

~Another Story with Joe Fox & Kathleen Kelly! ~

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62,225 words..
Still starring
Meg Ryan and Tom Hanks!

~Another Story with
Joe Fox & Kathleen Kelly! ~

Joe Fox received 2 books of poetry from an Independent Canadian writer, and after reading both books and being very impressed by her work, thought the idea of going to meet with her in person might be something he should like to do, because he really liked her work, and how she drew the reader in to make them feel what it's like to actually be there (at the place and time in her pieces). He also thought it would be a good way to check out his Canadian competitors to see what their large book stores look like and whether they offer coffee and poetry readings like his does in New York.

He looked forward to hearing this young woman reading her work for listeners who stop into his poetry corner, but thought for safe measure because she was an independent writer that meeting with her first would be a good idea! It said on the back of the books that there was 3 books in the set... but he only received 2.. so the third one Joe assumed wasn't in print yet, with that thought maybe, he could be the one to back the publishing of her third one it looked to be the size of something Fox books could handle supporting! This could only help with her transition of coming to America much easier and a lot more comfortable financially. Poetry though well liked and loved by readers isn't easy to make a living at writing. He believed this young lady had what it took however, to do it!

You've Got mail 2 Opening scene...

Joe chatting with Kathleen while checking his email and other work for the office,

Joe

"How would you like to go on a vacation Kathleen?"

Kathleen replies,

"Uhm o.k. where?"

Joe

"Vancouver!"

Kathleen

"This isn't some kind of business trip like vacation is it?"

Joe

"Nope."

Joe

"I'm just tired of the Hustle and bustle of New York.. I need a change of scenery, and thought it would be a good way for us to move our relationship forward to the next level.. I mean assuming there is a next level between us Kathleen."

Kathleen

"Good point, I hadn't really taken much time to think about it.. (us I mean) I have just been enjoying the NOW time with each other. A vacation would

be a good way for us to move our relationship to the next level which I believe we are both clearly in agreement is something we are interested in, since we are obviously NOT sick to death of each other!"

Joe.. (Now worried)

"You don't think this vacation will make us sick of one another do you? I mean spending so much time together in such a short period of time. I can't help myself I really just am enjoying myself and the time we spend together."

Kathleen

"Me too Joe, me too!"

Joe

"O.k. then, so it's settled, we are going to go on this vacation together, and we are going to have a wonderful time!"

Kathleen,

"Agreed!"

Kathleen

"Wait a minute"

Joe writes,

"What?"

Kathleen

"What about Brinkley?"

Joe...

"Well we will just bring him with us, that is ok with you isn't it?"

Kathleen...

"Of course it is silly, come on Joe I mean did you really even have to ask its Brinkley? He's like the perfect dog, the wonderfully behaved best friend any dog owner should be so lucky to have."

Joe

"O.k. I was just checking.. better to be safe than sorry.. I'd hate to be at the airport and meeting up with you and have you see the dog cage being loaded and you turn to me and say.. "What's Brinkley doing here?"

Kathleen

"Well now Joe, I'd Never do a thing like that. You should know me well enough by now."

Joe

"I do, I know you love Brinkley, but like I said I was just checking."

Joe

"O.k. then after I get back from my walk with Brinkley this morning, I will start price comparing and get back to you and we can go from there!"

Kathleen, O.K. Joe sounds good. I'm going to go take my shower now talk to you later!"

Joe

"Later Kathleen!"

End Scene!

A few days later....

Joe

"So is the itinerary finished Kathleen?"

Kathleen

"I just finished it."

Joe

"Do you think we will have enough time to get everything on the list done dear?"

Kathleen

"Yes Joe, I believe if our trip goes according to plan, we should get everything we want done; done while we are there. You know even if we didn't get everything done that's what coming back again another time could be for?"

Joe

"Are you saying, that you think you will enjoy this trip so much that you will want to return again for another one down the road?"

Kathleen

"Why it's the city of romance Joe, honestly sometimes I wonder about you,

why do you think 30 million people visit there each year?"

Joe

"O.k. Sorry for asking!" With that said what are we doing while we're there?"

Kathleen

"Boy you sure have a terrible memory I mean don't you remember anything you were yelling out at me from the bathroom when you were getting dressed for the day yesterday? Honestly Joe I think you need to start eating more carrots and taking you know those memory enhancing vitamins or something?"

(This of course is just a ruse for Joe to distract and keep Kathleen focused in another direction from one of his truer purposes for wanting to take this trip?)

Itinerary...

Kathleen reads off the list!

"Vancouver Trolley,
Robson Blvd walk--- Footlong hotdog, gelati...
Skytrain (full run)
Tour Bus
Science world
Sea World,"

Joe

"Science World, isn't that for children?"

Kathleen

“Oh for heaven's sake I'm not even going to answer that... it's Science World!”

Joe

“Good point, next!”

She continues...

“Boat rides, we will go to Granville Island, North Vancouver & Victoria island

Then we will go Tandem bike riding,

Walk English bay / Stanley Park,

Next we will see

Vancouver Aquarium and other places / hills

“Oh by the way, we don't necessarily have to do everything on the list in the order I have written it down!

Joe says,

“Thanks for clearing that up!”

Kathleen,

“No Problem, now I also have seeing

Metro town

Imax /movie and crab fishing on the list”

Joe

“Yummy, Crab fishing” Joe say's, “Let's do that right away it definitely should be first on our list!” He smiles... picturing melted butter on crab meat!

Kathleen

“Really Joe, sometimes?”

End Scene!

Day leaving Airport!

Joe

“O.k. Kathleen you ready?” He asks over the phone!

Kathleen

“Almost Joe, I’ll phone you back when I’m ready for you to come pick me up!”

Joe

“O.k. dear I’ll be right by the phone waiting!”

Kathleen

“Why don’t you go walk Brinkley it will do your body some good before that airplane ride!”

Joe

“Thanks for the suggested idea, I’ll think about it!”

“O.k.” Kathleen says, “Talk to you again soon!”

End of phone call!

Joe took Brinkley for a walk after staring at the phone for 3 minutes realizing she wasn’t going to call him back that fast!

Returning from Walk

Coming in the door Joe could hear the phone ringing!

Ring, Ring,
Ring, Ring!

Joe took the leash off Brinkley's collar and quickly went for the phone!

Joe

"Hello!"

Kathleen

"O.k. I'm ready now Joe, How was the walk?"

Joe

"Great, but how did you know I really went?"

Kathleen

"Just call it women's intuition!"

Switching thoughts to what he was thinking about while walking Brinkley

Joe says,

"Kathleen when do I give him the doggie tranquilizer?"

Kathleen

"What does the box say? Didn't the airline give you instructions? I mean they don't want him waking up during the flight; maybe we should wait till we get there?"

Joe

“Just a minute, I’ll go get the box,”

He puts the phone down, goes to the hallway where the box was sitting on the table ... grabs it and takes it back to the phone..

He continues...

“It say’s here that it takes about 30 minutes to take affect, and should last 3 to 4 hours.. I don’t remember whether the airline lady told me to give it to him before leaving home or at the airport!”

Kathleen

“I think we should wait till we get there, I mean it’s not like our flight leaves 45 minutes after we get there or something Joe, we don’t need it wearing off before we get to Vancouver!”

Joe

“O.k. Kathleen, I’ll trust your advice, Now comes the fun part, getting Brinkley in the car, the driver put my stuff in the car earlier so it’s only the last minute little things, the dog and me. I will send for the driver and we’ll be on our way to come and pick you up!”

Kathleen

“O.k. Joe, I’ll be here waiting for you guys!”

“O.k. see you soon!” Joe says...

End of 2nd call!

Car pulls up to Kathleen’s

Honk, Honk,

Honk, Honk,

The horn goes outside her apt window!

Kathleen comes to the window and waves to let them know she heard the horn. She brings her first couple of bags down to the car, by this time Joe and the driver are out of the car. Kathleen goes to the window and knocks on the glass and says Hello to Brinkley!

Kathleen

“Hello, Brinkley, how are you doing? (She bangs the glass with her finger nail...)

Yes are you having fun on this car ride. You me and Joe have a big trip ahead of us!” She looks to see that all the bags are put in the trunk.

Kathleen

“Just a few more Joe,”

Joe

“He says O.k. dear right behind you” As he follows her in to the building and up to her apt.

Joe

“Just a few more bags?” He says as he scans the doorway looking at the last of the luggage.

“Honey we’re not moving to Vancouver we’re just going on a vacation!”

Kathleen

“I know Joe I just want to make sure that I have everything needed for the time we’re there. Little things like mini first aid is expensive when impulse shopping. Plus seeing as how we are likely to go to some place like a nice theatre I wanted to make sure I had some evening wear!”

Joe

“Kathleen dear... Uhm I don’t think it requires this many bags for evening wear!” Teasing her a bit, when it didn’t really bother him at all!

Kathleen ignoring what he said, says

Kathleen

“O.K. you take those 2 big ones and I’ll grab these little ones and that should be it we should be done.”

With the bags in their hands they leave the apt, Kathleen turns around closes the door and locks it. She then safely puts the keys in her zipper pant pocket; she won’t be needing them for a couple of weeks!

Joe

“O.k. Delaney, come grab these!” The driver was quick to take one of the suitcases and the both of them walked to the trunk. Joe continues...

“Do you think we can fit everything in here?”

As he turns to look at Kathleen with the last of the bags!

Delaney

“I’m sure if we just arrange these things right we can.” The driver leans in to the trunk and starts moving things around.. Only part of him one could see is his backside sticking out of the limo.

Kathleen now at the trunk says,

Kathleen

“Here you go Delaney and thank-you. You’re so kind to us!”
Delaney just looks at her with a blink ‘look’ once getting his head out of the trunk!

Kathleen and Joe go to the car! Joe opens the door,

Joe

“After you, get back Brinkley get back Kathleen is trying to get in the car!”

After Kathleen gets in she holds Brinkley, and starts petting him...

Kathleen

“O.K. Joe you can get in now!”

Joe gets in and closes the door and they just sit and wait for Delaney who was re-arranging the last of the bags in the trunk. They hear the trunk close...

Joe

“Oh here we go Brinkley.” Who is now sitting in between them both!

Delaney gets in the car and closes the door and starts the car.

Delaney

“Are we ready, back there?”

Kathleen

“Yes, Delaney I think we are!”

Delaney

“O.k. then off to the airport!”

End Scene!

Joe, Kathleen & Brinkley at the airport!

Upon arriving at the airport Brinkley noticed another dog near by and was excited to be in a new environment, and quickly moves forward to the end of his leashes length and sniffs the other dogs butt. That dog in turn bit Brinkley’s nose, Brinkley cries. Kathleen apologizes to the other dog owner about Brinkley’s rude behavior, Joe gets upset, and says..

Joe

“What on earth are you apologizing for? They have a biter they shouldn’t have a biter in a public area like an airport!”

Kathleen

“Joe, Brinkley sniffed their dogs butt and the dog thought it was rude!”

Joe

“Never mind look, Brinkley’s bleeding, come here Brinkley..” Joe gets up nice and close to Brinkley’s face.

Kathleen says,

Kathleen

“Oh, hang on a minute I’ve got just the thing! Tada!” Kathleen say’s after pulling out her mini first aid kit from her carry on luggage and showing it to them.

“Here put this on his nose, oh wait clean that blood away first with this” after finding her way thru the kit she hands him an antiseptic wipe. Brinkley

cries a bit but gets over it quick. Then Joe puts the magic cream on his boo boo!

Joe

“There you go Brinkley, that a boy, you’re so brave for me, you’ll be alright now buddy!” He pets Brinkley’s face and head! “Woof” Brinkley says and then resumes panting!

Kathleen

“Honestly Joe how’s Brinkley supposed to know not to sniff other dogs butts if you give him so much attention and love? I mean it was after all Brinkley’s fault! Maybe they have manners workshop classes we can take him too while were in Vancouver, so this doesn’t happen when we’re coming back?”

Joe

“I’m not sure we’ll have time for that Kathleen, and honestly I’m pretty sure that bite on the nose told Brinkley where he’s not allowed to go with it!”

Kathleen

“We can talk more about this on the flight do you have a good hold of him? We don’t need anything else to happen while we’re waiting to catch our flight!”

Joe

“What is there to talk about? And yes of course I have a good grip on him, let’s get our carts and go figure out where we are supposed to drop Brinkley off!”

Joe pushed one cart, Kathleen the other; heading in the west direction looking for customer service or the airline they are flying with!”

End Scene!

On the airplane!

Joe buckling his seatbelt say's

Joe

"You comfortable Kathleen?"

Kathleen

"How could I not be, look at all this leg room Joe, I think I can get use too flying first class!"

Joe

"Well good because you're the kind of lovely lady that deserves first class treatment!"

Kathleen

"Joe are you trying to butter me up? Because if you are it's working! You want something don't you?"

Joe

"Nonsense, can't I just speak the truth about something and just mean exactly what I say? You're a lovely, a lovely lady I'm proud to be with, and you deserve all the trimmings!"

Kathleen

“O.k. Joe, that’s enough, I still miss my little shop around the corner!”

Joe

“Ouch!” he mumbles under his breath, “Guess I’m going to have to try something else!”

Then he turns to the window, and opens up the blind and Sunlight comes blaring in and Kathleen quickly leans over him and reaches for the blind, while squinting her eyes!

Saying...

Kathleen

“Joe, are you trying to blind everyone on the back of the plane? My eyes, well I just don’t think I’m ever going to see right again!” She puts sun glasses on her face and sits back.

Joe

“Well I didn’t know it was gonna be that sunny, I just want to be able to enjoy watching the flight.. I love watching the earth get smaller as the plane goes up. It leaves one feeling like their in a painting or something, at least I think so!”

Kathleen

“Well just wait until the plane starts moving AWAY from the sun before opening the blind again, that’s all I’m asking!” She smiles!

