

## Grace

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

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

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

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

It could have turned out much differently.  
There are others who have suffered less than I,  
who collapsed under the weight of violence and  
abandonment and  
who's fragile innocence was torn  
asunder.

But,  
For some unknown reason,  
the thunder in my soul,  
somehow,  
demanded that I raise the spirits,  
like Jesus raising the dead.

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

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

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

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

