



You Have Been Carrying So Much

LETTER TWO

From the Porch

Dear one,

I have been thinking about the kind of tiredness that does not always look like tiredness from the outside.

The kind that keeps going.

Answers the message.

Remembers the appointment.

Makes the meal.

Checks on everyone.

Shows up.

Smiles when needed.

Handles what needs handling.

And because you keep managing it, people may not realize how much it costs you.

Perhaps sometimes you do not realize it either.

You have become so accustomed to carrying things that the weight begins to feel ordinary.

But ordinary weight is still weight.

And you have been carrying so much.

Some of it is visible.

Work.

Schedules.

Bills.

Children.

Parents.

Appointments.

The house.

The errands.

The things that cannot simply be ignored.

But some of the heaviest things are the ones no one sees.

Remembering what everyone needs.

Noticing who is quiet.

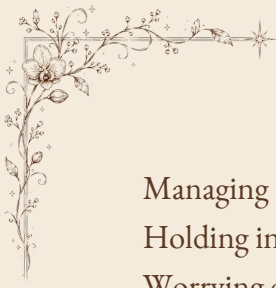
Thinking ahead.

Preparing for what might go wrong.

Keeping the peace.

Softening your words.





Managing someone else's disappointment.
Holding information that cannot yet be shared.
Worrying about the person who says they are fine.
Carrying the emotional temperature of the room.
These things rarely appear on a list.
But they live in the body.
In the shoulders.
The jaw.
The breath.
The mind that keeps turning long after the room has gone quiet.
Maybe people call you strong.
Capable.
Reliable.
The one they can count on.
And perhaps you are all of those things.
But strength can become a place people leave things.
They trust you with the problem.
The plan.
The secret.
The responsibility.
The part no one else wants to handle.
You carry it because you can.
Because you care.
Because sometimes there truly is no one else.
But being able to carry something does not mean it is weightless.
And being the dependable one does not mean you do not need somewhere to lean.
I wonder how often you have said, "It's fine," when what you really meant was:



I can manage it.

Those are not the same thing.

Managing is not the same as being okay.

Getting through is not the same as being supported.

Functioning is not the same as feeling held.

You may be doing everything that needs to be done and still be tired in a way sleep does not completely touch.

That does not make you ungrateful.

It does not make you weak.

It may simply mean you have been carrying more than one person was ever meant to carry alone.

There are things we take on because we love people.

And there are things we take on because we learned early that being needed made us valuable.

Sometimes we become useful before we ever learn how to be cared for.

We anticipate.

Adjust.

Protect.

Provide.

We become the woman who does not create more trouble.

The woman who can be counted on.

The woman who will figure it out.

And after a while, asking for help can feel harder than carrying the whole thing ourselves.

What if they do it wrong?

What if they say no?

What if we have to explain everything?

What if needing something changes the way they see us?

So we keep holding it.

Even when our hands are full.

You do not have to prove your strength here.

I already believe you.



I believe you have carried things no one fully understood.
I believe you have kept moving through days when part of you wanted to sit down and stop.
I believe you have loved people through situations that asked too much of you.
I believe you have done your best with responsibilities you did not always choose.
You do not need to present the evidence.
You can let the strong version of you rest on the porch too.
She has earned a chair.
Maybe there is something you wish someone would notice without you having to ask.
That you are tired.
That you have reached your limit.
That you do not want to decide the next thing.
That you need someone else to remember.
That you want to be cared for without first becoming visibly overwhelmed.
It can be painful when no one notices.
But the people around us may have become accustomed to our capability.
They may mistake silence for ease.
They may assume we have it because we always have.
This does not mean you have failed to communicate.
And it does not mean they do not care.
Sometimes the pattern has simply become so familiar that everyone has forgotten to question it.
Including you.
Perhaps today, you can question it gently.
Not by changing your whole life.
Not by walking away from everyone who needs you.
Just by noticing:





What am I carrying right now?

Name what you can.

The practical things.

The emotional things.

The things you agreed to.

The things you absorbed.

The things you are trying to control because uncertainty feels unbearable.

The things you keep revisiting in your mind because you believe enough thinking might protect you from pain.

Put names to the weight.

Not so you can solve it all.

So you can stop pretending your hands are empty.

Then ask one more question:

Does all of this belong to me?

Some of it will.

Some responsibilities are ours.

Some love asks us to carry hard things for a time.

But perhaps not all of it belongs in your arms.

Someone else's mood may not be yours to fix.

Someone else's decision may not be yours to prevent.

Someone else's disappointment may not mean you chose wrongly.

A problem may matter deeply without becoming yours to solve.

You are allowed to care without taking full ownership of the outcome.

That is not abandonment.

It is a boundary between love and disappearance.

And for what truly is yours, perhaps you do not need to carry it in the same way.

You can ask for help.

You can give someone a specific task.

You can say, "I cannot make that decision today."

You can let something be good enough.

You can stop explaining beyond what is necessary.

You can answer later.

You can allow another capable adult to experience the consequences of their own choices.

You can sit down before everything is finished.

Small relief is still relief.

One thing shared is one thing no longer held alone.



There may be people who are not used to you putting anything down.
They may be surprised.
They may prefer the version of you who never needed anything.
That does not mean you are doing something wrong.
A healthier balance can feel inconvenient to those who benefited from your exhaustion.
You do not have to become hard.
You do not have to stop loving generously.
But you are allowed to include yourself among the people whose wellbeing matters.
You belong inside your own care.
For today, I am not asking you to release everything.
Just choose one thing.
One expectation.
One decision.
One task.
One worry you can stop feeding for the rest of the evening.
Set it beside the chair.
Let the porch hold it with the things you placed here before.
You may pick it up tomorrow.
You may ask someone else to carry part of it.
You may discover it was never yours.
You do not have to know yet.
For now, unclench your hands.
They have been holding so much.
Let them rest around something warm.
Let your shoulders lower.
Let someone say this to you and mean it:
You have done enough for this moment.
You do not have to hold everything together here.
With warmth,
From the Porch