Joe

“That’s all huh?” He say’s with a smile back. Changing the subject he goes on...

“Do you think Brinkley will be alright?”

Kathleen

“He’ll be fine Joe.”

Joe

“Are you sure, maybe I should have given him a second one?”

Kathleen

“Joe do you want Brinkley to sleep all the way thru our vacation?”

Joe

“No.”

Kathleen

“Well then 1 is fine! The airline people deal with traveling animals every day. I’m pretty sure they know how much sleeping medicine they need to administer to get from point A to point B!”

Joe

“But what if it wares off early he’ll be all alone in the baggage department of the airplane awake in his cage, listening to the loud fans roaring outside the plane?”

Kathleen

“Well there’s nothing you can do about it now, the plane is about to leave and we’re all buckled in!”

Joe

“True enough I guess. Boy it sure didn’t take that tranquilizer long to work either did it?”

Kathleen

“No it didn’t, now stop worrying and read that emergency pamphlet thing in the back of the chair in front you!”

Joe

“But it’s not time yet, I always wait till the airline stewardess announces it, I follow along like we’re supposed to!”

Kathleen while listening to Joe leaned forward grabbed her pamphlet from the back seat in front of her, and went ahead and started reading through it. Joe noticed he lost her attention, and about 30 seconds later copied what she was doing. Together they sat and waited for the airline stewardess to take them thru the emergency procedures with all the passengers before lift off!

End Scene!

Arriving in Vancouver...

Joe, Kathleen, and a drowsy Brinkley in his dog cage on a flat luggage cart and their entire luggage are now at the front entrance of the airport!

Joe

“Well, I bet Brinkley is just busting at the seams to go to the bathroom,” Is what Joe is saying as he leans down to look at Brinkley in his cage. He opens the door... when Kathleen says,

Kathleen

“Joe I don’t think he’s ready, he still looks pretty stoned, maybe you should just let him be a little longer, we are in no hurry, the hard parts over we’re here, and we can get any limo when we are ready.”

Joe

“No, I think he’ll be able to get out of his cage to go outside, he’s a strong one.” He continues with unlocking the cage and starts encouraging him to come out of the cage.

Joe

“Come on Brinkley, that a boy, let’s go outside for a pee. Wouldn’t want you to go pee in the nice limo now would we?” Joe pulls gently on the leash, and a very disoriented Brinkley stumbles out of the cage!

Kathleen

“Ah look Joe, Brinkley’s tongue his hanging out on the side of his mouth, he looks like a dog that’s just come from the dentist!”

Joe

“Well I guess the tranquilizer has a similar affect.”

Kathleen

“Only it knocks the whole dog out on it’s ass.. haha he can’t even walk Joe.” Watching Brinkley they both see him take his front paws crossing over each other, like he’s about to lie down and go to sleep again.

Joe bends down and uncrosses his legs...

“Come on boy,” slowly but surely Brinkley moves forward, wobbling to and fro! Once the nice breeze of the outside air hits Brinkley, it gave him a second wind and Brinkley shook himself more awake!

And that’s when it happened!

Kathleen

“Look out Joe, Brinkley”

Joe say’s

“What?” Looking at her as the doors to the airport close, with her standing inside; he then looks in Brinkley’s direction there was someone with another dog on a leash, whose dog was of course now sniffing Brinkley’s butt! This dog was much friendlier, but still Joe thought, (Is it Brinkley, is it the airport, or is it just one of those days?)

After Joe talks to the other dog owner, and the owner nicely distracts their dog away.. Kathleen comes outside and says....

Kathleen

“I think it’s the Poo!”

Joe

“What?” he says..

Kathleen

“That dog must be able to smell that Brinkley’s not from here?” The smell of the food he eats, New York Dog food and other stuff!! She says quite seriously!

Joe

“Are you saying that dogs can tell the difference as to when another dog is from someplace else?” Do you think Brinkley smells like a New York dog or something?”

Kathleen

“Well not to me of course, but yes to other dogs I mean after all this is Canada were in now... so yes I do think dogs can tell the difference!”

Joe

“Well I don’t think they can, I just think their dogs being dogs, after all dogs sniff dogs butts!”

Kathleen

“Are you always this argumentative? Of course dogs will be dogs, but I still think they can tell the difference otherwise why would they do it in the first place?” She smiles at Joe as he begins to reply!

Joe

“What, I’m not arguing with you, we’re allowed to have a difference of opinion on some things, after all that’s part of what makes relationships interesting! We can’t think the same about everything otherwise things would become too boring and predictable.. I mean we could finish each other’s sentences off, because we’d always know what the other one wants to say. I find this way much more fun!” He smiles back!

Kathleen convinced she’s right just chalked it up to the plane flight and is certain that as their holiday adventure unfolds Joe will change his mind and

come around and agree with her in the end! Stepping up to the curb Kathleen flags the limo she sees; the driver pulls forward, puts it in park and gets out!

Joe

“You don’t have a problem with transporting dogs do you?”

Driver

“No sir just a dog fee!”

Joe

“How much to this location...”

Joe hands the driver a piece of paper with the address to a TownHome/duplex he rented for them for the 3 wks they’ll be in Vancouver, because he could not find a Hotel that would take a dog the size of Brinkley! Besides a furnished duplex just seemed like a nice change, and an awful lot more comfortable than a Hotel for that length of a Holiday!

Driver

“\$60 flat rate to any address in the lower mainland that includes the dog fee.”

Joe

“Done!”

The driver started packing everything into the limo, to make it faster Joe helped. Kathleen and Brinkley got in the car and just waited for Joe.

Kathleen

“Good dog Brinkley, good dog, this time it was the other dogs fault wasn’t it? I’m so proud of you for not nipping at that doggie, after what happened to

you back at the airport in New York!” She pets Brinkley with Love...
Brinkley pants proudly with a look that says for what I’m not sure, but I love the praise! Panting... with a smile as dogs do!

Arriving at TownHome/Duplex catastrophe strikes

Getting out of the car when the Limo Arrived Joe say’s

Joe

“He said he would be here with the key for us around now, (looking at his watch) I will go to the door and see if he is in there, so don’t send the limo off quite yet!”

“O.K. Joe, Brinkley and me will wait till you give us the o.k. to start bringing our bags in.” Off he went...

A minute goes by and Kathleen hears...

“WHAT DO YOU MEAN IT’S NOT READY??” My Girlfriend and my dog are waiting in the car with the luggage in the back. I have the receipt right here.”

Pulling the receipt from his pocket that is when the landlord turned in Kathleen’s direction as the car door opened!

Kathleen

“Is everything alright Joe? She says leaning out the door which she now had fully opened..

Landlord

“Sir, it is something we can fix and will only take a few days time to deal with. Please be patient with us your business does matter,” the owner went on to explain what the previous tenants had done. While relocating to their new address there was a sudden death in the family, so they stopped everything they were doing to deal with that. The duplex instantly became the place where the wake was held. So the tenants had asked for a few days grace to pull themselves back together before returning to deal with the last of their move and cleaning up after the wake that was held in the duplex!

Joe

“Oh my condolences to the family,” (the anger immediately went out of him.) That is a good answer for me to apologize to you for being so quick with you... I most certainly have not got a problem with being inconvenienced for a few days while they deal with the last of their family matters. You wouldn't happen to know of a place that takes a dog the size of mine would you?” Pointing to Brinkley who was now sniffing around while Kathleen was walking him around on his leash!

Landlord

“I am sorry, but I don't know anything about hotel policies so I can't help you there, but here is the key to assure you that as soon as they are done I will let you know and you can have the duplex for the duration of your stay in Vancouver! Thank-you for being understanding in this matter.”

Joe

“No problem, it isn't your fault, death is a part of life and not something any of us can control.”

Joe walks back to the car and explains the situation to Kathleen.

Kathleen

“Well Joe I’m thinking it wouldn’t hurt us to go to the last Hotel you phoned before leaving New York.. If I am right we are not that far from there, and the limo is a flat rate in the downtown core.”

Joe

“O.K. Kathleen let’s start there I’m too tired after the day we’ve been having... with that flight in between.” Along with Brinkley they both hop back in the car and Joe tells the driver where to take them. The driver heads in the direction without a second thought.

Joe

“At least I have the key anyway, so we can just let ourselves in after this!”

Kathleen

“Great Joe, that’s one less thing to worry about now isn’t it? I am sure the rest of our stay in Vancouver will be great.”

Joe

“You are probably right about that Kathleen,” He say’s as he turns back to look out the window to check the scenery!

Once at the Hotel

Joe lucked out and actually found the person who he spoke with from New York working behind the counter...

Hotel assistant manager

“Yes I do remember speaking with you sir and I am sorry to hear about your dilemma. You are lucky that I am here today I don’t usually work on this day,

but the manager is away on vacation like yourself.” With seeing how friendly and quiet Brinkley was, and so well mannered after a moment of silence the assistant manager said.

“O.k. I will let you stay for the few days you need, let me look to see what special room I can put all of you in... I’d say a death in the family is definitely one of those kinds of reasons to make an exception for something like this! Besides I believe sometimes rules are meant to be broken, and this looks to be like one of those times!”

Joe

“Thank you so much,” He turns and gives Kathleen who is sitting in the chair behind him with Brinkley sitting nicely beside her, and gives the thumbs up.

Kathleen gives a sigh of relief and say’s,

Kathleen

“Glad it was that simple, it could have been much more complicated, you see Brinkley I’d say over all we are still having a pretty good day!”

Joe signed all the paper work, pulled out his credit card the assistant manager swiped it, and then shook his hands to welcome them to the hotel and gave Joe the key to their room!

End Scene!

A few days into their Vacation in Vancouver!

A few days into their holiday Joe and Kathleen decide to go to Metro Town, a shopping mall in the middle of Vancouver. It requires taking the Skytrain to get there they thought that it would be fun!

Joe

“Kathleen are you ready to go to the mall now?”

Kathleen

“Yes, Joe let’s get going I’m very excited to get some shopping in.”

Joe

“Do you understand the sky train instructions; riding around in Vancouver is very confusing to me. I can’t tell if were in Vancouver still or if it’s some other area?”

Kathleen

“It’s the same as New York Joe riding on subways it’s just the suburbs, what’s not to understand?”

Joe

“Joe well I don’t think New Westminster or Surrey are part of Vancouver are they?”

Kathleen

“Well Surrey isn’t, we’d have to ask about the other!”

Kathleen continues...

Kathleen

“O.k. You got me, can we go now?”

Joe smiling with satisfaction says,

Joe

“Lead the way!” He goes on to say as Kathleen grabs for her purse and checks herself one last time in the mirror before heading out the door.

Joe

“You look great honey, as he holds open the heavy hotel door.”

As Kathleen walks by him holding the door open she comments with...

Kathleen

“Why do they make these darn doors weigh a ton of bricks anyway? Isn't that some kind of fire hazard? I mean how are we supposed to know how soon to escape if the building is on fire?”

Joe

“Uhm actually Kathleen I think that's exactly why they make the doors so heavy, I think in some strange way they are trying to save our lives... The doors take longer to burn down or for fire to get through. But after thinking about it, I'm on your side with this one, I want to know sooner rather than later, that I'm about to die... Those extra 5 minutes could be the very difference of what could save my life. The time I need to get out of the building for MYSELF instead of waiting for firefighters to come who in all probability could not reach me in time to save me. I mean after all their going to be busy putting the fire out as soon as they get here! “

“Great now I'm not going to be able to sleep at night while we're here, why is it Kathleen you always find the darndest things to say?”

Now standing in front of elevators...

Kathleen

“Well the doors are heavy, I mean I'm no weakling by any means, but the door definitely slows me down when I don't have you to hold it open for me!” With a big smile on her face she turns from Joe back too looking in the elevator door direction, 30 seconds pass the elevator button finally shuts

off and the doors open, the two of them step inside in silence and the doors close behind them.

Skytrain ride....

The Skytrain stops, they get out and walk through the tunnel bridge...

Kathleen says,

“Boy isn't this place big, those office towers are neat looking too!!” They walk towards the mall doors!

Joe

“Neat looking?”

Kathleen

“I'm a girl, it's a girl thing Joe,” she says looking at him with an eyebrow raised!

Joe replied with...

Joe

“O.k. The buildings are neat looking.” As they arrive at the doors he reaches out and grabs the handle of one and says,

Joe

“After you my dear.”

Kathleen

“Oh my we're going to be here for awhile I think Joe, better not have any other plans for the day; where's a GPS system for a place like this when you need one?”

Joe (note to self good invention... Mall GPS System!)

Joe and Kathleen go from store to store, and floor to floor, using the stairs, escalators & elevators. After a time of shopping Joe says looking at Kathleen and how full her hands are...

Joe

“Sure would be nice if malls this big had shopping carts for people.. Come to think of it, it causes people to have to shop less because we only have two hands. Anyway what I'm trying to say is would you like some help with those bags?”

Kathleen

“I thought you'd never ask...” she hands him some of her bags!

“There that's better” she says, looking at her hands as she opens and closes her fingers to get them working again. Looking at her watch Kathleen remarks..

“My how time flies... it's getting close to dinner time and I'd like to go to a nice restaurant somewhere. I don't want to have lunch & dinner at the eatery here. I mean we're on vacation right Joe? So we want to eat food we can't get back home.”

Joe

“Quite right Kathleen, so if I said I was in the mood for Sushi I guess that would be out of the question?”

Kathleen looks at Joe..

“Really Joe sometimes I wonder about you.” She lightly nudges him in the arm with her fist. (Of course going for Sushi in Vancouver wouldn't be a problem!)

Joe

“Still laughing he says,

“Why don't we look thru the yellow pages when we get back to our Hotel room to drop off the bags.. I'm sure that will give us some ideas of what we'd like to try while we're here in Vancouver.”

