

Hand Over My Mouth

There's something in the core of most of us: a need to figure out who caused the mess.

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We start early. A broken vase, a quick denial—"It wasn't me."
And as we grow older, we just get more sophisticated with it.

We blame systems.

We blame people.

We blame entire groups we've never met.

Because if we can identify the cause...

if we can name the enemy...

we feel a little more in control.

But the world is still a mess.

And if we're honest...

so are we.

There's a line from the film *Ordinary People* that has always stayed with me:

*"We would have been alright... if there hadn't been any mess.
But you can't handle mess."*

That line exposes something in us.

We want things neat.

Explainable.

Tied up with a bow.

But life doesn't cooperate.

I've stood at gravesides where people tried to explain the unexplainable—
accidents, disease, loss that came too soon.

We reach for words.
We reach for meaning.

And when meaning doesn't come easily...
we either blame, or we quietly disconnect.

Blame gives us something to hold—for a moment.
But it also builds a small, shrinking world where we don't
have to face the deeper mystery.

And if we stay there too long, something inside begins to
decay.

Life isn't clean.

It's messy.

I've been in a delivery room.
There's nothing neat about it—pain, noise, urgency, risk.

And yet... that's where life begins.

I've also walked through cemeteries.
Everything in order.
Straight lines.
Quiet.

If I had to choose...

I'd rather be in the labor room.

Because you learn something there.

The book of Job is filled with voices trying to explain suffering.

Friends offering reasons.

Theories.

Answers to the question we all ask:

Why?

But the turning point comes when God speaks.

And when He does...

He doesn't offer explanations.

He asks questions.

"Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth?"

"Have you ever told the sun when to rise?"

"Can you hold the stars in place?"

And suddenly, the conversation changes.

Job, who had been speaking and searching and questioning, says:

"Surely I spoke of things I did not understand... things too wonderful for me to know."

And then—

"I put my hand over my mouth."

I know that moment.

When God speaks, my opinions start to sound small.
When God speaks, my need to explain begins to fade.

As Augustine of Hippo once said:

"If you understand it, it is not God."

And like a quiet hymn rising from another century,
Katharina von Schlegel reminds us:

*"Be still, my soul: the Lord is on thy side;
bear patiently the cross of grief or pain."*

There is a strange kind of peace...
in not having to explain God.

In letting Him be God.

In handing over the gavel to the One who sees what we cannot.

I look at injustice—and He points to creation.
I worry about tomorrow—and He tells me to look at the birds.

And somewhere in all of that...

I stop talking.

I release the need to solve the mystery.
I let go of the blame.

And like Job...

I put my hand over my mouth.

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