Beautiful Baggage

He finds it hard to tell his story.
It's one not many can tell,
And its ending is still out of sight.
His friends tried to discourage him.
Dating a woman with kids was already a no-no,
Dating a woman pregnant with someone else's seed–
Ooh, forget about it,
Talk about baggage!
His comrades were uncertain,
Suspicious,
And asked him if he was sure about this.
Rumors were going around:
"She's a government agent."
"She's trying to infiltrate and destroy your organization."
But he knew better.
He listened with his heart,
Analyzed with his mind,
Saw her strap on her steel toed boots every morning until her eighth month of pregnancy,
Working hard so she could eat more than cereal three times a day,
Working hard so her baby could have a place to call home,
Held her as she burst into uncontrollable tears from the abuse she had endured,
Held her as she learned to breathe again and love herself.
He knew better.
Their love for each other grew along with her belly as months passed.
He understood from the beginning the implication of him being involved in this relationship.
He understood as he attended ob-gyn appointments and laid in bed with her reading pregnancy and parenting books.
He was filling the void that so many single mothers had experienced,
He was making up for all the men out there who walked out on their lover at the sight of responsibility.
Then finally the day came,
When she called him to say she was going into labor,
And he held her hand, transferring all his strength to her,
As she pushed and delivered this new life into the world.
The nurse brought him over to the umbilical cord,
And he cut this baby boy, a newborn who he had no blood connection to, loose into the world.
Tears came from his eyes that had never witnessed such an awesome event.
He would come to call this beautiful baggage his son.

Sumiko Braun

Sumiko Braun is a multidisciplinary performance artist (actress, spoken word poet, hip hop artist, musician, model, writer) who is inspired by the power and radical ability to transform culture and society through art. Much of her work is driven by her experiences as a queer mixed race woman of color and single mother. Last year she released her first poetry chapbook, BECOMING: A Journey to Complete Samsara, which is available for purchase on Blacklava.net. For updates, please visit http://www.sumikobraun.com/ or contact Sumiko at sumiko.braun@gmail.com.

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