



#ANOTHER_STORY

LATE NIGHTER

PART TWO

(THE SLEEPING CONGREGATION)

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FOREWORD

While writing this story I was facing a difficult time in my campus life. I had to make the hardest decision, had to depart from a close friend and relocate to a place where God called me. Through the transition I was thinking of the ideas and the concept of this story. After I took my time to settle down, i started gathering my thoughts and they became words, then to sentences and then paragraphs and so on

Before I finished this story, I can only say grace was with me. we all have our own wilderness to bare as christ did but we should all know the place of beginings is not the place of deliverance we must be content to bare it until we come to a sacred hill(Golgotha), it is sooner than you think and longer than you wish but we must be content with our lord's timing for at this hill the burden will fall off our backs of its own accord. It was hard to keep our eyes only on God. Our eyes often wondered to find solution and assurance that could help us answer our empty questions. But what we heard and what we saw stole the little light and hope within us. We have learned that keeping our eyes on God and trusting him only kept us from falling apart like many, and kept us from making wrong and rushed decisions like some did.

This story is the sum of six difficult, yet very essential months in my life. I have learned and gained a lot. I hope and pray for reader to gain something useful for their journey in life from this story.

Eden Asrat

A LETTER TO ALL THE LATE NIGHTERS.

I WOULD LIKE TO APPRICIATE ALL THE LATE NIGHTERS WHO SEEK GOD ON THEIR OWN ACCORD. NOT BECAUSE THEY HAVE TO, OR BECAUSE THEY WANT TO AVOID GOING TO HELL. BUT BECAUSE THEY KNOW THAT GOD DESERVES IT, AND THEY WANT TO KNOW GOD BETTER, OUT OF LOVE.

YOU MIGHT NOT SEE IT COMING BUT I BELIEVE YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD WILL EVENTUALLY CHANGE MANY LIVES.

KEEP IT UP! DON'T GIVE UP! IT MIGHT BE TIRING TODAY, BUT IT WILL BEAR A SWEET FRUIT!

LATE NIGHTER - PART TWO

(THE SLEEPING CONGREGATION)

...Where am I? ...

... what am I doing here? ...

... what is happening to me?

... why ... why ... why only me?

... how did I even get here ...?

I asked myself these questions when I came to realize that I was the only one awake...confused and in query. I didn't know where I came from, let alone where I was going... my thoughts were clouded with unending questions. And I couldn't see past the corpse beneath my feet...

Corpse ...

... are they really corpse? Are they even dead? I asked myself.

I looked for vital signs but they had none ... *so why do I get the feeling that they are still alive? ... or are they just on the verge of the living and the dead? Why are they like this? Why are they not breathing? And why are they not moving?...* questions kept flooding my mind.

... but there was no answer ...

* * * * *

The silence and emptiness surrounding me filled me with dread... The darkness was so deep I felt like it would swallow me whole and take away the light that was left within me...

What should I do? ... where should I run to ...? can I escape this darkness? ...Should I shout? ...Do I even have a voice? ...Can I speak? ...Even if I

have a voice and I shout, who is there to listen?... ..the corpse?, ...is there anybody else out there who can see me? Who could see us? Somebody ...? anybody ...?

Confused as I was, gathering my strength i picked one corps at a time as if I was getting them off of my shoulders... lost and wondering, my eyes started gazing to find some glimmer of hope... someone who can help me or at least explain things...

* * * * *

Not far from where I was standing, I saw a dim flickering light coming from one of the corpse... or so I thought.

I was not the only one awake...

From a distance the dim light I saw was a person standing just like me..." *he is just like me*", I said to myself.

Not even taking the time to catch my breath I started to walk forward so as to get the slightest clue to whats going on

"Hello!" ... "over here...! can you see me? ... over here!!"

Not a flinch... he couldn't hear me.

So I tried moving closer to him, trying not to get out of site i continued my call

"Hello... Hey ... over here....!!"

I kept calling out but no response. As i engaged and got closer i began to realise i was beyond recognition. *What is wrong with him?? I thought he was awake?...*

When I finally reached there, what I saw shocked me. Not only was the light within him fading, but he was also slowly turning into one of the corpses, the ones who are on the verge of the living and the dead.

Wait ... how did this happen?? could he not have moved and escape while he still had some light within him? "According to his belief so shall it be unto him"

He was breathing but his eyes look scared and his body worn out ... his whole being shouts out hopelessly. Desperate and incurable. But the wounds on his body were witnesses that he didn't go down without a fight. I looked at my body to see if I was injured and had wounds like his. And i saw I had wounds, but not as harsh, mines are like paper cuts in comparison.

