.

Oh, my heart, please don't cry out

"Christ, are you there?"

Blindly follow in his footsteps...

"BEAUTIFUL CHILDREN OF ZION,
MAKE HIS PATHS STRAIGHT.

CINDERELLA, BUILD ME A TEMPLE

OPEN YOUR LEGS AND CLOSE YOUR EYES, TIGHTLY. FOLLOW,
ALWAYS FOLLOW; TAKE THEIR HOLLOW HEARTS AND MAKE
THEM NEW.

ENTER THE CASTLE; SWEEP AWAY THE SOOT; STAY WAY BACK. YOU
ARE NOT WORTHY."

Wobbly knees, bee still

Sweat stained hands slip, grip that railing,

Always climbing higher, together forever.

Remember, don't taint his castle.

Continually ponder, recall his words.

"CLIMB STILL HIGHER, TORTOISE.
WEAR YOUR BABIES ON YOUR BACK!

DON'T LET THEM SLIP OFF. CLIMB HIGHER. LET
THEM THROW THEIR STONES AT YOU!"

Who am I?



Daggers, stones, spit upon my face.

Beautiful Savior, kind redeemer, whose are these?

Empty hearts saddled on my back

Voices weeping, "make me whole?"

Gentle Savior, please, can you hear? So

many eyes look down on me.

Whip me with their lashes

Taunt me, bleed from every pore...

Oh, man, please, don't touch my garments...

Not one spot of blood

Give me mercy, relieve me of these stones,

Help me please, carry them on your back.

They are too heavy.

Oh, Great Jehovah, redeemer of Israel,

Christ are you there?

Climb that hill, wear my cross, my own crown of thorns...

Watch me, hear me, be me,

Heal that ear lying on the ground,

In the darkness.



Lips and tongue tell the truth

*Clawing hands ripping my perfect, radiant skin. Flesh
and blood torn to bits*

*Beating heart, creeping, snapping, shaking.
Nail my hands, my wrists, my feet, dangling
vinegar.*

*That blade, all silver, glimmering, waiting... To
slice my side.*

*Hunched over, splintered, subdued.
So much shouting and whipping, like those in Egypt.
Those people of Moses,
Who carried boulders across so many shoulders...*

**"ADD MORE STONES! DON'T LET HER SEE OUR WAYS,
SHE IS LOOKING. STOP HER EYES--CLOSE THEM!**

**LOOK AT HER PITIFUL, STOOPED FRAME,
HER LACERATED HANDS AND FEET, ALWAYS WORKING, NEVER CEASING.
REMEMBER, WOMAN, THE SEVERED EDGE**

**WHICH PIERCED HIS SIDE, GUSHING OUT WITH THEIR BLOOD.
REMEMBER, YOU, SHE-HER-CREATURE, HIS SHAME."**

Now, all mine...

*Look mirror, recognize me?
Once curious eyes, warm with chocolate
Swirled with rich mint petals, made glorious with wild, worldly vigour Once
brimming, free?*



Replaced by chains, precious steel, metallic grey.
Inside 'this' temple, whirling, raging, untamed blue grey storm.
Choppy waves roaring, wishing to bash their feeble, wooden ship
Into bits.

"HER FACE MUST BE SYMMETRICAL, FLAWLESS.
HER HEART MUST BE FRIGID.

SNOW WHITE SKIN CONSTANTLY TIGHT, SMOOTH.
BLOOD-RED LIPS WITH UPTURNED CORNERS,
MUST SAY TO THE NEW, 'BE THOU PERFECT!' LET
THE BLOOD DRIP INTO PLUMP PERFECTION.
ALWAYS STARVING AND NEVER SATISFIED.

BE STILL STATUE! HAND THIS KNOWLEDGE DOWN TO THE NEXT GENERATION.
GIVE HER SONS THEIR WHIPS AND GIVE HER DAUGHTERS THEIR CHAINS."

Oh, my heart and eyes that wet my pillow,
Secret shapes crouch behind every corner,
Hiding behind my garments, egocentric man.
Quivering lips whisper, "Saviour, son of God, please... make me whole?
Carry me upon your back, yolk my burden, make it light."

"BACK! DON'T LOOK AT HIM DIRECTLY IN THE FACE.
STAY HERE, BLINDFOLDED, UNWORTHY FEMALE,
NOT MAN, JUST WOMAN, WRAPPED IN GLIMMERING GARMENTS,



COVERED IN HER FAMILY'S BLOOD.

SHE MUST WEAR THEIR BLOOD IN HER TORN GENITALS,
RIPPED, OOZING, DRIPPING WET,

ALWAYS READY, THIGHS WIDE OPEN, WAITING...

SO MUCH BLOOD ALL OVER HER BODY, STICKY AND HOT.

Where are my garments?

"TAKE HER, SHE IS NOT HER OWN,

THAT SHE-HER-CREATURE WRAPPED IN GLISTENING WHITE PAPER,
WITH A BOW.

A CHILD-BRIDE GIFT FOR A HUSBAND, STUCK TOGETHER WITH TAPE. SMILE,
NO? TOO MUCH SPIRIT. ADD MORE STONES!

HIDE HER IN THOSE GARMENTS.

KEEP THEM GLIMMERING, CELESTIAL-DOVE.

NOT ONE SPOT OF BLOOD FROM THAT MOUTH,
WILL DRIP DOWN ON THOSE GARMENTS,

NEVER.

Don't curse, don't feel, climb now higher,
in those soft, white slippers across
Frigid, stone steps.

Ever higher to his heavenly home.

"BLEED HIS BLOOD, AND LET ME SEE YOU,



AS A LAMB SACRIFICED TO THE SLAUGHTER

YOU ARE NOTHING MORE THAN A WOMB OWNED BY A HUSBAND.
STAY! BELONG IN SHADOWS NATURE-OBJECT-FERTILE ANIMAL,
ORDAINED BY GOD TO BE OWNED IN INVISIBLE DARKNESS. BRING
TO PERFECTION THOSE CELESTIAL GARMENT-CHAINS LET HIM
TOUCH IT, CARESS IT, WITH HIS CLAWS.

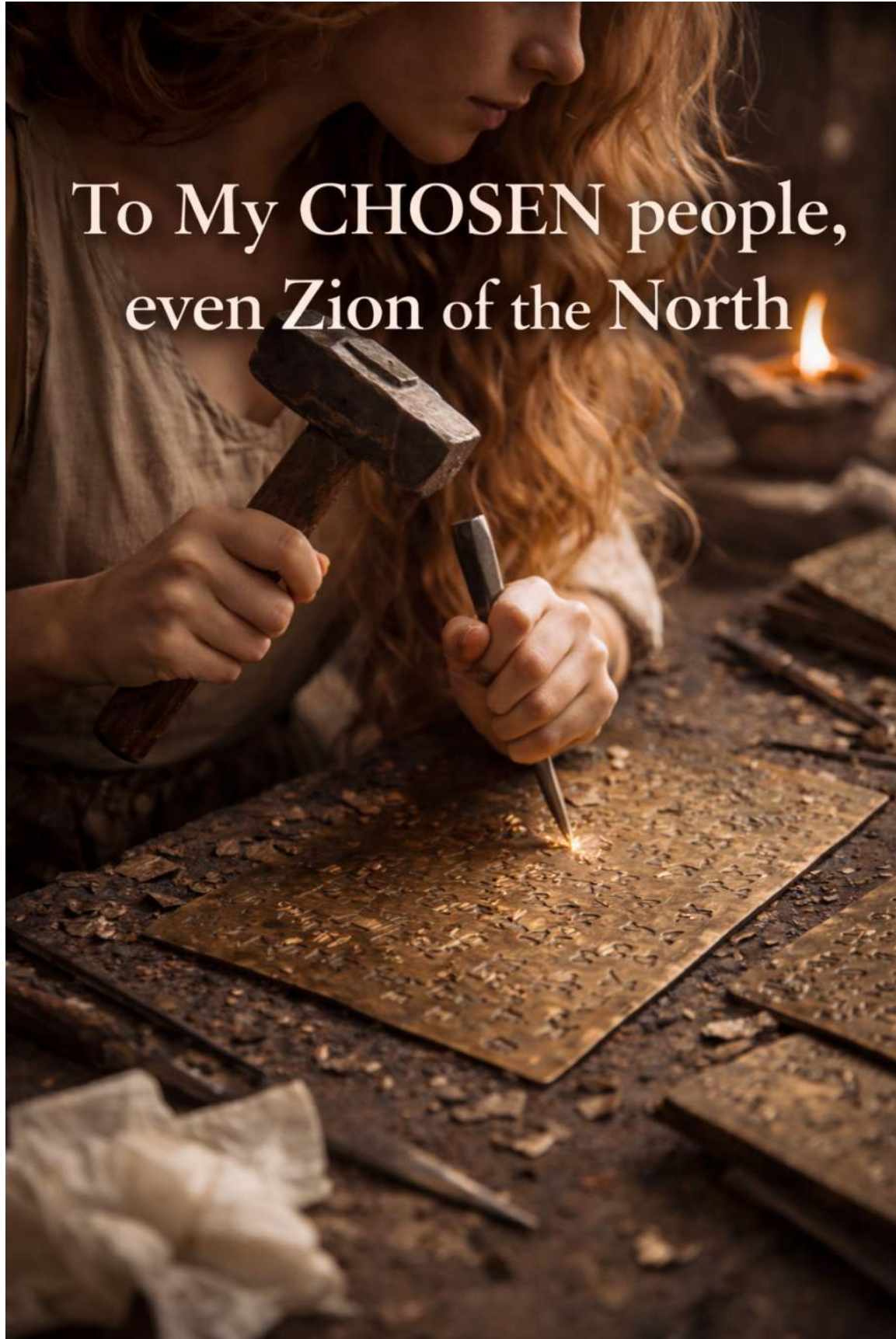
THEN GO TO HIS CASTLE. IF YOU AREN'T A MAN, YOU MUST..."

Let my people go

"KILL HER SPIRIT, ADD MORE TAPE OVER
HER EYES

STILL MORE GLUE OVER GLISTENING UPTURNED LIPS. CUT
HER HAIR; MAKE HER NOTHING.

REMEMBER, ALL HER VALUE CAN BE SEEN, SKIN-DEEP.
RETURN TO DARKNESS. YOU MATTER NOT."



To My CHOSEN people,
even Zion of the North

THE FIRST BOOK OF WILLOW

REIGN AND MINISTRY

An account made by Willow to her brethren and sisters in the latter days, for the intent of repentance and of hope to turn those in idleness and deceit to see their human error. The purpose of this work is to lift, urge, and inspire the whole human family to turn their energy towards the support of their brethren and sisters who need them. This work speaks of the Kingdom of Light, as well as the kingdom of Darkness on the Earth. By sharing this message through a Christian framework, she speaks with the voice of power and authority in the attitude of admonition to urge those elect children of the human family to action. Using the spirit of indignation through the admonition of the Lord, she aims to wake up those in high places to see that their acts of pride and lasciviousness have led to the whoredomes and the atrocities that afflict the whole human family.

CHAPTER 1

Willow begins the record of her people in these Latter days—She speaks through the words of Isaiah and of his prophecies to the children of men in the Latter Days—she accounts of the lasciviousness of the elect of God’s people to the poor, the weak, and the needy. She speaks of that Great and Spacious Building that has no foundation, and accounts of how the act of pride will cause it to fall in the last days; she recounts the words of Isaiah to the children of men, and accounts for the prophesied destruction which will fall upon them, if they do not repent before the Great and Terrible Day of the Lord.

