

An Excerpt from

You're **Already**
Amazing

*Embracing Who You Are,
Becoming All God Created You to Be*

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Introduction

The Dare



Pssst . . . pull up a chair and I'll tell you a secret. You'd better lean in close for this one.

Ready?

You don't have to *do* more, *be* more, *have* more.

I'm sure there are security alarms going off somewhere. You should probably hide this book when your in-laws come over. And this could be the makings of a Sunday morning scandal.

But it's true.

It's the kind of true that will change your life, set you free, and make you wake up smiling for the first time in a long time. I know because that's what it did for me (and believe me, for this non-morning girl that's nothing short of miraculous). I've seen it happen to a lot of other women too. I've read it in their words through thousands of comments on my blog. I've seen it in their faces as they sit on the couch in my counseling office. I've heard it in a new kind of laughter over coffee with friends.

So watch out, sister. If you keep reading, you just might be next.

Even if we've never met, I know this about you: you're a daughter of God, a holy princess, a woman created with strengths you've yet to fully grasp and a story that's still being written by the divine

The Dare

Author himself. And if you really take hold of who you are and what you're called to do, there will be no stopping you. That's because there's no stopping him *in you*—and he's got bigger plans for your life than you've even imagined.

Okay, you've been warned.

If you're feeling brave, I dare you to read on . . .



1

A Heart-to-Heart Talk



My friend sits across the table at lunch. She's lovely, wonderful, a bringer of joy to my heart. Yet today there's little light in her eyes. She talks of endless juggling—kids, work, church, marriage, sex, groceries, and God.

She whispers, "Sometimes I don't even like my life. And I feel so guilty because I'm so blessed."

She speaks of reading books, doing studies, and listening to sermons that say she needs to give more, have more quiet time, find more friends.

"I try," she says. "I try so hard and I just fall further behind."

She describes her spirituality as a treadmill that keeps having the speed turned up. She runs faster and faster, only to become more exhausted.

As she shares, I think not of where she is going but of the One who is pursuing her heart. He stands just behind her, but she can hardly hear his voice above the whirl of the track.

"Dear daughter," he whispers. "Come to me. You are weary and burdened. I will give you rest. You're already pleasing to me."

I tell her this and she pauses, sighs, leans into that truth for a moment. I watch the treadmill slow and then stop as she rests instead in the arms of grace.



A woman settles onto the couch in my counseling office. I can tell she's got something hard to say this week. She shifts back and forth. I see the words rolling around in her mind and finally making their way to her lips. She tells of abuse from those who should have protected her. Rejection instead of love. Names called in the privacy of her home and the public of the playground. Sticks and stones could break her bones, but it's words that have broken her heart. She finally comes up for air, and as the tears run a river down her cheeks, it seems a single lie follows their tracks.

"You could never be enough."

If it were audible it would be said with a hiss—the same one that has haunted Eve's daughters since the Garden. And within me I feel the response rising from a more Tender Voice.

"Tell her the truth."

So I do, and the rivers of tears become torrents, buckets of loss and fear poured out in that office. Empty and full, she looks up and smiles.

It's the first time I've ever seen her do so.



She writes me an email from across the world. I've never seen her face or even visited her continent. But we are more alike than different.

She tells me of feeling meaningless and wondering if she has anything at all to offer. She types, "Everyone else matters but me. Everyone else has something to offer but me. God must be so disappointed."

As I read her words I feel a physical ache in my chest, a longing for her to see what I can see in just a few sentences—that she has kindness, creativity, gifts, and strengths. She is brave, compassionate, and valuable.

I think of God placing his hand over hers as she types those sentences, wanting with all of his heart to replace those wounding words with new ones that reflect his love for her.

I type back, “Yes, you matter. No one can take your place. God made just one *you*, and this world needs you just as you are.”

I hit “Send” and pray the truth will make its way straight to her heart.



Wherever I connect with women, it seems the same hurt is there. I recognize it well because I’ve felt it too.

I know what it’s like to stare at the ceiling in the middle of the night and ask hard questions with few answers. I know what it’s like to hide in the corner of the room, hoping no one will notice me, wondering if I’ll ever be wanted. I know what it’s like to wrestle with insecurity, guilt, and impossible standards of my own making.

I know.

Yet there also came a point when my heart began knowing something deeper as well. In my desperation, I started asking God what he really wanted for his daughters. I searched the Scriptures, talked to women, pondered and prayed. I’m still trying to understand all of it and, quite clumsily, to fully live it. But what I discovered just may be the best news you’ll ever hear.

So let’s talk.

..... *Would You Like to Have Coffee?*

Imagine I ask you to have coffee with me—which is exactly what I do with my dearest friends. There’s just something about sitting across a table from someone you truly care about that really gets a conversation going. (And if you’re not a coffee drinker, then tea or a yummy dessert are perfectly acceptable substitutes.)

I call, text, or email: “Can we get together? There’s something I’d really like to tell you.”

We pick your favorite spot. I meet you at the door. We settle into a quiet corner. Order our favorite drinks. Swap small talk over mochas or tea.

Sip by sip we go deeper, until we land at the level of the heart . . . that place where it's hard to go in the middle of the busy and the broken.

I clear my throat, lean back, look you in the eyes, and say:

~ "It's time you knew you're amazing." ~

You smile, laugh awkwardly, glance at the ceiling. "I know, I know," you reply. "So kind of you to say."

I respond, looking at you more intently.

"I mean it's time you *really* knew. And there's more:

- You're not only amazing.
- You're enough.
- You're beautiful.
- You're wanted.
- You're chosen.
- You're called.
- You've got what it takes . . . not just to survive but to change the world."

By this time your fingers are wrapped around your cup. You stare down at the bottom of it, focused on the emptiness, wondering why these words are so hard to hear.

Finally, you ask, "Who told you that?"

And I respond, "The only One who really knows—Someone who loves you."

This concludes your excerpt of
You're Already Amazing by Holley Gerth.

Purchase the book.