

## **5 - And the two shall become one – Added by Leonard**

The year was 1983. The month was early December. The Day was a Tuesday. I know because the Soapy “Dallas” was on. The time I’m not too sure of but I think about 9pm.

I was living at my Folks house in Mayberry Park, a suburb of Alberton.

Well, I say living but not really. Actually I was in the Army doing the end period of my National Service. (See my Testimony – “You’re in the Army Now”)

I decided I was going to take a drive to my Sisters house in the next suburb. Think about this. Who drives out at 9pm at night to visit a relative?

The area we lived in was still being developed. Newly built houses were scattered here and there.

And we lived pretty close to a Township as well as an Industrial area.

Just around the corner from our house, and on the way to my Sister was an area still barren of any houses or buildings.

There walking in the road were two very young ladies. A strange sight for this time of night and particularly in this area.

I did exactly what any guy would do.

I drove pass...! A little way down the road I realised that I was not like any guy. (Do you believe this...?). So I turned around and went back. As I pulled up alongside them I wound down the window and yelled.... “What the Hell are you doing in the street this time of night.....?”

Without even sounding or looking shocked the one young lady said “We are just taking a walk” I asked her where she stayed and she indicated around the corner. In the same street as my folks.

I insisted that I should take them home.

When we arrived at the house, The young lady who had spoken to me invited me in for a cup of Coffee. This night was turning out to be an 11 out of 10 on the “pickup a Chick scale”

We got inside and the young Lady introduced me to her mother. “Wow...!” what a stunner. My mind immediately thought. “If this young lady turns out to look anything like her mother, I would be the happiest guy on earth. I was definitely sticking around to see how this pans out.

In the light of the lounge, I now suddenly recognised the young Lady.

A few months before. We had experienced an Electrical Power failure. Pretty much unheard of in those days. I noticed a neighbour working in his garden a few houses down and went to ask him if his Electricity was off as well.

Whilst chatting to him. This very same young lady arrived and also asked him “Oom..! is Oom se Krag ook af” (Uncle... is your electricity also off) Strangely, I did not take much notice of this young Lady then and eventually went back to my folks house. But Gosh. I found out later that she even remembers what she was wearing that day.....!

After our Coffee and a little bit of chit chat, The young lady asked me to take her to her Dad’s Home, a little way off in another suburb. The other young lady with her was her Cousin and she needed to be at the Dad’s house.

Excited at the prospect of having this young lady around me for a little while longer, I agreed.

We drove to her Dad’s house and I stopped outside.

“Come in” the young lady invited. “And meet my Dad” Wow, this night was now increasing to a 12 out of 10. Not even a date and i’m already meeting the parents.

I parked the car and we went up to the door. The “young lady” opened the door and we stepped in.

The sight that greeted us however, would have made a best seller Hollywood movie.....

The Dad, was walking around in a drunken state with a shot gun and threatening to shoot anything and everything in sight.

I looked back at the door and quickly did the calculations:

- Front door still open – Checked – “Yes”
- Distance to car – Checked and calculated
- Key in hand – Checked
- Fleeing worth the risk – Checked – “Yes”

But somehow my feet were glued to the floor. I had no idea of what to do or how to react. I mean This guy had a very Big Gun and seemed intent on using it.

Just then, another two figures appeared at the door. A family Friend of theirs accompanied by who later turned out to be a Police Detective.

Phew...! I was breathing again. Now I did know how to react.

“Get out of there...!” This was no time to bid anybody a farewell.

I moved out of the front door and felt every step towards the car. My senses were expecting a very Loud Bang of the Shot gun at any minute.

I opened my car door, and got in.

Just then I saw a movement on the passenger side of the car. My heart stopped. The door opened and the young lady climbed in. I glanced back at the front door of the house. Expecting a rather large figure to appear there holding a very large gun.

The young lady, now comfortably sitting in the passenger seat asked me to take her back to her Mother’s house.

We drove off. I don’t recall anything being said.

What was starting to confuse me was the young lady was not very overwhelmed by the events I had just witnessed. It seemed as if this was just another end to a boring day for her.

