

TO TELL
THE STORY



LUKE ITALIANO

Revealed

She paid no attention to the rough hands that clamped on her arms and forced her to walk. She paid no attention to the pain in her feet as they forced her to walk without sandals. She paid no attention to the heat of her tears against her cheeks.

All she could see were the faces of the people who saw her as she was marched past them. She saw the face of her mother turn away in shame. She saw Miriam, her neighbor and best friend, turn away in shame. She saw the woman at the well that she didn't even know the name of turn away in shame.

And she wanted to hide. She wanted to die. She wanted anything, anything to hide from the shame that she felt, but they would not let her yet.

The Pharisees had caught her, and now everyone knew what was happening. Everyone knew what she had done, and she couldn't hide.

They forced her up the hill to the Temple where sentence would be carried out. They forced her through the streets so that everyone could see. And they walked into the Temple, where she knew what would come, and she welcomed it. Anything – anything! – to get away from this shame.

But they weren't done yet.

They walked into one of the courtyards, and detoured suddenly, turned, to where a teacher was speaking to his disciples.

And one of the Pharisees, they stepped forward and said, "Teacher! This woman was caught in the act of adultery. In the Law, Moses commanded us to stone such women. Now what do you say?"

Well, the teacher, he stood up and walked over, looked the Pharisees in the face, looked at the woman, and bent down and started to scribble something in the dirt with his finger.

And suddenly no one was paying attention to her anymore. No one was paying attention to her shame. They were all paying attention to this teacher.

The Pharisees got agitated. "Answer us! Answer us!"

Until finally the teacher stood and said, "If any one of you is without sin, let him be the first to throw a stone at her." And then he bent over again.

But she braced herself. She knew if there was anyone who should throw the stone first, if there was anyone like that, it was the Pharisees. And she waited for that first rock to strike against her. She waited for that first sharp stone to break her skin open.

But no stone came.

The Bible says that they left one at a time, the oldest ones first, until finally in that Temple courtyard, it was just her... and Jesus.

And he straightened and approached her and looked her right in the face, right into her eyes – and he didn't flinch away, and he didn't act as if she should be ashamed or as if she should hide. And he asked her, "Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?"

"No one, sir," she said.

"Then neither do I condemn you," Jesus declared. "Go now, and leave your life of sin."

Brothers. Sisters.

Just as Jesus knew that woman's deepest shame and loved her anyway, he knows what you have hidden, and what you deeply desire that no one ever finds. He knows that secret, and he loves you anyway.

And this story is true.

John 8:1-11

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