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THE REDEMPTION OF MORE,
THE COURAGE TO STAY SOFT,
THE STRENGTH TO STAY



REDEMPTION DOESN'T
REMOVE THE LONGING—
IT TRANSFORMS IT.



Part 5: The Redemption of More

The Courage to Stay Soft, the Strength to Stay

Sometimes the greatest calling in life is simply this: to be the person you needed when you were young. There is a quiet kind of bravery that doesn't make headlines, it doesn't shout, it doesn't perform, it doesn't win awards, it simply *stays*.

It *stays soft* when it would be easier to harden, it *stays open* when it would be safer to close; it *stays "more"* when everything around says, "Just be less."

I have come to believe that staying "*more*" is one of the most radical acts a soul can make in this world, because being a more person is not easy. Being "*more*" means walking into rooms and feeling the room before anyone says a word. Being "*more*" means carrying a heart that absorbs *more*, breaks *more*, loves *more*, and therefore, hurts *more*. Being "*more*" means seeing others' pain before they're ready to speak it, it means wanting to hug someone who just wants to push you away, it means showing up again, even when it wasn't noticed the first time.

But here's what I've learned: there is a strength in staying soft; there is a power in refusing to go numb; there is a holiness in still hoping for "*more*." The world doesn't always reward this kind of person, sometimes, it calls us needy, or too emotional, or codependent, or unstable.

But I'll tell you what we really are:

We are prophets of Presence.

We are lovers of Truth.

We are midwives of healing.

We are the ones who refuse to give up on people.

We are the ones who don't walk away when it gets messy.

We are the ones who cry,

not because we're weak,

but because our hearts haven't calcified.

How hearts remain soft: we are "more."

And the truth is, I've tried numbing; I've tried shutting down; I've tried becoming what people wanted, quieter, cleaner, more palatable, but every time I did, something sacred inside me withered, something divine within me dulled and I knew: *I was not meant to shrink*. So, I decided: I would not become less to fit into spaces that couldn't hold my *more*.

I would not minimize the tenderness; I would not apologize for the passion; I would not forsake the mission I didn't ask for, but now embrace with my whole heart, because this is my calling: to be a voice for the "*more*" people. To bless them; to name them; to tell them: "You're not crazy; you're not broken; you're not too much; you are sacred; you are powerful; you are deeply, divinely right to want more and you're not alone. I'm here, still standing, still soft, still loving, still more."

And if that's you too, I want to say this as clearly as I can: Don't change, stay "more," it's the bravest thing you'll ever do.

From the ashes of misunderstanding rises a new kind of humanity, more-men and more-women, who've been through the furnace and emerged not charred, but refined.

They are not perfect; they are not immune to suffering, but they are **willing**, willing to feel, to hope, to rise again with open hands and open hearts. More has forged them into lovers of the broken. More has trained them to see beauty in places others miss. More has made them tender, resilient, and courageous.

These more-souls are the teachers, the mentors, the sacred interrupters of business-as-usual. More-souls do not settle for performative kindness or shallow faith. More-souls insist on depth, on truth, on presence and they show up again in the lives of those others forgot.

I've seen these "more" reflections in hospital corridors, alongside of those suffering. I've seen them in single mothers and weary nurses, brokenhearted pastors, leaders, servants, *regular folks* and children, who should have given up by now, but haven't. More doesn't retire with age, it matures. More doesn't fade with hardship, it deepens.

There's something holy about those who have carried pain and chosen love anyway; the ones who could have shut down but chose instead to become safe havens, I call them the redeemed more-people. These "redeemed ones" are not afraid of big emotions, deep needs, or sacred questions, they are the ones who will sit with you in your sorrow and not try to fix it. They will listen without rushing; they will hold space without condition, and in doing so, they redeem even more.

Because the truth is, more is not just a desire, "more" is a **mirror** of the Divine: The One who formed galaxies and laced the DNA of dragonflies. This One is the same One who put a longing in us that no job, drug, relationship, or religion can ever fully satisfy.

We were made for the Eternal, for the One, the Divine Expression. The One more than enough, the Great I AM, to whom and to where we cry, "in-to-me-see." That's true INTIMACY, the longing for more. That is why I believe: love is the only force strong enough to tame and transform more, not love as sentiment, not love as control, but love as Presence. A Love that sits down in the ashes and says: "I'm not going anywhere." Love that sees the storm and says: "I still choose you." Love that whispers into the ache: "You are not too much, you are mine." This is the redemption of more, the Love of more: not that it is erased, but that it is **EMBRACED**. And through that embrace, more becomes not a danger, but a gift, a calling, a sacred fire that lights the way home for us, and for others still walking in the dark.

One normative day in the Hospice continuum, I sat with a man in hospice care, a self-proclaimed atheist, weary and uncertain. He expressed concern when he learned I was a chaplain. "I don't believe in God," he said carefully. I smiled gently and asked, "Do you believe in love?" He paused. "Yes. I do." "Then," I said, "you believe in God." He looked puzzled. "I didn't ask if you believed in a Baptist God, or a Lutheran God, or a Catholic God, did I? I didn't mention any denomination; I asked if you believed in love." And then I shared something ancient, something true: "God is love, and in Him there is no darkness at all. If you say you love God, whom you cannot see, but do not love your brother, whom you do see, you are lying to yourself. Love is not confined to buildings or doctrines; Love is the fingerprint of the Divine."

He sat quietly, I gestured to the beautiful chair beside him, handcrafted, sturdy, expensive. “That chair didn’t just fall out of the sky,” I said. “It had a manufacturer, a designer, an engineer. So, if that chair has a creator, how much more does a fragile, beautiful, complex human being like you and I have a Designer?” He softened, as if something opened in him, not toward religion, but toward wonder, toward **more**.

You don’t have to belong to a church to belong to Love; you don’t need a pulpit to believe in meaning, because God is not locked behind stained glass or creeds; God is not the property of denominations. The Eternal One is Love, and wherever Love is, there God is, and I believe this Love, the purest “more,” calls to us all, and through that embrace, “more” becomes not a danger, but a gift, a calling, a sacred fire that lights the way home for us, and for others still walking in the dark. A cry with a beautiful invitation to, “*come to me all you who are weary and burdened and I will give you rest.*”

*May your longing never again be mistaken for lack.
May your ache lead not to shame, but to sacredness.
May you stay soft, not because it’s easy, but because it’s holy.
And may the fire of your “more” light the path home,
for yourself, and for those still stumbling in the dark.*

Reader Reflection:

Who in my life has carried pain and still chosen to love?

Where do I see love—not sentiment, but presence—calling me to stay?