BELOVED: *Love is Large*

The girl knelt to retrieve her belongings scattered across the ground. Tears stung her eyes and, keeping her chin tucked, she tried valiantly to not swipe angrily at them. She was perhaps madder at herself than the cruel circle of girls that guffawed as they marched away, victorious. Sometimes her emotions couldn't be put away as they seemed to frolic for everyone to see. She flattened her face, ironing out a grimace and willing her lips to go straight, just as a boy stooped in the dirt next to where all the innards of her backpack were strewn. 'Let me help you,' he murmured kindly. One by one, he picked her books off the ground, dusting each one cautiously before placing them back in her book bag. When he was finished, his hands were decorated with dust, and mud clung to his nails, but he didn't seem to care. 'Are you new here?' he inquired, to which she slowly nodded, willing the tears of gratitude to hide. She didn't want to embarrass herself, or lose any possibility of a friend. He smiled warmly, sticking out a dirty hand. 'Name's Ben,' he grinned, and then conspiratorially, he added, 'Let's go get a soda and I'll properly introduce myself.'

It wasn't until much later when they were talking that she finally got up the guts to ask. 'So, why did you help me? How did you know to gather my things, like how much it would mean to me? It was the kindest thing anyone could have done.' He scuffed at the ground, digging up pebbles with his toe and small puffs of dust rose in the air. 'Cuz it was the *right* thing to do.'

'But,' she argued, 'how did you know?' Eventually, he sighed, 'It's what my dad would've done for my mom. If I treat others the way my parents treat each other, it'll never be wrong,' he admitted ruefully, realizing just how true this sentiment was.

The Bible says in I Corinthians 13 (v.3), 'I am bankrupt without love.' Wouldn't the world be a richer place if that's how we lived? Today, a little boy asked if he could help me as I cleaned up our business to get ready to close. He added, 'I wanna make some money so I can help my mom with the bills.' He is six years old! But he is old enough to see that his single mom is tired and worried, fearful she can't make rent. Everyday, I watch on the TV how mankind is blowing each other up. Word bombs dot every sentence the media conveys, not to mention what we do to one another on all the social sites. Then, there's real bombs being detonated everywhere; intended to kill and destroy and decimate decency and humiliate humanity. But just one kindness makes up for so much animosity. One act can restore the injustice, causing hope to spring up so peace can thrive again.

The other day, I was almost terrified to tell my husband that in my haste, I'd scraped the wheel of my car on a curb (why do they make those aluminum wheels so soft and curbs so solid?!). I had blemished it good, and it was money we didn't have to repair it. Chuckling, he agreed I got it good; then added, 'It's ok. Accidents happen. We'll make it good as new.' Tears sprang to my eyes. Love covers a multitude of sins.

That's what Jesus did for you and for me. He came and made us good as new. He took our blemishes and repaired them; whitewashed our stains. Not only did He dust off our belongings and carefully set us straight again after the enemy bullied and harassed, intending to harm us deep, but Jesus shows up repeatedly. He fights for us; He loves our fearfulness off of us, and mends our brokenness with His grace. That's how extravagant His love is, unrestrained, costly, indulgent, recklessly wasteful, exorbitant; lavishly, He pours out His love on us, drowning us in oceans of grace. His love is forever effervescent, bubbling up and overflowing, drenching you and me in a love so large, it cannot be contained.

I Peter 4:8 'Above all, constantly echo Gods intense love for one another, for love will be a canopy over a multitude of sins.' TPT)