

STAND

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*Child, you just stand when there's nothing
left to do.*

*You just stand, watch the Lord see you
through.*

-Donnie McClurkin-

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>CHAPTER</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
DEDICATION	i
PREFACE	ii
OPENING PRAYER.....	1
CHAPTER 1 – Found My Way Back	2
CHAPTER 2 – When The Body Fails	5
CHAPTER 3 – What Do You Do When You’ve Done All You Can?.....	9
CHAPTER 4 – How Do You Handle The Guilt From Your Past?	12
CHAPTER 5 – How Can You Smile When Your Heart Has Been Broken?	15
CHAPTER 6 – DIALYSIS	19
PHOTO INSERTS	22
CHAPTER 7 – When You Don’t See It Coming	31
CHAPTER 8 – Prayed And Cried	35
CHAPTER 9 – It Won’t Be Long.....	38
CHAPTER 10 – God’s Priority.....	40
CHAPTER 11 – STAND!	43
CLOSING PRAYER	46
EPILOGUE	48
AFTERWORD.....	50
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	52
MY FAITH TRACKLIST.....	54
CONCORDANCE.....	55
NOTES	56
ABOUT THE AUTHOR	70
OTHER WORKS	71

Dedicated to:

*My Lord and Savior Jesus Christ for
stepping in when I stood.*

*Secondly, to my fiancée for being my rock,
my lighthouse in the storm and my North
Star. Lastly, to all the individuals who
aided me in the fight to save my life.*

PREFACE

The bulk of this book was written between my time spent from my calmly rocked deck chair on my way to Ocho Rios, Jamaica and my assigned chair in the dialysis center for that was the culmination of where my journey led me. As I watched the waves crashing it's ironic to look at the totality of my life's situation and how far I've come. If you all will indulge me, allow me to explain. 2 years ago, I found myself on board a Carnival Cruise ship named "Conquest" and I was in the process of conquering my fear and hatred of "Him" while going blind. On top of that I was at the apex of my literary career. Now 2 years later I find myself again on another Carnival ship now named "Sunrise" which is apropos because now that I have regained my eyesight, I have also established my way back to "Him" and the Sun has now essentially risen on a new day for me. With this journey comes new challenges, questions plagued with uncertainty and answers too unpleasant to face. But with those questions I have learned that there is (1) universal answer to a lot of them:

STAND!

*As the song says:
Just stand.
Stand and be sure.
Be not entangled in that bondage again.
You just stand and endure.
God has a purpose.
Yes, God has a plan.*

*So, there you go when all else fails...**STAND!**
Through every Dr's appointment...**STAND!**
Through every test...**STAND!**
Through every setback, disappointment, and
disillusion...**STAND!***

Opening Prayer

Dear Jesus, you are the author and the perfecter of our Faith. You save us and sustain us. Help us to trust in you and to worship whether we have a lot or a little. May our praise bring you glory and remind us of your promises. We love you, Lord, we seek your presence, and we worship you alone.

Father God, we come before you today laying down our pride, our arrogance and confess our need for you. We lay our needs at your feet and worship you and you alone. For without you, we are nothing. Teach us how to worship you in all transparency. Fill us with your Spirit as we open our mouths in praise to you.

Lord, you have told us in Your Word that You hear our prayers. We are crying out to You; we are humbling ourselves before You and seeking Your face. We come together as a collective body to seek You. We repent and turn from our wicked ways, thank you for hearing us. Thank you for Your forgiveness and Your healing.

Amen.

Chapter: 1

FOUND MY WAY BACK

After a successful journey I am blessed and humbled to say that I have found my way back to “*Him*.” It wasn’t easy and it wasn’t quick. I had to take a long hard look at both the man in the mirror as well as an even deeper look within. The man in the mirror was a bearded angry man that I didn’t recognize. Behind the beard I saw a face riddled with pain, hurt, suffering, confusion, fear, and doubt. I saw no signs of the happy-go-lucky individual that I once was. I saw a face scarred by the ravages of time, mutilated by another man’s sick perversions, and disfigured by loss. But more importantly I saw a face blemished by the scowl of hatred.