The soapy Dallas had nothing to compare with this family.

I dropped the young lady off at her Mother's house and went home.

I was still in a state of shock when I arrived home.

A bath and Bed and I am sure I will wake-up from this Nightmare soon.

I never mentioned a word to my Parents.

It was back to the Army the next day in any case.

Days went by. I was on "Special Pass" from the army a few weeks later.

One day whilst tinkering with the car in the garage this form appeared at the garage door. I looked up. I was suddenly overwhelmed by fear. There standing at the garage door was this young lady. I glanced behind her expecting the form of her Dad to be standing there as well. with the shot gun.

A few words of greeting were exchanged. Then, The young lady asks. "Would I accompany her and her Dad and his wife to a New Years eve Dance to be held at the Johannesburg city hall on the 31<sup>st</sup> December?"

I had three problems with this:

1. She wants' me to go to a Dance with the same guy who was walking around with a BIG Shot gun and wanting to shoot people
2. I was on a Army Salary. Which I recall was about R140 per month
3. She wants' me to go to a Dance with the same guy who was walking around with a BIG Shot gun and wanting to shoot people. (Yes, I know I said this twice)

I thanked the young lady for the invite and offered my apologies. I would "love to" accompany her. But my car is broken. I did however, offer to ask my friends if any of them would be available.

This was Damage Control.

Stunning Mom or not. There is no way I was going to find myself in this young ladies company ever again.

She thanked me and wandered off. I was glad to see her leave the yard.

A few Days later there was a knock at the door.

My folks called me from the bedroom and said there was a young lady there asking for me.

I walked down the passage. Standing there at the door was this young lady again, but this time holding a three year old toddler in her arms, who she introduced as her little sister.

Being the gentleman my parents expect me to be, I invited her into the lounge. My Dad who was at home that day was sitting on the sofa.

Being the exemplary Parent and Grand Father he was, he started paying attention to this three year old toddler.

The young lady asked me if I had been able to get somebody to go to the dance with her. Quite honestly, I had purposely not given this a single thought. My experience with woman is they pretty much know a brush off when they see one.

Nope! Not this Young Lady. Here she is back at my door asking for a date again.

“Sorry” but “No..!”I said.

I could see the disappointment on her face. My Dad glanced at me as well.

“I will go with you” I muttered trying to save some face in front of my Dad. Remember, the Folks still did not know what happened the night I met her. I mean, you just don’t talk about such things.

I could see the young lady was happy at this answer.

“You need to bring R30 and your own drinks, and can we go in your car?”

30 Rand? Petrol although cheap then was still a luxury.

What have I let myself in for?

The evening arrived and I pitched up at her house. Wow..!, she was quite the stunner when dressed up. Although I later found out she was only 17 she pretty much could have passed for 22.

I met her at her door and escorted her to the car. One small problem though. I was still having difficulty with the starter of the car.

You need to draw a picture of this in your mind’s eye. Here is a 17 (She turned 17 a few days before on the 24th) going on 22 year old. All dressed up for a Dinner and Dance pushing my car to get it started.

At this point I still strongly objected to wanting anything to do with this family. And I suppose to some degree this was Pay Back Time.

We got the car started and continued to her Dad’s house.

On arrival she said, “Come in”. “No Thank you“. I will be staying right here in the car. “Can’t switch it off you know. Problems with the starter“

Truthfully, I was holding the car nose pointed down the road with the engine running for a “Fast getaway” if need be. I mean this is the Guy who has the Big Gun and now I have just arrived at his house with his daughter.

To my surprise. Uneventfully he comes out of the house with his wife, greets me and gets in the car.

I say his wife but I am shocked. She is younger than me. My brain starts racing again.

I had wonderful conservative parents who have gone to great effort to give me a well balanced Christian upbringing.

Nowhere was anything like this ever discussed or mentioned.

I recall my Mom and eldest Brother taking me to see the Shining in Johannesburg. At the scene where the lady is standing under a shower in the bath. Both my eldest Brother and Mom stood up, grabbed me by the hand and walked out of the movie theatre. That describes my upbringing. And I thank them for instilling those values in me.

