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Sandbox 101

February 16th, 2018

This I Believe-

Courage is Better Than Patience

Patience is a virtue, that’s what they say. But what they should say is that it is actually more like an empty cake box that you’ve unwittingly saved for a special occasion, or standing on a roof while the flood water licks the eves. Patience is like trying on your parent’s shoes when you can’t even reach their knees yet, and then realizing that you can’t live like that, so you ditch the shoes- fast. I believe that we unravel ourselves in the name of patience. One woman waits patiently for her boyfriend to realize that it’s not her fault when he hits her. One man works three jobs outside in the blistering sun, enduring until the day can come when he can see his family again and stop filling the holes in his shoes with newspaper. A boy watches his buddy as he glances over his shoulder and walks away with the girl of the boy’s dreams, all the while his mother is telling him to have patience: the woman of his dreams will come. Do you see how the fear of change masquerades as Patience in the streets of our minds?

I believe that Patience should have a legal name change to Courage. Courage is holding your head up while the night tries to force you to lower your eyes. It’s the faith to stand up when everyone is sitting out. I have waited since I was twelve to live my life. If I got a full ride to college, if I worked another job, if I went to the gym one more time a week, then I could start. So I patiently waited. Strangers would knock on my door and hand me power tools that I would politely refuse, stating that I was being patient for the day my future house would appear next door. Turns out all those strangers were the cousins of opportunity. Courage pushes us to take those tools and work, night and day, to build those walls. This is the courage we need to accept that ‘someday’ is just an oversimplified ‘today.’ So recently I have finally used my gift receipt to return my false patience for work and faith. I’m not waiting for fate, or destiny, or ‘tomorrows,’ or whatever word we use as the carrot on the string just in front our donkey-like noses. I’m taking these two hands and I’m taking every chance that comes my way without excuses or fears. Courage is a virtue, that’s what I say.