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Midday Service

SONYA CURTIS-TSHUMA

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By Sonya Curtis-Tshuma

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nana

Christ says to be like the master is enough
meaning we can never be him
and i get that
because we can never be you,
and as children, we can
hardly bare the weight
that defines you as mother
and are not worthy to
because the creation of love
that makes a mother
is not bound to a womb
or a child

the only thing we can do
is wrap you in what we become
until what's left is a statue,
an image to be created in
and to create from
as you once did for your mothers,
daughter of eve
and evenings waiting to give birth
daughter of wisdom
and whispers that scream
through generations as
"mama always said",
daughter of zion and creation

may we wrap you in the prayers
of our salvation,
in our thankfulness to God
for providing you

may we harden your image
in the stability of our success,

in the remembering of your lessons,
in the love we give to others

and may we stand you
in today and tomorrow
in our expectations,
in our conscience
as we learn from your mistakes
and mimic your successes

prince

if sin was meant to conquer
or iniquity strong enough to kill,
you would have died at birth

it is the flesh that makes you male
but God has not failed to name you prince,
as someone God-sent stop letting you be you,
boys be boys, and taught
you how to be a man, taught you stand

so for all the things that came to overwhelm you
that challenged your identity,
your completeness, your stance,
that wanted to invalidate you claim to a throne
and your inheritance that hails you prince,
for all the things you've been through

God thought enough of you
to bless you with a son or daughter,
someone worth the cost of your testimony
and the burdens bore,
to love and lead to Christ

so to the prophet with your ear to God,
keep talking, when the time is right,
it's your voice that will echo

to the priest and prince,
the earth is groaning,
children are dying
awaiting your arrival
we need you

to the man who has stepped in
where other fathers failed,
it's your stories we'll tell our children,
we love you

and finally to the father
who has stood
up the challenge,
the ground you walk on is your God's,
and the prayers that hold you up are ours,
we need, love, honor, and appreciate you

kingdom

Matthew 13:44

"The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field. When a man found it, he hid it again, and then in his joy went and sold all he had and bought that field.

the kingdom of heaven is like
the heart of a woman hidden
in stone, when God found it,
he hid it again, and in His compassion
took the life of His only begotten Son
to purchase her entire being

and all so that no one else could
lay claim to the ground
in which He found the heart
that he perfectly created
but lost behind emotions
hardened after being unused

hid it so that no one could
force it deeper into stone
by stepping on it,
crushing it because
they couldn't distinguish
it from any other rock

gave up His own
so when He finally exposed
the heart, it would be
only in the power of His spirit,
the safety of His presence,
in the resting of His peace

thought it was so much

to be treasured
that He bought her entire being
to make the crown worthy of its jewels,
the melody worthy of its beat
the body worthy of its heart

purchased her
so he could heal her scars,
her wounds, her marks
left from those who never
found the treasure or
understood that God seeks
to be most reflected in the heart

beauty's shadow

Proverbs 31:30

*Charm is deceitful, beauty is passing but a woman who fears the Lord
is to be praised (nkjv)*

shadows depend
like beauty depends
on the light and the object
on which it is cast

and when i am cast in the light
of waists the size of magazine covers,
it's funny how my waist expands,
how the images in my mirror
change so suddenly

in the moon light of nights
of only imagined conversations,
of responses to the lines of scripts,
my beauty fades and thins
and i am surprised to see anything
of a reflection in the morning

and in the light of
“let's just be friends”,
the light of blurred tears,
again my beauty morphs
into solid shapes,
nothing distinct,
nothing irreplaceable

in the light of solitude,
of chronic nights of no one
knocking at my door,

or a history of last dates
disguised as first,
my beauty wrinkles faster
than my wishes can catch up with

these lights,
they seem so endless
and i tire of lights
laying me on the ground
casting me in images
that may or may not be pleasing,
tired of being labeled

someone's opposite
someone's physical insecurity
someone's exotica

someone's urban
someone's plain
someone's model

so i'll no longer lay down
for lights that create borders
by showing only my outline
and filling me with darkness

valued

when i searched for the most
precious jewel to build
my temple,
i trampled over diamonds
and sapphire,
pushed aside silver and gold,
ultimately choosing your flesh
to form the likeness of my image
and your heart to hold my spirit,
then commanded mortals
not to duplicate a portrait of
my essence,
because man cannot correct perfection,
you are beautiful
because you are my creation
and your love my reflection

making love

in us
God's kingdom expands,
gains territory
as we explore promised land,
melt and are formed
together as clay
in a new image of God,
given seashores
to fill with the sand of
our seed, given new names,
a combined destiny

we do not make love
create emotion,
this isn't practice
for a maybe
and a promise

we give an offering
in response to vows made,
we wrap around each other
like the rings encircling our fingers

and in this offering
up to each other,
we confirm covenant
as a living sacrifice
before God
on an altar of covers

there is mystery
fear, trembling,
the shedding of blood
the assurance of love,

speaking in tongues

the purity
of undefiled vessels,
we bring no illnesses
no baggage
no images of anyone else

we are mature enough
for any consequence
of this covenant,
no one brought surprisingly
to an altar
not knowing they'll sacrifice
their life for an imitation of love
because there was no ram
in the bush

we do not make love,
do not create emotion
and when he gets up
nothing is ripped out of me,
this is not an apology,
it isn't the gold laid
over stone to hold together
what is crumbling,
covering up
 our doubt,
 our desire to be grown,
 our desire not to be left alone

we do not make love
nor take lightly
what God creates
when veils are ripped,
when blood is shed

A close-up photograph of a guitar's fretboard. The fretboard is dark wood with seven circular wooden fret markers. Each marker has a letter carved into it, spelling out 'WOODS HOLE' from top to bottom. The guitar's body is a light-colored wood, and the soundhole is visible at the bottom. The background is a vibrant blue wood-grain texture. The text 'Thanks for Reading' is written in a white, elegant cursive font on the right side of the image.

Thanks
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