

THE CAPTURED STORY OF A BROKEN MAN

tumaini

G O D • T R U T H • H O P E

Book Sample

A COMPILATION BY

JADE NOVELIST

This is a letter to my son, a retelling of my relationship with his mother and a conversation with myself.

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XVII.

XVIII.

Once upon a time,
there was a boy and a girl.

In the beginning there was love, then their love made way for more love. It brought together a few souls but they all suffered a great loss. After their loss, they had to learn to live without hope while struggling to hold on to faith. This is a story of his journey towards healing. Towards love. Towards unlearning.

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I.

Ours starts with a girl at a bus stop in her hometown and a boy driving away after an exam,

their first meeting was brief and a fateful encounter,

within 5 minutes they exchanged hearts and texts with the promise of a love that would last for *Forever & Eternity*.

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II.

We had no boundaries,
we had what we wanted when and where we wanted it.

We explored one another,
we explored locations,
even those surrounded by other occupants.

There was no place too taboo;
no place we could not enjoy our forbidden fruit
and even though we struggle to pinpoint,
we're convinced
you were conceived on a Sunday afternoon
in the backseat
with a backdrop of a sunset.

III.

I recall some of the prayers,
the ones I whispered while I lay next to her.

I asked for your smile to always be like hers,
honest and kind.

For your eyes to be like mine,
patient and inviting.

I recall some of the other prayers,
the fearful ones I whispered solemnly under my breath.

I begged for you to know joy,
that all your days would be filled with love.

For your hands to never hold on to hurt,
for you to never question your worth.

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IV.

We had hoped for pink bows and pregnancy scares,
instead we got blue balloons and awkward stares.

You see, we promised them a girl,
but you, my boy, only offered them 52 hours.

So they couldn't decide what we were;

Parents,
broken souls
or their children who grew up too soon.

I ran out of ways to hint I was unhappy,
eventually I settled for fighting as a way to communicate my frustrations
but even that got boring because I realised no matter how hard I tried, I couldn't shout
over your insecurities.

We were made up of too many assumptions.
You could never prove that I didn't put you first,
you assumed I was cheating,
you assumed I was always hiding something
and I assumed you trusted me.

In the end we struggled with the little things,
saying sorry and meaning it,
making promises and keeping them,
being around without summons
and showing affection without physical intention.

VI.

Unsolicited advise can be a sign of discomfort.

Humans aren't taught how to deal with sadness, they just know it's a bad thing. So they do their best to make the sadness go away.

Most of the time,

the sadness discomfort makes people say things without thought; like how they cannot understand grief, unless it's a hypothetical situation to them.

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VII.

It happened once,

She confessed

I forgave her.

VIII.

We hurt each other in your name;
we use you as justification for the pain;

“If he were here, we would still be together.”

“If he were here, you wouldn’t speak to me that way.”

“If he were here, you would still love me.”

Just in case;

— you remember your way home,
I will leave my address and the locks unchanged.

— you let your fingers slip and dial my number,
I will ready my apology in advance, it's okay, blame it on me.

— you get lost and find yourself in my arms,
I will rehearse how to make this space your safe place again.

— you miss more than my sheets,
I will stick to our routine so you can see I never lost hope.

— all you miss are my sheets,
I will find ways to give you reason to miss them more.

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X.

I don't pray anymore,
sometimes it's because I am still mad at God.

Other times I fear you might hear the bad prayers,
or the ones where I ask for the strength to rush to where you are.

Sometimes for you,
sometimes because of you,
sometimes because I don't want to be here anymore.

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She said I was angry,
I knew that already.

She said I was hurt
and I've never denied that.

She said she wasn't sure I'd come to our next appointment.

I smiled, with an awkward stare;
I didn't think her job description included stating the obvious.

XII.

Healing can be beautiful,
and healing can be painful
but there is nothing more confusing than healing,
especially healing from trauma.

The back and forth arguments of why it happened are exhausting.

The back and forth between victim and survivor;
maybe it happened because I deserve it
or maybe it happened so I could understand and be there for someone who is going
through it too.

Healing can be beautiful,
healing can be painful
and sometimes healing needs you to find a way to justify pain
but in truth,
sometimes the justification is just another form of self-hate.

XIII.

I still struggle with balance.

I still struggle to deny myself my ambitions,
so my dreams still rob me of interaction
and in a world that discourages human engagement,
I've only gotten better at getting worse.

I put my goals first, people second and myself last.

I'm able to be there for those who need me but somehow pull away when someone tries
to get close to me.

Maybe,
I'm just afraid to get too attached,
maybe I use my career as a distraction and assure myself it's easier to control than
human relationships.

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XIV.

A lot of people ask why I don't talk about your grandparents, I always avoid the topic but the truth is, I only write about things I know about.

She won't admit it
but I saw the guilt in her eyes.

Somewhere between her "*Are you okay?*"
and "*I lost him too*",
it was written on her face.
She knew she had something I could never have;

memories of holding you.

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XVI.

I left because my soul was breaking and she couldn't see past her own pain.

She couldn't wonder if maybe I needed someone too.

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XVII.

~~I'd love to have kids. I think about it all the time.~~

~~I'd love to have kids. We tried but had miscarriages.~~

~~I want kids. I'm waiting on God.~~

~~I'd love to have kids. It's just not the right time.~~

Kids are a lot of work. I'm focused on my career.

Tumaini

XVIII.

You have so much unlearning to do but no one to teach you. You don't know who you are, when you're not broken; you don't know who you were before life gave you something to fix.

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The Captured Story Of A Broken Man

TUMAINI

GOD — TRUTH — HOPE

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