Now before you all assume that I am going to become the proverbial broken record and repeat what you already know about all my trials and tribulations. This is not that moment! This is nothing more than an overdue apology, an apology to the one who was always with me even when I didn’t want “*Him*” anywhere near me. It’s funny actually that looking back I can’t help but laugh at the giant joke I didn’t realize I was in. Allow me to let you all in on the Ha, Ha moment! If you are

someone who knows me or if this is your 1st introduction to me, I have several artifacts that I have added to my skin via ink. Of those many artifacts I have a tattoo of *Jesus Christ* on the cross on my right forearm, a large cross that takes up my whole right outer calf with the words “Strength and Faith” etched in the center and 3 crosses on the left side of my neck. Now you may be asking: Glaister, where's the joke? Well, here it is...I got all those aforementioned tattoos on me but not for the reasons you may think. I was a firm believer that to ensure that I never falter on my mission of hatred I placed those tattoos on my skin to remind me of who it was that I despised. My mentality was simple: keep your friends at arm's length but keep your mortal enemy as close as humanly possible. **NOW HERE'S THE PUNCHLINE!** In a conversation with my lovely fiancée as I was explaining my thought process she replied: “Honey, don't you realize that in your hatred you were actually giving “*Him*” reverence? You were blanketing yourself with the protection of his love. You weren't hurting “*Him*”, you were honoring “*Him*”!

There's the joke Brothers and Sisters all those years when I thought I was defiantly spiting “*Him*”, essentially, I was actually paying tribute to “*Him*”. He

says, *“Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth.” The Lord Almighty is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress.* -

Psalms 46: 10-11. She chuckled as she revealed to me how warped and incorrect my thought process was by showing me how far off I truly was. So, allow me to humbly apologize to you. *Heavenly Father*, in the process of finding my way back into the fold I do so in repentance. Forgive me for my ignorance and my disrespect. Forgive me for my years of unbridled and unrivaled hatred. I now know as I take this walk back to you that everything, I hated you for was simply things that I hated within myself. Please forgive me and allow me to bask in your light and your love as long as I am on this Earth. I apologize for every vile and vicious thing I have ever said to you. Not only was venom wrongfully directed at you, but it was also undeserved. I am sorry for everything that I said about you.

On this walk I thank you for your patience. I know it wasn't easy, but I have felt your love the whole way from my 1st hesitant step to my million and one questions from me learning how to pray again to loving myself as you love me. I am honored, blessed, and grateful that you would let me find my way back into your

arms. Thank you for your mercy, your grace, your understanding but more importantly your forgiveness.

Chapter: 2
WHEN THE BODY FAILS

So, prior to this current speed bump my loss of vision was without a doubt my greatest challenge. I found myself struggling to see anything just 3 feet in front of me. But thanks to my *God*, Dr. Gechter, the team over at Aran Eye Institute and my beautiful fiancée I am now able to see once again. You don't realize how much you value your vision until everything you love is taken away from you. The fact that I wasn't able to draw or write was literally killing me! I went from releasing 3 books in the span of 18 months and cranking out custom sketch covers 2 by 2 like Noah to absolutely NOTHING was a punch to the gut. Although this chapter of my life came with a series of challenges it also came with an appreciation for the gift *God* gave me. In **James 1:17** it tells us: *Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change.* And I have to give *God* thanks for those abilities that have afforded me everything from special guest bookings to

co-founding and headlining a thriving Comic-Con as it rolls into its 6th year to sitting in front of a radio mic and holding radio interviews on multiple stations.

My talents are from *God* and every blessing that those talents create is a testament to his grace and his glory. *"I the Lord search the heart and test the mind, to give every man according to his ways, according to the fruit of his deeds -*

Jeremiah 17:10. To date my talents have allowed me to have a career with 23 published titles under my belt and pieces of art across the globe. With all that success I surely never saw this coming down the pipeline. In the blink of an eye I went from losing and regaining my eyesight to now facing end- stage kidney failure and in need of a transplant while fighting for my life. My body was racked with pain whether it was simply going to the bathroom or agonizing wrenching pain in both kidneys. The best way I can describe it is to imagine ringing out a sponge or small kitchen towel. Now imagine that same ringing out on your left kidney and then again on your right kidney and if that wasn't bad enough both

at the same time. That pain was truly excruciating, and it would happen at the most inopportune moments. It was clear and undeniable my body was slowly failing me.

I found myself tearfully asking why? What I learned was this can be contained. *God* will never give you more than you can handle. *God* helps us manage what we are given. *Jesus Christ* will give me the strength to push past this obstacle. I just need to have faith and remain vigilant.

Hebrews 11:6 shows us that without faith it is impossible to please “*Him*”, *for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek “Him”*. I am so grateful that I put my anger and pride aside to have a relationship with “*Him*” for I wouldn't be able to navigate through these treacherous waters by myself. I am confident that *God* will see me through this. He said to them, “*Because of your little faith. For truly, I say to you, if you have faith like a grain of mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it will move, and nothing will be impossible for you.*” - **Matthew 17:20**

That is a promise that I have continually held on to...especially as the Dr's appointments pile up.