

Taken Away -- A Modern Day Parable

Inspired by Mark 1:29-39

On leaving the Concert Hall, Jalisa entered the house of her grandparents where she spent her childhood summers with her brothers, Jeremy and Jimmy. With her flute in hand, she walked along the entry corridor along the worn brick floor. In the distance she could see her grandmother's plump form silhouetted in the handmade lace curtains of the kitchen window. Grandma was plating cookies and pouring tea in anticipation of her arrival.

Jalisa could hear her grandmother humming a favorite Gospel hymn. She lifted the flute to her lips and gently blew, joining in praise with Rock of Ages. Without missing a beat, Grandma threw her head back and belted the refrain, then she shimmied across the room to welcome her precious granddaughter.

Jalisa braced herself for a "Grandma hug." Grandma's hugs were unlike any other -- part teddy bear hug, starting off soft and gentle -- and part grizzly bear hug, ending with a squeeze that takes all the air from your body. When Grandma hugs you, you know you have been hugged with all her love!

They sat at the quaint kitchen table and Grandma waited on her, feeding her as if she hadn't eaten since their visit last year. She also fired off non-stop questions wanting every detail of Jalisa's year with the symphony. Both women were so delighted that she had chosen to stay here for her entire two-week break.

When it was evening, after sunset, the neighbors came to hear Jalisa play. Soon the whole village was gathered at the door. She played for hours. No one wanted the evening to end. It was as if they were transported to another place. A place void of sickness and sadness. The music drove out all the demons of the world, and no one dared to speak.

Rising very early before dawn, Jalisa went to the meadow where she played with abandon. Jalisa could lose herself in her music. As she played, the sun shined whiter, the flowers glowed brighter, and the wind flowed lighter. The world was simply a better place, and the feeling was absolutely contagious.

Grandma and her sewing circle filled the heavenly sounds and on finding her said, "Everybody is looking for you. They want you to play at their weddings, and funerals, and birthday parties, and anniversary celebrations! Jalisa told her grandmother, "Let us go to the nearby villages that I may play there also. That's an important part of the purpose of my coming here." So, they went into the valleys and gardens and fields, playing and singing and dancing throughout the whole region.