1 Come, Come, ye Saints of Zion: Listen together. Repent ye, repent ye, for the kingdom of Heaven is nigh at hand. Listen to the voice of Him who calleth, “make your paths straight.” Yea, listen to the voice of Him who reigns in all light, charity, and goodness; He who is the father of all righteousness, yea, listen ye together.

2 Come, come ye Saints, and listen to Him, The Great Jehovah; The Great I Am. For, for this cause have many to mourn. Yay, and for this same cause have the small righteous branches of my kingdoms to rejoice; Yea, all twelve tribes, and those of Levi; Yay, all of those scattered about the Earth who patiently and steadfastly wait and watch for my coming; Yay, all those children of Light who watch for me, and look for the signs of that Great and Terrible Day.



3 Yay, oh ye wicked and perverse generation; know ye not that I shall come, in the not-so-distant future? Know ye not that I shall come again to rule and reign upon this Earth?

4 Ye say that thou art watching; thou sayest that thou are waiting steadily for My coming. Yet, ye are not; nay, ye are not. Oh, ye people who call yourselves “the chosen.” Ye bold, ye beautiful, ye rich, and thou drunken of the things of this world; Yea, all ye who come close to me with your lips but stay far from me with your hearts; yay, even they who say that they, themselves, have drunk out of that bitter cup: death and carnage lay before you. Yay, ye people who are puffed up, who wear high heads and stiff necks; listen ye together to the voice of your Creator; your One True King.

5 Yay, ye people who call yourselves of Zion but, yet ye stink of your own filthiness: of your flowers and your rich potpourri, of your fine spices, and of your clean linen. Oh, fear ye, and be chastened; all ye who walk after their own paths, and seek ye after your own light; Oh, ye wicked and perverse generation, listen together.

6 Thou people of Zion, even those who call themselves that “Zion of the North,” even Cardston; and all the lands round about, listen ye together to the voice of Him who calls you. Yay, He calls you by name, yet ye heed him not. Your eyes and your ears are turned yet away towards that Great City of Sodom and Gomorrah.

7 Yay, ye look only to that which pleases the senses of the flesh. All those who call themselves “my people,” yet they look not to me, but at their own reflections. Yay, they say that they walk in my light, step in my footsteps, and seek after my ways; yet they are wearied by the heavy burdens placed upon them by the praise of their brethren; yay, all those who run faster than they have strength; yet ye are often toiling and wasting your energy and talents for that which is of naught; you work and toil only to receive the praise of your brethren. Yea, all those who wish to find gain, and who have become lifted up in pride, because of the work of their own hands; all those who wish for the gain and the praise of his own brother; all those who wish to be seen of men in high places. Yay, those who desire to hear their own voices, and who wish to be called of by their brethren, “thou great, thou righteous, thou ruler, and thou peacekeeper.” Thou fool, who treasureth up that which is of naught; that which moth doth eat up, and the corrupt steal; yea, all they who seek after the praise of their own works, and by their own hands, they have received their reward.

8 Yay, all ye people who look down upon the poor, and the heavy laden who wish for rest; thy brethren and sisters who cry up to me from their dark corners, and waste places. Know ye not that the least of these, thy brethren, are in similitude of me; these are they who ye must serve, and in doing so, ye only serve me; yet ye will not. You deny me of your substance, yea, ye deny the beggar and the wayward child; ye deny even your professed Lord, and Saviour, even Jesus Christ. Know ye not that I hear their prayers, and I count their tears against you; yea, even ye accuse me, your Lord and Saviour amid these your brethren, to be evil because of their poverty, and their sufferings because they lack the same gifts wherewith ye have been so graciously blessed; ye turn your hearts away from these thy brethren when ye, yourselves, are supposed to be my hands and my feet; yet, when the beggar crieth out to you, ye heed him not. What say ye for yourselves?



9 All those who call yourselves perfect; thou fool, who call out “Rah-Cah” to thy brethren; yea, all you who spit and scorn your brethren and your vulnerable sisters due to their poverty; know ye not that ye are all mine; all One Eternal Family? Turn your eyes from your brother’s soot, thou fool and turn ye to your own reflection; Yay, turn your own eyes towards your own awful and filthy state. See ye not the dirt and the dried blood under your fingernails and upon your own hands? Look, ye, for yourselves, at the gallons of blood soaking your own garments: yea, those who call themselves mine elect, listen together.

10 First, take ye the beam out of thine own eye, before thou reach for the rod which is in thine brother’s eye. Forgive the debtor, heal the sick, lift the heavy laden; feed the poor; clothe the naked; give to him that asketh. Oh, ye rich, and perverse generation, know ye not how to give good gifts? Which of you, having children, who ask of you a fish, would offer them a serpent? Yay, ye wicked and perverse generation, ye have your reward.

11 Yay, and to those who walk with the clinking shoes, high necks, and haughty countenances; who cause our Earth Mother to stink due to your whoredomes and your abominations; yea, ye women who cause others to mourn and lament because ye have cast them into your shadows. Yea, all those who cause the chest to puff, and set their noses way up high; Yay, all those who look down upon their own sisters and children with necks of iron and brass: ye have your reward, and it be not in Heaven.

12 Yea, ye who walk with wonton eyes, and who ignore the elderly, the disabled, the poor, and the weak; all ye wicked and lascivious, who care more of your own face paint, your spiced soaps, your fine linens, your grand mansions, and that great and spacious building; you have already all the riches in this world in your hands; yet ye thirst that impenetrable thirst which none can quench; yea, even all that which ye have, all your earthly gain cannot quench that thirst which is in you. You whores who call yourselves the mothers of Zion: ye have your reward.

13 Thou man, thou fool, who seek for the fine things of this world; all those who seek only after your own riches, instead of the support of your own children; all you men who perverse the right ways of the Lord; even Him, who ye profess to be your King and your Redeemer, yea, listen together.

14 Oh man, fear ye and tremble: you, even yourselves, are the harlots of the flesh; yea, your kind wives and your innocent children’s cries reach out to me by the night. And, even I, your God, count their tears which water their pillows; and count them against you. Yet, ye hear them not. Yea, ye think that ye know better than they; ye think that thou art holy, yet ye are not. Ye are nothing more than a robber and a thief to the poor, to the needy, and to the poor of spirit; ye are the whore which walks upon our Mother Earth and who cause the heavy heads to hang down, and the hanging hands to dangle at their sides. Yay, ye harlots of your mother; ye fool who deviate from the True Lord’s paths, and pervert his ways and cloud the eyes of your children; ye who harm your own family so that your beautiful, precious daughters, and your strong stalwart sons do not recognize me; know ye not that ye walk in the similitude of me? Know ye not that they follow in your footsteps? Yet, they do not know me.

15 Your precious children look about for me in the darkness, yet, born to the righteous, they cannot see the light. Yay, ye husbands and fathers who deny your children of every good thing: of your love, your hugs, and your



kindnesses. Yay, even ye deny them of that which is of true worth: ye deny them of your Devine Father's love. You rob them of His gifts and His righteousness, which He intends to rain down upon their heads; and yet, you deny their parched lips with even the smallest cup.

16 Oh, ye wicked men, who hold yourselves up high, and deny the whole Earth of My goodness, mercies, and love; only to replace it with your own shadows, and the illusion of your own light; Yea, your wives and your daughters walk like that of the prostitute; tinkling along in their heels and finely adorned apparel; yet their fine potpourri does not hide the stink of your own filthiness.

17 Yea, oh man, listen to your Devine Creator; your True Heavenly King, and walk ye in his ways, and seek ye after His light. Turn your hearts towards me; yea, turn your eyes to the Heavens, and your tent doors towards my temple. I come speedily, and my time is nigh at hand.

18 Turn all ye into your closets and close their doors. Let not your hearts fail you. Cry out to me with a broken heart and a contrite spirit. Be ye steadfast, immovable, kind, humble, charitable, and generous with your substance, while ye wait for me. Feed ye the poor; clothe ye the naked; embrace the weary heart; lift the hanging heads that hang down and dry the dripping eyes that are set down; hold the hand and steady the knee of thine brethren and sisters; silence their fears and make peace for all those whose tears fill the Earth.

19 Yea, turn ye away from your wicked ways: your whoredoms, your abominations, and your perverse thoughts; turn ye from your unrighteous dominions, your unrighteous judgements, and from your own self-righteousness. Only they who come unto me as a child, with a broken heart and contrite spirit, may enter the kingdom of Heaven; be ye clean, be ye pure, even as I am.

20 Let not your stink fill the earth; let not the ground cry out against you for your own unrighteousness; let not the pillow become wet with your families' tears for my sake.

21 Repent, and come unto me, even Jesus Christ, who stands with open arms waiting to receive you. Bring forth My Zion, walk in My paths; yea, even the footsteps of Him who made you and who has lent you breath; yea, even He who has loaned to you His energy and of His light; who has gifted you the use of His priesthood power to bless His children; who as gifted you the power to walk as He walked; to speak with His voice; to give, and take upon you, His body and His blood. Turn ye from your wicked ways and come unto me. I am waiting with arms outstretched still. Yay, come unto me and be filled with that Light and that love that has no end. Come unto me and turn ye away again to feed my sheep.

22 My time speedily cometh; ye must repent quickly before the great and terrible day of the Lord; even the last day. Remember, remember, that ye must fill your lamps with my oil, even pure oil, before the bridegroom cometh. Be, ye mindful and watchful for my coming; as I will come as a thief in the night; and yet, if ye hear not these, even my words, then your salt shall lose its savour and will be for nothing.

23 If ye hear not these things, you too will find yourselves in the waste places of the earth with your brethren who are poor; and all your gifts,



which the Lord has so graciously given you, will have come to naught; your riches will crumble to the dust. Your grand mansions will burn and tumble to the ground; and will be no more; your beautiful wives and daughters will be ravaged, tortured, and feasted upon by men, women, children; also, by beasts of the land; and of the fowls of the air; even they who will pick their bones, and the varmints of the earth will feast upon their flesh. Their bones will pile high, and the stink of death will become so great that none can inhabit your lands of old. Yea, and your sons will sleep against their own swords, while those men with gentle hearts will rest eternally in their own blood.

24 Yea, your high places and your great and spacious buildings, which ye yourselves know have no foundation, will soon crumble to the dust; and will stand no more. Your riches will be pillaged, your cupboards left bare, and your families will be devoured as by wolves of men in the night. Those who ye see not; yea, even those who ye have denied of your succour and of your substance; yea, all they who shall take and shall reap of your spoils, even the spoils of your hands; and then will they live as kings and as rulers of your lands; and remember, remember, all ye, that even yourselves, will be no more.

25 Yet, ye will cry up to me from Satan’s chains, but your voices will not be heard; your voices will be stopped by him who feeds you. In that day, I shall say, even I, the King of Kings, that ye never knew me. Then, and only then, shall ye reap all that which ye have sown. Then, and only then, shall your tongues burn, and your skin squelch from that heat which shall devour your whole souls.

26 Repent ye and save yourselves and your children by carrying my cross. Look ye forward Saints! My work is not yet fulfilled, but my time is nigh at hand; I commeth speedily, so repent ye, before I come; because, if not, at that time, it shall be too late for you. In that great and final day, ye will all be judged.

27 Be ye ready for my coming.

CHAPTER 2

Willow speaks through the words of Alma from the Book of Mormon—and recounts of the Lamanites, the Nephites, and the Anti-Nephi-Lehi’s from chapter 24. She calls her brethren and sisters of the church to repentance. She reminds them of their brethren the Lamanites, and in how they were more righteous than the Nephites. She speaks in the attitude of admonition in accordance with Isaiah’s words to the children of men in these latter days. She calls all unto Christ for repentance of their sins to stop the pain of sin and prevent future suffering.

