



Dear One Who Cares Enough to Serve My Life:

I am a child for now. One day I will be the cascading consequence of your touch. Last night in my room, I found myself releasing a watershed's gathering of tears. I fell asleep as a river. When I woke I realized what that river was: a flow of gratitude. For you.

Dear Caring One . . . If ever you find yourself as a river filled with too much . . . just too much . . . I hope you will take out my words, and swallow them into your heart, so you will know that who you are is always Greater than what sometimes feels like *just too much*. I want you to know I am a river that passed once by you, and when I arrived, you did not turn away. *You did not turn away.*

The first time you sat with me, you chose to look from your soul into mine. I could see you *seeing me*. I could feel you *feeling me*. In that moment I had found an island on which to rest my weariness in this wide and unforgiving sea. You let me glimpse just a little evidence of your own life struggles in the honest quiver of your face. In spirit I felt you take my hand and join me in this deserted place they call *The Young Who Is in Need*.

*I wonder when they will realize that when my heart is cut it is the entire human soul that bleeds.*

You told me secret stories of your scars, and fears, and doubts, and how your own tender blossom was violated before you ever released your bloom. You watched over me with Love, even as society watched over you, suspicious of us both. Each time they wanted to brand me with stigmatic lies and cast me to the dungeon of social banishment, your voice cried out: *This life will not be left to scavengers. Its sun will surely shine!*

I began to know what hope feels like, as you showed me how your life's fate was hitched to mine. Over and over in panic I drew my weapon of distrust against your advances. Instead of gunning me down in return by giving up on me, you smiled and said: *Holster your fear, and come inside the shelter of your possibilities*. I did. You stood at the door, on guard while I lay down to catch a rare and needed sleep.

When I woke, you were there, with bowls full of fresh hot faith in me, and lightness and laughter poured in cups of tea. You ate with me. Which is to say: You wrapped your human soul around my human struggle and let me feel your heat. You were going to care enough for me to do whatever it took. I know that look. I've seen it in the eyes of parents well enough to protect their young, and halt the world at the line of indiscretion against their offspring.

I keep springing off from earth on forays of fantasy, looking for an escape from my reality. You keep risking merciless outer space, with no fancy ship or special suit, to bring me back to the planet of my destiny. You help me to see that what I thought was my reality is my illusion, and that I can arrange the stones of my circumstance into a staircase ascending into the life I dream.

Do you know how great you are? You stand your ground every time I scream. I walk heavy...you lift me up in laughter. When laws and rules say: *No, we can't do that to help that one*, you crush that *No* under your heel and by will of force give *No* no choice but to turn into a *Yes*. You change laws and rules by the power of your devotion. You change this world. For caring is revolution's greatest sword and you wield that gleaming power. You are the sixty strokes of endurance that help pass my fateful hour.

When I fear sunset, you lift the disbelieving sun for just a while longer. When I falter, you alter my course with kind correction and firm resolve. When I thirst, you pour more water. In my darkness, here comes your candlelight. You teach me by the way you touch me how to kindly touch our humankind.

I carry a porous bag leaking my relationships. You walk behind with your brave basin catching all the drops. I have never heard you slur my mom or curse my pops. I have never sensed you insinuate that I come from bad people, or that good people will save my life. Your lesson is always about the goodness inside what looks like badness, and that I, like the earth, and being *of the earth*, carry all that I need to heal myself, reveal myself, kneel myself down before my Greatness and let life's cleansing breath carry all my woundedness away.

On this day, Dear Caring One, I hope my words infiltrate your fatigue. That my words live inside you, a Love virus you can never eradicate. This world and its values cannot measure you. Only the lives you touch can do that. Cruelness and coldness can never create new life. Only your Light can do that. The Peace you so deserve is pronounced *compassion*. This Peace sits waiting in old oak barrels only your Love can tap.

Dear Caring One, lift my words to your lips and drink this truth into your heart: You are the Greatest Gift this young life has ever known. If I am royalty, your service is my throne.

In Gratitude Forever,  
A child for now . . . one day the full grown life your Loving honed.

**This salute is in celebration of Social Worker Appreciation Month . . . in honor of your sacred service. For all whose hearts are awake and open. Bless, bless, bless your caring soul.**

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