



A SEASON OF LIFE
IN VERSE

Face-to-Face

BY ERICKA CLAY

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“Pour your heart out face-to-face with the Master.”
From Lamentations 2:19 (MSG)

Heart Digested

I am falling away,
ink on paper,
heart digested,
wet then dry.
All of me is words,
You read, fingertips
dipping into my braille,
Knowing every little
basic, complex thing
Within my human
cells.
Keep me humble,
kind,
Without reproach,
without regret
Without disdain
For the people
You judge
and You alone.

Wrists and Ankles

There is so much I want to say—
To type in a small, inch-like
breadth
where I could offer my failures
in an unfailing paragraph,
And watch You wipe
them all away.
But sometimes,
the ink still penetrates,
a remembered shadow
of all the things said
and done, the thick
strap grasping my ankles
As I walk closer and closer
to Your freeing hand.
So here they are, wrists
And ankles,
And all the words
I'll never say,
But You've always
Known from
the moment
You set my life to
the tick of Your
time—here, now
forever,
and ever.

Amen.

All This Much

The sin of me is so small
And the brilliance
and beauty of Your
universe, so wide,
so far.

I am infinitesimal,
lone and lost
in all my ways
Without the strength
Of the same hand
That painted
the macro-skies
And shaded
Them as dark
As my shadowy
heart.

It's Your light
That brightens
the very core of me
And it will always
Be the pervasive
ask–
Why do You love me
and could you possibly
all this much?

This Untamed Soul

Broken bits
and far sharper
Than I ever meant to be,
But smoother too—
honey on flint.
Run your finger
Flat against this
untamed soul,
Like a lion
roaring,
Prowling,
Or the Shepherd
circling,
the metronome
Clicking to this beat
called life.

This Cultural Sea

Where is this going,
You
and me?
And as long
as we're together,
Set against this cultural
sea who hates You
(and me by association)
Let me never associate
with anyone but You.

He Conquered Those Too

What is that noise,
That wretched sound
coming out of—
me.

Alone, ghosted in the night
And often during the day,
watching what others
categorize as "normal"
And often wondering
When my time will cease.

And then there He goes again,
lifting my head
To my last world
Of troubles,
Showing me
how He conquered
those too.

Their Heart and Yours

I am not the rebel
Except for that one time,
and all the others—
Little girl sitting alone
Against
the tide of those
Who can only sit
together
Even when the sitting,
the complacency,
hurts their heart
and Yours.

Heart Once Dark

Inner sanctum,
I'm invited,
and what bright
light from
a heart once
dark.

Could it be
that all your
Teachings
aren't mine to
pile and play
With like poker
Chips
but to make
A real profit,
An extension,
A forever loan
To those who
Need you,
And know you,
On one level,
and looking forward
To the next?

Lungs-Deep

I have no appetite
for reconciling the girl
Who was
To the "who is"
of my current situation.
It's still constant though,
Isn't it,
The current of You
singeing through,
vein-to-vein,
until I remember
moments of me
Turning my back
Only for You to turn
me forward.
Like in the chapel
when all was quiet,
You moving my fingers
Through the hymnal,
Me picking up little bits
of You I so desperately
Wanted to seek.
Or through a girl,
A friend,
a nobody,
(Or was that me?)
Singing lungs-deep
against the lookers-on
Who barely knew
Your name.

How You've always
Been there
even when I barely
was.

Strain of Holy

I am never alone
even when alone
in this room
With the thoughts
From the brain
You've given me
And the pleas
from the heart
You've crafted.
May I always
know all the others
You've crafted,
Turning their
flesh this way
and that,
Looking
for the soft
strain of holy
that echoes Your own,
and answering
Their call
lost in a room
too dark for them
to see.

Praying Mantis

I egg-shelled
out my heart
today,
like that time
I asked the boys
to kill the praying
mantis.

Limp little thing,
still praying in my
hands–

The very image
of me now,
limp but no sleeper,
bearing the worst
of this world
while cradled
in Yours.

Little Ol' Me

I am small, a little thing
still childlike
in all I do and say.
And there around me,
Brains apt in the art
Of manipulation
and frowning
the smile on my face.
It's more than
Anyone can bare,
Let alone little ol'
Me.
But there I become,
white lioness,
Prowling around
With my King
at my side
as my enemies
Watch Your
glory escape
All inches of
You.
Your brilliance,
More than the sun,
More than all I could
ever expect for
little ol' me.