1 Burry your weapons of peace, my brethren and sisters. Or rather, burry your weapons of war for peace (Alma 24:19). Be ye clean, even as the Lamanites. Yea, even they who had only but one wife. Oh man, ye fool, do ye think that ye are better than they? Yet even the Lamanites loved but one wife. Yea, they loved and served their precious wives and children better than even those of the Nephites.



2 Yay, even those Lamanites who were said to be the wicked posterity of Laman and Lemuel, who Nephi prophesied to be a cursed people; even Nephi, he of old, the prophet who said that the Lord placed a curse upon the skins of the Lamanites and made them dark, because of the foolish traditions of their fathers. In the which was a misunderstanding, as God loves all his children. No son or daughter is greater than the rest; not one gender, and not one colour of their skins is loved above another.

3 Yay, oh man, be not fooled by the Pharisees and Sadducees of thy people: all are loved of God, and his love is unconditional and eternal. Yay, Christ loves all men, even these the Lamanites, who were more righteous than their brethren the Nephites, who had the word of God.

4 Yay, even the Nephites had God’s word, but they were corrupted by their pride and self-righteousness. They were corrupted by their own riches. Yay, they were tempted and led away, even by that old serpent who calls himself the “prince of this world.” Be not fooled by the deceiver, who corrupts Christ’s paths. Ye see that ye can only have but one master: for, if any shall love the one, they shall despise the other.

5 Hold yet firmly to the rod of iron and press forward through the shadows and mist. Yay, do not be blinded by the darkness; do not follow ye after that deceiver who creates winding paths to deceive and confuse the minds of the children of men to be lost; Yay, be ye not ashamed by the mockery and the haughty countenances of the rich and pervasive. Yay, all they who can be seen in that great and spacious building that has no foundation. Know ye not that it shall fall?

6 Press forward saints! Have courage! Press on and come forward, even unto the fruit of the tree, which is most desirable and precious. Partake of the fruit and be filled. Yay, even seek ye after Him, whose path is strait. Even him who is the father of all righteousness. Brethren and sisters, walk each after His ways, follow in His footsteps, and feast upon His words.

7 Yay, brethren and sisters, remember even the Lamanites, even these who were more righteous than those of the Nephites; in so much, that when converted, many became a delightful people to the Lord; Yay, even so much that many called themselves the people of Anti-Nephi-Lehi.

8 Oh, remember, remember, thy brethren the Lamanites, even the people of Anti-Nephi-Lehi. Remember how each man, woman, and child prostrated themselves upon the Earth, and before God that day, when their brethren came to war. Those left of the Lamanites were angry with them for joining the people of God; Yay, insomuch that they came to war against their righteous brethren to change their ways and to remove their king.

9 Yay, even these, who were left of the Lamanites, were deceived by the Nehors and stirred up to anger against their brethren, the Anti-Nephi-Lehi’s; in so much that they did come upon their brethren as lions. Yay, even they did fall upon them with the sword. But instead of returning hate against the remaining Lamanites with their own swords, these righteous children of God fell upon the Earth before their brethren in the attitude of prayer and of faith (Alma 24:21). Yay, even they, allowed themselves to be slain by their brethren; Yay, and in the self-same moment that they fell by the swords of their brethren, they did so while praising their god; even that Jesus the Christ of Nazareth.



10 Yay, remember, remember, your brethren and sisters who fell. One, by one, they fell by the sword, because they refused to stain their own swords, no more, with their family's blood. Yay, they buried their weapons of war deep into the Earth as a testimony of God to Him. Yay, these righteous men and women would not take up their weapons of war again against their brethren. For, they feared God and would not that they may be corrupted again by that deceitful one against Him. Yay, even they cherished the atonement of Christ, insomuch that they would lose their own lives. Yay, they loved their Savior so much that they sacrificed their own lives for Him. Can ye say that ye are better than they? Nay, ye cannot.

11 Oh, remember, remember, your brethren the Lamanites: even they, who called themselves the people of Anti-Nephi-Lehi. Oh remember, ye fools, in how without meeting any resistance, their brethren did slay a thousand and five of them, yea. Ye speak of this in your synagogues, and ye reflect the law of consecration in your temples; yet, knowing all these things, many do still curse and spurn at these thy brethren. Do ye not remember that even the Lamanites were one with Christ, and were blessed for their sacrifice? Yay, even these thy brethren were received into Heaven to dwell with their God (Alma 24: 22).

12 Do ye not remember, how, even in death, the Anti-Nephi-Lehi's converted their remaining brethren? Yay, when the Lamanites did witness that the Anti-Nephi-Lehi's would not flee from their swords; Nay, neither did they turn aside; nor did they turn to the right hand or to the left. Nay, but each gave of themselves to their brethren, or rather, they gave themselves to their God; in so much that they allowed themselves to lie down and to perish: each praising their God, yea, even in the very act of death by the sword. Can ye say that ye are better than they? (Alma 24: 23).

13 Oh, ye wicked and perverse generation, remember, remember your brethren, the Lamanites: in how after witnessing this, even they did forbear from slaying their brethren. Yay, even those who slew many, were grieved for their acts by the sword. Yay, their hearts had swollen within them for the cause of death to their brethren, who had fallen by their own swords (Alma 24:24).

14 Yay, even they repented of the things which they had done. They threw down their weapons of war and would not take them up again. Yay, we see that even these remaining Lamanites were stung for the many murders which they had committed to their brethren. They were stung by the much blood on their own hands. Yay, and they fell upon the Earth, even as their brethren, the Anti-Nephi-Lehi's.

15 When these remaining Lamanites saw the testimony of their brethren, their hearts were swollen with the love of God. Remember how it came to pass that they did praise His name; and they, even those Lamanites, did prostrate themselves upon the Earth as their brethren, relying upon the mercies of those whose arms were lifted to slay them (Alma 24:25)?

16 Oh, remember, remember, your brethren, the Lamanites: in how there was not, yet, even one wicked man, woman, or child, who was slain from among them. Nay, all were righteous and pure through the atonement of Jesus Christ.

17 Yay, and even, in the self-same moment they did bare their testimonies of Him through the shedding of their own blood; even they, those people

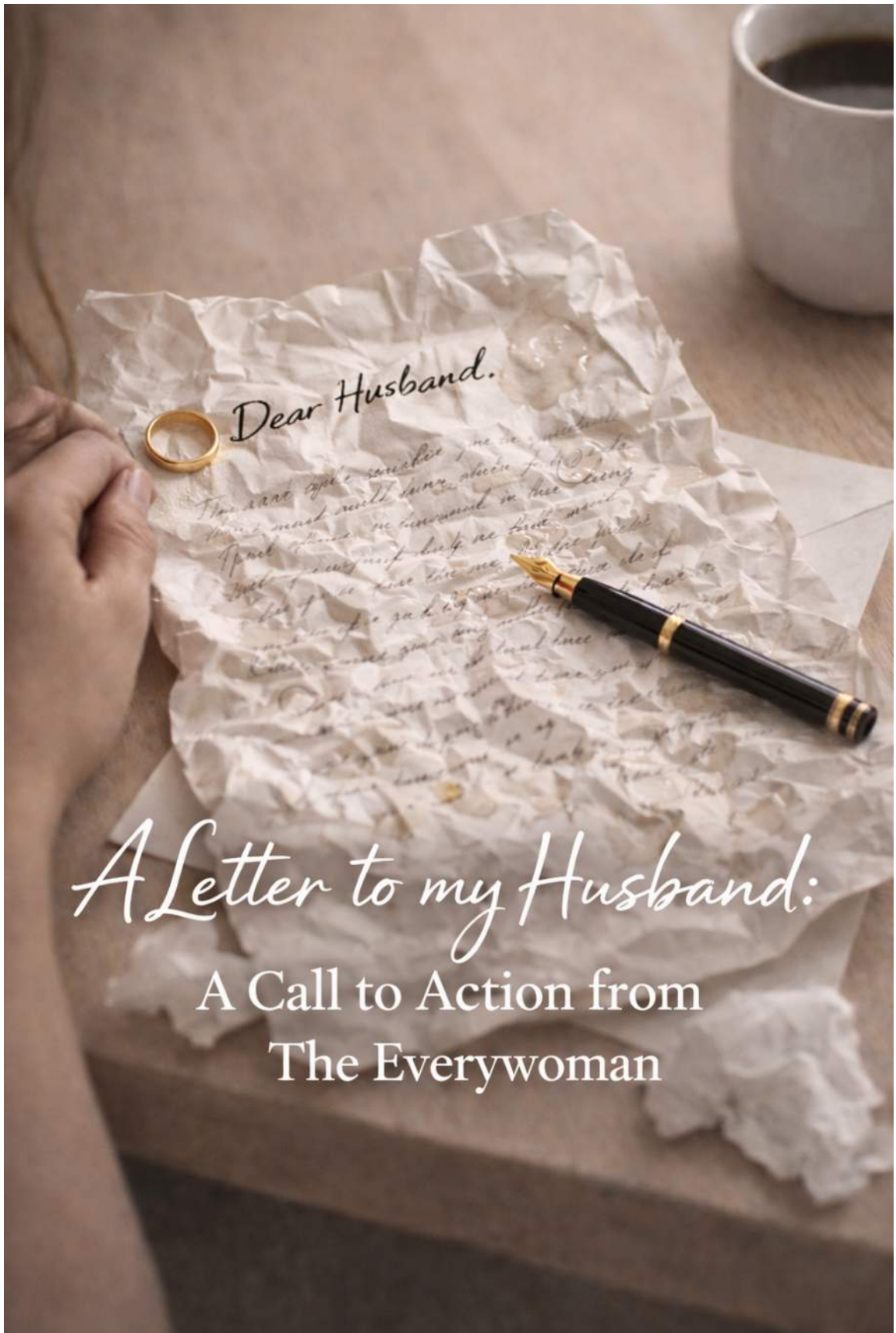


of Anti-Nephi-Lehi, brought more than a thousand of their brethren to the knowledge of their God. Yay, in the very act of perishing, yea, even in that selfsame hour, did they serve and praise their God; and it was felt by all. Yay, oh remember how the people of God were joined by more than the number of those who had been slain (Alma 24: 27).

18 Thus, we see that the Lord, our God, even that Jesus Christ of Nazareth, can overcome all evil; yea, and in the self-same hour can compel his children to do good. Yay, by allowing, even these, thy brethren to use their own agency, Christ worketh by miracles. Thus, we see that Christ, our Lord, can work a mighty work in many ways, even unto to the salvation of all mankind (Alma 24: 26).

19 Yay, remember, remember, that these things are true. Yay, and even remember all ye these thy brethren, and come even unto Christ, your Lord and Saviour; even Jesus Christ, the One True King. The One and Only Begotten of the Father, who loveth all of his children, every single one. Remember Him, always, in your hearts; Yay, even Christ the Lord, who is no respecter of persons. Yay, even He who alloweth the sun to rise and to set upon all his children who make up the human family. Repent ye, repent ye, all ye children from near and far, and come unto Him: his arms are stretched out still. Come unto Him, and repent of your sins, and trouble yourselves no more.





A Letter to my Husband:

A Call to Action from The Everywoman

A letter to my Husband: A Call to Action from The "Everywoman"

I'm sorry...