Kathleen

“Good idea Joe, I can only imagine our selection of restaurants to choose from.... now which way to the doors?” Looking around all she sees are stores...

Joe

“Good question Kathleen let's try following those signs up there.” He points to the signs that say what stores are in what direction. Doing that led them to what looked like the center of the building where you could see the different floors below and above them and the elevators. But no sign of any exit doors.

Kathleen

“She looks at the signs and reads “exit to skytrain station” (there was an arrow pointing left from her standing position.) “I think we're supposed to go in the direction of the arrow.”

Joe

"I'd say you are right about that, so let's go." An hour later and all their walking finally led them back to the area where they started.

Joe

"This isn't looking good Kathleen, though we discovered stores we hadn't seen while shopping... I'm thinking we should ask for help my feet are getting sore!"

Kathleen

"Tell me about it.. MINE TOO," she says as she looks down at her feet in high heels.. Turning to look back at Joe she goes on with... "How come there isn't any security around in these places when you need them?"

Joe

"Good question he says, let's see if we can find one... "So they start walking following the signs; still another hour passes and leads them back to the center again.

"Well Kathleen, {looking at her with a straight face} I guess that didn't work! I'm beginning to feel like Waldo!"

Kathleen

"Shush Joe, forget security let's just start asking people!"

Joe

"O.K."

Kathleen

“Look let's ask them, {pointing to a couple with children} they look like they know the way out. Excuse me but could you help my friend and I here out, we've already tried looking for security but that didn't work. We're here on a Vacation we're from New York and we're trying to find our way out! Can you direct us?”

Man in mall

“Sure” The man who is likely the father of the screaming kids...

“Go back to the center turn left go till you see the escalators and go down from there... and walk behind those escalators, where you will see a hall walk down the hall, this should lead you to some stairs that you can take.. I'm sure there's an escalator there too anyway at the top of there should be the doors straight ahead.. The ones you two are looking for to take you back to the Skytrain station!”

Joe quickly says....

“Thanks, I think I got all that, good luck with your kids.” he say's as he pulls on Kathleen and heads away from the sound of the screaming children.

Kathleen

“How rude,” she says..

Joe says..

“What? Oh my gosh I couldn't think did you get how loud the shrill of those kids were? I just couldn't take it anymore I had to get away!”

The man in the mall gave Joe a strange look.. Because he clearly didn't think there was anything wrong with his children.

Kathleen

“That's right you're not use to being around children, well then I am going to have my work cut out for me I'm going to have to break you in slowly, starting with taking you to lots of parks where children play!” With a smile on her face she goes on to ask...

“Great, now can you really remember which way to go to get us out of here?”

Joe and Kathleen followed the instructions two different times starting from the center point where the elevators were before finally on the 3rd try (after all there was only 4 options to choose from) they finally found the right escalators to lead them to the path where the stairs were to get them out of the building and back at the Skytrain station!

Kathleen

“It's getting dark now Joe...” Looking at her watch... “My watch says 7:30pm that means we've been in there for 7 ½ hrs. We lost our whole day to that mall!”

Joe

“Well we're out now Kathleen so let's just focus on that, let's get this stuff back to our hotel room and go from there.”

With that said they arrive on the Skytrain platform and wait for the next train!

Joe turns to her after a moment of silence before the doors to the train open as it arrived..

“My friend and I? So I'm just a friend then, that's it?” The doors to the skytrain then open and they got on..

Kathleen turns in his direction getting more comfortable for the ride and looks up at him before giving him a smile, she then leans into him and gives him a kiss without saying a word! The train starts pulling away from the station as the passengers around them watch them kiss!

End Scene!

Back at the Hotel...

Kathleen

“When do we get to go stay at the Condo again? I’m kind of looking forward to a more homey environment and after discussing the fire door.. I’m having trouble with the thought of sleeping too!”

Joe

“Well, tomorrow is when we are supposed to be able to go there, but I have to phone them first at 9 in the morning to make sure there are no more delays. After all I have already paid them for the three wks stay.”

Kathleen

“O.k. Great, now did you say you wanted to go for Sushi??” Looking at the restaurant pages in the Vancouver yellow pages (noting how many pages there were.)

End Scene!

The next day...

Joe was in the bathroom brushing his teeth when he stopped in the middle of what he was doing and stepped out with the toothbrush still hanging out of his mouth, he quickly grabbed the toothbrush from its place so he could speak clearly and said to Kathleen...

Joe

“So have you figured out where we are going to go today to begin our tour of things to do?”

Kathleen

“Why yes as a matter of fact I have, I decided with the noted good weather we are to have for the day... the temperature is supposed to be just right.. well anyway I decided that we should go to Victoria and go crab fishing. Did you know that the island is only about 2 hrs long from one side to the other?”

Joe

“Yeah but that’s probably by car Kathleen..”

Kathleen

“That’s not the point I am trying to make here..”

Joe

“Oh sorry, go on!” He steps back into the bathroom..

Kathleen

“It takes 2 days to walk across New York city.. not the STATE of New York just the city, so I figured if we are eating ice cream and having a good time before we know it we’ll have made it from one side to the other without evening noticing the time.”

Joe

“Shouldn’t we crab fish first before eating ice cream? I find I get sick to my stomach when I eat ice cream on an empty one!”

Kathleen rolled her eyes with nothing to say went back to getting ready for the day.. The hotel breakfast was really good and she couldn’t figure out

how Joe ate his so quickly.. She figured that he'd be hungry for crab when she'd still be full from breakfast this might be a problem, it might be necessary to bring some snacks to keep Joe going!

After Joe was finished in the bathroom he comes out fully dressed looking sharp while Kathleen is still eating breakfast and sitting in her housecoat and says..

Joe

"Where are we going to cook the crab?"

Kathleen laughs

"Well I guess we'll just have to figure that out when we get there, I'm certain if there is place for people to go catch crab there most certainly must be places where people can bbq and picnic so that they can enjoy their catch of the day!"

Joe

"Well logic stands to reason that what you say is right, so I guess you've convinced me that crab fishing is the way to go for today." He gives Kathleen a funny look as he finishes putting on his watch and points to the time and the fact that she isn't ready yet.

Kathleen

"What?" she says "Breakfast is good people in Vancouver can cook." But that said she realized if they were going to be on the 9 O'clock boat over to the island she'd better hurry or they wouldn't make it..

A little while later on the boat....

Kathleen

“Oh Joe it’s so beautiful, I don’t want to sit inside let’s stay outside on the boat.”

Joe

“O.k. but I hope you dressed warm enough... It’s gonna be a bit windy.”

Kathleen

“I’m fine Joe but thanks for caring” she kisses him on the cheek and say’s as she takes his hand, “let’s go see the gift shop too look at postcards and stuff!” Together they spend some time wandering through the boat and of course Kathleen couldn’t help but stop to check the menu out at the restaurant.

“Hey Joe the menu is really good I think we should grab a few things to take with us for our trip on the island, besides I am just really enjoying how good people can cook here.” Kathleen gets in the lineup and starts digging around in her purse.

Joe

“O.k. but after that we will go back outside to finish enjoying the boat ride as you requested.”

Kathleen, after finding her wallet looks up at him before turning to face the menu again and say’s

Kathleen

“Absolutely Joe!”

After a few minutes pass Kathleen re-joins Joe outside on the deck he looks at bag full of goodies and say’s

Joe

“Did you get everything we need?”

Kathleen

“Yes I’m certain you’ll like what I got to go with our picnic.” That said she walks over to the side of the boat and just through luck or good timing she points out to the water and say’s,

Kathleen

“Joe look, whales a whole family of them.” She counted 2 adults one midsize one and 2 little ones. “That one must be the teenager,” she chuckles with a smile as she points out the midsize one.

Joe

“These must be the famed Killer whales, the same kind you hear about at Sea World only they don’t look much like killers to me, they are quite beautiful to look at indeed Kathleen, you were wise and choosing the boat ride to start our vacation off with, very good choice I have a feeling today is going to be a very good day indeed.”

The both of them stand quietly starring out at the Pacific Ocean with Joe putting his arm around Kathleen as the boat determinedly makes its way towards their final destination!

* * * * *

On the docks in Victoria where people are allowed to crab fish the two of them found the little crab fish cages, and both of them picked one up..

Joe

“Aren’t these so cute Kathleen look at them there little prison cells.”

Kathleen

“Yes now let’s just hope we have good luck using them.”

The 2 of them took a few minutes to figure out how the cages worked and with a good luck to one another and a heave ho, they through their respective cages into the Ocean tied on tight to the dock and stood back and looked out into the great expanse holding each other’s hand and waited. After some time passed they pulled in their cages and low behold they both by some strange luck found a crab in each cage.

Kathleen

“Well this must be our lucky day Joe, would you look at that!” Holding her cage up to show Joe and look at the funny little ocean critter inside. Joe did the same thing.

Joe

“I almost feel bad to have to eat the little guys in this state they sort of look so harmless don’t ya think sweetheart?”

Kathleen

“Yes dear, I agree but I imagine our stomachs will out argue us before some uncertain time today.”

Joe

“Quite right Kathleen, now I just wonder how far will we have to walk to find a park with BBQ pits?”

Kathleen

“This is Vancouver Island, I am certain that there are some here somewhere, what would that do for tourism if they didn’t have any? I just hope there will be stores near enough for the things we will need to have that said BBQ!” Kathleen smiles!

Joe

“Well I guess we can deal with that when we come to it.. Now how do we get these little guys out of here and to our final destination with us?” Joe looks around and thinks to ask a local how the tradition of this festivity is done.

After a couple of hours of walking the island and eating the little goodies Kathleen bought for them on the boat, and of course with the helpfulness of asking people along their stroll they did indeed find the store and the park with the BBQ pits they were looking for. The weather was wonderful not too hot and not too cold and not a cloud in the sky. Joe following the instructions of the locals made sure the crabs were dead before they were put in the little pot now boiling with water that Kathleen found at the store they bought what they needed for the BBQ from. While the crabs were cooking Kathleen set up the picnic table with the rest of the stuff they got from the store.

Kathleen

“Joe come sit down with me, the crabs aren’t going to be getting out of the pot now just let the fire do its job.”

Joe

“I’m just looking, I want to take in every minute of this day” he said as he meandered over to the table and sat down with Kathleen.

Kathleen

"I feel bad we couldn't bring Brinkley with us he would have loved this."

Joe

"Yes Brinkley would have loved the walk, but I am sure he's having a great time at that city dog sitter place where we took him before coming here. It's too bad we couldn't have brought him on the bus with us, but rules are rules for the safety of all the transit passengers."

Kathleen

"Yes I know but it just feels so strange to go someplace and do something without him."

Joe

"I am certain Brinkley will be sure to let us not forget that when we go pick him up. I sure hope we'll still have the energy to take him for a walk when we get back?"

Kathleen

"Now what are we going to do with all this stuff when we are done?" She was referring to the fire starter stuff and the Coles..

Joe

"Well it didn't cost all that much so I'm thinking we can just donate it to the park by leaving it here if we can't find others interested in having a BBQ before we leave, I am sure they will go to good use."

Kathleen looking at her watch.. say's

Kathleen

“Those crabs should be done right about now, here’s the corn they should be ready to eat by the time we finish the crab.” Already husked she handed Joe 3 beautiful yellow cobs.

Joe fished the crabs out and put them on the plates and through the corn in and then sat down and got much joy from the aroma, and right when he looked down at the crab on the plate in front of him he saw the crab crack open everywhere and there you could see the tender delicious meat calling his taste buds.

Joe

“Look at that Kathleen, we don’t even need to fight with trying to crack open the crabs to eat!”

Kathleen

“A perfect cook great Job Joe!” Wasting no time she opened the butter and chopped off a chunk and put it on her plate, and then dug in with her fork to pull out her first piece of meat. She smeared it with butter and put it in her mouth. Across the table looking at Joe she could see he wasn’t far behind her.

Kathleen

“Mmm Joe the butter is delicious, Canada has great butter.”

Joe

“Lactancia, the guy in the store recommended it guess it was a good recommendation after all.”

Kathleen

“The crab meat is wonderful too.. This really has turned out to be a wonderful day.”

Joe

“It sure has my dear, it most certainly has been a great day I am so glad you suggested we start our holiday off by coming to the island and doing this.”

Kathleen reached across the table and smiling grabbed Joe’s hand and he smiled back!

Back at the Hotel as per what Joe said Brinkley made sure they knew that he knew that he had been missing from that day’s adventure, he insisted on a nice long walk so he could unwind all his dog energy. Kathleen graciously bowed out of the walk and said she was going to have a bubble bath because her feet were killing her, so Joe and Brinkley found themselves on their own.

Before getting to the part of the park where Brinkley could be let off his leash, Joe noticed a bus stop that had a bench at it and on the bench was this stack of envelopes, he went closer and saw that they were all tied together nicely with string. He picked them up and looked around, but didn’t see anyone on either side of him or near the bus stop. Holding the nicely tied together stack of envelopes Joe looks at the top one and sees that its addressed and stamped, but when he looked in the corner at the return address all he read was a name, there was no address written.

Joe

“Hmm, this should pose to be a bit of a challenge Brinkley, only a name no address.. But a name is better than nothing, so I guess I will bring them with us and deal with it when we get back to Kathleen and our Hotel room!” Carrying the package carefully Joe finished his walk with Brinkley to the open section of the beach and unleashed Brinkley and let him go, sat on a bench nearby and went back to re-examining the envelopes.

End Scene!

Back in the hotel room, Kathleen out of the tub and all nicely wrapped in her housecoat, smiled at Joe and Brinkley as they entered the room.

Kathleen

“The phone call came Joe; from the townhouse we rented, it has finally been cleaned up and we are all clear to move in for the duration of our holiday here in Vancouver. Isn’t that great news, we don’t have to pay for another night’s stay here? Although it has been a pleasant experience this is a nice hotel.”

