

Beauty for Ashes

“A thousand times I’ve failed, still your mercy remains—should I stumble again, still I’m caught in your grace.”

Countless times I have written this, my Testimony, only to fall again... sweeping my hurt under the rug, to function and not seek true healing. Why then am I writing this again? I am not sure—I love to write for one, second something in me is changing. I have a nick name taynawin (tree n a wind) from the movie Nell. To just sway like the wind-- now I feel more like the scripture Jeremiah 17:8 pertaining to the tree by the riverbank that’s roots run deep. I feel my feet becoming more planted, stable. My desire to know God the Father on a deep, meaningful level and allow room for God to heal areas in my life is where my True Healing began.....

My testimony began as a small redheaded baby, not wanted by her mom or dad, placed up for adoption—taken in by her grandparents. They did the best they could and provided a strong Christian foundation still there was some voids—because of age difference/generation and their hurts never dealt with. We parent the way we were parented unless we break that cycle, I am breaking the cycle.....

I knew something was different about me at an early age—my attraction to girls, dressing like the boys and playing with the boys—I tried to become one of them. At my parents' disapproval, often questioned by Family members if I was GAY? Oh me—NEVER! One day my biological father even told that he would make me have a sex change if I didn’t “straighten” up! To be gay or a lesbian in the small town where I grew up would be the unthinkable, which in turn made me bury this confusion further. Being sexually molested as a child from a male family member, my trust in males quickly became distorted. Even though it was so long ago, I remember where and how in complete detail, having some memories haunts me in my dreams to this day. I was adopted and strongly did not feel I fit in with my family; I felt the outcast or "black sheep". I had red hair, freckle’s, and was often teased by my boyish looks. I wanted to BE a boy; I tried to hide my body appearances, my clothes, and haircut. Everything about me reflected a boy. It wasn't until my junior year in High School that I grew tired of the name calling and tried to become more like a girl, at least on the outside. Still even as I grew older, on to graduate from High School and on throughout College; my friends and family were always questioning me.

Being brought up in a strong Christian environment I would run to God and my beliefs and create this disguise/mask for others to see. I needed to become more and more feminine! Wearing makeup, how I dressed and acted on the inside was so much more of an internal conflict was sometimes unbearable. Yet, God would provide throughout my life wonderful women of God who would nurture me and point me in the right direction, some I never shared with, but God knew—I Thank Him for this today.

Still in my disguise, or mask, I began dating and dreaming of marriage and children. Meeting my Man of God, whom I had been praying for, became my motivation for getting over this internal conflict of my life. Much to my disappointment, meeting, falling in love, and marrying this Man God gave me never made it go away.

Life, work, deciding to have children, two precious boys, would only once again be a disguise.

After almost 7 years of marriage, years of pushing something down that needed to be dealt with came out like a Volcano erupting. I shared in tears this unbearable secret from my past with him that I just could not hide or fight any more. I gave him all the options of ending this marriage, but he always said "No". Unfortunately, he thought it was cool, and encouraged my exploration.

Later when my feelings grew stronger for the women he began to get concerned as to the mistake and toll this played on our marriage. Countless times, repeating the same cycle over and over, our marriage is a miracle in itself. My husband knew that God had brought us together and God would bring us through this even though I was not there yet.

Behind his back, still trying to deal with this on my own, looking up Homosexual on the Internet. What started out as to get information for help also gave me insight on all that I had fought for so long, the temptation was incredible. Late at night, with my family in bed I began exploring! Chat Rooms to Email to "meetings" gave way to numerous affairs. My husband knew something was wrong, but our problems had grown so that neither cared at this point. I threw myself in work and this New Lifestyle. I went to Gay Bars, parties; a whole world new had been opened to me. I finally felt free; like I belonged and was accepted for who I thought I really was-I had found the real ME. I was a mom by day and someone completely different at night; I lived for the Night! As though the night would actually hide my new life style and me that began taking control over me even throughout the day.