This poem is meant to be read, sentence-by-sentence, by different women, to reflect how abuse hurts everyone: it is not specific to ethnicity, age, or color

I'm sorry that I didn't love you more, and I am sorry that you didn't love me. I'm sorry that it hurt you, when I pulled away, because of how much you kept hurting me. I'm sorry that I couldn't allow myself to be an emotional or physical punching bag anymore. I'm sorry that I stopped letting you rape me. I'm sorry that looking out for my best interest, and the best interest of our sons and of our daughters hurt you, because it meant saving me too. I'm sorry that not being with you means that you have to pay our kids money so that they can be safe while in my care. I'm sorry that being a healthy role model for them, by working and getting an education, hurts you, because it means that you have to try harder to compete. Only, I'm not competing. I'm only trying to live my own life. I'm trying to get up every-single-day with enthusiasm and hope so that the abuse that happened to me wasn't all for nothing. That it didn't win. That it didn't stop me. That it didn't take so much of me that my daughters have to go through it, or their daughters, or their daughters. I'm sorry that I broke the chain because I lived, and that I still live everyday better than the last. No matter what. Every day is better now because I don't have to live with you. I'm sorry that I found people who love me, and who take care of me. I'm sorry that they show me that I matter. I'm sorry that me being happy makes you unhappy, because somehow that takes away from you. I'm sorry that my very existence means that you didn't win, and that you don't own me. That you never owned me. I'm sorry that my life is pointed in the direction of a better future for me and for our kids. I'm sorry that one day I will make a difference big enough that I can create change for all people. I'm sorry that I will teach other people to rise and be their own true authentic selves. I'm sorry that my example will show others that their very existence on this earth holds value, because... they matter too. No matter what has happened to them. No matter who they are. No matter what they look like. No matter their sexual orientation or gender. No matter how they sound, or speak, or what they know, or how they know it: they matter in this world. Their lives matter. Their very existence matters. They will know that they matter, because they will know that I matter too. No matter what people say or do. No. Matter. What. I'm sorry that every time that I take a breath, I show people that I survived: and every day that I live just a little bit longer, I show people that they can live too.



See; hear; feel

It's okay to feel

When it's all too much

Just breathe in...

Calm, the mind;

Then breathe out...

Steady, the soul;

Breathe in...

Stay, the thought;

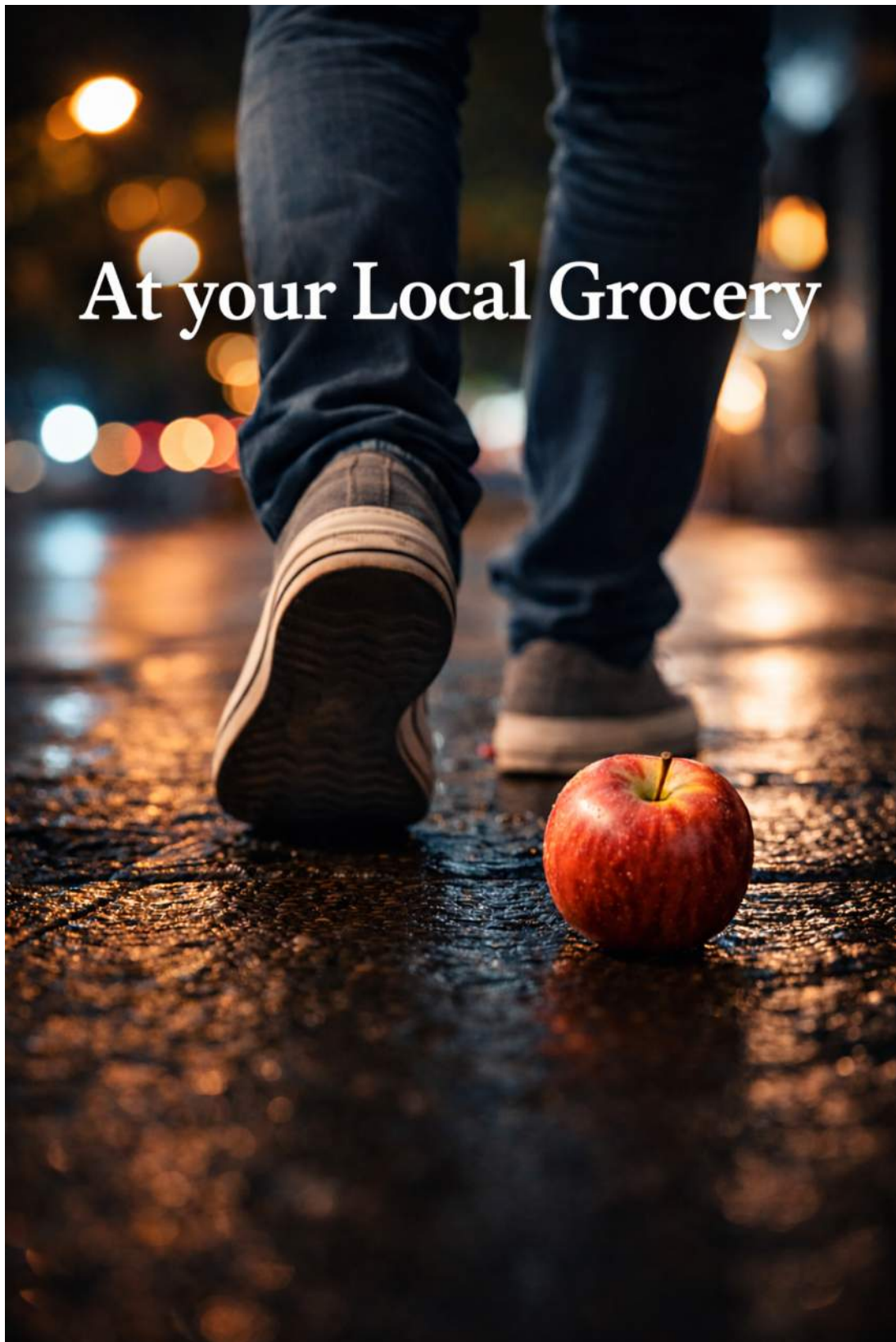
And breathe out...

As-long-as you want to.

Welcome to my humble abode.

Leave when you're ready.





At Your Local Grocery

Why do you treat me like this?

Why do you yell?

I am not the CEO of this company

I am a store clerk.

Trying, always trying

To make a buck or two,

To feed my family

To feed the many mouths of my babies,

They do not understand why

I am away for so long,

I am not the CEO of this company

I am a pawn

A nobody

Just trying to pay my rent

And ensure that my babies get a meal

Or two...

Nothing more,

They need school supplies

Clean shoes

Without holes where their toes peak through

My babies are constantly growing

No matter how much I beg time to



slow down

So that their childhood doesn't

pass me by

I'm always running

Faster than I have strength,

I am far too weary

To take this verbal diarrhea

From you.

I've worked a 12-hour day

Only to end my second shift

At minimum wage

To hear you shout at me

Like a toddler crying for gum

Because the price of your ice cream

Wasn't a dollar or two cheaper

I am not the CEO of this company

I also have a word or two

for HIM

Please pay me

A buck or two more

To feed my family

So that I can stay home

A moment-or-two longer...

Before their childhood



Passes me by

And my home is empty

Because, when they are grown

and gone,

I cannot hug their little bodies

And kiss their tear-stained cheeks

Put colourful Band-Aids on

their boo-boos

Kiss their skinned knees

And hold them in my safe, warm arms

Until the boogie man creeps out of their closet,

Or slithers out from under their bed

On the floor.

Please, Mr. CEO, pay me a buck or two more,

Allow me to chase away the boogie man,

And tell my babies that everything

is going to be ok

Mommy is here now...

I don't have to be away for so long...

Please sir, Mr. CEO, do not allow

all this time to pass me by

In this store

Scanning item, by item

Only to feed the small tummies



of my sweet babies

Please help me quickly

Before I'm no longer their favourite person,

Their hero walking home to kiss them all

goodnight,

To ensure that they all had something to eat

Then lay my weary head down

on my own pillow,

Before I wake to start the work

all over again,

Only to have another person

Watch my own sweet, babies.

Who doesn't love them like their own,

And who gets to raise them

in a way that I wouldn't,

Because I am stuck here

Day after day,

Hour-by-hour

Behind this counter at quarter to nine,

Only my second shift of the day,

Just in time to hear one man's displeasure

Over a dollar or two

Of ice cream.

I take a deep breath and remember
my sweet babies
Waiting long hours at home
to kiss their momma goodnight
I cannot risk losing this job
by telling you just how I feel about you,
customer.

So, I just nod and smile
Return your change with apologies
to make things better
For you

But...
How can I change the price for your ice cream?
When I cannot
change the dollar for me?



Just Another Day at the Local Grocery

Warm air puffed against our cheeks as we walked through the sliding glass doors of our local grocery store. It was a usual day. Shoppers hustled and bustled about the aisles, selecting the necessities of life. An elderly woman stood in produce. She gently squeezed plump, ripe oranges in her leathery, arthritic hands. I watched momentarily, as she gently placed the juiciest ones in a plastic bag. Two men visited energetically by the Deli, and a brown-haired woman strode past. I felt the woosh of air as she went by. The sight overwhelmed me, but public places usually did.

We originally moved in like one large creature. Everyone was connected to me or to the cart.

Emma-baby sat shotgun. Her chubby cheeks vibrated, and her soft, shiny brown hair shone in the fluorescent lights. One of her squishy hands was gripped tightly around mine.

My other hand was intertwined with the sticky fingers of my mischievous toddler, Hunter. His small blond head bounced up and down beside my hip as he merrily skipped along. He held on tightly. His honey brown eyes were bright with energy. His grubby little face seemed to be looking everywhere. It was like he was excitedly looking for a new game.



Grace, calm and steady, held firmly to the cart. She was only six years old, but her spirit felt much older. It was like she was created for another time. She held her head high when she walked, and she looked straight ahead; never deviating. I quickly glanced down at her. Her hair was like spun gold. It swished gently back and forth with every step.

Then there was Jacob; he was the oldest. He held loosely to the handle with damp, infirm fingers. He lolloped along as we went: hop-step, hop-step. His mahogany hair was long and unkept and it curled around his ears. It contrasted against his pale white skin. His face looked eager and excited. His eyes seemed to dance under his heavy-set eyebrows. The black sweatpants he wore were two sizes too small, and his wrinkled, red shirt was two sizes too big. This did not bother him: he was happy that he dressed himself. He, like Hunter, was full of energy. He giggled and shrieked with happiness. This boy had something up his sleeve.

A quick shop would not be so bad if I could leave Jacob at home, but finding a sitter was impossible. "In and out," I whispered under my breath. I quickened my stride, but it was hard to do. My children's legs could not walk as fast as mine did. Jacob, though, had no problem picking up speed. He let go of the cart and galloped ahead. I kept him in my laser focus as he rushed excitedly towards the crowd.

People stopped and stared distastefully as he hop-stepped around them. Shiny, wet drool oozed down his chin, and yellow teeth peaked out from behind his upturned lips. A man jerked away. Jacob reached his clammy, underdeveloped hand towards the man to balance himself. He was not good on his feet. Jacob stumbled momentarily and shrieked with glee as he continued onward. The man did not look happy.

"Sorry," I said. My chest tightened. All I wanted to do today was get groceries! This was not going to be easy. I tried to grab whatever I could from off the shelves. I snatched up a box of Ritz Handi-Snacks for my kid's lunches. I hoped that they were on sale. There was no time to check price tags today. I could feel my palms sweating against the handle of my shopping cart.

Jacob disappeared. I picked up Hunter. His little legs wriggled. "Ger-off me" he said, and I sat him next to the baby. I quickened my stride, and I took off after Jacob with Grace in tow. My heart pounded in my ears. Where did he go?



