

Prologue

The Battle

When the mind is quiet, we are compelled to enter hidden chambers to revisit dungeons where we are chained to past experiences that manipulate our present situation and daily interactions. Our disdain with the way things are lets us know that now is the time to overcome. We stand in a courageous confrontation that requires our mustard seed of faith to guide us as we prepare for inner war.

We release a sharp breath loaded with fear. We know we are in for a terrifying fight because negative forces without mercy battle against us to remain in control. Some memories are horrifying: It is as if one is suffocating, stumbling in a circle, fighting against surrounding death. Negative thoughts march forward in battalions. Mocking sounds of fragmented voices attempt to collapse our mind. Layers of pain intensify. If we can persevere, we can uncover why the memory hurts us so that it will relinquish its bond, and we are momentarily free.

But the negative thought patterns return to rattle at the knob of our mind's door, when the pressures and distractions of everyday life cause us to lower our guard. Staying steady even in a busy day, we recognize the strength we acquired from the battle: Our minds now armored to resist the destructive patterns of thought once so automatic. In this way, over time, the opposition disintegrates. Our deepest selves realize that we have gained discipline. An overwhelming sense of expansion envelops us as the space that is created after light scatters darkness.

We walk with care lest we slip, but we walk in the knowledge of our inner steadiness.

Inner Conquest

Passion awoke from a sound night's rest to be greeted by the sun and an epiphany, which proclaimed restoration with a strong vibration that resonated deep within at an unspeakable level. Passion hoisted herself up onto her elbows and lifted her head, tilting it towards the sun and gently spoke with an assured clarity..."I'm healed." In that moment she knew she was healed from the pain of her childhood past. Healed from all the painful memories that molded her, at times wrestled her to the ground and binding her. Her mind hastily traversed back to some of those places, turning, curving in a circle around a hurtful universe. With a blink that brought her back to the present, she realized, hers was a healing from generations of hurt. Passion knew her healing was not hers alone to claim, it was for her mother Gladiola, Grandma Tiye, Great-Grandma Emerald and all the women she passed through to experience life and its infinite possibilities. Most of all, the healing was for Passion's two small children and the generations to come.

Passion sat up on the bed and began to think about how much her healing meant. She thought about faith and how self-determination helped her to understand how and why God's grace healed her. She thought about all the holy texts she had ever read and her mind paused at her favorite, Psalm 27. She nurtured this thought and allowed it as it always did, to fill her with its light. While enjoying this fullness and drawing a deep diaphragmatic breath, she focused all her energy on one verse, "Though my father and mother forsake me, the Lord will receive me." Releasing her breath, it was this particular promise that anchored her life. Being received by the Lord meant living a life of self-discipline in the pursuit of self-knowledge. In being healed, Passion embraced this wisdom as the complete meaning of her life—Kemet Nu (Know Thyself). Her pursuit of self-knowledge led her on an internal journey back through all the doors where there was brokenness. In peeling back all the layers of pain to receive God's deliverance, Passion realized this would be the only way to receive the kingdom of heaven. She had come to know that God loved her enough to want to share oneness with her. And this oneness connected her to everyone else. It satisfied the purpose of her humanity.

Passion drew another breath and thought about prayer. She believed prayer to be just as vital and necessary as every breath she took. She trusted its power. Prayer not only protected Passion from being devoured like prey, it helped her understand herself, love who she was despite the pain. She discovered her worth and value through prayer—her gifts and talents. Its arms comforted her and allowed her to pound on its chest whenever she became weary from not being able to see beyond her circumstances. When she became calm, prayer would illuminate her mind with insightful answers that expanded her vision to see beyond those same circumstances. Prayer strengthened her with perseverance and the endurance to keep reaching, asking and searching as she learned the lessons of her life. Its power helped her to realize she was beyond definition. And it was the quickest way to get God's attention. When Passion got God's attention, prayer taught her how to be honest with Him. Prayer revealed God's mercy and manifested His glory; and when she aligned her will with His, His favor. Of all the things to be grateful for in life, she was most grateful for prayer. For it took prayer to be able to understand the wisdom of forgiveness—forgiving all who had ever hurt her as a child. Passion's forgiveness was steep. It led to repentance. And she repented for those she forgave. In doing so, she was freeing herself from being a bondservant to a painful past. The light of the love offered by

forgiveness heals pain, allowing you to see what was holding you back. It's a pass key to another chance to keep growing, to keep moving forward—to evolve.

With another blink, she felt the warmth of the sun's rays against the left side of her face. As she began to think about the murkiness of deliverance, Passion arched her back in the shape of an "S" and drew a deep breath that connected with her soul. The journey of deliverance and the karmic cycles of cause and effect helped her to know she was being delivered from the consequences of someone else's choices. She recognized deliverance was setting her free to take full responsibility for the power of her own choices. Passion wanted to be accountable for her own life. She sought to reach her full potential in her exploration of the infinite possibilities that her life represented. When Passion spoke, she needed the voice she heard to be her own and not her mother's. When she took action, she needed them to be a response that came from the purity of her own nature and not from the dysfunction that attempted to break her will and steal her vitality. In her desire to become one with her true Self, experiencing all the levels of consciousness within, Passion learned to expect deliverance. She anticipated it, even though she never really knew how awesome the experience would be. But she was sure, however awesome, she needed courage to endure the battle. She had to face whatever was hidden in the mire attempting to hold her to it. Deliverance was fierce, her warring guardian that bravely removed anything in the way, leading to the next level.

With another blink and an exasperating breath, Passion's shoulders slightly slumped as her head tilted down under the weight of contemplating what she had been delivered from. After all these years, she still couldn't fathom how she made it through the pain. How God held onto her. What plan did He have for her life? It must be great. And what Passion thought of is how her life was a testimony of how determined God's love is for His creation to experience the infinite possibilities of His awareness. How this love is relentless in its purpose. It partners with you for eternity and does not make it easy for you to turn it away. It desires you in the deepest darkest places of yourself and never considers you unworthy. There is no measure of the width and height of this love. There is no bottom to its depth. Millions and millions of years could pass and love would still be waiting on your doorstep. Passion knew that she was loved. If she never heard the words spoken to her again, she could feel love's gentle vibration from deep within. This knowing was always with her.

Passion relaxed her posture and leaned back against the headboard, pondering the wonder of her life. At 37, she was a successful trial lawyer, married with two children, a girl Amiyar and a boy Anu. She thought of her family as a complete circle. This brought a smile to her face and she was happy, happy that her life was now healthy, vibrant and good. Her life was no longer tragic, but content. With a sigh, she thought if it weren't for the grace of God, where would I be? She turned her body and flung her legs over the side of the bed, placing her feet flatly onto the floor and became overwhelmed by the thought of how she exceeded every expectation and suggestion of who she should have become because of her childhood. As the tears flowed down her cheeks, Passion got up from the bed and went over to the mirror. As she wiped away the tears, she gazed into the reflection of her hazel eyes to look back upon where she came from and began to recall her story the story of her childhood. It was a story that taught her numerous lessons about life and how to live by its principles. These lessons were abundant in knowledge, understanding and wisdom. Passion benefited from the lessons in such rewarding ways

because they showed her how to choose level paths for her feet, which led to prosperous and righteous living. She didn't have to experience something negative to know that it was negative. This lesson in particular taught her how not to add trouble to her days. Passion also learned how to observe the patterns in her life and when weakness seemed to override her faith she prayed for deeper understanding to ask the right questions; and more strength, the strength to act upon the answers. She believed in herself. Passion reached out her hand to touch the face on the mirror and a guiding voice now ready to tell the story began to speak.