BELOVED: Greatly Loved

She wasn't even 3-foot tall, toddling around on her gramma's heel hops (high heels) with gaudy plastic beads draped about her neck and a slinky negligee hanging from thin shoulders. Balanced against one pudgy little cheek was a corded handset from the broken rotary phone and traces of Mommy's lipstick were smudged around her Cupid lips. I couldn't help but smile secretly as I listened into the one-sided conversation at a distance. 'But, baby, I need ya home n'later than 5'aclock cuz I gotta leave then and I don't have no time to wait fer'ya, so don'cha let ur baby down now, ya hear?' The little half-pint shifted her weight, jutting out her opposite hip where one hand had landed. A blush spread across her cheeks as she murmured, 'Aw shucks baby, yer makin' me flutter.' Even little girls are born with an innate natural ability to mimic 'Once Upon a Time' and 'Happy Ever After' fairy tale moments.

Most everyone has been in love–or thought so anyway–at least once in their lifetime. Many have fancied love, dreamt of it, been colored by love's blush and sickened by its sting. We have been captivated by it, and arrested because of it, and completely sideswiped and blindsided by the effects of it. I will treasure for a lifetime when my firstborn grandson said at the precocious age of about five that he was going to marry me when he got big, because I was his 'bestest girl ever'.

There are also days when we feel completely unlovable. Or unloved. There are people we know who have been neglected, others abused, for others silenced, and for some, exploited and trafficked and shamed. Because of what humanity has made out of love and the gross injustices perpetrated on another being who hoped to be treated with decency and care, there has grown a misconception of what love really is. Only God knows that–what love truly is. He is the author of love, the only One completely capable of unconditional love. In fact, God ***is*** love, and He spoke the world into existence through intonations of His love language for who He considers beloved children. The greatest expression of that love language is Jesus, the gift God gave for you and me.

Why is it that we spend so much of our lives looking for, and totally missing, the promise of perfect love, when it is right there all along? The One Who created you and me calls us His *Beloved, which* means 'to be greatly loved'. The God of the Universe has taken every measure to woo mankind to Himself, thus birthing the greatest love story ever written. And it keeps being written, and the effects of His love in our lives exposed, if we will allow Him to dress us in love.

Colossians 3:12-14 'So, chosen by God for this new life of love, dress in the wardrobe God picked out for you: compassion, kindness, humility, quiet strength, discipline. Be even-tempered, content with second place, quick to forgive an offense. Forgive as quickly and completely as the Master forgave you. And regardless of what else you put on, wear love. It's your basic, all-purpose garment. Never be without it.' (MSG)