My head jerked frantically, this way and that, as I looked up each aisle. Emma, unconcerned, blew spit bubbles, and jabbered “da-da-da-da-da.” Finally, I found him. He was sitting on the dirty floor with a Fisher Price barn in his lap. He rocked back and forth and flicked his hands in a jerking motion. Jacob’s eyes glazed over. He was overcome by the music that emanated from the baby toy. To him it was the sweetest sound. He was satisfied. The toy section was his favorite place. “Hey buddy,” I said, “we’ve got a few other places to go still.” I helped him on his feet. Jacob thrust the toy into the cart. “I wanna toy too!” Hunter shouted. “You have lots of toys” Grace told him firmly. My budget could only cover basic groceries. I would have to delay the storm until later.

I quickly grabbed the things that we needed: eggs, milk, cheese, and bread. Then, set off for the checkout. Jacob thought that he had won. He stomp-danced and sidestepped beside the cart. Sometimes he would stop to grab a bag of Doritos, or crackers from a shelf, or he would press a button on the toy. My back tightened. I knew what was coming.

We stood together in the lengthy line. The baby jabbered, and Hunter picked his nose with a grubby, sticky finger. Every so often, people turned and glanced at Jacob. They could not resist. He was not someone that you saw every day. Besides, he was pungent. His sweats wafted the smell of urinal. From time to time, I stroked the baby, or told my toddler to “please not touch that.” All the while keeping my eyes on Jacob. He was known to bolt, but, thankfully, the toy held his focus. “Don’t worry, we will be home soon” I said more to myself than to Grace. She was typically quiet and still, but the long wait made her restless.

Eventually we checked out our items. “Can I have-a chocolate bar?” Hunter asked. “You don’t need candy every time that we come to the store,” Grace replied before I could respond.

“Not today, Hunter, but you can have some cookies when we get home,” I said. That satisfied him. I strategically placed the toy last on the conveyor belt. I could feel the pressure building in my chest. When the groceries were all bagged, and before the toy reached the scanner, I whispered to the teller that we would not buy the toy. Jacob did not notice. He was trying to open a bag of chips. I sighed. The teller gave me the total, and I quickly paid for my items.

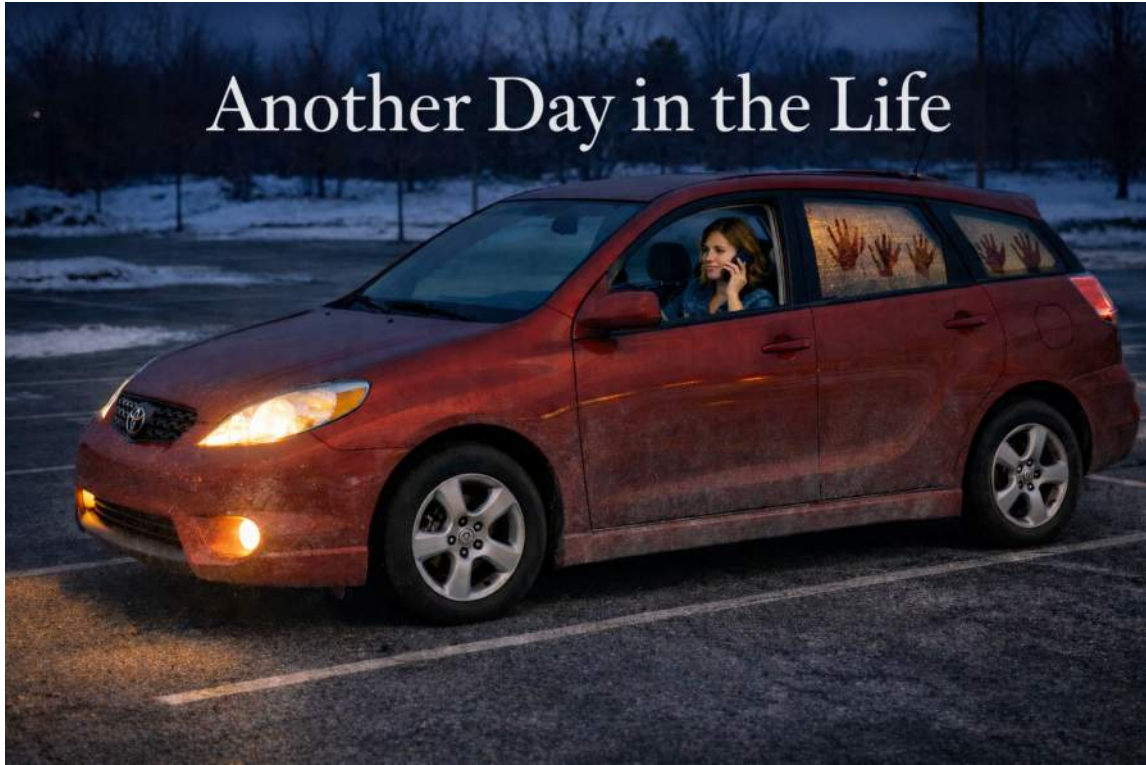
As we started to move away from the till, Jacob realized what was missing. He was agitated. He tried to turn back several times. I wrapped my arm around him, and silently pressed forward. How far could we go before it started?

We were at the exit when his feelings of loss finally sank in. Jacob threw himself on the floor kicking, screaming, and banging his head. He was blocking the doors. His shoes flew in the air.

The hustle and bustle of shoppers stopped. My children went silent. Time seemed to move in slow motion. Bystanders whispered. I could feel their eyes. I could feel their judgement. I caught sight of the elderly doorman as he slowly shook his head. My muscles tightened and my teeth clenched. My heart began to beat faster. What was I going to do?

Something inside of me switched on. I kicked into action. Strategically, I pushed our cart out of the way. Grace could keep an eye on things. Life in our home had made her mature. I picked up Jacob's shoes, and slowly walked over to him. I bent down and placed them quietly on the floor. I sat with my legs straddled on each side of him. He continued to scream and kick. He smacked himself repeatedly in the face with his fists. I heard a woman behind me gasp. The crowd stood frozen, captivated by the scene. I gently rubbed Jacob's back, and I sang softly into his ear. Gradually he quieted, the kicking stopped, and his body relaxed. He looked at me with wet eyes. "Are you done now?" I asked. His little hand signed "yes" in sign language. "I love you," I said, and I kissed his cheek. "I am sorry that you had those big emotions today. I am sorry that things did not go your way. The world can be hard for all of us sometimes." Then I put on his shoes, gave him a hug, and our family left the store.





Another Day in the Life

My red Toyota Matrix looked like nobody loved it. Crumbs and pizza sauce crusted the upholstery in the backseat. Evidence from an attempt to have quality time with my kids: it was quality time, not quantity time. The fossilized remains of pizza crusts lay abandoned on my floormat with the dried mud, in the back, and my passenger seat was repurposed into a purgatory for Monster cans, my favorite energy drink. The windows were decorated with smeared fingerprints that were supposed to be "cave paintings." This artwork was a reminder of why I did what I did every day.

"You could do what I am doing. According to Darwin's theory of evolution, all creatures can adapt to their environment. I have a cat who cannot hunt, but he opens doors. He knows where the easy food is." I said into my cellphone.

I could almost hear the click of my front door, and that stupid, black fur ball marching in the house like he owned it. That cat looked smug, and I hated that.

Michael laughed, and it bubbled out of him like a joyful brook. His laugh matched his personality. I could picture his azure eyes: they sparkled, and they crinkled in the corners. Talking to Michael felt like a gentle breeze by the ocean. He felt peaceful; he felt safe.

When was the last time that I had truly laughed-like really laughed? It felt like a long time.

"I'm not sure if I could?" he continued. "Being a single mom makes you superhuman! That job alone is impossible, and, on top of that, you are in full time school, work part time, and carpool kids; also, don't forget Jacob: he has special needs!"

How can he say that?

Michael was an emergency room doctor. He was a modern-day superhero, but instead of a cape he wore a white coat.

It felt good to be appreciated, but it was hard to believe that what I did was so spectacular. I was a poor, 33-year-old college student, still in my first year.

Not a lot of people had faith in me.

"Well, I have an hour drive home still, and kids to put to bed." I paused. "If I stay parked here at the college any later, somebody is going to call security." I was trying to be funny, but it wasn't.

Michael humored me with a small chuckle. "Any time Sarah. You got this."

He was always so optimistic, but I was less so.

"Thanks Michael, I appreciate that. Have a good night." And with that, I hung up the phone.

An hour, or so, later, I gently pulled into my driveway. The snow lightly fell from the sky, and it crunched under my tires. I had a full view of my country house. It was a larger character home, painted white, with a tin roof. It faced East. From the addition on the south, to the carport on the north, it formed a 'U' shape. Brown and red curtains covered the windows inside, and the light radiated through.

Looming above the house was a crescent moon.

Was it waxing, or was it waning?

I did not know.

I sat there for a moment before pulling in, fully, under the carport and turning off the ignition.

It was breathtaking, until it wasn't. The scene was a disguise. It was not real. It reminded me of something else that looked good on the outside, in the dark, to the oblivious onlooker; but what was seen was not how it really was.

A different kind of darkness swelled inside of me.

In that moment, the front door opened. Emma, my four-year-old, rushed outside without any coat, socks, or shoes on.

I tried to push the negativity out of my mind.

I opened the car door, and the air was so crisp that I could see my breath. "Mommy!" Emma shouted. "You're home!"

Her round little face grinned from ear to ear, and her chubby cheeks were pink from the cold. Her squishy hands were up by her face, as she hopped from foot to foot in the snow. She simply vibrated, and her grey eyes sparkled with energy.

It was cold outside, but she made me feel warm. I opened the driver's side door wider. "Get inside little woman!" I shouted at her. "You'll catch a cold: it is freezing out here!"

"I just needed to see you! Why did yah take so long?" she questioned.

I exhaled.

"School just took a little longer than I'd planned. Hurry up and get inside before you die! I'll be inside in a moment."

The night air prickled my face and hurt my ears. I quickly grabbed my hippie purse and my oversized backpack, locked the car door, and rushed inside. I was relieved to feel the warmth of home.

The door was jammed, so I squeezed tightly inside the narrow doorway that led into our entryway made for tiny people. It was too small for the six people who lived here.

My heart sank. No wonder the door would not open wide enough: there were dripping boots, coats, and snow pants piled high in a puddle on the floor. At least the backpacks were neatly hung; only they were unzipped with homework and lunch kits hanging out of them.

Why did nobody put their stuff away like they were supposed to?

I strategically side stepped and shut the door, trying to keep winter outside and everything else inside. I kicked off my boots, hung up my things, and tried not to look directly at the mess.

I worked my way into the living room.

Four of my five favorite people were there, and all their faces were glued to the television screen like zombies. Bodies of all sizes lazed on the crooked furniture with pillows and blankets. This was the YouTube generation. Kids preferred to watch people do things rather than experience life for themselves.

Emma had hopped up with her older sister Grace, who was nine years old. They were wrapped in a pink duvet. Grace had one arm around Emma and the other around Oreo.

That smug, little cat.

Nobody heard me, and nobody moved. An atomic bomb could have gone off and they would still just sit there, faces forward, glued to that stupid screen!

Hunter, who was six, sat entranced with his mouth hanging open. His honey-brown eyes said that nobody was home.

Noah, my fourteen-year-old, was not any better. He was sprawled out on our second-hand sofa. He lay with *my* favorite quilt, the one with the rosebud pattern. One of his long hairy legs was draped over the back of the couch, and the other was resting on the arm rest. He was a big boy, and he was only going to get bigger. His shoe size matched his age, and I swore that he was going to eat me out of house and home.

