



Soul-Scaping

A Sight For Sore Eyes ...

By Cilnette Pienaar

There is always a lot going on behind the curtains of my eyes. This soul is pretty aware of its own soil. I thought everyone was like that.

Obviously, a soul co-habiting with the Spirit does have a divine standard to reflect and check emotions in. So, He gets the credit for any transformation ... and I'm convinced that the process is way more Him being a friend to the Bridegroom than anything else psychology could explain, but for some or other reason I

am very much aware when there is a process of uprooting, or pruning, or blossoming going on in my soul-garden and often, these processes happen simultaneously or in very rapid relay. Welcome to my garden. 'Tis a splendored space. Even though it's had its fair share of (uprooted) pestilence and (restored) vandalism.

I am one of those people that cannot lie to her heart for too long. I think its grace. I might be able to fool my mind for a while, and my flesh

tells me many contradicting things, but more often than not, my heart shouts until I sit down and listen. Sometimes, until I break down and listen. Sometimes at inconvenient times. The heart-shouting takes on many intense forms: Being sad. Being excited. Being frustrated. Battling a contradiction. Fighting a line of reasoning. Feeling trapped. Feeling free. Being drawn to do something for someone else... Those are some ways that my heart shouts or whispers, as if she is saying ... "hey ... I need you

to listen ..." perhaps to the voice of the One who calls Himself the Lover of your soul ... Listening to it is the first step to guarding your heart, methinks.

Problem is we occasionally try to exert a wilful "cleverness" to try and supersede humble wisdom. "Yes heart, I hear you, but ..."

And whatever follows the "but" then becomes the catalyst for a process that could take quite some time to play out ...

I have a current case in point.

I've recently wondered again about compatibility. What makes two people right for each other? And what makes two people who are seemingly right for each other on paper, who have chosen to be together, just not happy together? Why does it seem so difficult for so many of my beautiful friends (guys and girls) to find someone that they can agree to walk with for the rest of their lives, while others seem to find that life-partner so naturally and so quickly? This is perplexing to me.

So I think about it. Much. And pray over it. Often. And fight with it. Regularly.

And then, out of the blue one morning, I get to be included in a candid conversation with someone on the other side of my own conundrum. A male of the species. A brother nursing a broken heart over a similar allegation that I have held silently against another of his kind. And somewhere in the listening to my own heart-war reflected back at me from the "other side", compassion replaces accusation, and I am suddenly free. Free to empathize, and not expect unrealistically anymore. Free from the torment of trying to force life into something that just doesn't make my heart fly for its lack of reciprocation. Free to move on. Free to hope to love extravagantly, without fear, one day. Free to be me.

One man brave enough to engage in a vulnerable honest conversation, and light falls on hidden treasures for those around him. Humble enough to seek help from others.

Guys ... we really don't want you to have it all together before we can love you. We want you. Just you. And we want to figure stuff out with you. We are made that way ... to help ... I wish all guys knew how difficult it is to love them (even as brothers), when they don't seem like they need the affection. If you don't allow a woman you say you love to hear your heart, you are cutting off the lifeline she needs, and

needs to give, to feel like she has a valuable purpose in life. It often is as drastic as that. Not that we should find our life-source in our partners and friends, but the feeling of being disconnected from intimacy that you should have access to (through the agreement that exists between two people who choose to commit to each other in whichever context) is often the reason why people's souls die. Methinks.

To be let into a heart, to be trusted in that way, is to be given a garden to flourish in. To rest in. To help tend. To be denied access, is to be denied the wellspring of water in that garden. And without water, even the most extravagantly displaying gardens eventually wilt. It really is as intense as that ... (I am sort of a poet, so dramatic effect does play a role ... alas.)

This is an accusation many women hold against many men. And vice versa. It is the root of many a bitter herb in many a soul garden.

They say to be emotionally mature is to be fully self-aware. To be able to identify the reasons for what you are feeling, and to be attentive to what you might be making others feel through your actions, or lack thereof ... and to then choose to love (in its 1 Corinthians 13 definition), I'd like to add.

Whether I ever get to share my garden exclusively with another is up to His purpose for this generation. It's not the point. The point is to learn, through these heart-shoutings, to listen. To be able to eventually just default to love, and be loved.

As humans, we pretty much suck at this many times. Hence we need His grace. And others' forgiveness and kindness and gentleness and self-control - the fruits and the gifts of the Gardener. The fruit He forms through these pruning processes and the gifts He grants without reproach. Should we only ask ... sometimes persistently so.

I like to think that this is why I feel the brutal need to be so painstakingly honest with myself (and others) over what is really happening in this peculiar garden. It is to understand the processes, to partner with His restoring order. To eventually, hopefully, should I be allowed to, help others who are not always so self-aware. Not to be confused with self-obsessed - even though the line is fine..

Too many broken hearts feel condemned over processes that they aren't able to connect with a hope for restoration. I have heard of too many suicide attempts over the past while to ignore the fact that these soul-wars are not the afflictions of a select few. They are going on everywhere, and they are fatal if not uncovered to Love's Light, and wise counsel.

If you are battling, you are not alone, and you are not without a lifeline.

It's what He has been doing since the Redemption-rescue took effect on the Cross. Align and order. Devour that which is leading the chaos in your life ... to bring His Shalom. The Kingdom in and through His sons and daughters, created in His image. For His glory.

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And I am thankful to those who help me see the content of my garden-soil, through acknowledging their blind spots, and wrestling truthfully with their own restoring vision.

I salute all who refuse to disengage their hearts in this war for souls.

Don't sit in your darkness for one more day. Phone a friend. Preferably one with a counseling background, and a stash of ice cream ...

Selah.