

I am single: a woman on my own.
How did I end up here?
So fiercely independent that to ask for help is hard.
To confess a need to others leaves me squirming in fear.
To reach out clothes me in the shadowy rags of shame and guilt.

How did I end up here?
Single.

Dare I share the why, the tale for which Jesus wept?
Dare I care to examine my heart for the bitter dregs left behind by failed love, of promises broken?

How *did* I end up here? Single.

It started *there*. In a together dream where together became alone.
Stolen by the demands of getting it right then learning, just as quickly, wrong was a punishable offence. When yesterday's right became tomorrow's wrong.
It was buried by the weight of service to unquenchable demands that only grew into more demands burdened with the weight of pride.
Together was strangled by the rules, the how to's of generations before me.
It was cut to ribbons by the sharp edge of Scripture quotes missing the heart of Jesus. Dutiful obedience became the chains that bound me.
And beat me down into gratefully accepting a few crumbs of rare kindness.

Together was pierced by the cruel spikes of negligence and utter disregard.

Together was torn apart by the shame of selling myself down the river and not being able to leave. Scripture quotes missing the heart of Jesus became the bars that caged me.

Decades moulded and shaped an Invisible Voiceless Woman Alone, a ghost, who was baffled where the years had gone and why things got so bad despite having tried so hard to make it good.

How did I end up here? Single?

I was released by the most amazing gift of an infidelity not my own.
Scripture quotes missing the heart of Jesus became the wings that freed me.
So here I am.

Single but never alone because the arms of Jesus have never let me go since that
fateful moment. And I have never let go of Him.

So I practice trust.
I practice reaching out.
I practice believing myself worthy of help.
Scripture quotes with Jesus at their heart encourage me.

It is getting easier each time I push against the lessons of alone and the wounds of
having been with another.
It is getting easier because I am surrounded by a community whose foundation is
the love of Jesus.

Thank you for your patience.
Thank you for reaching in when I am paralyzed by fear and indecision and cannot
reach out.
Thank you for helping me break free from yesterday's lies each time you answer
my "ask".
Thank you for being the love of Jesus with skin on it.

Thank you, most of all, for allowing me to witness and learn and embrace the
truth of God's together.