Joe

“That is great news Kathleen, I mean for Brinkley’s sake I just thought it would be much more comfortable for him if he had the same freedom as though he were at home. This way we don’t have to worry about him, or leave him with babysitters when we go out!”

Kathleen

“Well I just think having our own personal place to live is much more quaint and personal and gives one the feeling of what it’s like to live here like one of the locals. I think Hotels were more meant for shorter vacations, not long ones like ours. So renting a townhouse to me seemed like the most logical thing to do. And I personally am looking forward to finishing out the rest of our vacation in the townhouse.”

Joe

“Yes, agreed Kathleen but on condition of ONE THING while we are in there for the duration of our holiday.”

Kathleen

“What’s that Joe?”

Joe

“That we NEVER speak about what happened in the house just before we arrived!”

Kathleen

“Oh, yeah the wake, I guess it would be best not to think about the death of someone in a house we are trying to enjoy our vacation in now isn't it? So yes I agree that this should be the last time we speak of the sad incident, though I do wish that family the best and hope all is well for them!”

Joe

“I am sure things are fine, but to change the subject it is now my turn to have a bath, because like you my feet too are killing me! I'm going to sleep like a baby tonight.”

Kathleen chuckling said,

Kathleen

“Yes, me to, all that fresh air will certainly guarantee us a sound sleep tonight as long as we don't think about the doors or the possibility of any fire alarm going off.” She laughed hard as Joe went to take his bath who was looking at her with the expression that, that wasn't funny not right before bed!

End Scene!

Next day....

Kathleen sitting at the desk looking at the envelopes looks up at Joe who was playing tug of war with Brinkley says...

Kathleen

“Well I think we should mail them, I mean she addressed them all to this Josh guy and each one is stamped, so obviously I think it was her intention to send them off.”

Joe

“But there is no return address in the corner of the envelope with her name. So I am not so sure if she was ready to mail them yet?”

Kathleen

“Let’s see if I can fix that.” Pulling open the top drawer of the desk she was sitting at she looked for the Vancouver phone book, seeing that it was sitting right there she pulled it out and put it on the desk in front of her and looked at the name on the corner of the envelope and then turned back to the phone book and opened it, and started looking for the name.

Kathleen

“Gwen Louise can’t be too many of those around?” But after looking through all the Louise’s listed she came up empty handed...

“No Gwen listed, there are a couple of G Louise’s but no Gwen should I call them?”

Joe

“Can’t it wait until we get settled into the townhouse, we are all packed and ready to go and I’d like to get there and get in so we can finally get started on having the rest of our vacation?”

Kathleen

“But what if there isn’t a phone book there? I mean you know how everything is on the internet now these days.”

Joe

“Fine how about this for a compromise, you write the numbers you see there down and bring them with us, and you can call them when we get there. Because I think returning the letters to the letter writer would be the better thing to do.”

Kathleen

“Well I think life is like an adventure and sometimes, one has to take risks in life to have those adventures happen, and I believe this Gwen Louise was intending on sending them but that maybe she just hadn’t finished filling out the information on the envelopes. Anyway let me just get these numbers written down and then we can be on our way.”

Joe

“O.k. great!”

End Scene!

Once settled in at the townhouse Joe and Kathleen went back to discussing the mysterious envelopes.

Kathleen

“I wonder what this Josh Rhodes is like Oh I bet he’s sweet and romantic and probably young and very good looking.”

Joe

“Oh Kathleen you are such a romantic at heart, how can you surmise all of that just from the writing on these envelopes?” He smiles.

Kathleen

“It’s just a hunch Gwen’s handwriting is so dainty, and clean, pretty and neat. She comes across as a very organized and orderly person. And I bet she too is young and beautiful with the whole world in her hand.”

Joe

“Next I guess you’ll be wondering if they are two successful people dying desperately for each other’s love being so many miles apart?”

Kathleen

“Well what if it’s true?” Kathleen retorts with a smile and tilt’s her head slightly to her side.

Joe

“Well let’s just stay focused on doing the right thing here and start with making those phone calls. How many numbers do you have to call?”

Kathleen

“Not that many only about 6.”

Joe

“Well I’ll help you, give me some of the numbers, and I’ll call some from my phone while you are doing the same.”

Kathleen told Joe a few of the numbers, and then turned around and picked up the landline and phoned one of the other numbers. After 45 minutes of talking with or leaving messages with these 6 strangers, they both hung up there phones at almost the exact same time and turned to each other.

Joe looking at Kathleen didn’t have to ask how her efforts went.

Joe

“Well I guess I don’t have to ask if you had any success on your end, looks like we both came up with the same results, no leads. The question is NOW WHAT?”

Kathleen

“Well there is still a glimmer of hope waiting to hear back from anyone we left messages with, but alas my conclusion is the same as it was when it started and that is to mail them.”

Joe

“Well if we can’t return them my dear then I am starting to lean towards thinking you might be right, I mean we can’t throw them away, and we can’t keep them and I’m sure that gentlemen Josh you said his name was, would probably enjoy receiving them. I mean there are so many of them that, that in itself is a romantic gesture.”

Kathleen

“I absolutely agree I get goose bumps just thinking about how I’d feel receiving a big pretty stack of letters like this. How exciting, wondering what’s inside each one, wanting tear open all of them and read them all at once!”

Joe

“But wait Kathleen what if it’s not good news? What if she went to all this trouble to tell this poor guy some kind of bad news carefully thought out over a period of time explaining why they never got sent?”

Kathleen

“Oh Joe you would have to be the pessimist in this situation but really think about it how many letters does it take to tell bad news to somebody? If its bad news, when have you ever heard of someone needing to write 2 dozen letters to tell someone bad news?”

Joe

“You’re probably right Kathleen, but someone has to be looking at all the scenarios, and all I am saying is... Just, well what if?”

Just then when Kathleen was going to give Joe a reply the phone rings so she turns her attention to it, gives Joe that just a minute finger and look and then promptly answers the call. After a few minutes have passed the call ends and Joe pipes up with..

Joe

“Well is it good news or bad news, I couldn’t tell by the length of the call.”

Kathleen

“You are right it was one of the Louise’s but unfortunately not one with any direct relation to Gwen, so I am afraid we are going to have to make this decision on our own.”

Joe

“Well why don’t we take Brinkley and the letters and go for a walk, see the neighborhood and maybe find some place where we can let’s say stop for an ice cream, I don’t want to waste this beautiful weather, for as we know Vancouver has a reputation for raining a lot and so far we’ve not had to witness this saturation.”

Kathleen

“Agreed, I’d love to go for an ice cream, and Brinkley can never have enough walks.”

Joe

“I’ll get Brinkley and his leash, you grab whatever you need and the letters and we’ll meet you out front.”

Kathleen

“O.k. Joe sounds like a plan.”

A few minutes passed and just as he had said Joe and Brinkley were waiting for Kathleen as she opened the door to the Townhouse and ventured outside to join them with the stack of letters in hand.

Kathleen

“Look at this beautiful weather we really should take advantage of it while we are ahead.”

Joe

“Brinkley and I totally agree my dear, shall we?” Joe puts out his arm for Kathleen to take as she comes down the stairs and joins them on the sidewalk! The walk to English Bay was very nice, Joe pointed out the direction in which where the bus bench was that he found the envelopes on before refocusing on the beautiful ocean and beach walk in front of them.

Kathleen

“Oh look Joe,” Kathleen points to a street performer.

Joe

“That looks like it would be fun to watch shall we? Don’t see much of that in New York City.”

Kathleen

“Of course not I mean where exactly would they do it? We don’t have a beautiful Ocean front like this back home our water is completely polluted up at the shoreline.”

Joe

“I guess that’s what taking vacations are for, so we can see what other beautiful things there are in the world to see.”

Kathleen

“Quite right Joe, you’re quite right about that.”

The street performer was very entertaining; he swallowed sticks of flame and escaped from chains and a strait jacket. It was apparent that the performer came from Europe with his strong accent. How nice they got to watch a show from abroad while being abroad themselves.

Joe

“O.k. that’s it I can’t stand it anymore..”

Kathleen

“You can’t stand what?”

Joe

“The smell of the hotdogs over there at the vendor on the street, I have to have one, you up for a hotdog?”

Kathleen

“I guess being on vacation is as good as any excuse as to not concern myself with what’s in a hotdog or my weight, they sure do smell good, so yes let’s have one. And I think I heard someone else say that if we keep walking through the park that we will find ice cream too.”

Joe

“Sorry Brinkley all I can give you is some of the bun,” Brinkley was happily sniffing away at the ground and noting the other dogs in the park when Joe said that!

Ordering up 2 hotdogs, they both topped there’s with cheese, mayo, mustard, and relish, and together devoured their dogs.

Kathleen

“You had the same thought I did huh Joe, passing on the hot peppers and the sauerkraut?”

Joe

“Who needs to put that on a hotdog, and I don’t want to be wishing for antacids or a glass of Eno the rest of the afternoon.”

Kathleen

“Me either Joe, guess we’re not as young and brave as we used to be. When having hotdogs at the vendor meant everything goes!”

After finishing their hotdogs they took Brinkley down to the beach, let him off leash and decided themselves to take their shoes and socks off and enjoy the water and warm sand on their feet.

End Scene!

Sometime later in the day much further down the walk known as English bay...

Joe

“Look Kathleen, across the street there is a Gelati shop and over there, there is an ice cream truck aren't we in luck take your pick!”

Kathleen

“Mmm, Gelati, Oh ah a dipped ice cream cone both are making my mouth water, I don't know which one to pick.”

Joe

“Well you can't take too long to decide or that ice cream truck might make the decision for you.” He said with a smile.

Kathleen

“O.k. you convinced me the ice cream truck it is, we can always come back for gelati on another day, but we may not find another ice cream truck.”

Joe

“Guess we just lucked it out at the right time of day.”

Together they walked to the ice cream truck ordered their desire, and walked on, when Kathleen stopped suddenly because she noticed something.

Joe

“What is it Kathleen?” He looked in the direction she was looking and went “Oh” upon seeing what she saw.

Kathleen

“Yeap Joe I think the time has come to make our decision; the day has been nice to us now we should decide whether or not we are going to do the same thing?”

She held up the stack of envelopes as they both looked at the mailbox about 50 feet in front of them on the side of the street.

50 feet later they found themselves standing there next to the mailbox, looking at each other, Brinkley and the envelopes.

“Well I guess you’ve convinced me Kathleen, and I guess there is no time like the present, shall we? He opens the mailbox for Kathleen, she carefully places the stack of envelopes on the drop slop and said..

Kathleen

“O.k. Joe, deep breath,” they both breathe in.. “Let it go.”

Joe closed the mailbox and both of them listened to the sound of the stack of letters drop to the bottom of the box.

Joe

“I sure hope we made the right decision, Kathleen?”

Kathleen

“Well Joe, we can both agree that a decision had to be made. And I rather like this one I think it’s much more romantic, then never seeing whatever is in all those nicely written and strung together letters reach the recipient they are addressed too. I think that would have been a far sadder ending, because without them being mailed their really wouldn’t be an ending.”

Joe

“You know Kathleen I think you missed your calling you should have been a romance novelist, instead of children’s story teller and book shop owner.”

Kathleen

“Thanks Joe.” On that note they took each other by the hand and went about finishing their day’s adventure together!

End Scene!

A couple days have passed and the stacked and nicely strung together envelopes have made their way to the main Vancouver postal outlet where they were being sorted and ready to be shipped out when one of the postal workers stood there stumped not knowing what to do about the stack. She looked to either side of her where others were working away at their job, and then back at the stack. Something inside of her looking at the nicely tied bow on the top of the envelopes left her without being able to undue the string and separate all the letters and ship them out as single letters. So she decided to take an early coffee break and walk the nice stack of letters over to the truck they would be going out on in person in hopes that she could keep them all together.

Postal worker

“Hey Jerry I have something here I’d like you to take special care of for me.”

Jerry looking over in her direction said...

Jerry

“Sure Anne, what would you like me to do for you, you know it would give me pleasure to help you in whatever way I can?”

Anne

“Thanks Jerry, I was working away in the mill this morning when this special package of well cared for stack of letters found their way in front of me, and well I know protocol calls for separating the letters and sending them out individually, but I just didn’t have the heart to bring myself to do it. Something inside just told me by how pretty the handwriting is and the nice bow on top, that these letters need to be kept together to make it the gentlemen there addressed to on the envelopes.”

Jerry

“Well Anne let me just see these letters for myself.”

Anne

“Here ya go.” She handed Jerry the stack of envelopes. It just seems to me that sometimes rules just have to be bent a little. And I see no harm in it in this case.”

Jerry looking over the stack looked at Anne and replied...

Jerry

“Yes Anne I think you are right, sometimes we have to take chances in life and make choices outside the rules, and if you feel that strongly about it then I can’t see how keeping this little bundle together should do any harm as they pass through our wonderful Canadian Postal system.”

Anne

“Thanks Jerry, I owe you, I’ll buy you a coffee or something one of these days.” She turned and walked away.

Jerry took the envelopes and brought them to the front of his truck and sat them nicely on the passenger seat, deciding that he would personally see to it, that they get on the plane together. Outside of that it would then be out of his hands, all he could do is hope!

End Scene!

Later at the airport when Jerry arrived he got out of his van and unloaded the mail heading for the plane that's taking his mail to Winnipeg. Once he was done unloading the bags he went to the front of the mail van and grabbed the stack of envelopes on the passenger side of his van, and closed the door. He took the stack and walked over to the familiar face of the pilot he's used to seeing; for the many years they've worked together transporting mail everywhere, that mail goes.

Jerry

"Hey Buddy, I got a favor to ask you, I have something I need you to take special attention too it's a special, special delivery." He smiled at Buddy, the pilot of the plane these letters are set to go out on.

