

Music and the Spoken Word

Masterpiece

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It was a pity that such a beautiful block of marble would be wasted. It was immense, the size of three men. Artists had eyed the stone before, and one had even started to carve it, but he had damaged it to the point that it appeared nothing could be done to salvage it. And so the once-magnificent stone sat discarded — abandoned for decades, a monumental mistake.

Then a young man of 26 years came to look at it. He noticed the chisel marks that had left the stone too narrow, too flawed. But as he looked deeper, he saw something within it. Inside that rejected block of marble, he saw an image of strength and beauty waiting to emerge.

The young sculptor acquired the marble block and set to work. Two-and-a-half years later the young artist, Michelangelo, revealed the masterpiece he had carved from that abandoned stone — *David*, one of the greatest works of art in the history of the world.

Like Michelangelo's stone, we too may have flaws. Perhaps we have been abandoned. Perhaps we feel too imperfect, stained, or weak to be of any worth. Nevertheless, no matter how broken or marred we may appear to be, there is a masterpiece of breathtaking beauty, depth, and nobility inside each one of us just waiting to be revealed.

And the same is true, of course, of everyone around us. If we can look with an eye like Michelangelo's — past the flaws and weaknesses we think we see in others — we will recognize priceless value and infinite potential in each person we meet. And with just the right amount of love and tender care, we can help each other turn the rough stones of our lives into our very own masterpiece.