

Poem on Wilderness

THE WILDERNESS IS A PLACE OF ISOLATION:
IT IS ALSO A PLACE OF CONNECTION

We sat around a six
person table,
For don't most holy moments
happen around a table?
Six women, six heartbeats, six
names and identities.

We gathered there once every
twelve days,
To read and pray, to learn each
other's names.
It was nothing more than a
burger bar,
And we were nothing more than
the truths we shared,
So sitting around a basket
of fries,
I assumed I knew everyone
there.

But then the woman directly
to my right
Said quietly to the group of six
that night,
"I had an abortion when I
was young."
And my heart stopped. And my
heart sunk.

For she had kept this wilderness in.
She had carried this
weight alone.
She had grieved and prayed
for peace,
And I had never even known.

She went on to speak of hurt
and grief,
Of a prayer to God to
end suffering.

She went on to tell us her most
vulnerable truth,
And in an instant that small
leather booth
Became church.

For in naming the wilderness,
that space became
Not only the place of her
greatest pain,
But also the place where
we became
One.

In an instant, she became her
own light.
And in an instant, we
were changed.
For in that instant, we saw her
wilderness walk,
So in that instant, we became
Six names, six united identities,
one heartbeat.

I think the wilderness does that.
Sometimes you walk it alone.
And sometimes you tell
that story
And a booth becomes home.

Prayer by Sarah Are

3.15-3.21

Journaling & Reflection

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*Who have you met and encountered in the wilderness?
How have they shaped your journey?*