What happened to this guy? What could have caused him this? The cruelty he faced brought tears running down my cheeks.

Little did I know while I was just standing there in pity my own light had already started to fade and my legs started to feel heavy... it was getting harder to move.

What is happening to me ...? I was just standing here, I didn't even get that close to him and touch him ... why am I feeling the same coldness and numbness like him...?

No...no...no I can't let this happen! If my light gets dimmer than it is right now, I won't be able to see myself...

I need to fix this, and fast!

As time passed by my legs felt more heavy and dragging myself was tiresome

"I ... need ... to ... move ... I ... need ... to go ... I have to ... escape ..."

Was easier said than done... I barely can move my legs, how on earth am I supposed to run and escape??

Well ... uff! I exhaled as I finally come to a conclusion...

Well, I don't see any other way out ...

so with no other option I did what I thought was my only chance of progress ... *"Forcing my legs to move using my hands, one step at a time..."*

* * * * *

while I was crawling without knowing where to, I felt something grab me from behind.

My heart skipped a beat...

*What was that? Strong and firm was the grip that even my numb legs felt it!
I am done for! Was the only thought i can think of.*

“Could it be, one of the corpse that was laying on the ground? But how is that possible?”

Some part of me wanted to stay like that, because the hand that held my leg felt warm. *Where did it come from? And why did it grab me...? My instinct was telling me to run... but I don't want to, I want to feel the warmth. I was terrified to look back but the warmth kept me standing.*

I thought back and forth for a while. I couldn't decide whether running away or taking a pick to see what grabbed me.

Finally, my curiosity to know the source of this sensation over powered me and I slowly turned...

It was just a child...

A child full of light, and a smile on her face...

a child with this strength to grab and hold me... what is she? Who is she?
Where did she come from? I was full of awe with the light and strength she possessed.

"Who are you?"

"I am a new soul." Said the child with a bright smile.

"A new soul? You mean you just got your name written on the book of life?"

"Yes, that is right."

"Okay... but why are you here? What are you doing in an awful place like this?"

"I have to let everybody know what happened to me."

"Are you serious? Can't you do that somewhere else? There is no one who will listen to you here."

"But he told me I should start here..."

"With the corpse? Look kid...around here curiosity kills you, I've been around here for a while and all I'm trying to do is escape. The longer i stay the sooner i die..."

She didn't answer ... she just kept staring at me with a smile.

"What? What is it?"

"He told me that I will find someone to help me grow when I tell people that

I am a new soul. And he is right." She giggled.

Awkward

"what do you mean he was right... you are in the middle of a grave yard kid. You should get out of here while you still can! Don't babble about growing up, worry about not turning into a corpse!"

"He really was right..."

"You are not listening to me!"

Before I could say anything else the kid hugged me... and said "It is you!" and hugged me.

As I felt the warmth that I felt earlier i couldnt say a word... and now it was not only from the kid, my whole being was engulfed with that warmth. And my light that started to dim, started to glow brighter.

I see... I now see everything... and I know what I must do ...

Something changed in me. The coldness and numbness that I was feeling were long gone. I remembered the time when I used to be just like this kid, full of light, full of hope and a smile on my face that had a power to change people's heart. How long has it been since I felt that way?

"what are we going to do next?" asked the child.

"we are going to wake all of them up... but first we should start with this person."

I took the child by the hand and led her to the man i chased, the one who had

grave wounds. Then I slowly put my hands on his shoulder. The kid followed my lead, she run towards him and hugged his leg.

After a while we heard a cough... then the person started breathing heavily. Both of us looked at each other and smiled because We knew he was going to be okay.

“sir. Are you okay?” I asked, but I was not expecting an answer.

“ye... yes ... I think... I am fine..... I can finally ... breath...”.

“oh ... he can speak...” and then she giggled.

“you are going to be fine sir... it is going to be alright”.

It was slow, but we watched as his light slowly start to shine again. We helped him to lay on the ground so he could rest while his body recovers.

“Do you have a name?” I asked. I felt a bit awkward referring to him as “sir”. I wanted to know his name, and what happened to him. So I started with the simple questions first.

“Nathan... is my name”.

“I am Dave. And this is...” . then I realized that he didn’t know the Kids’ name either.

“Hanna”.

“Yeah, Hanna”.

“nice to meet both of you. If it weren’t for you, I’d still be frozen”.

After that Nathan explained the hardships and trouble he went through, and I told him what happened since the time I gained consciousness. It was amazing how light I felt after talking with Nathan and Hanna. It was as if we were carrying each other's burden together.

"So, what do you plan on doing next?" asked Nathan.