Buddy

"Hey Jerry, sure what can I do for you."

Jerry

"Well can you see to it that this special stack of letters stays tied together and makes it to Winnipeg that way?" Jerry hands Buddy the letters.

Buddy

"Well that shouldn't be too hard to do I don't see why this special request can't just join me and my pilots in the cockpit for the flight, where I can pass them on to the postal worker at the other end." He shook hands with Jerry who said thank-you!

Jerry

“Sometimes rules need to be bent a little, gives life a certain sense of romance that we can never have enough of in our lives. At least that’s what I think” He waved bye to Buddy and went back to his mail van, got in started it up and drove away.

Buddy looked at the stack of envelopes and thought that the nicely tied bow on top looked so sweet, that it put a bit of pep into his step as he walked to the plane and got on. Once in the cockpit and situated in his seat he looked for a safe place to put the letters, and conveyed the special request to his co-pilot who witnessed it take place from the plane.

Co-pilot

“Well I think that’s a nice sentiment and we certainly have the room for them to ride along with us up front here.”

Buddy the Pilot

Buddy

“We certainly do. It feels good to do good things for others, and I am expecting with that many letters it’s got to be good news.”

Co-pilot

“I should think so, and it’s a very nice bow who should have the heart to pull the string? That’s clearly the job for the receiver of the letters.”

Buddy the pilot snapped himself into his seat and looked at his partner and said,

Pilot

“You ready?”

Co-pilot

“Whenever you are,” his hands in place for the flight, and then looking back to the window with an, (it’s a beautiful day look on his face) as the pilot began to take plane to the runway.

End Scene!

2 hours later the plane touches down in Winnipeg, and starts’ slowing down as it’s driven up the runway to the depot. When the plane stops the hatches to remove the mail open and the unloading begins. The pilot unbuckles himself gets out of his seat and before leaving the cockpit grabs the stack of letters. The co-pilot remarks on how he hopes everything works out with the letters.

The pilot says,

“Well if I have any say about it they’ll reach their destiny.”

He smiles as he continues with the mission at hand as he heads to the pilots hatch which he opens and then climbs off the plane. Once he arrived inside the depot he looked for somebody that looked like they might be important.

Pilot

“Ah your tag says floor manager, you should do the trick.”

Postal manager

“Yes, I am the floor manager what can I do for you?”

Pilot

“This,” He lifts the carefully packaged now seemingly important stack of letters. “I would like to make a special request that you do your utmost to keep these letters together until they reach the recipient they are addressed to here in Winnipeg.”

Postal manager

“Well seeing as how they made it this far intact I can probably honor that request. What’s so important about them?”

Pilot

“I don’t know I didn’t write them, but let’s just call it a hunch, with the effort the sender went to, to keep them together that they must have something important in them. Besides it’s such a pretty bow would you want to be the one to undue the string?” The pilot smiled at the postal manager waiting for reply. Looking at the nicely tied bow on the stack, looked at the pilot and said..

Postal manager

“No, no you are right, that is a nicely tied bow, whoever did it went to a lot of effort to get it so perfect, I’d hate to be the one to mess with a destiny like this one. I will make it my priority to see to it that these letters make it to the right letter carrier, so that they reach their final destination altogether.”

Pilot

“Thanks ever so much and I really do hope whatever is so important that took so many letters to write has a happy ending for the sender and the recipient!”

Postal manager

“Well, it will sure leave all of us that got these letters here together thus far wondering.”

Pilot

“Agreed.” The pilot shook hands with the postal manager and thanked her and turned and went to meet up with his co-pilot.

The postal manager flicked through all the envelopes like a deck of cards nicely with her thumb, and thought UHM! Because she was thinking about how much she’d like to get a gift like this in the mail in this day and age of high speed internet. There is just something much more personal about getting handwritten letters that one just doesn’t see enough of anymore. Noting the time of delivery the postal manager for the floor that day, decided that the letters being delivered to the carrier will have to wait until after lunch so she opened a cupboard at her standing post and put the envelopes safely inside and closed the door, locked it and went for her lunch!

10 O’clock rolled around when the manager returned to her site, where she stood at her post and looked around at the floor waiting for all the staff to return to theirs. Opening the cupboard door, she thought knowing the address would be a good idea so she could figure out which carrier the stack would need to go out with. After discovering the answer to Josh Rhodes address she promptly looked in the direction of the dock she needed to proceed too closed the cupboard and headed with letters in hand toward that direction.

Postal manager

“Hey Larry?”

Larry

“Yes?”

Postal manger

“You’ve got mail.”

Larry

“You’re not kidding.”

Postal manager

“No, No I mean this mail, special delivery.” She shows him the carefully stacked letters and tells him the story.

Larry

“Well sounds like these letters have already been on some kind of trip. And I guess I hadn’t better interfere with that luck?” Taking the strung stack from the manager he gave his word to keep with the tradition of the letters luck so far telling her that they were in good hands and would certainly make it to their final destination the same way he received them!

Postal manager

“Thanks Larry, I trust that you will see to it they find their owner.” She waved good-bye to Larry and went back to her post.

Like the first postal worker in Vancouver did Larry decided that the letters so not to be ruined from perfect form should not ride along in a mail bag but once again find themselves with a lucky seat up front in his truck with him.

Larry

“Well it looks like you guys are lucky bunch of letters, who knows how long it would have taken the receiver to get all of you guys, and what order he would have had to read them in?”

That said Larry closed the door went to the back of his truck and closed the door and snapped it shut, and then walked around to the driver’s side of his box and checked his mailbag that it was secure and in

place, then he opened his driver door and got up in his seat shut the door put his seatbelt on and checked his mirrors. When that was done he looked straight ahead and turned the key in the ignition and pulled away from the depot. The carrier followed his regular routine he filled his mailbag and set it in place and went on his way.

After emptying and filling his bag about 3 times, it was finally time to do the apt blocks. He did one building at a time until he got around to the 3rd one, where upon opening the mailboxes he was quickly reminded of the fact that he had a special delivery to make at this location. He emptied out his mailbag one box at a time till all the mail there was delivered, he closed the boxes and turned the key to lock them back into place, then he left the building and walked to where his truck was. Once back at his trucks location he wasted no time retrieving the special stack of letters from where he had safely placed them.

Postal carrier

“Well here we go, I just hope whatever it is that I am delivering comes with a happy ending?” Holding letters in hand he locked the passenger door and shut it. “Guess there is no time like the present!”

That’s what he said to himself as he happily carried the stack of letters back to the 3rd building on his regular mail routine in this neighborhood, opened the door and stepped inside and let the door shut behind him. He then looked at the apt number on the top envelope and took a deep breath and headed for the stairs and the climb up! The carrier got to the top of the first flight of stairs and stopped briefly turned toward the climb of the second flight looked up and started his climb. At the top of the 2nd flight he secured his landing and double checked the apt number he was looking for, number 18. He put his foot out and started his walk down the hall looking at the door numbers until he reached number 18 where he stopped in front of the door.

Without wasting any more time he knocked on the door and waited. On the inside of the apt a tall young man, with dark hair and dark eyes with a pleasant face was puttering around in his kitchen, when he heard the knock at the door, he stopped what he was doing and proceeded to answer it. Once at the door he answered it with a smile and pleasant greeting.

Josh

“Hello, Mr. Mail man how can I help you?”

Postal carrier

“You got that wrong sir it’s not what you can do for me it’s what I can do for you. I didn’t know what else to do, you see what I came here to deliver today wouldn’t fit in your mailbox so it occurred to me that it would require personal delivery.”

Josh

“Thank-you...” Josh stopped mid-sentence looking for a name tag to address the postal worker by name but couldn’t find one.

Postal carrier

“Names John if that what’s you were looking for sir.”

Josh

“Thanks, John” Josh said.

Postal carrier

“No Problem, well guess there is no sense in postponing the inevitable, here you go sir, and I hope whatever is in the special delivery turns out be nothing but a pleasant ending for you sir.” The postal carrier puts up his hand holding the nice package of letters and say’s,

Postal carrier

“Well it seems my young fella that there is no other way to say this except to say sir that YOU’VE GOT MAIL!”

He hands the stack of letters over to Josh who received the letters graciously, then the postal carrier nodded his head said good-bye with a smile and walked away to finish the rest of his day's duties. Meanwhile Josh shut the door and found himself standing inside his apt holding this beautifully strung together neatly written out stack of envelopes evidently all made out to him, and just thought of the Postal carrier's last words before he walked away.

YOU'VE GOT MAIL! Indeed he did he thought to himself with a chuckle as he took the mail with him and walked over to the couch where he sat down with them.

You've GOT MAIL!

End Scene!

* * * * *

A week has passed and the phone rings at the Townhouse, Kathleen gets out of the chair she was sitting in where she was reading a book and goes to answer it.

Kathleen

"Hello?" She says

Caller

"Yes hello, I'm sorry I am calling back so late, but I was out of town so I didn't get my messages until last night. But are you the lady that phoned to ask me about someone named Gwen?"

Kathleen

“Gwen... OH Yes, the lady with the envelopes and nice handwriting. Just over a week ago my boyfriend was out walking the dog when he found this nicely tied together stack of envelopes completely addressed and stamped sitting on a bus bench. But the return address in the corner wasn't finished being filled out, there was only a name Gwen Louise was all that was written there, so I got out the phone book and started looking through all the Louise's, but we didn't have much luck in our efforts. Are you related?”

Caller

“Yes, Gwen is my cousin on my father's side our parents are brother and sister. I haven't had much contact with her lately, but I have to assume her phone number is still the same I would be glad to give you the number I have. She actually doesn't live far from English bay, are you guys near there?”

Kathleen

“Why yes we are renting a townhouse in the area, we are on vacation from New York City.”

Caller

“Right than that would make sense, but I wonder why Gwen would be taking a bus anywhere she has a car Serves me right I guess I should keep in closer touch with her?”

Kathleen

“I know the feeling, its hard when one has such a busy life at times especially if you do a lot of travelling like it sounds you do.”

Caller

“Yes, I get out of town a fair amount. Anyway I really don't have time to talk but I thought I'd give you a call, do you have a pen and paper handy?”

Kathleen

“Yes, I do.” Kathleen reaches for the pen and writing pad near the phone and the caller gives her Gwen’s address and number and wishes her luck bringing the phone call to an end.

Kathleen puts the phone down and goes to the bottom of the stairs and calls up to Joe.

Kathleen

“Joe, can you hear me?”

Joe say’s

“Yes Kathleen I will be down in a second, just combing my hair.”

Kathleen

“O.k. I’ll wait.” She goes back to her chair and book.

A few minutes later just as he said Joe appeared, in tip top shape for the day.

Joe

“O.k. I am here now what is it you wanted to say?”

Kathleen

“A phone call came did you hear the phone ring?”

Joe

“Yes I did, so who was it?”

Kathleen

“Someone related to that Gwen lady with the envelopes we mailed.”

Joe

“OH, are you saying we shouldn’t have mailed them?”

Kathleen

“I don’t know Joe, but we did so we won’t think back on that decision. What we do have at hand is the decision on whether or not we want to phone her?”

Joe

“Well I am certain that Josh has received those letters and probably read some if not all of them by now. Would we be helping or interfering some more if we phoned the lady that wrote them now?”

Kathleen

“I don’t know but I almost feel like we owe her an apology!”

By this point Joe was looking at the piece of paper, holding it in his hand he said...

Joe

“You got her address too? Well how about this, why don’t we go walk over there with Brinkley and take a look around and see how we feel about things when we are there?”

Kathleen

“O.k. Joe, that sounds good to me, I can live with that compromise.”

Joe

“O.k. good now that we have that settled, maybe we can focus back on our Itinerary of things to do and decide what we want to do next on our vacation?”

Kathleen

“Sure, let me go get the list.” Kathleen left the room for a minute and returned with list in hand.

Kathleen

“Well I can scratch off crab fishing, and Vancouver Island... Now let’s see we can take that sky train ride which I think would be very fun, or we could go for a trolley ride and see science world, which is right by those little boats that go to Granville Island from what I’ve been told.”

Joe

“Now just how much do you think we can get done in a day? We are supposed to be having a Relaxing and good time. But I sure do like the sound of taking that FULL ride on the sky train we don’t see those every day in New York. Makes me think of Walt Disney and how long ago he built his sky train around the Disney Park in Florida. That’s my vote I think I’m up for the rest of that train ride ABOVE GROUND!”

Joe

“We can just bring the list with us, so when we get back from our sky train trip we can figure out what else we have time to do, based on what time it is when we are done!”

Kathleen

“O.k. did you want to carry the list or should I?”

Joe

“You’re too cute Kathleen, well I’d love to do the honors of transporting the list around for the day tomorrow it can be your turn.”

Kathleen smiles in agreement and hands Joe the list.

Kathleen

“Well it seems you’re just full of important papers today. So should we walk Brinkley and see if we can find Gwen’s address before hitting that sky train ride?”

Joe

“That seems to sound like the plan for the day!”

Kathleen tells Joe she needs to use the washroom before they go, and that she would get Brinkley this time Joe agreed.

About 45 minutes later, they were standing across the street from the address on the paper.

Joe

“Does that look right to you? Can you see that number, I think that’s it, but it’s too far away for my old eyes to see.”

Kathleen

“Yes Joe, the number is right, OH wait look” she says the door opened and 2 people came out who were busy talking to each other as one of them was locking the door.

Kathleen

“I wonder who the guy is that’s with her? If that’s Gwen she is pretty and very feminine too.”

Joe

“Kathleen!!”

Kathleen with a voice of innocents

“What Joe? I am just saying.”

Joe

“It’s not our job to speculate on some strange women’s personal life. In fact what do you think she’d do if she knew we were spying on her right now?”