I marched over and turned off the TV, only to receive groans of dissatisfaction.

"Glad to see you too! Can somebody please tell me what's going on here? Why does everything have to be a pigsty all the time?" I complained.

"A simple 'hello' would've been sufficient, Mom, and a 'Thanks Noah for babysitting,' would've been nice, too." Noah spat.

My heart ached.

Why did I just say that?

"I'm sorry you guys, but this is unsatisfactory. A mess follows me everywhere I go these days, and things need to change."

"Maybe you shouldn't have had so many kids then..." Noah muttered under his breath.

My blood pressure began to rise.

"Excuse me. What did you say? Don't give me that cheek. I really appreciate all that you do, but I don't deserve this kind of treatment from *you*." I said sharply.

Noah's lips tightened, but he stayed silent.

I tried to change the subject. "Where's Jacob?"

"I put him to bed at seven because he got into the mayonnaise and sour cream again. He was fisting it into his mouth like a barbarian."

"Did you feed him anything?" I asked.

"Well, I gave him crackers and juice. Does that count?" Noah said sarcastically. I was really starting to get annoyed.

"He probably got into the fridge while you were watching TV, didn't he?"

Noah glared at me.

"Well, I guess you got what you deserved for not watching him properly."

"No, I didn't because I left it for you to clean up. Good luck!" And with that he pushed past me with his shoulder and stormed down the stairs.

I followed him, and my heart pounded in my ears.

"What the Hell Noah! What's wrong with you?"

His fists were clenched, and he had his back to me.

I grabbed his shoulder and tried to turn him around, but he was too strong for me, so I went in front of him.

"I said, what is wrong with you?"

Noah's eyes were wet, and his shoulders trembled. Immediately my frustration dissipated and turned into concern. "Noah, what's wrong?" I said more gently this time.

"It's YOU!" he sobbed through angry tears.

"It's because of YOU that we're not a family anymore; it is because of YOU that we're going to move and leave all my friends; it's because of YOU that you're never home! I AM TIRED OF IT!"

This is what my son thought of me?

"Noah, it's not as easy as that."

"What do you mean it's not as easy as that? It is easy. Figure your shit out so that we can be a family again! I don't want to leave my friends. I love this village. It doesn't have to be this way!" He shouted through thick sobs.

I wanted to reach out and wrap my arms around him to comfort him, but I knew that he would not let me.

"Noah," I said more calmly this time. "Being an adult is complicated. Being married is complicated. These are adult problems that adults need to deal with right now. I'm so sorry that you're hurting. We're all hurting."

"No, YOU are not hurting. WE are hurting!" He pointed forcefully at the ceiling towards the other children above us, and with that he turned, stomped to his bedroom, and slammed the door.

I stood there frozen.

I will let him cool down.

I slowly walked up the stairs, and I paused when I reached the top. My hand gripped the railing. It was dark, and everyone had already gone to bed.

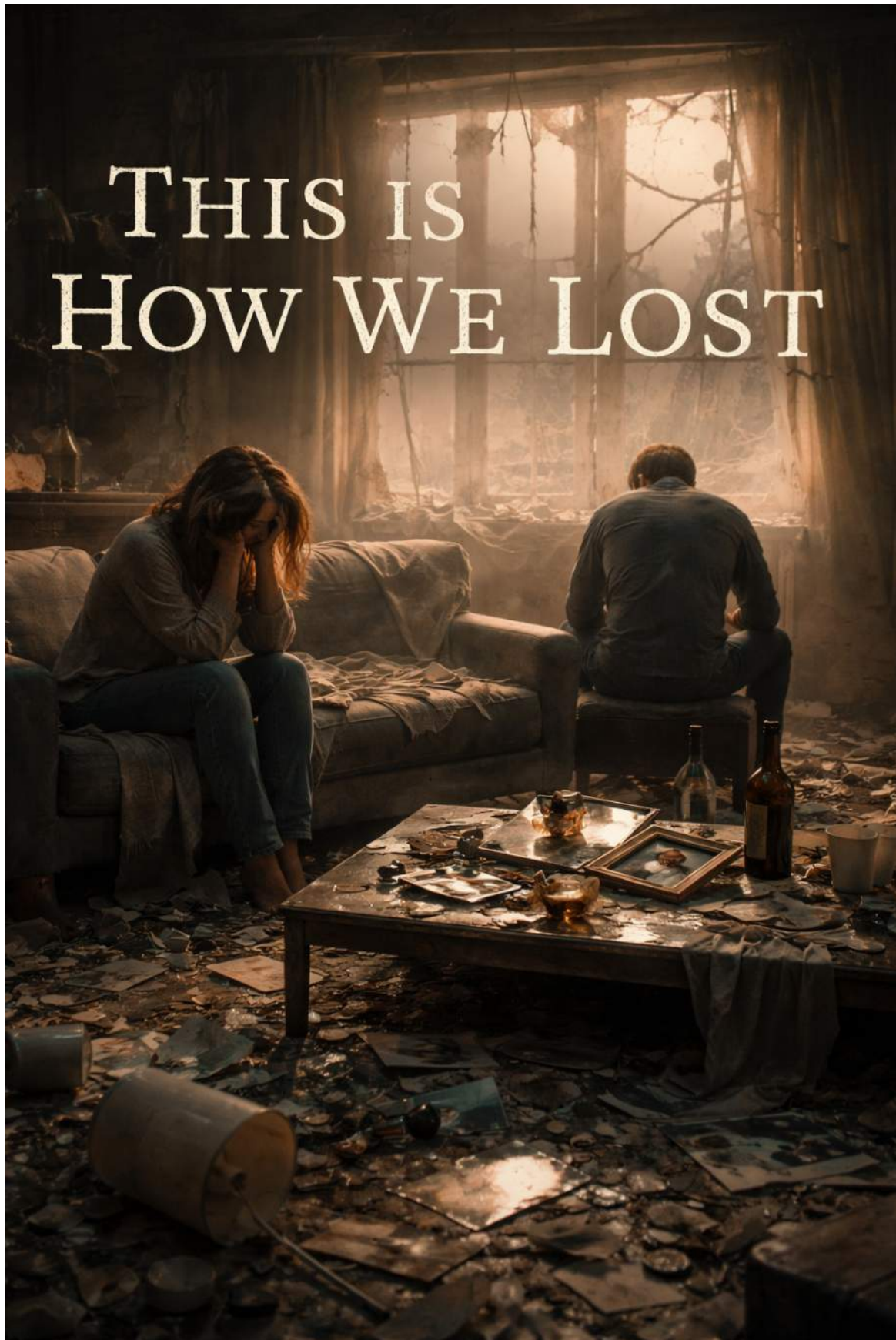
I turned right and made my way down the hallway that led to the other three bedrooms; the doors were all shut tight. I reached out a shaky hand towards the first door handle, and then hesitated.

I was a failure.

Instead, I turned and opened the door to my very own bedroom. It was dimly lit; the only light was a small antique lamp on the side table. This was a spacious room, but there was not much in it. It felt hollow. This room was a constant reminder of another time—a time of sex and sometimes warmth—now it was cold and empty. I crawled into the bed with my clothes still on and pulled over the covers. I switched the lamp off, lay my head down, and cried myself to sleep.

It was just another day in the life.





This is How we Lost
Going through a divorce,
Or a separation,
Is like experiencing a world war,
Firsthand.

Only, nobody else around you
Is going through it.

So,
You suffer in silence.

People ask you to put down
Your defence systems,
And hug or shake hands
Because it makes them
Uncomfortable.

While your home,
And your family
Is ransacked everyday
And every night
By your enemies.

While you suffer to survive
Hour-by-hour,
Pushing away
The PTSD
And the memories
Of the things
That you have seen
And experienced.

Every-single-time that you
Are triggered
By the ongoing violence
All around you,
You need to pretend that
Everything is ok.
Put on a happy face
Cry me a river
Build me a bridge
And
Get over it

Because everyone else

Around you
Is living their happy,
Peaceful
Lives.

If a tree falls,
And you don't see it,
Did it really make a sound?

And they wonder,
What is wrong with you?

You try to open your mouth
To tell them,
But
They close their eyes
And ears
Because war hurts everyone.

They walk away.
It's not their issue.
Get over it.

If it can't be proved
Without
A shadow
Of a doubt,

If nobody
Wants
To get involved,
And
Nobody wants to hear it,
Then did it really happen?

So, you constantly live
In secret shadows.

They don't see
The bruises
On your kids,
Under their sweater
And pants

Or the late-night
Visit

To the police station,
Where you made
That report
Again
To that officer

Or to the hospital.
Waiting long hours
In the waiting room
To tell the doctor
About
Your baby's bruises.

They don't know
All the painful emails
That you have to read
That re-traumatize you
From the violence that
Happened to you.
That You experienced
Again, and again.
Each-and-everyday.
Alone.

What is wrong with you?

Grow up!

Move on!

It's for the kids...

They do not see
And experience
All the unheeded complaints
Made to CFS
Because you are the other
Parent.

They don't see
The burn marks,
On your special needs
Son's
Fingers
From the
Hot burner

Dad made him
Touch.

He is non-verbal,
So,
It didn't happen.

They don't see
The scratches,
Across
My
Disabled son's
Back and arms.

All the bruises
Found all over
My baby
As soon as she
Came home.
Across her arms
Back
And
Abdomen
On her legs
And bum.

They didn't see that bruise
That looked like
A spoon.
Across my little boy's
Bum.

They don't see
The pneumonia
Our oldest son got
Again,
For the second,
And third time.
Because
His dad wouldn't take him in
To the emergency room
Because,
It was too inconvenient.

It's the mother's job,
So, wait until you go home.

They don't know what
Happened
To you,
Or me,
Or to our kids,
That lead to the war breaking
Out
All around us
Because we are censored to the
Public:
We can't publish this.
In their newspapers.
We can't call others to action,
Or ask anyone to save us.

Nobody knows how
Our little people
Live in poverty,
While in HIS care,
Or how
Their home was shaken
By bombs and grenades
That look like psychological
Warfare.

They don't know about
The raining gunfire,
That were hateful words used
To hurt us
Every. Single. Day.

They don't know about
The secret combinations,
The war alliances,
And the war tactics
Used to manipulate us
Day-in-and-day-out
To gain more territory.

They don't have to experience
The death and carnage,
The rot,
The flees,
The rats,
And the lice

That one sees
When they are deep-down
In the trenches,
Using lawyers like rifles,
On the bloody front lines.

They don't see
The razor wire put out
To keep "others" from
Their own lands,
And property.

They don't know
The late nights
That we have sat homeless,
Shivering, and starving
Because we were pushed out of
Our home.

They don't know about
The hateful words,
The spit, and rocks
That get thrown at you
By the enemy,
Even to this day.
When you aren't part of the war.

They don't understand
How people hate you
At first glance,
Even though
People who have never
Spoken a word to you.
Hate the very sight
Of your face,
Because of what they have
Heard or read.
About you.
From your enemy.
His enemy.
I am the enemy. too.

They love a good story.
It gives them a thrill,
So, they add to the hateful
Language.

They join in on the abuse,
And they increase your
Alienation
Pass on his message
Increase your suffering.
Because you are the enemy.
The bad guy.
He is the hero.
There can only be one winner,
And the winner writes the
Textbook.

People who are part of the
Opposition because,
They love
The hype of propaganda.
All publicity is good publicity:
But it's not.

