

You Are Loved



By Benjamin Gillis

A tribute to "You are Special" by Max Lucado

The Amarians were small dwarfs that lived in a beautiful village bordered between the mountains and the ocean. Each Amarian was different. Some had big noses, others had large eyes, some were tall and others were short. Some wore hats, others wore coats, but all lived in the same village.



All day long, every day, they did the same thing: they gave each other stickers. Each Amarian had a box of gold star stickers, and a box of gray dot stickers. Up and down the streets, all over the village, people spent their days sticking stars or dots on one another. The ones with smooth skin and beautiful hair always got stars, but if their skin was rough or their hair was tangled, the Amarians gave dots.



The talented ones could throw boulders high above their heads or jump over tall bushes. Still others knew big words or could sing pretty songs. Everyone gave them stars. Some had stars all over them. Every star made them feel so good, and made them want to do something to get another star.



Perseus tried to jump, but he always fell. And when he fell, the others would gather around him and give him dots. Sometimes when he fell, his skin got scratched up, so the people would give him more dots. Then when he would try to explain why he fell, he would say something silly and the Amarians would give him even more dots.

After a while, he had so many dots that he didn't want to go outside. He was afraid he would do something silly, such as forget his hat or step in the water and then people would just give him another dot. In fact, he had so many gray dots that some people would come up and give him one for no reason at all.



"He deserves a lot of dots." "He's not a good person." said some of the Amarians. After a while, Perseus believed them. "I'm not a good Amarian." he would say. The few times he went outside, he hung around with other Amarians who had lots of dots. He felt better around them.



One day, he met a woman who was unlike anyone he had ever met. She had no dots or stars – her body was completely unmarked. Her name was Aries. It wasn't that people didn't try to give her stickers; it's just that the stickers didn't stick. Some of the Amarians admired Aries for having no dots, so they would run up and give her a star, but it would fall off. Others would look down on her for having no stars, so they would give her a dot, but it wouldn't stay either.

"That's the way I want to be. I don't want any marks." Perseus thought. So he asked the stickerless Amarian how she did it. "It's easy." Aries replied. "I don't care what other Amarians think." "You don't?" "No, and you shouldn't either. Who are they to give you stars or dots? They're Amarians just like you. What they think doesn't matter, Perseus. All that matters is what you believe. I think you're pretty special." Perseus laughed. "Me? Special? Why? I can't walk fast. I can't jump. My skin is rough. Why should I matter to you?" Aries looked at Perseus, put her hands on his shoulders and spoke very slowly: "Because I believe that you are a good person, and you are worthy of love."



Perseus had never had anyone look at him like this. He didn't know what to say. "Every day, I hope people come up and ask me why I don't have any marks." Aries explained. "But why don't the stickers stay on you?" Perseus asked. Aries spoke softly: "Because I have decided that what I believe is more important than what they think. The stickers only stick if you let them." "What?" "The stickers only stick if they matter to you. The more you trust that you are worthy of love, the less you care about their stickers."



"I'm not sure I understand," Perseus confessed. Aries smiled. "You will, it'll take a little time. You've got a lot of marks. For now, just try to think of all the unique things that you have to offer others, and you will learn to believe that you are special." Aries gave Perseus a big hug. "Remember," Aries said over her shoulder, as she turned to leave. "You are special, and you are loved." As Perseus watched Aries skip away, he thought: "Maybe I am worthy of love after all." And when he did, a dot fell to the ground.

THE END