Kathleen

“We’re not spying Joe, we came for a walk with Brinkley, and by chance she just happened to come out of the house when we got here. We are allowed to talk about what we’re observing.” Kathleen smiles!

Joe

“I give up on you Kathleen, and now as we see the 2 of them drive away we don’t have to ask whether or not she is home. Because clearly she is not, now! We’ll just have to try again another day. Shall we finish walking Brinkley take him back to the Townhouse and go for our Sky train ride?”

Kathleen

“Yes, seeing as how we know for certain she is busy today, finishing our walk with Brinkley and taking our sky train ride sounds like an efficient way to spend the rest of our day.”

Joe

“I’m so excited to fly across a city and all the little towns it reaches, this should be fun. I heard it’s a pretty long train ride so it should occupy the better part of our day, maybe afterwards we can go for something to eat?”

Kathleen

“Yes, that sounds like a plan for I am sure we’ll be starving for something to eat by the time we get back to the city core.”

And so that’s just what they did!

End Scene!

Joe Fox satisfied that Kathleen was happy with the quality time he has now just spent with her, now focused his attention on his other motive for being in Canada. He pulls out one of the books of poetry and looks at the email address on it. And say’s to himself,

Joe

“Well I guess there is no time like the present, I’ll email her right now” and he puts the book on the desk with her email address facing up. After sending an email letting her know that he was there in Vancouver and would like to meet with her, he pulled up a search for book stores in the lower mainland. Maybe he thought, “Just maybe I will be able to find that third book in one of the local stores here?” With that email sent all he could do now was wait!

Joe

“Now how do I convince Kathleen to go into a book store without looking suspicious to her? This should be fun to work out?” Joe chuckles under his breath as he rises from the desk with the addresses of several book stores for him to go see on a piece of paper in his hand. Joe then goes to look for Kathleen to try some diplomacy.

Joe

“Kathleen darling?”

Kathleen

“Yes Joe?”

“I’ve decided that I’d like to go check out some of the book stores here while we’re on holiday. I think it would just be unethical of me to come to Canada and not take a peek at the difference. Besides I might find a good book I want to read.”

Kathleen

“Now come on Joe you expect me to believe that you don’t have a deeper motive for wanting to do this its o.k. Joe you can tell me the truth because I’ll still love you?” Kathleen smiles at Joe.

Joe

“Why is it you always suspect I have ulterior motives when it comes to visiting book stores?”

Kathleen

“I’m the wrong person to say that too.”

Joe

“I didn’t do that on purpose, I didn’t think oh look there’s that little shop around the corner, let’s put fox books right across the street from there!”

Kathleen

“Well you might as well have, all I’m saying is that I wouldn’t be surprised if you were thinking about an expansion through buying out a book store in Canada.”

Joe

“Well I’m not, so there! I just want to go take a peek at their standards it would be silly of me not to step into any stores while here. But I promise I won’t go speak to any managers or owners, or schedule any business meetings, scouts honors my dear.” Joe puts three fingers up in the air on his left hand, while giving Kathleen his wounded puppy look.

Kathleen

“Well when you put it that way, I might be willing to trust you enough to take your word on it! But you promise me you stay away from any business side of things! We are supposed to be here on vacation remember?”

Joe

“I promise I’ll be a good boy Kathleen!” Joe shows Kathleen the list of book stores he found online, so they could figure out together which ones to visit.

End Scene!

Back in Winnipeg...

Josh now anxious and confused, having read only just a few of the letters from Gwen had no idea what to do; what does anyone do in a situation like this as he looks over at his kids playing video games together? Gwen has no idea that he has any; last thing she knew before she moved to Vancouver in pursuit of her career aspirations was that he had gotten engaged. Now here he was 12 yrs later a divorced father of 2 wonderful kids.

Josh

“Hey you two can Dad have your attention for a minute?”

Josh’s kids

“Sure Dad what is it?” they said in unison as they kept their eyes glued to the t.v. playing their game.

Josh

“No, No I mean video game off and facing me.”

The kids sighed but relented to their Dad’s wished, they paused the game and turned to face him.

Josh

“Have I ever mentioned someone by the name of Gwen to you guys?”

The kids

“NO”

Josh

“Well she’s the lady all these letters are from she was/IS someone very special to me. I knew her before I married your Mom. I thought she was the one I was going to marry, but her dreams of going off to be somebody in the world took a higher priority than becoming my wife. I wanted to settle down and have kids, when she didn’t. Now I am the luckiest man in the

world because I have the 2 of you, but Gwen is someone important to me too." His kids cut him off...

Josh's son spoke...

Robby

"Would you please get to the point Dad, you know we love you but our video game is waiting."

Josh's daughter,

Tannis

"We're not as young as you think, ya know Dad!"

Josh laughing...

Josh

"Well fine then, I'm not finished reading these letters but I am pretty sure after I'm done my decision is still going to be the same, I am thinking we are going to need to go on a trip. So getting right to the point kids how would you 2 like to go to Vancouver with me?"

Josh's son looking at his sister and back to his Dad said,

"I'm game."

His sister

"Yeah me to, but when Dad?"

Robby

"Does this mean we get to play hookie?"

Josh laughing, walks over to his son and rubs his head and say's,

“Something like that as for when we leave I have to finish reading these letters first. Gwen is planning on getting married finally and I haven't read when the date is yet.”

Robby

“Are we going to get to crash a wedding Dad? Ohh neat this trip is sounding more and more interesting to me by the minute.”

Josh

“Well now I didn't say that, don't go putting words in my mouth. I'm just saying it might be a good idea for me to see her before she ties that knot.”

Tannis

“You mean it might be a good idea for HER to see YOU before she ties that knot considering you're a single guy again! And you are the world's greatest Dad so she'd be lucky to have you back in her life.”

Josh smiling say's,

Josh

“Honey I think you've found your calling in life, you'll make a great relationship councilor!”

Tannis

“Thanks Dad!”

Robby

“Is that it? Can we finish our game now?”

Josh

“Yes, yes, go ahead, and thanks for amusing your Dad!”

His kids

“No problem Dad!” They both turn back to the screen and un-paused their game and got back into the swing of it.

Josh went over to where he put the letters from Gwen picked up the pile of all the un-read ones and carried them over to the couch, sat down and carefully arranged them on the coffee table in the order of which they needed to be read. Took a deep breath and opened the first one on the table (which would be the fourth one of them all) and took the letter out, opened it and began to read it. Dear Josh....

End Scene!

Back in Vancouver, about 3 days had passed since he sent out an email to the poetry writer, when he went to check his emails and as luck would have it, there was a reply from her.

Joe

“Isn’t this exciting, everything just looks like it really is coming together!”

Joe replies back..

Dear Jennifer,

Thank-you for getting back to me, I wasn't sure if I would reach you or not. One can never tell if the contact info on books is still any good after a book becomes a few years old. I just wanted to let you know that I thoroughly enjoyed reading the poetry books you sent me, and on that note would love the opportunity to meet with you in person while I am here in Vancouver....

Joe arranged a time and place that he and Kathleen could meet with her, and then he said his good-bye and pressed send. Now just to warm up to Kathleen, he didn't think she'd have any problems with meeting with someone whose written books, because it doesn't really have anything to do with his business of selling books well not in the way she is used to seeing him work anyway!

Joe

“Hey Kathleen, Do you remember those books of poetry I got from that Canadian writer from Vancouver?”

Kathleen

“Yes, A Special Something and The Day My Gold Fish Died! That Goldfish story was a good one I cried, poor little girl, poor fish, all of her work was good!

Joe

“Precisely, bringing me to my point... She only mailed me 2 of her books and there's 3 of them. Anyway what I'm saying is that I... well I emailed her and she just answered me back today. And I've arranged to meet with her now I'd love for you to come with me dear, you know I can never get enough of your company but you don't have to come if you don't want to, but I'm going because I want her to autograph the books for me, and if I can't find the 3rd one at one of the bookstores we go to I will ask her about getting one from her when I see her than.”

Kathleen

“Well now this is a coffee date I definitely don’t want to miss. I’d love to meet the writer of some of my new favorite poems. I love the poem I only ate once today... so riveting and so true what girls and women for that matter are like toward each other! Maybe I’ll get my own copies of her work she’s definitely the kind of poet whose work I would have sold in my little shop around the corner.”

Joe

“I’m not gonna be able to get around that am I?”

Kathleen

“NOPE!” That said Kathleen went into the kitchen and left Joe standing there hanging on her last word! Joe stood there for a minute before following her into the kitchen.

Joe

“Now wait a minute, you are not just going to leave me standing in the other room like that. You aren’t really mad at me still, just look at what you have now? ME, that’s got to count for something right?”

Kathleen whose back was facing Joe when he came into the kitchen turned to face him and said..

Kathleen

“You’re right, how could I ever stay mad at a wonderful person like you, every minute I’ve spent with you since we came together has been nothing but a wonderful joy.” Putting the plate she had in her hands down, she walked over with a loving expression on her face leaned up to Joe and kissed him on the cheek.

Kathleen

“Meeting a Canadian poet should be a lot of fun, now run a long and go think about the questions you want to ask her. I will let you know when lunch is ready!”

Joe

“O.k. dear, by the way whatever you’re making smells great and I look forward to digging into it.” He puts his arms around her and gives her a great big hug.

Joe

“What would I do without you Kathleen?”

Kathleen

“Probably die a nice but cool hearted business man!”

They both chuckle, and Joe meanders his way back to the computer, petting Brinkley on the top of his head along the way! He stops at the front window of the townhouse opens the curtains and watches the rain coming down,

“Well Brinkley it looks like our luck with all the beautiful weather has finally run its course. You’re going to have to be satisfied with the backyard until this pouring rain passes over.” Brinkley looks Joe straight in the eyes as though to say he completely understands, and barks “WOOF.”

Joe

“I know Brinkley you want that walk anyway, the rain is my problem you have fur and all you have to do being a dog is shake it off!” That said Joe goes back to the office where his computer is to get other necessary work done.

End Scene!

Now over at Gwen’s condo...

Gwen sitting down at the table looking at different kinds of doylies listening to the sound of the rain fall against the window, looks up from the display in front of her and calls out to her fiancée.

Gwen

“Greg, I don’t know which one to pick. I can’t make all these decisions by myself, I mean this affair is just as much yours as it is mine you know dear. The rain we are having today gives us a chance to have some good quality time together, so why don’t you come join me in here and we can sit and work on our wedding plans together?”

Greg

“How am I supposed to help you with picking out a table doily? I am a guy I don’t do that sort of stuff. How much help will I really be?” By the time he had this said, he was standing behind her sitting there in the chair looking at the sample arrangement on the table in front of her.

Gwen

“Oh don’t be that way, that’s just silly guys can pick out these sorts of things just as much as women can. Now come sit and pick one out with me.”

Greg pulling the chair nearest her out takes his appropriate seat, in confronts the ordeal plaguing his wonderful fiancée at this moment.

Greg

“Well, let me see” he picks each one up, to get a feel of them and to get a closer look into their design, after 2 minutes of this and all of them back in their place, he takes a breath and say’s...

“Well I like this one,” he points to one that has a neutral design suitable for COUPLES rather than something on the high end of feminine.

Gwen

“Really?” Gwen said with a smile, that’s one of my top contenders. “I think that one’s something that can speak for the both of us. You see dear this isn’t that hard to do together now is it?”

Greg

“Anything that we do together is fun dear, but I just want to make sure I don’t take away from this day for you, I want this to be everything you want it to be. So I expect your personal taste to come through here, like you did with the cake. Whatever you pick will be wonderful honey because you picked it.” He gets up from his chair and kisses her on the forehead.

Greg

“Now I am going to go into my office and take care of some business, rain or no rain work needs to be done so we can afford everything we want for our wedding.”

Gwen

“When you’re done that we can pick out the invitations together, because those are going to have to be filled out soon only I am wondering about the right number should we have 200 or 250 guests?”

Greg

“Well I think the most expensive part of that will be the food, considering we are having an outdoor event, we don’t have any overhead costs renting a building, so it’s just about chairs so I am going to go out on a limb here dear and say you can go with the full 250 invitations. Does that help at all?” He said before heading into his office.

Gwen

“Yes it does thank-you if you are o.k. with having that many people then I guess I can live with that answer. O.k. you go take care of business and get back to me as soon as you can, I miss when you’re not around!”

Greg

“I love you to dear.” Then he left the room went into his office and closed the door.

The phone rang, and Gwen got up from her seat and went to answer it, the phone to her ear she said..

“Hello, Hello?... Who’s calling please? Is there anyone there?” After 30 seconds of this, she looked at her caller ID, but the number calling was blocked, she put the phone back to her ear and heard a click. Maybe it was just a wrong number she thought and hung up the phone. Though Gwen was in the midst of all these wedding plans there was something plaguing her. She was certain they were just miss-placed but she could not find the letters she wrote out for herself as a sort of journal to render the closure from her past she was looking for before marrying Greg.

Gwen

“Well since I am up I might as well look around for them again, I’d hate for Greg to come across them and even worse read one of them. I don’t want him thinking I’d ever have an affair on him or something.” Knowing she’d have a hard time trying to explain her way out of that one since all the envelopes were addressed to Josh as well as stamped that would look pretty incriminating to her if the shoe was on the other foot.

Gwen remembered taking her car into the shop the last time she had the letters together with her, so she decided to go to the garage and check her car again. After 10 minutes of looking through the front seats, and in the glove compartment, back seats and trunk she came up empty handed.

While leaning in the trunk and moving things around Greg came into the Garage...

Greg

“Honey, you’re going to catch a cold out here with no slippers or sweater on, with the chill of the rain outside coming in here. What are you doing?”

Gwen pulling herself out of the trunk of her car banged her head on the hood and said,

“OUCH,” Oh I am just looking for something, I am working on something and well the day I took my car in to get it fixed was the last day I remember seeing them. And it’s driving me crazy.”