I met several women, in search of this person I felt I longed for all my life, one in particular I fell in love with, making my once internal conflict now external, to choose her over my family. We were together for almost 3 years before "my night life" started catching up with me. Drinking slowly became my escape from this pressure that consumed the everyday motions, even to my dreams at night while I tried to sleep. I began feeling there was no escape. Becoming two different people, the reality of it was killing me on the inside. Here I had found this woman who I fell in love with, always secretly dreamed about, more and more we wanted to be together, but how? My life was out of control. Where could I go, who could I talk too? No one seemed to understand; but like before, God still not giving up on me, laid a friend in my path that I began to trust. She loved me unconditionally, yet would disagree in love to all I would tell her. For once in my life I was developing a healthy, close friendship with another woman. I could tell her everything and yet she would always call me the next day and still would pray for me. I still was not shaken.

Watching my life, my once strong Christian Values disappear before my eyes I slowly became a ticking bomb. My closest friends, my family, my lover knowing something was wrong, as I would push them away. During this time my partner was also ready for more and wanted me to choose. At times I wanted to kill myself than to deal with pressure and the choice I now faced, there seemed to be no relief. At times I would be so happy on top of the world and other times I would just find myself just weeping before God and everyone around me, a basket case. I could barely get out of bed each day and put one foot in front of the other. How could I have grown up feeling like this from a child? I knew I was hurting my family, but what was so wrong with this NEW ME? I began to question my Christianity and whether or not I was actually born this way. None of it made any sense to me. I was on a mission—a mission that almost destroyed my life, marriage, my family, and me. The conclusion was one of the two—I was going to kill this in me, or IT was going to kill me.

In desperate need of help, once again, I fell back on my face before God. NO MORE SECRETS, something had to give. I started looking over the Internet for help. Amazingly, there were so many others like me. I began ordering books, CDs, anything on same sex attraction. Facing this fear and learning that I was not the only one in world like this became encouraging! With my unconditional friend cheering me on with prayer and support, God was restoring my confidence in him and me. The scripture, where "A friend sticks closer than a brother" Proverbs 18:24—I

had two, Jesus and her; All these transpiring events began to bless me and open my eyes that something else was at work here in me. She drove 5 hours with me upstate JUST for a meeting that began to turn my life around. She sat there as I wept before these strangers and poured my heart out to them for help. McKrae encouraged me and showed me even more painful steps that I needed to take to get my life back, and my family. There is still much of that advice that I have to work on as I chip away at it all. Now with new friends, a witness beside me, my best friend, to help hold me accountable, God is moving in my life! All the uncertain fears of my childhood of this deep dark secret coming out and how anyone could and would love me through this began to unfold. Giving me hope to return home to my family and my husband. It has been a steep climb and every day begins with knowing that God created me and I am His and He is mine. Change? YES, it is possible. I am going to give it all to Him that created me.

To drive out the Giant that has been IN MY LAND for so long. I did not choose my same sex attractions but I did however choose to act on my feelings and longings opening a huge door to sin that flooded my life and family. I went against what I have known all my life, that this was not God's plan or will for my life. Even though I went in that direction my true feelings had always objected, knowing the Truth.

Today, I look back and am just amazed as to where I have come. I am mirror myself through the eyes of the one who created me and concentrate on my relationship with Him as He began to speak to me through His word. I also learned a lot on the roots of same sex attraction and came to terms on why I had such strong tendencies, days get easier and easier. I had asked for help. "Ask and you shall receive, seek and you shall find." Although, sometimes I have not been in a place where I have been willing to receive the answer—it's there, "You shall know the truth and the TRUTH will set you Free." I long to keep my heart pointed in the right direction, to find the TRUE me that God made me to be.

God has blessed me with so much unconditional love through this journey. He is truly faithful! Day by day He is restoring the years "that the locust have eaten." I LOVE My husband more than ever, daily learning to turn it ALL over to God. I am not where I want to be but I am not where I used to be. Day by day God is bringing Beauty from The Ashes.