Sweet Soul

by Kelly Mullins

You've been fighting for so long, Sweet Soul –
bearing burdens bound tightly by fear and hurt,
on sagged shoulders, on drooping hope.

You're tired and…
it's far too easy to see.

But don't back down.
Not yet…
Don't waver; don't hesitate.
Press on, because despite the looming beasts ahead,
You are a warrior.

I know your struggle well,
though you hide behind a genuine smile,
the tired in your eyes reveal:

You *feel* everyone, Sweet Soul –
it shows in the worry stuck like pine sap on your brow,
in the desperation tucked beneath the encouragement of your words,
in the tears that bleed from your soul, from your third eye…
you taste their fear,
you breathe their worries,
you vomit their hatred.
You become the lack of confidence in beautiful souls –
they deny possibility and embrace doubt like cluttered debris
stored too long in dusty corners of their hidden, dark closets.
You become the lost happiness stuffed away by their judgments.
You become all the moments they did not risk it all for love,
their wasted minutes,
counted hours watching water boil,
days blotted out by extreme silence…

Try to remember, Sweet Soul – though it seems folded in your cortex –
none of it belongs to you!

You smile at a million blank faces every day
and even though busy smirks greet you back,
keep smiling!
Give them like gifts of crumpled flowers from a child.
Smile when blank faces return apathy.
Smile when confused scowls force feed mistrust.

Or stop!

Don't do it for them, Sweet Soul, but for yourself.
You smile because it's what you want the world to feel.
You love the undeserving because
you know the stuff on the surface
only veils the beauty beneath.
You hold them close to your heart because
you see what no one else sees.

Keep holding onto them, Sweet Soul,
because you know the truth…
that they deserve more than they believe,
that even though they fill you with their dread,
you get to swim in the hidden pools of their potential.

You, Sweet Soul, have been led to this task.
You feel the strength in your veins,
Surging through your strong shoulders,
your patient breath,
and your devotion to your warrior's task.
Don't give up.
Keep fighting.
Keep smiling.
Keep loving.