

When the Miracle Weighs Less Than Two Pounds:

Lynn Felder on the Sacred Art of Patience,
Divine Motherhood, and the Son Who Taught Her How to Fight

There is a precise chronological age when society tells you that you've reached adulthood, but for me, maturity didn't come with a number. My defining moment—the exact intersection where I transformed from a twenty-four-year-old Black girl into a fiercely resilient Black woman—happened in a quiet, sterile room inside the University of Chicago Hospitals.

It was the day my oldest son, Marcus, entered the world three months early, weighing a fragile 1 pound and 12 ounces.

Born at just six months gestation, Marcus's tiny body was a battleground. He had severe bleeding on his brain, an underdeveloped respiratory system that required a mechanical ventilator just to breathe, and a wave of frightening seizures. The doctors gave him a slim chance to live. At twenty-four, I was already navigating a fracturing marriage and caring for my young daughter. I was young, terrified, and overwhelmed. I had spent my early years dreaming of becoming a schoolteacher, standing at a chalkboard, guiding children. I had no idea that my true classroom would be a neonatal intensive care unit, and my first student would be my own flesh and blood.

In that room, confronted with medical jargon and a row of flashing monitors, I realized that my girlhood was over. I had to grow up instantly. I was forced to step into the role of a mature mother tasked with making difficult, complex decisions that literally meant the difference between life and death for my

son. With my baby's life hanging by a thread, prayer was the only currency I had left.

And it was enough.

God knew exactly what He was doing when He chose me. A profound truth was once spoken

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over my life: If God had to choose a mother to care for a child with a disability, He chose the exact right mother. I never once considered giving up. Instead, I looked at Marcus and chose to fight.

That choice required me to call upon a village, and the Universal Creator made sure that village was built on a foundation of iron. The University of Chicago Hospitals surrounded me with an incredibly diligent, engaging staff who plugged me into the precise support groups I needed. It was there that I met a guardian angel in scrubs—a nurse named Debbie Boughton. Though she is no longer with us in this earthly realm, I must shout her name into the atmosphere. If it were not for Debbie's compassion, guidance, and unshakeable strength in those early days, I would not have been able to survive the weight of it all.

When Marcus finally came home at three months old, our faith was immediately put to the ultimate test. One afternoon, his tiny body went limp. He went “code blue”—stopping breathing completely. The panic was paralyzing, but the training kicked in. My husband at the time and I had learned infant CPR, and together, we fought for his breath until the ambulance arrived. Marcus went back to the hospital, but he returned home again, proving each time that he was a fighter. He didn't crawl until he was three years old. He didn't walk until he was eight. But he did it.

During those formative years, while navigating a divorce, I leaned entirely into the village concept. I spent my days as a stay-at-home mom, volunteering at my local church. Pastor May and the church elders wrapped their arms around us, providing a sanctuary of kindness, politeness,



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and remains a steadfast pillar of help and grace. Even though his father and I are divorced, he is consistently there for Marcus, and all of Marcus's siblings pitch in with a spirit of love and duty. Looking back at that twenty-four-year-old girl, I am filled with overwhelming gratitude. Every single step of this 31-year journey has been layered in divine purpose. My divine moment of motherhood came when I accepted that being Marcus's survival support system wasn't a burden—it was my sovereign calling.

My son's diagnosis completely re-routed my destiny. My desire to teach shifted into a profound calling in the medical and nursing fields. Driven by the necessity to understand Marcus's body, I became a nurse. Today, Marcus is 31 years old. He is a strong, beautiful Black man. He is non-verbal, but because of my medical training, my lived experience, and a deep soul-connection, we don't need spoken words. I have learned the sacred art of patience. I listen to his silence, I anticipate his needs, and I understand his heart completely.

Today, our home is a testament to multi-generational love and solidarity. Marcus lives at home with me, his brother, and my amazing mother, Shirley, who

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Marcus is my miracle. He is a survivor. And because I chose to step out of girlhood and into the fullness of my strength as a Black woman, we are here today to tell the story—written in ink, forever etched in truth and love.

I am Lynn Felder TS#24 of 52 of The Souldtown Magazine. I want to thank you all for having SOUL! ☺