

Duets

As I Sit Reminiscing

As I sit reminiscing,
thinking of the love that's missing,
and all the time that we shared together,
remembering the loving fulfillment
and knowing that I could not have asked for better,
from the very beginning even until now,
you strengthen me in ways that I don't know how to express,
and so more or less,
I can only say,
I never imagined things would end up quite this way,
that there would ever be separate places
that our two heads would lay,
it's so much between us including three little lives,
and the turbulence that it causes them,
the pain, cannot be disguised,
microwaved, from inside out to the core, my love is hurt,
but with all systems operating, I tell myself to revert
back, undercover, to shield myself from the pain
knowing if this was a pipeline, I'd be labeled the main,
you see, I do forgive you, but it still doesn't cease my pain,
and deep, deep within, I know true love never dies,
so don't mistake the pain for hatred, when you gaze into my eyes,
devastating circumstances, the situation took me by surprise
my family life is now gone, in the blinking of my eyes,
no more sharing our love,
no more hearing my babies' cries, at night,
I know there must be a reason for all this,
so I pray looking into the skies, in fright.
But who am I to question
the forces guiding the courses of our lives?
So I can only surmise the reflection of your actions
as I reminisce on our goodbyes.
The 'till deaths' do us part and all the other lies,
now suffocate my thoughts as the feeling slowly dies.
I'm thinking, you must have thought what you felt
was you loving yourself, and my love was only in my mind.

But in your continual search for love, my dear,
this is what you will find:
*The love you thought I didn't have for you
is the love you left behind.*

~ Lemuel Israel

Love on Board

March 30, 2008...my life changed forever. I was working as a tour operator for the Cukka Cove Tours. The Royal Caribbean "Navigator of the Seas" was the tour ship for that day, and my tour site was the White River Tubing. Fifteen tourists were approaching my van, and at the end of the group I saw a beautiful woman wearing flowered pants, a white shirt, and a bikini top. Not to be obvious, I spoke in my native language of "Potwa," telling the tour guide to seat her up front with me.

Thirty minutes later, we arrived at the site, and she told me she was ordered not to bring a towel. I offered her and her sister my towel. She undressed to her bathing suit, and I watched her go off to the river. Within 45 minutes, the tourists were back from the tour. When she went to the restroom, I asked her sister if she was the "wild one." Her sister replied, "Yes, my mother sent me to take care of her." I smiled and returned to the sitting area while the passengers shopped the souvenir stores.

About 10 to 15 minutes later, I heard someone yell, "Baxter, did you see my sister?" I smiled and responded with a "no" and told her to hurry because we had to leave soon. "Don't leave me," she shouted. I smiled and said, "Don't worry. I won't leave you." I never realized that response would become reality. On the trip back, I couldn't work up the nerve to ask her for her phone number. I never liked attention or rejection, so I dropped her and the other passengers off at the shopping plaza. She left, and I thought that I would never see her again.

I usually went straight home after work, but on this day, I happened to see my brother. I decided to stop and chat with him for a while. After leaving my brother, God gave me a second chance. Walking out of a store headed in my direction, I saw her again. She smiled when she saw me and said, "Hey Baxter," as if she had known me all her life. I smiled and asked her if she would like a ride back to the ship. She replied, "I don't have any more money to tip you with." I told her not to worry because I

wouldn't accept it anyway. I asked her about her sister and she told me her sister had left because she couldn't find jerk chicken. We drove around the block to see if her sister was still walking. When we couldn't find her sister, I offered to take her to The Ocho Rios Jerk Center to buy her sister some jerk chicken.

Finally, alone with her at last, I asked for her name and phone number. She wrote it down and told me she wouldn't be back on land for two days. I looked down at the paper and I thought to myself, beauty has a name, "Shannell." Thursday finally came and I called her. From that day forward, we talked on a daily basis. Sixteen months later, I came to the United States, and we were married on July 25, 2009. My love on board is now reality.

~ *Lebert Reid*

My True Love

I learned something in life: One should never say “never”. When I was a little girl I experienced a lot of things. I lived in a good neighborhood, and my family was wonderful. In my house I had parties every single weekend, and if something good happened during the week there was a party. I was a good little girl, but I remember saying to my grandma, “I will never want to get married.” I remember her saying, “Never say ‘never.’” But I had my vision about marriage.

I remember my mom and dad fighting a lot. I was seven years old when they got a divorce. I was very upset because I had to go live with my grandma while my mom went to live in another city and my dad stayed in the same city as I, but he hardly came to visit. My sister went to live in a boarding school. It was hard because the family was separated.

And I remember my grandma was sad, angry and crying because my grandpa was never home. He always told my grandma he needed to stay late at work, or sometimes he didn't tell her if would come home or not.

The time passed. When I was 19 years old I got pregnant, but I didn't get married because I didn't love him. But he gave me a little angel, and my life changed for good. After my daughter was born, I went to live with my sister. The year I got pregnant she got a divorce after seven years of marriage, so I moved to her city to help her with her kids.

One night my friends and I went to a main square of the city where everybody was talking about an American boy. My friend asked if I knew him and I said no. Later that night I had the pleasure of meeting him. And that's how it all started. We talked until 5:00 o'clock in the morning. My heart was beating hard, my ears popped, my voice trembled, and I felt afraid because I had never felt that way before. I knew he was the man for me. I was in love, but I thought to myself that he can't be for me

because he's rich and I'm poor. I also have a daughter. I believed he would return to the United States and forget about me. I was so nervous. Days went by and we became best friends. We went everywhere together – clubs, bars, the supermarket, the mall, dancing – everywhere.

One night we kissed, and I asked him if he wanted to be my boyfriend. He said yes. I was so happy and so was Josh. He said he fell in love with me the first time we met and talked all night. I was so happy that I couldn't believe we were dating. We enjoyed every second, but a month later he returned to the United States. I couldn't believe he was gone, but he promised me he'd come back to marry me. I said, "OK," but in my head I thought, "YEAH, RIGHT, I'm a poor girl with a daughter already, never!" He also said he would be back in two months to marry me on my birthday.

He kept his promise and came back to me on May 31, 2003. I couldn't believe it, but he did, and we got married on July 19, 2003. Since that day we have come through a lot of things, but we have never stopped loving each other. We have two beautiful daughters, and I hope we grow old together – my true love.

~Sara Hagan

My Most Treasured Possession

When I think of my most treasured possession, only one thing comes to mind – the love letters my husband wrote to me. As the saying goes, the course of true love never runs smooth. We knew each other through the Internet, and we were in love for more than two years before we actual met each other face-to-face. At that time, he was studying for his Ph.D. in America, and I was studying in China. We hadn't had a dinner together, watched a film together, played together, or had a picture taken together before we actually got together. We were apart in space and time.

However, these 12 letters are our love's constant witness. In these letters, he told me how much he loved and missed me. He made a solemn pledge of eternal love. He sent me red roses every Valentine's Day in a letter. He used special stamps printed with my date of birth and my picture. He told me he would write me one letter every month, and he would come back to China when he had used up all the special stamps. I knew he wanted to give me the hope that we would be together one day. As I remembered, I was excited when I received his letters and was moved after I read them.

Finally, he came back to China last October, even before all the stamps were used up. He gave me an affectionate hug when we first actually met each other. We got married and went to live in America together. Even now, whenever I read those letters, I cannot help crying with tears of joy. To some, waiting means suffering; to others, happiness. For us, it is a mixture of both.

~ Ling Zhu

