

MR. STONE

Joseph would never have made it if you weren't there. You talked him out of wanting to leave this world. He is strong because of you.

MR. WONDER

I call him Ituha, it means, sturdy oak. No one can knock him down.

MR. STONE

You made him never give up. Isn't that what you tell them when they don't understand something? Do not give up.

MR. WONDER

Yes.

MR. STONE

If you leave them, they will do that.

MR. WONDER

Why are you doing this?

MR. STONE

Because they are your children too. You let them into your life and you can't turn your back on them. They have become your family.

MR. WONDER

No. I know what you're doing and it will not work. You can stay but let me have my peace and quiet with my book.

Mr. Wonder returns to his reading. A quiet moment.

MR. STONE

Did I ever tell you about my parents?
(No answer.)

They were very much in love and they were good to me and my sister, Anna. My childhood was very different from yours but we were both battling the same kind of feelings inside.

MR. WONDER

I never battled with it.

MR. STONE

I did. When I was fifteen, I met this boy who worked for my pa. I started having these feelings. I couldn't stop thinking about him.

(MORE)

MR. STONE (CONT'D)

I would try to make it go away but it never did. I didn't know if it was something bad or good all I knew was that it was different. One day, I told him I liked him and I tried to kiss him. He starts hitting me real hard calling me a sinner. My pa runs in and I thought he was going to save me. That boy told him what I tried to do and my pa walked away. He said, "teach that boy a lesson but don't kill him". I was no longer his boy, I was "that" boy. I wanted him to kill me, I really did. My sister cleaned me up and told me to run just run. I did. Didn't come back until my pa passed away but I learned my lesson. To stay alive, I couldn't be me so I chose to be alone.

MR. WONDER

Then you understand why I can't stay.

MR. STONE

You can. I am not afraid anymore and I am so tired of being alone. Aren't you?

MR. WONDER

It is best that it ends this way.

MR. STONE

The only ones that have to know are the people here.

MR. WONDER

It is not that easy.

MR. STONE

It can be. I want you to come home with me and share my life.

MR. WONDER

It is wrong! I was wrong. I broke a rule as a teacher. I let my personal life get in the way of my teaching. I allowed myself to give into the one thing that will destroy everything I studied my whole life for.

MR. STONE

So you're going to keep on punishing yourself?

MR. WONDER

I don't do that.

MR. STONE

But you do by just being a teacher
and no one else.

MR. WONDER

Teaching is what I base my whole
life on. It is who I am! Nothing
else! Nothing!

MR. STONE

There is so much more to you.

MR. WONDER

No, it has to go back to the way it
was before.

MR. STONE

Why?

MR. WONDER

Because I have fallen in love with
you.

MR. STONE

Good.

MR. WONDER

It is not good. It is something
that should not happen between two
men.

MR. STONE

But it has happened.

MR. WONDER

And it can no longer go any further.

Mr. Wonder goes back to his book. Mr. Stone grabs the book.

MR. STONE

What are you so afraid of? Tell me.
Please.

MR. WONDER

Hate. You saw hate from one man,
Mr. Stone. I have seen hate from a
group of them. I didn't know his
name but I know who he was. Inside
here.

(Points at his heart.)

They dragged him from his bed, tied
the sheets around his neck, called
him a deviant, then they hung him.

(MORE)

MR. WONDER (CONT'D)

I stood there and watched as they celebrated his death. These smart rich well suited nob's killed him because he liked men. You could fight one or two men but when a group of men hate, you can not fight them all. I will not let those feelings out because I am afraid, one day, hate will not only kill you and me but also Becka, the boys and--

MR. STONE

That will never happen. Not to any of us.

MR. WONDER

The country is not ready for people like us. Nor will it ever be.

MR. STONE

But it will.

MR. WONDER

No, it won't. We are deviants. Sinners.

MR. STONE

We are not.

MR. WONDER

Then what are we?

MR. STONE

We are two good people who have fallen in love with each other. That is all.

MR. WONDER

It is better to be safe and alive.

MR. STONE

With me, you can be that and a teacher but best of all, you can be, Daniel Wonder.

MR. WONDER

I wouldn't know how to be him.

MR. STONE

I'm still trying to figure out how to be Tom Stone. We can teach each other. I'm willing to take that chance.

MR. WONDER

Please go home, Mr. Stone.