Every morning you, me, I, we,
Get up and stand tall
Despite them.
It's not your fault that you are
hated,
Like a Jew.
Even though the very rationale
Is nonsensical.

People just love to hate
One another.
Especially you.

They see the weight gain,
And the stress lines that
Break free
All over your face
Like a spider making a web.

They see the thinning hair,
The blood shot eyes,
With bags growing
Heavier and heavier,
Day-in-and-day-out.
But instead of helping,
They laugh at you.
They join in.

You, me, I, we,
Are a joke
All because of all
The sleepless nights,
All-the-worrying
And the empty bank account
That you keep opening up
Always,
Just in case
Only to see that yet again,
That your kids' dad
Hasn't paid his child support,
Again,
For the next month.
So, you have to make up the
Difference.

You work hard
Making minimum wage
Just to make ends meet.
On top of everything else that
you Are doing
To make it look like everything
Is ok.

Because divorce is like a world
War.
Only, you have to send
Your most precious possessions
Over to the enemy who destroys
You
For a few days at a time.
And when they come back,
They are different than
When they left.

That same man who has
You followed by his friends,
Or by his extended family,
And even by strangers.

That same man who parks
Near your house
Late at night

To watch you through your open
Window,
To see what you are doing,
When the kids are all away...

The same man who gets
Strangers involved because
They get a kick out of gossip,
And those same spies keep
reporting
Your most intimate details
Back to your enemy.

You don't know who you can
trust
Anymore.
Every face could be a spy,
Or they could be an ally
With your enemy.

Secretly lying in wait
To destroy you,
And all that you know
And love.

The same evil humans
Who tell your kids that
You are the true enemy,
A wolf in sheep's clothing.

She doesn't really love you.
What you see isn't really what it
Is.
She is a self-centred monster,
And she only wants to use you
To get gain from me.

She doesn't mean it when
She tells you that she loves you,
Or when she kisses you
goodnight.
It's all a joke.
A show.
A play.
A lie.
A farce.



It's all to get back at me.

See those nice clothes,
And the new shoes that she
Bought you:

It was to make HER look good to
Others.

See that roof that she put over
Your head,
She did that to make ME look
Bad.

Don't look at my new car,
My vacations, or skiing trips.
Only look at our bare shelves
In our cupboards:
That's because she stole from
Me.

We have nothing because of
HER.

You don't have to tell people
When I hurt you:
Its none of their business.

Don't you want to protect me?

Don't you love me and want to
Keep me safe?

I am changing and trying:
She is only trying to take you
From me.
It will never happen again...
Until it does.
Honest.

Look at all these presents:
It's because I love you.
Look at all my sacrifices,
Things are different now,
And now let's have fun!

You don't need to remember
What happened before.

Remember, how sad I was
When I didn't see you
That last time?

Remember how scary that was
For you
And for
Me
When you were taken from me?

It was all her fault.
It didn't have to be that way.
She is a monster:
She wasn't trying to protect you.
Look at how funny
And nice
I am today,

I wasn't really like that.

It wasn't all that bad.

She put thoughts in your head,
And twisted my words.

It's her fault that the police held
Me in prison.
She put me there.
She had YOU
Put me there.

It's not my fault,
It's your fault—I mean
It's all HER fault.

Go and erase her evidence
Against me,
She only wants to take you
Away.
I'm a changed man now.
I am getting help now, see?
YOU HAVE TO SAVE ME.

Your mom used to be a good
Mother,

See the home videos
We looked like we were in love.
See how nice I am?
I'm still that same guy, see?

It is her who has changed:
She is different now.
She is no longer safe.
She is a bad mother.

You can't tell at first,
But if you look more closely,
It is there.
See?

Look at how grumpy she gets,
When you don't clean up
It's because she doesn't want
You.

Look at how tired she is,
She is spending all her time
At school
And work
Because she doesn't want to be
With you.

She only lies to you
When she says that
She is trying to provide
A better future for you.

She never wanted to be your
Mother.
She is a work-a-holic
A driven feminist—who only
Cares
About MONEY, MONEY,
MONEY
And nobody
But herself.

Look at all the new stuff that she
Has given you:
She bought it all with my
Money.
Look at how badly you have it

At my house,
I have nothing because
She has taken it all away.

Don't look at our new furniture
Or our new house
In a nice neighbourhood.
Only look at the empty
Cupboards,
Your worn-out shoes,
And those clothes that don't fit
You
Any more.

I'm providing for you the best
That I can.
I DON'T CARE IF YOU DON'T
LIKE WEARING THOSE PANTS,
THEY ARE ALL WE HAVE!

Only, ex-husband, you are the
Liar.
I work hard because you
Aren't paying me any money,
Again.
Yes, I am tired, because I have to
Work hard
To ensure I maintain a
Continuation to our children's,
Prior, lifestyle
Before I left you
PAS tells me so.
So that we can be safe.
To protect them from the
Gaping jaws
Of poverty
So that they know that they
Have food to eat
A safe home with friends and
family
That love them.
So that they don't have to worry
Any more.
I do all of this for them.
So that they don't have to be
Afraid.

Any more.

Meanwhile, you are saving all
Your money
Only for you,
Hiding it away,
To spend it on yourself
And what you want,
Leaving nothing for your kids
Because I am the enemy.

While constantly complaining
About
Any lack there could possibly be
In my home.
If there is no lack,
Then I am the enemy because
I have too much.
I'm spoiled
I'm selfish.
All I have, I have unlawfully.

Divorce is like a world war,
Only me and my family
Are the only ones who see it.
Nobody else knows

About all the times you let air
Out of my tires
So that my rubber blew off the
Rim,
On New Years
In a remote location
While I had kids in the truck.

Or how you loosened
All my lug nuts
So that all the tires fell
Off my vehicle
At that stop sign.

Or how you begged me
Not to tell
Anybody.
It was only an accident,
"...don't tell anyone because..."

YOU are so embarrassed.

"It wasn't what it looked like."
I was taking things out of
Context.
"Could we still be friends, for the
kids...?"

Or, how you shot a nail through
Their rubber.
Or how you hid that long, sharp
Wire
Up inside my wheel well
So that it tangled around my
Tires
When I drove the kids to school.

Nobody knows how you
Continually
Lay booby traps,
Like sharp bits of welding rod
And glass,
Behind my tires
In my driveway,
Or how you lay shards
Of broken glass
In my back alley.

Or how you planted
Poisonous plants in
My garden box,
Hoping that it would poison me
When I touched it.

Nobody knows how you keep
All our kid's new clothes,
One-outfit-at-a-time,
And send them home
In the old worn-out garbage.
That they got from you.

Then play dumb
Like you thought that you
bought them,
Or that somebody else
Gave them to you



Because they have been at your
house a long time.

Or, how you refuse to return
Them home to me,
Even when I have called your
Act.
That way I have to spend
My own money to buy more.

Nobody knows how you refuse
To return our kids to me for
Weeks at a time,
At exchange time
Or how you poison their minds
Against me
Every day that you have them.

So, when they come home, they
can't even look at me.
In the eyes.

Nobody knows that you lay
Economic bombs, chaos, and
Sabotage
In my wake,
By changing our children's
Personal information
To yours
At the doctors' office,
At their schools,
At the dentist, that one time
That you made it.

Or, how you make yourself
The primary contact
So that you can reverse the
Parenting regime in court
In six months', time.

Nobody knows
All the sneaky things
That you have our kids do:
Like turn off my video cameras
So, you can drive by without
Getting caught,

To plant a shard or two, of glass
In the yard.
Or erase my evidence
Of your abuse to me,
Or our kids,
From off my phone:
They never existed because,
Look they aren't there.

Or, how you have
Our precious babies steal
Important paperwork
Needed for my lawyer
In court
From my house.
From my bedroom.

Nobody knows how
I don't share my phone,
anymore.
Or my computers, or devices
With our kids
Because of what has happened.

Nobody knows how
I must lock my bedroom
All-times-of-the-day
When I am not in there,
So that they don't pilfer through
My stuff, like a criminal
Or to squirrel it away for you
The next time they see you.

Nobody knows how
Our second youngest
Elementary schooler
Hides food in his bedroom
Because mommy and daddy are
Fighting again.
He is afraid that when he wakes
Up
There might not be food to eat.

Nobody knows that
No matter how hard I work,

Or how much I provide for our
Kids,
It's not recognized, appreciated,
Or valued.

Our children live in scarcity
Mindset
Every day of their lives.
How they break their nice things
Because they don't feel like they
Deserve them.

How they are mean to Each
Other,
Sometimes,
Because they only want to feel
better:
If they can shift the pain onto
Somebody else,
Does that mean it went away,
Even for a moment?

Other people don't know how
I have to put cameras up all over
My property,
Just to keep you from driving
Past
The house
Again, and again.

People don't know how you
Took
Our oldest son's housekey from
Him
So that you could go through
My home with your brother,
"Just to check things out."

People don't know that you
Constantly talk about me to
Others,
And tell our kids schools that
I'm not an "involved parent"
Because they never see me at
Parent Council meetings,



Or volunteering during school
Hours
Like the other married moms
Do.

You aren't working, so why
Aren't you there?
Ex-husband
Joining in the work

I thought that you are an
Involved parent.
Only, why aren't you working?
Oh, because you don't want to
Pay your child support.
To our kids.

But, no, you are a marvel
At juggling it all.
All by yourself.

Only, you don't juggle any of it: I
Do.
I set up the doctors'
Appointments,
And skip work and school
To take our kids to them.
All-the-while you sit on your
Butt
At home being a waste of skin.
Also, I'm the one helping our
Kids
With their homework,
And tutoring them at their
Math,
Late at night.
When I am so tired I think
I can't take one more step.
I am the one financially
Supporting
Their interests and needs,
At home.
At school.
In daycare, afterschool
Programs, and extracurricular
Activities.

I'm the one paying for that
Class field trip,
Or sending them with donuts to
School,
So that they can say thank you
To their teacher
For all that they do.
I'm the one giving our kids'
service projects
In the evening,
Instead of TV before bed.
I am teaching them the value of
Their community.
I am the one teaching them
To bake cookies at night.
For school.

I am the one holding them in my
Arms
When they cry because it's all
TOO MUCH!
I'm the one putting them into
Therapy
To help all their trauma
It hurts so much that my eight-
Year-old
Told her teacher that she
Wanted to die,
I have another daughter
Who rips her hair out of her
Scalp,
One hair at a time.

I'm the one dropping our kids off
At football practices, rugby, and
Boxing.
I am the one buying their
Equipment, cleats, and jerseys
And making sure that they have
A bottle of water and a snack.
Even on your parenting time
Because you don't want to.
I am the one compensating for
Your lack
Thereof,

As you complain and point at
mine.
Giving them rides, and making
Excuses for you
When you don't show up for
Them on time.
I'm the one smoothing over the
Loose ends
And the wrinkles when you mess
Things up.
I am the one telling our kids that
everything is going to be ok.

But you are the hero, right?
You are the one making yourself
Visible.
You "act" like a good father for
The public eye,
While not actually being one.
You are the one doing nothing
And complaining about
Everything.

Telling everybody that I don't
Update you
Or inform you about events for
Our kids:
That's why you don't go!
Yet, those very people don't see
All the emails, and events on the
Joined calendar,
And the alarmed reminders that
I put on our joined app,
So that it tells you on your
Phone.
You have no idea what is going
On!
Because of me.

Every time I open my mouth to
Ask for help,
Or to tell people what
Happening to us,
You blow up like a machine gun,
And tell people that I am lying.



