

Friday, March 14, 2025



*Day 09*

*“A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh.”*

—EZEKIEL 36:26 (ASV)

## Reflect

Life has a way of hardening our hearts. It isn't a terrible instinct either. Sometimes it is all you can do to heal from pain or suffering or lessons we have learned the hard way. Like when the people you trusted let you down. Or when she said she would love you forever, but she left. But a heart of stone misses out on a lot too. “Life will break you. Nobody can protect you from that, and living alone won't either, for solitude will also break you with its yearning,” Louise Erdrich writes in her novel *The Painted Drum*. “You have to love. You have to feel. It is the reason you are here on earth. You are here to risk your heart.”<sup>9</sup> So we live here in the messy middle between the beautiful and the terrible, with all the courage and love we can muster, keeping our hearts soft.

---

<sup>9</sup> Louise Erdrich. *The Painted Drum*. (New York: Harper Collins, 2005). 274.

# *Respond*

You've been working so hard to keep your heart safe—it's okay to take a break. Speak to yourself with some kindness (maybe even thank your heart for putting up with so much). And maybe reach out to a friend—you both might need a good laugh or a little distraction.



---

# Blessing for when you see things as they always were

*Blessed are you who see it all.*

*The terrible, beautiful truth that our world,  
our lives seem irreparably broken.*

*And you can't unsee it.  
The hungry kid.  
The exhausted mom.  
The woman wondering it's worth it.  
The loneliness and despair.*

*Blessed are you who glimpse reality  
and don't turn away.  
This seeing comes at a steep cost,  
a cost paid not intentionally,  
but here you are.  
Seeing things clearly.*

*Blessed are you who have  
worked hard to keep your heart soft.  
You who live with courage,  
fixing what is in your reach,  
praying about what is not,  
and loving, still.*

*May you experience deeper capacity  
and glimpses of hope,  
as you continue  
to see the world as it is.*

*Terrible.  
Beautiful.  
Fragile.<sup>10</sup>*

---

<sup>10</sup> Kate Bowler and Jessica Richie. "A Blessing for When You See Things as They Always Were" in *Good Enough: 40ish Devotionals for a Life of Imperfection*. (New York: Convergent, 2022). 208.