"Well, we are actually trying to wake everyone. But we thought we should start with you first."

"But... that would take us forever. It is only the three of us"

"Of Course, not! Can't you see? We can start a chain reaction. The three of us can reach three people at first, but then we will have three more people doing the same thing with us. Doesn't that mean we can then reach six people at a time? Then we will be able to reach twelve people, twenty-four, and the number just goes on."

So we did exactly that. And before we knew it, the place we were at started to be filled with bright light. Murmur and chatter begun hearkening through the space.

I admired the peaceful air that breathes in the arena. *Why did I not notice this before? Why did I only discern the darkness, and not the promise of the great king to these people?...*

Their light was getting stronger every minute, and I could hardly keep my eyes open. *Whoa... this is way too bright...* I lifted my arm to cover my face. Even in doing that I could still feel the strong light that shined in front of me.

... THE NEXT MORNING

I didn't know when it happened but I was not laying in my bed, instead I was on the floor with my arms on my face and I was mumbling *it's too bright* for a whole one hour.

It was Sunday, and I was late for church. I swear I thought that today I would be there on time. But I was even late than I was before. So I stormed out of my room half awake, with a crooked tie and messy hair.

I was very late when I reached to church, but at least I was there before the offerings were collected. The preacher stood on the podium and that was when I realized something was missing.

Wait... what happened last night? How did I go to bed? Why was I on the floor when I woke up? And what was with the "it is too bright" nonsense I was spouting?

The preacher was boldly saying something about God still speaking today. Although we are ignorant and sometimes naive to listen. God still speaks to his people.

He had a point. Almost all of us on the service were oblivious. Maybe more than half of the congregation might not even remember what he preached after the service. What a hopeless communion

During the whole service I was looking at the preacher but lost in my own

thoughts. After he preached it was time to call for new souls to the stage. He began to call people to receive The Lord Jesus Christ as their lord and savior. That this was the time of salvation. He kept calling for new souls to come forward but only one old lady came to the front. We all clapped.

After he prayed for her she returned to her seat and I got to look at her face. Just a glimpse anyway!

Where do I know this face? I was so sure that we have never met before, but yet her face was so familiar it was like a *deja vu*. *Hmm ... I could say that I know this face but not as old... maybe a lot younger... what a resemblance...*

As usual after the service ended people exchanged greetings and everyone looked happy. It was almost like they came to church to meet this people and not to worship. I shook my head as I was going to my car. And that was when I bumped in to this guy. He was on the phone talking and laughing he was hard to miss... When he bumped into me his key fell and we both reached to the ground to pick it up. And then again he hit my head.

"I am really sorry, excuse me..."

And just like that he continued his chat on the phone and left without saying more.

He looked familiar too...

"Nathan, hurry up!" a lady said.

"yeah, I'm coming." It was the guy who bumped into me.

Wait... his name is Nathan? Don't I know someone called Nathan and looks just

like him? I've got a strange feeling about this...

People that I am facing looked very familiar, what a strange day... I don't know them personally but somehow I feel like we know each other.

What on earth is wrong with me today??

Where do I know all of this people? They looked familiar Where? where on earth do I know them from?

Then suddenly I remembered the preachers' words... "God still speaks today... weather by his word or by his spirit, God still speaks today. Weather using someone else or to yourself, God still speaks today! Weather through prophecy or a dream, God still speaks today! Even through little kids and old people, God still speaks today! I'm telling you today God is still speaking to you, you just haven't given him your time to listen..."

That's it... it was a dream... last night ... God spoke to me through a dream... and I was just ignorant to listen but he wanted me to know no matter how messed up their life seemed, they are still his people and I should treat them like God's chosen people.

Imagine if mosses said he wouldn't lead the Israelite because they are too imperfect to become God's chosen people? What would have happened...? I am sure there would have been a completely different story in our Bible.

This congregation is his. These people are Gods' chosen people, who am I to judge and say they are dead? They're just asleep, and are waiting for their

leader to wake them up. This is not an empty gathering; it is just a sleeping congregation.

Isaiah 63 (NIV)

¹¹ Then his people recalled the days of old, the days of Moses and his people—
where is he who brought them through the sea, with the shepherd of his flock?
Where is he who set his Holy Spirit among them,

¹² who sent his glorious arm of power to be at Moses' right hand, who divided
the waters before them, to gain for himself everlasting renown,

¹³ who led them through the depths? Like a horse in open country, they did
not stumble;

¹⁴ like cattle that go down to the plain, they were given rest by the Spirit of the
Lord. This is how you guided your people to make for yourself a glorious name.