UNDER HIS SHADOW OF LOVE

UNDER HIS SHADOW. **Mark 4:30-41**

I've been his disciple for such a short time.
But in that short time my world's been transformed. I don't know where it's going to take me.
Just take a look at the last twenty-four hours;
All day we'd been on the Galilean shore,
Huge multitudes from all over the place,
Many had walked miles upon miles, - others had come by boat.
I'd anchored ours just offshore.
There were so many people that Jesus used it as a pulpit, standing at the stern.
It was incredible.
Everyone that was there seemed to be hearing everything that he said with no difficulty.
Parable after parable he taught.
He made the Scriptures so clear, his speech reached the heart of everyone that hearkened to his words,
Some were healed just in the listening.
We all wanted to hear more, and were surprised when the sun began to dip beneath the mountaintop, and the evening cool brushed our faces.
Jesus finished his preaching, and said for us to pass over to the other side of the sea.
The multitude dispersed, and some got back into their own boats and set sail with us.



It was a beautiful evening, - a perfect end to the day.
The cool had settled in fast, and we wrapped up warmer.
But Jesus came as he was. He didn't seem to feel the cold. In fact nothing ever seemed to trouble him.
It was as though he was living in another world, giving us glimpses of a different reality.
Anyway he retired to the hinder part of the ship, closed his eyes and slept. Just that quick.
We all felt at one with the world. Twilight. Early evening stars. Safe.

Thomas saw the first cloud. Just a casual remark, as one would. But less than a minute later he called out again, - the horizon had vanished, - not with the coming night, but looming storm clouds.
A sudden gust blew hard across us, followed by another. Quick shouts of warning echoed across the sea, boat to boat, scaringly lost in the now buffeting squall.



Night brought on early by treacherous black clouds; deep swells overtook our craft, rain with no caution just dumped down and merged into the jumping sea. Wind driven waves mounted attack, tops driven hard, wet, into our faces, threatening, promising, crashing into our vessels. Up, down, round, sliding, full of water, - frightened faces sharing fishermen's worst fears. I glanced at the stern, - took in Jesus still sleeping on his pillow, oblivious to the storm. I looked at my friends, - we'd run out of ideas, of hope. We'd failed him and ourselves.
Unspoken agreement had us moving hand on hand to his sleeping form.
I'm holding onto some rope for my very life, balancing my weight against the mounting-falling deck, expecting him to scramble up and do..what?!
All this talk of the kingdom of heaven worthless. I felt an anger and resentment that matched the tempest.
I urgently shook his shoulder, woke him.
"Master, carest thou not that we perish?"



I swear to you the moment he awoke the boat stopped rocking. My fear, the great billowing storm, had not touched him. Instead inner tranquillity conveyed itself outwards. He was the Master, nothing else. That moment he woke, he looked at me, not with reproach, but as though he abode in the kingdom of heaven, and had just opened the

door for me to come in.
I forgot the storm; love for this man had replaced fear, the guilt of my resentment battling awe of his complete command. I let go of the rope, safe in the presence of his utter knowledge of supreme power.
He stood. Reached out with outstretched arms:
"Wind, behave!
"Peace, be still"
The wind ceased, and there was a great calm.



The wind, the rain, the mighty sea swell, all suddenly gone. How? Where?
I looked down at my feet. The boat was empty, dry.
We looked at each other, hearts racing with fear of a different kind.
It was as though the storm had never been.
He turned round, spoke to us.
"Why are ye so fearful? How is it that ye have no faith?"

Have you ever shared witness of the impossible?
We whispered amongst ourselves "*What manner of man is this that even the wind and the sea obey him?"*

He looked at me again, both reading and guiding my thoughts..
His words at the seashore came back to me as if we were both back there barely two hours ago:
"Whereunto shall we liken the kingdom of God? or with what comparison shall we compare it?
It is like a grain of mustard seed, which, when it is sown in the earth, is less than all the seeds that be in the earth:
But when it is sown, it groweth up, and becometh greater than all herbs, and shooteth out great branches; so that the fowls of the air may lodge under the shadow of it".
Once more I saw the kingdom of heaven within him, felt infinity itself enfold me in the still of the evening dark, the universe the heavenly abiding place of all God's creatures, safe, secure.
I had just witnessed such a seed, a glimpse of some great Truth, already growing in my consciousness, of Man, under the shadow of the Almighty, untouched by whatever could be thrown at him.
With a jolt I realised his words had been more than just words. I'd been taking them at face value. They'd sounded good, and comforting. I'd not bothered, or been too scared, to think through their implications.
He'd just proved them!
"Wind, behave!
"Peace, be still"
It all seemed so natural.
Jesus had been in control all along.
He was still looking at me.
And I felt sure I heard him say to my listening thought
"With God, you too have dominion"

HAVE FAITH:

GOD REMOVES ALL STORMS!

Was this why he had called me?
Am I also as a grain of mustard seed?
I felt his love planting and nurturing me.
I'd forsaken my nets for this man. I must forsake all I once knew.
"How is it that ye have no faith?"
Lord, give me faith as a grain of mustard seed.
Take me where you will.

Jesus responded and held me by the hand.
"Peter, nothing shall be impossible unto you……."

"Verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you."
Matthew 17:20

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