Greg

“Well I am sure whatever you’re looking for is around, so it will show up. Now come back in the house, and let’s look at wedding invitations together.”

Gwen

“I am sure I haven’t lost them, but I’d still like peace of mind in knowing where they are!” That said she closed the trunk and joined up with her fiancée who put his arm around her as they walked back into the house together.

End Scene!

Back at the TownHouse or Duplex rather...

Joe

“Honey I did a bit of homework on those stores and get this I came across a store called the world’s biggest book store... Kathleen interjected

Kathleen

“Uh huh well that should be fun to see sounds BIG!” She smiles.

Joe

“You didn’t let me finish, the catch with that store is its location, it happens to be in Toronto.”

Kathleen

“Oh well I guess we’ll have to go there on our next vacation. Too bad I think I might have had fun getting lost in a building that big!”

Joe

“Very funny, anyway that’s definitely a place on my list of things to do at some point in my future when we get back to New York, I am absolutely curious to see how big BIG is?”

Kathleen

“I can’t figure something out, how did that place show up in your search results online if you were looking for bookstores in Vancouver?”

Joe

“Well after I did a local search for bookstores here I decided to go one step further and I just punched in big book stores Canada and wandered my way down the list and found a listing for Toronto and the words World’s biggest bookstore.”

Kathleen

“I was going to say that would require a bit of talent on behalf of the webmaster for that site if it showed up in Vancouver list results.”

Joe

“Well for now we have a few places here to see, one of them is called Pulp fiction books.”

Kathleen

“Interesting name, wonder has it any relation to the Movie? I loved that movie it was so good.”

Joe

“I guess that’s a question we can ask them when we get there.”

Kathleen

“What else did you find?”

Joe

“Well there is a store called Black bond books, I look forward to going to check them out and then there is Chapter’s book store on Robson Blvd, and I imagine they are very similar to my own store, it should be interesting to find out what kind of books Canadians read! There is also another book company called McNally’s that I discovered in my searching, but I didn’t see a listing in Vancouver, however we have enough to go see for one day. In short it is obvious Canadians read, because they have big book stores all over the country!”

Kathleen

“Yes, it’s true a small list will do I don’t want to walk around as much as we did the day we went to Vancouver Island my feet are still trying to recover from all of that walking!”

Joe

“Well I have the list here and the addresses, just let me know when you are ready to go, I am going to take Brinkley for a short walk, I decided today that it would be o.k. if he stayed home instead of coming with us.”

Kathleen

“O.k. dear I should be ready for when you get back.”

Joe say’s ok and kisses Kathleen on the cheek and then goes in search of Brinkley!

Kathleen opens the door and steps outside to look for her 2 cohorts, she looked to her right but didn’t see anything and then looked to her left and there about a half a block away was Joe walking towards her with Brinkley. She waved at them and waited patiently for their return. Once Jo got to the steps he smiled at Kathleen and climbed the stairs and promptly put Brinkley in the house closed and locked the door.

Kathleen

“Now promise me Joe no funny stuff this is just a vacation?”

Joe laughed

“Scouts honors dear,” he said as he held up 3 fingers.

With the list in hand Joe looked at his selection of addresses, and promptly noted that Chapters would be the best place to start it was the closest book store to their current location.

“Well it looks like we are going to chapters first, so much for leaving the biggest for last!”

Kathleen

“O.k. Joe you’re in charge lead the way.” She said as she put her arm under his like they were about to walk the yellow brick road.

Joe

“O.k. here we go, you ready?”

Kathleen

“Whenever you are Joe?”

Joe looking down at his feet smiling, Kathleen catching on quickly looked down at hers and back up at him and said,

Kathleen

“3, 2, 1...” And together they stepped in time and headed towards beautiful downtown Vancouver!

End Scene!

The day finally arrived for Joe to meet with the Canadian poet he was so excited about finally getting to meet with her. He almost forgot that he had told Kathleen and had asked if she wanted to come along.

Joe

“Kathleen, I have to tell the truth, I am so excited about today’s appt I almost forgot about you, what I mean is inviting you along for the visit. I hope you can forgive me?”

Kathleen laughs...

“You’re forgiven dear but try not to do it again, she chuckled. I didn’t realize that meeting her was today, it seems like only yesterday that you scheduled the appt. Well I don’t have to ask if you’re excited about this meeting, it’s written all over your face.”

Joe

“It is?” Joe said looking for a mirror to look at himself in.

Kathleen

“Very funny Joe, I meant to just say that your face is all lit up, your eyes are shining with excitement, or mischief rather when it comes to you?”

Joe

“Thanks a lot Kathleen, why on earth would you get the idea that I’m mischievous?” Joe of course said this with a laughable expression on his face.

Kathleen

“I’m not even gonna dignify that with a response since it is ME you are talking too.”

It was obvious Kathleen was referring to her little shop around the corner... ONCE AGAIN, Joe need not go any further with the conversation instead he asked..

Joe

“Well are you still up for coming with me for the coffee date to meet this lady?”

Kathleen

“Actually Joe if you don’t mind I’d like to change my mind about going, We’ve gone out somewhere every day since we arrived and I think I would like to take a day off and just hang out with Brinkley and do nothing at all, except maybe read a good book or watch a movie. You don’t mind do you?”

Joe

“Not at all Kathleen, we are after all on a vacation, this is your vacation as much as it is mine, so by all means it’s perfectly alright if we don’t do EVERYTHING together the entire time we are here if all goes well today I expect you will have plenty of opportunity to meet Jennifer. Besides I wasn’t totally up front with you about my plans for wanting to come here to meet her, and since you took it so well I can’t complain if you decide to sit this coffee date out!”

Kathleen

“Thanks Joe and yes I imagine if you talk off her ear enough about your store and visiting New York, I am sure you will convince her that coming to visit you there would be a good move for her writing career!”

Joe

“Alright then I am off to meet her at the coffee shop in the chapter’s book store on Robson Blvd.”

Kathleen

“Have a good time Joe.”

Joe

“Thanks Kathleen, I will fill you in on everything when I get back!”

Joe proceeded to head out the door and shut it behind him and scurried down the stairs.

15 minutes later he found himself reaching out for the handle on the door taking him inside the store. He looked at the picture of the writer in one of the books and started looking around for her once he got to the café area, when someone stood up and waved him over focusing on her face he recognized it was her at once and went over to join her.

Jennifer

“Hello Mr. Fox, I recognize you from the photo of you I saw when I looked you up online.”

Joe

“Please call me Joe, we need no formalities here.”

Jennifer

“O.k. Joe thanks, please have a seat. Did you walk here?”

Joe

“Why yes I did, it’s not that far from the place my girlfriend and I rented, and I find one gets to know where they are better when they walk places. Kathleen changed her mind about coming today so it’s just you and me!”

Jennifer

“That’s fine, I am sure I will have plenty of time to meet her.”

Joe

“Glad to see we’re on the same page. Which brings me to my first question, why did you contact me?” Joe got comfortable in his seat.

Jennifer

“Well Joe here in Canada things work a bit differently. First of all the population of this country is the size of ONE American state, of many states in the U.S. Canadians in this industry have a much tougher time making it then one would if living abroad. All too often what happens to a person’s dream is that they get a job doing something that pays the bills in the industry like working in a publishing house, next thing you know 20 yrs has passed and they never accomplished their dream. I don’t want that to happen to me. So I realized it would take some ingenuity on my part that I would have to think outside the box.

I’ve been writing for more than 20 yrs and have lived all over this country and well country is exactly what this place is! Sure I’ve dealt with publishers but they think Canadian, and that’s not good enough for me. I know my work would be embraced by Americans and people abroad, because I wrote it so that everyone could enjoy it, and well that simply IS what I want for people everywhere to have an opportunity to do to read my work and I don’t just mean Canadians! I was born here but that doesn’t mean my life has to end here, I am an artist not one of the worker bees who spend their lives living happily in their hive I want more out of life than that!”

Joe

“Well that was a mouthful sounds like you’ve really thought this out. Well I am honored you thought to contact me. And after having read your work I would love to do whatever I can to help you achieve your goals. Kathleen say’s these 2 books will forever be 2 of her favorite poetry books now that she’s had the pleasure of reading them.”

Jennifer

“Thank-you Joe, but what do you think of them?”

Joe

“Well I thought they were worth coming to Canada to meet you in person to talk about them! Your work is great, it’s refreshing and yes there is something in here for everyone to relate to no matter the age. My girlfriend and I were just out and about town the other day, visiting bookstores and one of my missions that day was to try and find the 3rd book but I could not.” Jennifer replied,

Jennifer

“Oh, well here ya go Joe I never leave home without having copies of my work with me to share with others she pulls a copy of book three from the stuff on the chair next to her that she brought with her. My books are available at specialty small book shops, but no major chain book stores, and for good reason that I am certain your being here today you might have figured out already. Chapters might sell coffee, but what they are failing to get right is that they don’t hold poetry and musical events at their stores across the country, making a book tour for an independent writer like me hard to do.

When the stores first went up everybody came to chapters and there was always something going on, but after a while something happened, climate change (customers) or management, and what started out promising has now just turned out to be over sized uppity bookstores for the trendy prep or yuppie as it were; People with money who want to look good having somewhere to hang out to spend that money on overpriced books and lots of expensive coffee!”

Joe laughing says

“Don’t knock expensive coffee my stores sell expensive coffee...”

Jennifer

“O.k. Fox books excluded!” she replied with a smile.

Joe

“Thanks, but I think I can understand your predicament now, as for the book, the point I was trying to make is that I wanted to pay for the 3rd one. In fact here, I’d much prefer if I just paid you for all three right now.” Joe reached into his pocket and pulled out \$30 and pushed it over to her. “I know it’s not much but I feel like it’s the least I can do for now, you’ve earned that.”

Jennifer

“Well I don’t know what to say except thank-you I really appreciate that!” She put the money away.

Joe

“I don’t know what your calendar looks like, but I would love to have your books in my store, and have you come and do a poetry reading at Fox Books in New York City, where you can autograph copies for people. Incidentally would you do me the honor of autographing these copies for me while I’m here? I plan to frame them and hang them in my office on the wall. If all goes to plan you should be looking forward to a very successful writing career in America, if I have any say about it.” He pulls a pen out of his pocket, and slides it across the table with the three books!

Jennifer graciously accepting the compliment, signs all three books for Joe Fox, owner of Fox books from New York City!

Jennifer

“Well, all I can say is that reaching out to you has exceeded my expectations, I would have been happy to have just received a letter or email with an invitation to New York, but here you are in person, sitting

with me having a coffee... which by the way I noticed that we got to talking so quickly that you haven't got one of those very expensive cups of coffee for yourself yet. Please by all means go get yourself a cup I will wait here, and work on drinking mine."

Joe

"Yes, I do say that I am a bit thirsty from the walk here, a specialty cup of coffee sounds pretty good. Would you like a date square or cookie or something? I am going to have something, I like dunking things in my coffee!"

Jennifer accepted the offer and asked for a peanut butter cookie and sat waiting as he went to put in the order. A few minutes passed and once again Joe was sitting at the table with the order in hand.

Joe

"Here ya go Jennifer," he slides the cookie over to her half of the table.

Jennifer

"Thanks I love peanut butter cookies I can never seem to get enough of them."

Joe takes a sip of his hazelnut coffee...

"MMMM, delicious, I must say coffee in Canada is different than that of coffee in America. Both are good and unique in their own way, I almost feel guilty having a cup of coffee at another big book store." He chuckled.

Jennifer

"You're on vacation, don't feel that way. The point of vacations is to get as much as you can out of the experience. I don't really think coffee is so different in either country it probably more has to do with the ambiance, or

maybe the water... but I guess I can compare taste buds for myself when I come to New York and try coffee at Fox Books for myself!"

Joe

"Yes indeed, this I very much look forward too. Kathleen and I still have a few weeks' vacation to go here in Vancouver so I can't tell what my calendar of events looks like until I return home and look, but I will be sure to email you as soon as I know!"

Jennifer

"O.k. deal I look forward to receiving your email. This should be a busy summer for both of us!"

Joe

"Well I don't know if having a vacation, and then having you come to New York can be called being busy, but it's a good summer for sure, I haven't taken a vacation in years and I am really enjoying myself here in Vancouver."

Jennifer

"Well I am glad the city is being good to you, because it has its downside too, but I am glad you haven't had to run into any so far, except this unpredictable Vancouver rain. Not much we can do about that though!"

Joe

"A little bit of rain never hurt anyone!"

Jennifer

"No I guess not, you just get a little bit wet!"

Joe and Jennifer sat and drank their coffees and ate their desserts and carried on their conversation for some time yet. Talking about the book business and the writing industry their similarities and the challenges, once their visit was finished Joe shook hands with Jennifer happily picked up his copies of her autographed books and left the Chapters book store and headed back to the house to fill Kathleen in on his outing!

End Scene!

Reading through their itinerary of things to do, they planned another day's adventure and headed out to embark upon it!

Kathleen

"Tandem bike riding should be great fun, How come we never thought to do that back in New York? I just hope the weather holds out." She looks up at the clouds dispersed throughout the sky.

Joe

"I guess we were just saving the experience for an adventure just like this one, I really don't know what else to say about why it never crossed our minds to do it before today, but we can put it on our list of things to do when we get home!" Seeing New York on a tandem bike should also be fun at least that's what he thought!

Kathleen

"Well maybe it's a good thing we are getting a bit of practice in first, considering New York streets are a bit more crowded, and I don't have the best balance in the world!"

Joe

“I think it’s a beautiful day, a few clouds floating in the sky doesn’t necessarily mean it’s going to rain, I mean the weather channel never said it was going to rain, so let’s go with that!”

