

## **A Word of Hope to A Dancer**

**Kerry S. Doyal**

The ladies at Gentlemen's clubs live a hard life. Calling a stripper a dancer, and her audience gentlemen does little to take away the pain and shame they often live with.

Below is a letter I recently wrote to one such precious woman. I have taken out her stage name to protect her identity. I submit it here for two reasons. First, a message of love and hope to any hurt little girls.

Secondly, may God be pleased to use it as an example – certainly not perfect – of an approach to such exploited, hurting women. May God give us eyes to see them as He does.

Dear -----,

What a cute name you have taken... Obviously, you have changed your name. Dancers have to for both security and dignity purposes take on stage names and personas. The lonely men who pay your bills can hardly be trusted to know who you really are.

In fact, to sustain your dignity, you have changed your whole identity as well. The mirror can be hard enough to face for any of us on the best of days. However, to see the sweet little girl you were become a plaything for men must make self-examination even harder.

It is cruel and ironic that the cost of letting others – perverse strangers no less – examine you in intimate ways makes it ever so painful for you to do the same. The name you took becomes a person you increasingly have to be.

I wish I knew your real name so that I could address the hurt little girl that I take you to be. You know first hand what I have only read about; that most dancers are desperately hurt women who feel they have no recourse but to earn a living by exposing themselves.

Feeling they have nothing new to expose, no dignity left to forfeit, no other means of receiving so much affirmation, they try to leave a painful past behind as they unknowingly pursue a painful future.

What is painful about star treatment, a decent wage, wearing glamorous clothes, having your name in lights, with countless men ogling over you? It may not be the runway of super models, or the bright lights of Broadway, but it pays the bills and feeds your needs. After all, daddy never showed that kind of affection. How many other women have so many men who love them.

Sadly, you realize that time will betray you. A few pounds and stretch marks, a loss of shape or firmness and the next Cinderella takes your place for her few years of glory. You will go back to being the stepsister, the false glass slippers having been taken from your tired feet.

Fantasy is what you provide others. It will be what you need later. "I didn't do that, live like that. I didn't abort my babies for the sake of a group of gross grabby guys, forfeiting my childbearing years in the process. I didn't pass up marriage to a good man to be a means of visual adultery for thousands of creepy males..."

When the clock strikes midnight and the carriage is a pumpkin again, you will need fantasy even more than ever. Reality is painful. That is why you dance – to evade it. That is why you can use your managers and they use you.

They live fat off your lack of fat. Pimping you for their gain, while keeping wide-eyed for their next beauty queen to take your place. The drugs, toys and trinkets are payoffs to keep you strung along. They are as fickle and false as the males in the front row, waving extra money for extra favors.

Is there no one who loves you – the real you, the damaged and tattered little girl? Could there be one who sees your most intimate side – your insides - and loves you all the same? Yes, there is.

Could it be that His greatest anger is not towards you, but towards those who have hurt, abused and exploited you? He sees your scars – ones which makeup and costumes hide. He aches to heal them, to heal you.

Indeed, God, your Creator knows all about you and longs for you to let Him love you. His holy and healthy love is not centered on your body, which He made for greater, more glorious purposes. His love is pure and complete, in the full light of your damaged state.

God carried your sins when He bore your sins in the cross. In shame, He willingly bore it all, stripped and exposed, up on a cross to take away our shame. When Jesus died on the cross, it was to pay our sin-debt.

Jesus was perfect, sinless. He did not owe God death for His sins; we did. He took our place, paid our fine by going to the cross. He has made a way - the

way - back into fellowship with God. He did this so us sinners – each of us, any of us- could become God’s dearly loved children. Having been raised from the dead, He offers us new life as well.

God loves adopting new children. His household is big enough for all who want to be His child. One cannot earn adoption. It is an act God carries out all by Himself and offers by invitation only.

Like many adoptive parents, God gives his kids a new name, a new identity, a new heritage and destiny. He takes us “warts and all” and makes us His very own.

And what a new family of origin to have - all due to a rebirth into God’s clan! His kinfolk are the oddest lot you’ll ever encounter. Frankly, it looks as if He will let anyone in His family. Thankfully, He does and will – all who call out to Him in faith, turning to Him from their sins.

I urge you to do just that – turn to the One who loves you most purely. Allow Him to shower you with a love that leaves no regret, never has to be questioned. Let His people love you, accept you, and grow in faith with you.

We would love to be of help to you. Feel free to call. We have some ladies that would love to mother you and be sweet sisters for you. God has forgiven them of their stuff. They know shame and they also know grace and mercy. They would love to share this incredible good news with you.

In His mercy and kindness,

Kerry Doyal, Pastor & Forgiven Sinner