You tell people that I am
Discrediting you.
You tell people that I am
Sabotaging your character.
Only, I'm not.
I don't have time to waste so
Much effort.
I don't have ample hours of
Nothing to do,
Like you.

The only person sabotaging is
You.
Everywhere you go.

What's worse, is that people
Love a juicy bit of gossip.
Nobody questions the funny
Charismatic guy,
All they want to see is that
Smiling man walking down
His kids' hallways at their
Schools for no reason,
Or donating equipment that
They don't really need,
Because you are such a NICE
GUY!
Wow, look at that!
And why not?
They don't see how you haven't
paid your child support
Or section seven expenses
For another month.

They don't see how poorly our
Kids eat
While under your care.
They don't see that you don't
Pay
For their school fees, sports
Events, clean clothes, or new
Shoes,
Unless you receive a parade and
Public applause.
You see, you can only buy
Something expensive,

Here and there,
If you get to tell everybody
About it.
He needs a parade for a ponytail,
Look everyone!
Single moms all want to drop
Their pants.
Who is that WONDERFUL
MAN?

Meanwhile, you do nothing but
Hurt your kids.
They get more bruises than
Dollars from you.
You got more than half of
Everything,
Just to end their suffering.
But wait, you are the hero.
You have not paid full child
Support
Since the day we separated.
You have created psychological
And emotional
Warfare for our whole family
From the beginning,
But nobody knows about it, so
It's okay.

But, if I make you accountable to
Your responsibilities,
I am the monster.
How dare I get MEP involved
To ensure that you pay some of
Your child support.
How dare I get a lawyer to
Update our parenting
Agreement
To pay the accurate amount?
Or hold you accountable to our
Agreement.
How dare I ask you to be
Accountable to the law?

But, when every day we live in a
War zone,

And everyone else lives in peace:
There is something wrong with
me.
Why can't you just hug, shake
hands,
Sit beside each other and be
friends again.
It's for the sake of the kids.

I am so selfish.

Stranger,
You wouldn't ask this of a
Holocaust survivor.
You wouldn't ask them to hug
somebody
Who put their family in a gas
chamber
Would you?
You wouldn't put them next
To their abusers from camp
Ask them to forget about what
Happened to them,
And tell them to shake hands,
To sit beside each other, hip-to-
Hip
During, or after, the Second
World War
Would you?

That wouldn't be humane,
So how can you ask this of me?
He is still hurting me and my
Family,
And he won't stop,
And nobody will do anything
about it,
So, is that why it's different?
What do you expect me to do?
What more do you want me to
Give up for your comfort?

So, I just shove the pain down
Deep
In my stomach,
Put on a fake smile,



and pretend that everything is
okay,
because how dare I make other
people feel uncomfortable?
I am the only one living in a war
zone,
While they all get to live in
Peace.
Only... my kids feel the
Difference between
My actions and words,
And what is lingering
Underneath,

Between the lines.
Nothing is okay.
Nobody knows if it ever will be.
We all want peace,
But nobody will help us.
Because,

If you cannot prove what has
Happened to you,
Without a shadow of a doubt,
It means that it didn't happen.
So, every day we suffer
Over so many things

That never happened.
Maybe even in this very
Moment,
But if you can't see it...
Was it ever there?
What happened is only a
Memory,
An illusion.
If you didn't see it, it didn't
Happen.
So there.



Say Goodbye to Fireworks

Say Goodbye to Fireworks

Sunshine-sparkles; radiant; vivid-intensity,
Pressing against the heavy, inky blackness
Firecracker-luminosity that provoked the dim,
Twilight delight; a simple flicker—unworldly glow.
Continuously crackling; spitting; uninhibited spontaneity.

Breathtaking, unsophisticated beauty
Captivated the night and secured the innocent gaze,
Of youngsters everywhere.
A flickering lighthouse that inspired
Celestial-hope until the break of morn.

Fluorescent sparks that spurned the imposition of dusk.

A thief in the night; Nothing could stop you,

Not a thing

Nil

A glint, once refused to be subdued.
Nothing could parallel your glow,
It radiated, it beamed: pop, sizzle, crack.

Glitter-flash-blink!

Until mortality and time fit the bill.

Perplexed by simultaneous termination,
A kindle that filled the empty darkness.

Positive ripple effect and warmth,



Extinguished instantly by the Devine

Dumbfounded, descending, fading

footsteps escape into sleep.

Hearts and heads once illuminated by protective arms

Of crackling light all around us.

The past can't be changed, the future

not guaranteed.

Etched forever in memory,

You set fire to the night.



A Recipe for a Good Life

A Recipe for a Good Life

I am a scraggle-haired, barefoot girl,
Who craves the simple kiss of fresh country air on her skin.
Mountains, caves, lakes, and waterfalls
are interwoven into the fabric of who I am.
I was born and raised in the East Kootenay of British Columbia,
I had the most beautiful childhood.

I was raised by wolves, or rather, I was raised by men.
My dad brought me up as an equal,
and I ran barefoot alongside four busy, muscle-bound brothers.
I wasn't a lady: I was only a sister.

I grew up building fires, playing in the dirty creek,
catching frogs in the pond behind our house,
and riding up to the lake barefoot on my bicycle
as soon as the sun came up.

Some say that I was spawned in the water.
I lived in it all summer-long.
I grew up swimming, canoeing, and building rock-piles underwater,
Always picking saskatoon berries by the mouthful.

In winter, I remember...
Snow that fell up to my waste,
Hugging the windows and roof,
Shovelling a path to the front door of our cabin abode,

Snowmobiling from my backyard into the mountains.

I've had a good life.

My father didn't know how to raise a girl,

But he taught me about the good things in life:

Be grateful for all that you have and give when you can.

Live life in the moment.

Tell people what you really think about them,

because life is short.

Forgive, but don't forget:

Life lessons are the best kind of learning.

Love people, not things.

Use things, not people.

Remember that not everyone is going to love you,

but don't let that stop you from being your whole self.

The ones that stay will love you fiercely,

and the ones who don't aren't worth your peace of mind.

Your word is your bond, so don't say things that you don't mean.

Always say please and thank you.

Don't judge a book by its cover,

pay it forward, and good will come back to you again.

Every person has value,

but sometimes you have to look for it.

Our purpose in life is to leave the world better

than when we came into it,

and every person can make a difference.

I was taught that this was the recipe for a good life.

Now, I'm a single mom of five beautiful children ages 8 to 17.

Life has never been an easy one,

but it's always been worthwhile.

My children are my life's best work,

and the world is better with them in it.

I've never been so proud of people,

than the homemade people I have made.

Every day I come to school wearing my five babies on my back.

They are my heart; they are my life.

I don't always look perfect, but I'm here.

I show up every-single-day.

If I'm not here, I'm with them

because they are my favourite people.

Failure is not an option for me:

I'm doing everything for them.

I WILL do great things, because no matter what I do,

they will always be watching.

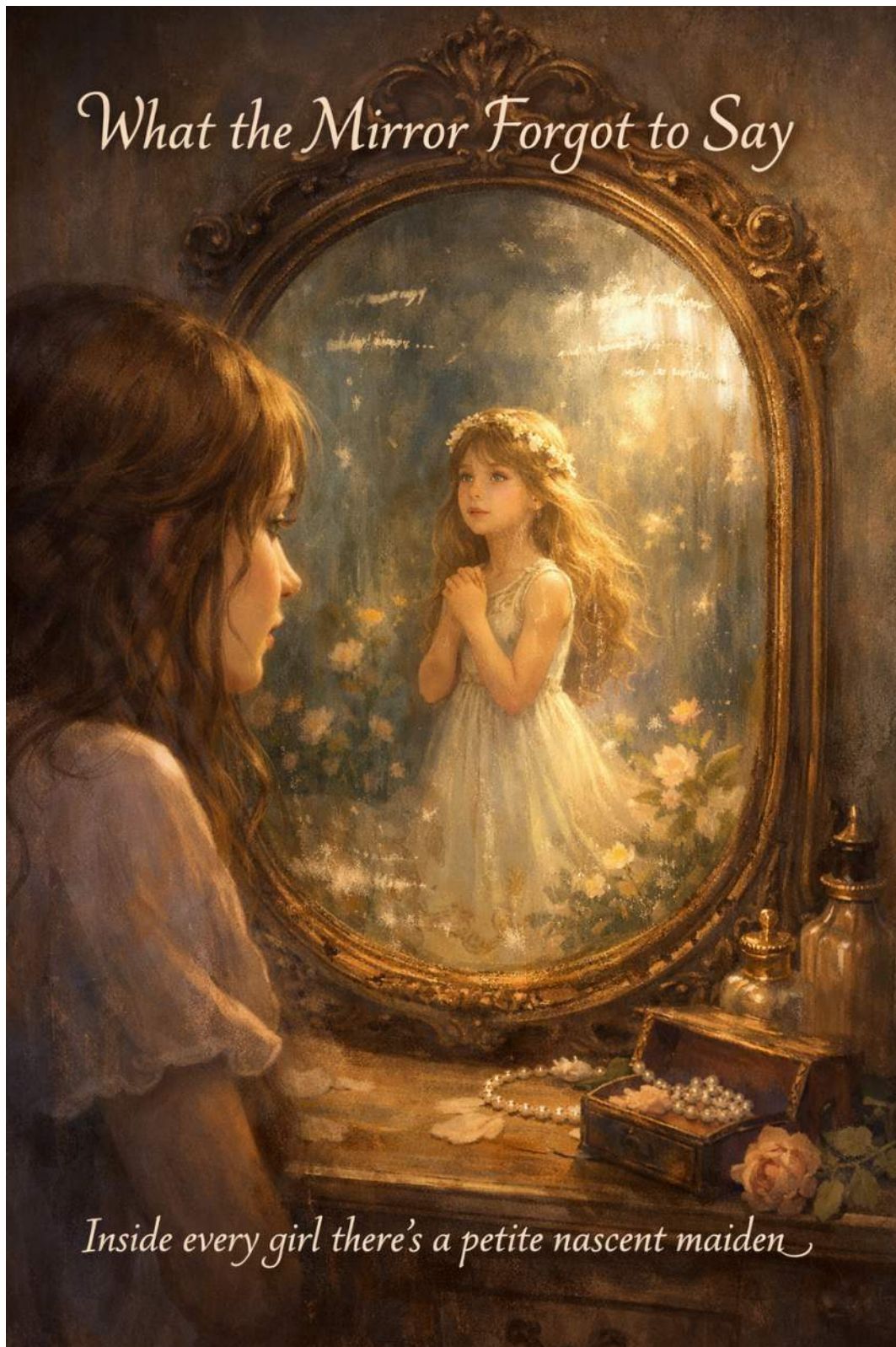
My journey may take longer than others,

and it may be more strenuous and challenging,

but I am determined to make it to the end.

I know that no matter what, I will succeed.





What the Mirror Forgot to Say

Inside every girl there's a petite nascent maiden

What the Mirror Forgot to Say

Inside every girl there's a petite nascent maiden,
Ample curls gently pecking each cheek,
An elegant naiad; goddess-lotus flower,
Gliding slippers sparkle twilight whipped cream.

A cherished angel each spawned from magic,
Each a precious gift homespun in ethereal glow,
Stitched from choice silks from the garden of Eden,
In composed anticipation; divinely supreme.

Every sequence is magnificently handcrafted,
Gracefully fashioned by dryad velvet gloves,
Every girl born of peerless perception,
With blooming grace, aerating blush-rosaline.

One angelic gift cannot take from another,
Each version a symbol of beauty, passion, and love.
Every girl is a gem of immeasurable wealth,
A celestial princess, a goddess, a dream.

