LYRICAL DEVOTIONAL · DAY 117

Who Stole the Body?

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"Then the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first,
also went in, and he saw and believed."
- Jn 20:8

As she ran,
Mary encountered Peter and John

"They have taken the Lord out of the tomb,
and we do not know where they have laid him."
- Jn 20:2

The moment she said it,
they knew what would follow.

The Jewish leaders would blame them.
Rome could command the road,
but it could not write the ending.
And stealing bodies
was punishable by death.

Grief had crushed them.
Fear for their families
Had kept them
behind locked doors.

And now the body was missing.

So they ran.

No thought of resurrection.
Just the urgency of men
who knew danger stalked them.

John reached the tomb first,
stooped,
and saw the linen clothes
lying there.

He didn't go in.

Peter arrived a breath later,
stormed inside,
and froze.

The grave clothes lay
where the body had been.
The face cloth was folded
and set aside,
a detail that offered
no explanation.

It only meant this:
the body had been stolen.

John stepped in behind Peter.
The text says,
"he saw and believed."
- Jn 20:8

But what did he believe?

John's gospel answers the question for us.

First,
"For as yet they did not understand
the Scripture,
that he must rise from the dead."
- Jn 20:9

Second,
"Then the disciples went back
to their homes."
- Jn 20:10

John wasn't believing
Jesus had been raised.
He believed Mary's report-
His body was stolen.

If he had believed
Jesus had been raised from the dead,
he wouldn't have gone home.
He would have raced
to tell the other disciples.

So they did the only thing men do
when the world collapses
and nothing fits:

they went home.

Carrying a knot of fear
that squeezed their chest
with every step.

Bound up in fear
and despair,
unsure what to do next.

The stone was rolled back.
The body was missing.
The morning felt colder
than the night before.

They didn't know this about Jesus,
but the greatest surprise
in human history
was upon them-

a light no darkness
could hold back.

You may not know this about Jesus:
He is at work where we assume loss.

Where do I assume loss, when Jesus is at work?

I need to avoid assuming the worst when I can't see Him.

Father, steady my heart in
the risen Jesus. I ask this in His name. Amen.