So off we go to the Dinner/Dance.

Although anticipating the worst. The Dinner/Dance was actually a pleasant event.



Our 1<sup>st</sup> date ( The one I tried to avoid at all costs ) 31<sup>st</sup> December 1983.

And this young lady was starting to get in under my skin. I actually found myself paying considerable attention to her and hoping to impress her. She had an inreadable air of innocence about her.

We arrived back at her Dads house in the early hours of the morning. Being exhausted at the evenings activities and not wanting to wake the folks with me coming in late I decided to pass out on the lounge floor.

Yeah , right..! Believe that if you wish. I was starting to like this young lady and while the Shot Gun was safely locked in the safe (I actually learned later it was taken

away by the Police) I was going to stick around a little bit longer.

Suddenly, at some point of the early hours of the morning, this young lady and I became rather passionate with each other. This caught me rather off guard, but, “Man could she kiss....” For some reason I blurted out. “Will you be my Girlfriend”.

Remember not more than 24 hours ago I was trying to get this girl out of my life.

She replied she would think about it.

Gosh...! Look at what I have been through for her. And she is going to “Think about it...!”

After going home in the morning, I had enough courage to return to her Dad’s house later in the day.

I asked her to decide or I’m leaving for good.

She said “yes” she would go out with me.

The days of courtship started.

This young lady often visited at the house, and when she had her “little sister” with her, my Dad would always spend some time with the “little sister”

One day and I can’t remember how. But my Dad said that this young lady could be a girl I should consider marrying. Dad had started to grow very fond of this young lady and her “Little sister”

Which in itself was strange. My Dad had a very Strong “English” Heritage. And I always believed he would appreciate I marry somebody English. I had never ever heard my Dad speak Afrikaans and this Young Lady was Afrikaans.

At some point it was speculated by my parents that this “little sister” was in actual fact the young ladies daughter.

I asked her one day and she answered “Yes”

The “young lady” then continued with all the other details of her youth.

Gosh...! What have I let myself in for, was all I could think about.

As a parent consider this:

Your son comes home and introduces you to possibly his future bride.

But she has a few flaws though.

- She has given birth to two children with different Fathers by the age of 14
- She has little academic education
- She has no Christian Upbringing
- She is wanted by the State and Police and they are searching for her
- Her parents are divorced
- Her Father is Alcohol dependant and has Violent tendencies
- Her Mother prefers Guy’s younger than the Daughter
- She drinks, smokes and goes to clubs

How would you as a Parent react?

My Parents, and I Thank God for them, had more wisdom than I could ever have imagined.

The 1<sup>st</sup> thing my Parents did was to go see a Magistrate and accept Guardianship for this young lady.

In March 1984 we became engaged to be Married

On the 26<sup>th</sup> May 1984 this “young lady” at the age of 17 became my Bride.



My Dad was admitted to Hospital the next day and never came home again.

On the 2<sup>nd</sup> July 1984, only a month after our Wedding my Dad was called to “Higher Service”

Now, almost 4 decades later and with many trials and tribulations endured. This “young lady is still at my side.

I still honour her and I am proud at the wonderful Children we have shared.

The “Little Sister” was formerly adopted by me as my daughter and has “Blessed us” with our 1<sup>st</sup> and eldest Grand Daughter

Interestingly:

- We later learned that when I lived with my Folks on the West Rand this “young lady” use to often visit a family friend who lived in a flat down the road from my Folks House. In the same street.
- When we moved to Alberton in 1981 my Folks rented a house which was just around the corner from where this “young lady” was staying with her folks, whilst our house was being built in Mayberry Park.
- When my Folks moved into their recently built house in Mayberry Park the “young ladies” mother rented a house only 5 houses away from ours.

Over the years my Love for this “young lady” now "My Wife" has grown immensely and I truly give God all the Glory for sending such a challenge my way. Life just would not have been this interesting without her.

**NB.... Her Stepdad. (The guy with the Big Gun) Went on to remarry again a few years later. And he has become a servant of God with a wonderful wife and family and grandchildren.**

**All information supplied herein is truthful and fact.**

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