

Attest to Love

By

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FADE IN:

INT. PRAISE SCENE.

NIGHT

(Whimsical storybook world in a small, prairie town.)

JESUS, the village shepherd, befriends a young man and young, sick woman, whom he is especially attentive to. He walks, talks, and eats with them. His presence works wonders in LAURA'S heart, as well as in JOHN'S. Seeking to win LAURA'S affections, JOHN represents the epitome of sacrificial and pursuing love, beautiful in its own way, but nothing compared to the real love of JESUS, which LAURA initially fears but ultimately comes to cherish and wholly depend upon. At this point in the script, their journey is only half-way through.

JESUS talks with LAURA in her cottage. JOHN has just left LAURA'S home after eating a meal with her and JESUS. It's been a long day and everyone is exhausted. The reality of LAURA'S sickness is beginning to weigh heavy in her mind and on her heart. She is confused, hurt, and afraid. JESUS and LAURA move to sit on a rug in front of LAURA'S fireplace. They stare into the flames.

JESUS
(SOFTLY)

Praise me.

LAURA wipes the tears from her face. She pulls away both physically and mentally.

LAURA
(BLANKLY)

Praise you?

JESUS moves closer toward her and encourages her to do as he has asked.

JESUS
(INTENTLY)

Hmm. Praise me.

LAURA prepares herself to follow his gentle command even though she doesn't want to.

LAURA
(SHAKILY)

You are forever good. You are honorable and faithful, forgiving and strong. Nothing compares to your strength.

JESUS
(WITH KINDNESS)
Open your eyes, beloved. (Pause) Look
at me.

LAURA meets JESUS'S gaze.

LAURA
(REASSUREDLY and INCREDULOUSLY)
Your holiness is deserving of more than
I can give.
You are mindful of man and just in all
your ways. You hung the moon and stars.
How majestic you are! You speak and it
comes to pass. (Pause) You are life and
love itself.

LAURA, suddenly filled with joy and revelation, continues
to speak.

You are love.

JESUS
(AUTHORITATIVELY BUT GENTLY)
Never stop praising my name. When you
praise me, you forget your troubles and
your sorrows. Say this with me...

LAURA and JESUS
(SLOWLY)
Why O my soul are you so downcast? I
will dwell on and recall the wonders of
the Lord and my heart is filled with
hope.

LAURA leans against JESUS'S chest. A bird sings a song
outside of LAURA'S window and then flies away. A gentle
breeze sweeps into the cottage. JESUS and LAURA sit in
peaceful silence, relaxing in each other's company, for
many minutes. LAURA still has doubts and JESUS senses the
suspicions running through her mind.

JESUS
(WITH CONVICTION)
I am the artist, and I declare you
wonderfully and beautifully made.

LAURA shifts from her position to better see JESUS'S face.

LAURA
(QUESTIONINGLY)
But I am broken. I am sick. Couldn't
you make me well again?

JESUS
(GENTLY REBUKING)
You are already whole, beloved. Do you
doubt my perfect plan?

LAURA meets JESUS'S gaze.

LAURA
(EMBARRASSED)
I don't doubt you.

LAURA does not want to go on but feels that she must tell
JESUS the truth.

I'm just...afraid.

JESUS chuckles, feeling neither surprised nor offended at
her response. He turns solemn again and lifts LAURA'S chin
so he can look into her eyes.

JESUS
(COMPASSIONATELY)
Cast your fear aside, my daughter. I
know what is best for you.

LAURA
(STRAINING)
What's best for me is my healing!
What's best for me is to be free from
this pain!

LAURA turns away from JESUS and faces the fire.

I thought surely you would understand.

JESUS
(QUIETLY)
I do understand...better than anyone. And
one day you will see the truth.
(Pause). *I am* what's best for you.

JESUS kisses her on the cheek and stands. He
walks through her door and past the cottage,
disappearing beyond the green hills. LAURA
remains seated on the floor, contemplating
his troubling words.