Close to My Skin

The why do I do
of what I do
is a deeply set
temperament,
An underlying
undoing of all
You've done
that I tend
to wear—
sometimes
like a scarf,
sometimes
like the base
layers close
to my skin.

Once Upon a Time

Who am I
To turn away
a hardened heart
When You
Once upon a time,
Humbled
my own?

Screaming “Timber”

Worms eat the inside
Of my fruit,
My core,
My heart.
I go to wave,
Say hello,
pat the baby,
kiss the cheek,
Falling over,
Waist-deep,
Screaming “timber”
Inside my head.
My hands, though,
Go deep with Your
guidance,
Your always knowing
The way,
Peeling back
bits of my bark,
And all of the worms
That have eaten my
good heart,
my good core,
the good fruit,
You’ve made
For me to feed
Your sheep.

Float and Go Rogue

I am not good,
but bad
and holy
and saved.

And
the "both/and"

Of everything
ever

Because You
are that great,
to sever through
This great divide,
needle and thread
tucked between teeth,
Uniting the bits
And parts of me
that desire to float
And go rouge.

Your Peace Floods

It's a little bit fuzzy
and overloaded,
this brain of mine,
but when Your peace
floods, a reminder,
that knowing the world
Let alone saving it,
Is not my task
to claim.

That Old Familiar Lie

What is that old
familiar lie,
I tell
to myself,
like stories
to a child?
That I'm too
much,
And You'll
never love me,
But how can
I even write
this
Ending
When I'm
not the one
with the
pen?

The Blood of Your Son

The further I search,
The deeper You are,
All depths,
of all time,
And how is
Anyone
to fathom
something
like that,
without
the gift
You sent
in the blood
of Your son?

A Soft Whistling

In awe always,
because when I
look back,
even that bad
had been good
in the way You
used it like
a fine-tipped
scalpel,
working away
my layers of fear
And always asking
"Do you still trust me?"
like a soft whistling
while you worked.

Awake

I don't understand it,
how You could be
all I ever want or
Need when this
90's kid needed
Everything just
to feel alive.
But You've granted
Me a peace beyond
this generation
and the next,
nothing Beanie Babies,
Tickle-Me-Elmo,
or every boy band
this side of the Milky
Way could ever
provide.
So goodbye, to the
Alanises and Sheryls
who sang my angry
soul to sleep
And hello
To the One True God
who lovingly
nudges me
Awake.

This Worn Heart

I can't see too well
Out of my dark
and into Your light,
But softly,
You graze fingertips
Against the skin
of my lids,
And there,
My eyes open,
seeing all that's
come to pass—
an anchored
road
linking
this worn heart
to Yours.

Time

It sits and stirs
and works itself
away,
illusive,
like sand,
until I
remember
it's only
a very real
fiction
of Your
imagination,
one You watch
and tend
deeply
apart from
it.

Your Goodness

A man died
yesterday,
just another
martyr making
international
news, although
most don't,
working nameless
but fortunate
to know Your name.

Help us
Wade through,
sift out,
work out,
all the wrong
and box it up,
pick it clean
give it to
the angels
to burn,
while
the only things
left in our hands
is Your goodness.

The Condition of Our Hearts

I wonder what
would happen
if we stopped
with all the outside
talk–
lamenting
our circumstances–
And instead,
lamented
the condition
of our hearts.

For All the World

For all the world,
here I am
desiring all
that's better
than You,
but when
I look to find
where I've
stored these
treasures,
I find
only
the moths,
the rags,
the worn
dreams
that never
really
could warm
me anyways.

Finally Free

Headlong
we go into something
I never thought
we'd find.
Little holes leading
out
and into
the "anywhere but here."
And for so long now,
how I've labeled
and categorized
them,
set them apart,
Stored them away.
And here I
am now, called
to dive headfirst,
but isn't that
the point?
This season
of healing,
growing
discontent
with all the status
they continue
to quo?
So, I'll grab his
hand,
and he'll grab mine,
the one You made

for him,
and we'll embark
into what
You wrote far
beyond time,
finally free.

Thank You

Thank you for reading. May God bless you and keep you.

Whenever, though, they turn to face God as Moses did, God removes the veil and there they are—face-to-face! They suddenly recognize that God is a living, personal presence, not a piece of chiseled stone. And when God is personally present, a living Spirit, that old, constricting legislation is recognized as obsolete. We're free of it! All of us! Nothing between us and God, our faces shining with the brightness of his face. And so we are transfigured much like the Messiah, our lives gradually becoming brighter and more beautiful as God enters our lives and we become like him.

2 Corinthians 3:16-18 (MSG)

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