Kathleen

“O.k. Joe I’ll go with that, a blue sky with some clouds floating through it is indeed a pretty site. Now are we going for gelati first or after our bike ride?”

Joe

“I don’t know, we’re hot now, and we’re gonna be hot after the bike ride, so I don’t think it matters either way, it’s a hot day! But based on where we have to go to get the bike, we could make part of our bike ride be to stop for gelati at that shop we saw the day we went to the ice cream truck instead?”

Kathleen

“You know something Joe that doesn’t actually sound like that bad of an idea, this way we get to stop somewhere in between our trip and cool off for a few minutes. I think that’s a good plan I am up for it, now which way to the bike rental place?”

Joe looks at the address and then looks at the tourist map he had in his other hand and studies where they are standing and where they have to go. After a minute he concluded that this would require a bus trip.

Kathleen

“Are you sure we are not going to get lost trying to find the gelati shop on the bike if we have to take a bus to get to where the rental shop is, I mean we don’t know Vancouver at all?”

Joe

“I think that will be part of the fun in our adventure today, to see if we can reach our gelati destination and see parts of the city we haven’t seen yet and still find our way back to the rental shop. I mean we have all day and what would life be without a bit of risk in it?”

Kathleen

“Well with two of everything between us to figure it out, I think you are right we’ll probably be ok. There’s a bus stop is that going in the right direction according to the map?” She points across the street from where they were standing.

Joe

“Yes according to this, that bus stop should take us where we need to go.”

Kathleen

“Great let’s get going!” She reaches out for Joe, who puts the paper and the map he was holding away and grabs on to his girl-friends hand!

End Scene!

They were sweating like they had just raced a marathon when they finally reached the other side of the English bay trail, a part they never reached during their previous adventure down this way.

Kathleen

“This is so much fun Joe, but remind me when were at home not to do this on such a hot day!”

Joe standing still was looking straight ahead at the next part of their ride as he wiped away some sweat from his forehead and said,

Joe

“Should we take the road or ride on the path?”

Kathleen

“Well the ice-cream shop is closer to the road and we have more room to wobble, on the trail we could hit somebody walking or fall into the rocks or water. So I vote we take the road.”

Joe

“But I want to stop and feed the birds.” He pulls a little bag of bread crumbs from his pocket and shows her.

Kathleen

“You can but just not until we stop for ice-cream!”

Joe gets back on his seat and asks if she’s ready, with a yes they start to peddle in tandem once again!

They didn’t peddle to fast so they could enjoy the beautiful water front view that surrounded them. There were all kinds of birds and flowers planted on the trail and frog leaves floating on top of the water near the rocks that were fully or partially immersed by the water. Once approaching their destination Kathleen points with her finger and say’s...

Kathleen

“Look Joe, there’s the gelati shop mmm I can taste it now, we made it that wasn’t so bad was it?”

Joe was of course panting by this point as you could hear him say under his breath, "Water, it's so hot in Vancouver." He was glad to finally stop peddling unaware of one of the reasons for his being so tired was because of how far back Kathleen had decided to take a break from peddling without informing him of her decision!

Kathleen

"You did great Joe," she said as she got off the bike without being out of breath or coming across as nearly as tired as her partner. Suspicious of her rested heart rate Joe says,

Joe

Kathleen, were you peddling at all, or did I unknowingly just do all the work?"

Kathleen smiling at him said..

Kathleen

"Of course I did some peddling Joe, (then in a quieter voice continues') at the beginning when we first entered the park!" Without a pause to give him time to respond while laughing she headed in the direction of the ice cream shop!

Joe

"I feel like such a stooge, I should have checked the pedals, O.k. that's it Kathleen I am gonna get you back for that when you least expect it. You'll see, you'll be sorry then." She laughs at him as she looks at him one last time before going into the store. Not having a bike lock, or a place to lock it he looks for the next best thing, a tree, then leans the tandem bike up against it and waits for Kathleen to return with her ice cream. After Joe

went in and ordered his, the 2 of them stood happily under the shade of the big tree the bike was leaned up against and enjoyed their cool treat. Then Kathleen walked away from him a few steps and came back and said...
Kathleen

“Look Joe, isn’t that Gwen?”

Joe swallowing the ice-cream in his mouth, looks in the same direction as his girlfriend and replies..

“You mean Gwen Louise, the lady whose envelopes we mailed off?”

Kathleen

“SHHHHH, not so loud are you trying to get her to look this way or something? Do you think she’s heard from the guy the envelopes were addressed too? What if she has, and she heard you just now and she came over and spoke with us and you told her what we did, and she started lecturing us about interfering in strangers lives in front of all these people it would be so embarrassing!”

Joe now speaking slightly quieter say’s

“Kathleen you have quite the imagination you know that? What if the reply from Josh was positive, if she’s even had a reply, do you think she’d honestly be mad at us? What if Josh never replies at all if he hasn’t so far? What harm then did we do for mailing them? So what I’m saying here is why should I be concerned if she hears me say her name?”

Kathleen

“Well I don’t want to take any chances I don’t want to be yelled at. I want to enjoy eating my gelati without a scene.”

Joe

“What do you think she’s doing? Can you read the sign above the building where she’s standing? It looks like there are fancy pastries in the window.”

Kathleen moves forward a few more steps and changes her standing position to get a better look at the building that her and Joe watched Gwen go into just now. Looking up at the sign she say’s....

Kathleen

“Oh yes I have a clear view right now I can see it, the sign say’s Rose’s pastry and Wedding cake shop.”

Joe

“Well that’s rather generic, not very exciting at all really Rose’s pastry and Wedding cake shop!”

Kathleen

“Ah Joe it’s probably just a little one owner shop, someone whose learned their art the old fashioned way, through many hours and years of hard work and practice in the kitchen. Till one day they were good enough to open their own shop! Should I walk over and take a peek or did you want to come with me?”

Joe

“I thought you said you didn’t want Gwen to discover us? That’s being a bit risky isn’t it?”

Kathleen

“There’s more than one person in the shop if I make it really quick I can probably get a peek through the window of what’s going on in there and whether there is a lady that looks like a Rose standing behind the counter!”

Joe

“If you insist, then by all means go over there and let me know what you see.” He waved her off with a smile and went back to eating his ice-cream. Kathleen gave Joe a funny look and waved him off the other way as she walked over to the shop. There she peered into the window and noticed all the nice little sweets on display, and then she put her face up against the glass (Joe laughed witnessing this, she looked like she was a little girl at a candy shop) she focused on who was behind the counter dealing with the customers.

Kathleen noticed that Gwen wasn't alone, there was a man with her again and they were comparing items that were in their hands. When a lady who looked to be in her 60's came over to talk to them, Kathleen thought that must be the shop owner. But she wasn't sure if the shop owner looked like a person named Rose. After watching for another minute at the different people shopping and what was going on, she pulled her face away from the window and walked back to Joe.

Kathleen

“Well I am convinced the lady in there running around talking to everyone is the person who owns the place, but I am not sure if she looks like a Rose though?”

Joe

“Who is to decide what anyone named a certain name looks like, maybe none of us look like the names we have to everyone who looks at someone did I say that right? Although I think I look like a Joe!”

Kathleen

“Yes I agree I think I look like a Kathleen as well. Anyway we should probably get out of here before we start looking suspicious for standing around in one place to long.”

Joe

“I am done cooling off, and it looks like you’re finished too.” As he licked his spoon clean from the last bite he walked over to the garbage can and through his empty container in the shoot. Kathleen a moment later did the same. Then Joe went back to the bike pulled it away from the tree...

Joe

“All aboard, you ready to keep going with our adventure for the day? I’d like to go find a place down by the water to feed the birds. If we’re in luck we might even get to see another street performer or something near where we ate the hotdogs the last time we were here!”

Kathleen

“I am coming, right behind you.” She then climbs on the back of the bike and takes her place on the seat.

Joe

“Oh and one more thing before we take off, if you’re going to STOP PEDDLING DEAR, please let me know!”

Kathleen chuckled, and gave him the scouts honor! Together they put their feet on the pedals and road off into the afternoon sun.

End Scene!

The phone rings,

Ring, Ring,
Ring, Ring,

Joe walks over and picks it up.

Joe

“Hello?”

On the other end to his surprise was the Canadian poet Jennifer.

Jennifer

“Hello Joe, It’s Jennifer here, we met at the coffee shop together the other day?”

Joe

“Yes, yes, I recognize your voice, how are you doing? And to what do I owe this pleasure?”

Jennifer

“Well upon returning home, I checked my current calendar of events and I discovered to my surprise, that I had completely lost track of all time and dates rather. It turns out that I will be doing a live poetry reading and music show over on Grandville Island while you and your girlfriend are still here. So I thought I would offer you the invitation to come and hear me read in person. Does that sound like something that would interest you?”

Joe

“Yes, absolutely it would be a wonderful couple’s thing to do.” He covered the mouth piece and started to talk to Kathleen who was now beside him asking who it was with her mouth.

Joe

“It’s that Canadian poetry lady. She’s invited us to a poetry event that she is doing some place on Grandville Island... it sounds familiar but I can’t put my finger on why? But I told her it would be a great thing for us to do.” He went back to talking to Jennifer.

Kathleen quietly said,

Kathleen

“Grandville Island is one of the things on our list to do; it’s where we get to take like a tug boat ride of sorts. That’s something else we can mark off our list of things to do now receiving an invitation to go there. A live poetry reading, that sounds so exciting. I definitely won’t be missing out on going to this with you.” She touched him on the arm and went back to her chair and the book she was reading.

Joe

“O.k. let me read that address back to you...” Joe relay’s the instructions that were given to him along with the date and time Kathleen wrote what he said down. Again he covers the mouth piece and says,

Joe

“Yes, yes, now I remember the tug boat ride, that should be fun, especially in the early evening on a Friday after the week-end rush hour has passed. The show starts at 8 pm.”

Joe went back to the call and politely ended his conversation with Jennifer, letting her know that he and his girlfriend would definitely be there, and that they are both looking forward to it. Once the phone was hung up Kathleen speaks up...

Kathleen

“You see that extra bag of clothing with my evening and swim wear has come in handy. Now I can pick out something nice to wear to this. And well I guess I will have to find you and outfit to match, so we look like a smashing couple together.” She smiles.

Joe

“What you don’t trust my taste in evening wear dear?” he laughs.

Kathleen

“Well I am girl and I have a better fashion sense that’s all I am saying, if you don’t like what I pick you don’t have to wear it!”

Joe

“Its fine dear, I trust you I am sure I will like what you pick out for me just fine.”

Kathleen

“Why thank-you Joe I really appreciate that.”

Joe

“So what’s on the docket for us today?”

Kathleen

“Well working our way down the list I thought today we could do something that doesn’t require too much effort for our legs. I thought we could go on a tour bus ride it’s a 90 minute trip around the city while we listen to the guide tell us all about Vancouver’s history; then after that I thought we could go to a museum and find some place unique to eat dinner at when were done at the museum.”

Joe

“Sounds like you have our day all planned out. I’m just glad it doesn’t have anything to do with riding bikes because man let me just tell you how much pain my legs are in. And my butt for that matter those seats were something less then desirable.” Joe takes his hands and rubs his back side. Kathleen laughed and nodded in agreement.

Kathleen

“Those seats were terrible, what you said is putting it politely. I’m not sure my rump is ever going to get over the experience. And to think we’re supposed to do this again when we go back to New York! Wonder if we can attach extra cushion?”

Joe

“I guess we’ll worry about that when we get to it. For now let’s just agree to take today slow and easy to recover from our tandem experience.”

Kathleen

“Agreed!”

Joe changing the subject suddenly blurted out...

Joe

“I am thinking that Brinkley isn’t enjoying being left home so much, we’re going to have to make it up to him somehow.”

Kathleen

“Like a special doggie day kind of thing?”

Joe

“Yeah that’s it, like where the whole day is all about Brinkley. Everything we do with him is all doggie related.”

Kathleen

“Gotcha, hmmm actually I think I have something in mind already come to think of it.”

Joe

“What’s your idea?”

Kathleen

“It’s a surprise, you’ll see. I’m sure Brinkley will have a great time, he will get to spend the entire time around other dogs too.”

Joe

“Well then he will be certain to love it, sounds exciting I look forward to whatever it is you have planned for us. Can you give me just a small hint I’m dying here, trying to guess what kind of idea you could have come up with so quickly?”

Kathleen say’s...

“Woof, Woof, Woof.”

Joe

“Hmmm is that Brinkley talking or you talking for other dogs?”

Kathleen goes...

“Woof” to the last thing he just said. Then she went back to working on what she was doing which now was painting her finger nails.

Joe

“Fine, I give up I guess I will just have to suck it up and wait just like Brinkley!”

Kathleen

“O.k. great now that we’ve had that conversation, back to our current day’s plans, I will be ready to go as soon as my nails dry. So why don’t you go check your email or play catch with Brinkley or something in the mean time?”

Joe

“Yes watching your nails dry on my vacation does seem rather, to be a bit of a boring thing to do.” On that note Joe then left the room leaving Kathleen alone in the room to finish her nails.

End Scene!

As luck would have it, Kathleen and Joe were standing at the tour bus stop outside the Vancouver Convention Center waiting for the tour bus with a crowd of other people, when a cruise ship along its ocean travels was docking.

Kathleen

“Isn’t this exciting, look at that BIG BOAT trying to pull into dock, I always admire good driving, especially when it is something that big. I know that if it were me up there steering that boat, there’d be bumps and scrapes somewhere down the side of the boat for sure even after all the training.”

Joe

“Somehow I believe you Kathleen from my experiences women are not the best driver’s!”

Kathleen pokes him in the stomach...

Kathleen

“That’s a sexist thing to say terribly sexist I drive just fine thank-you very much. You can’t say that about women.”

Joe

“Really, well then how are you at parallel parking?”

Kathleen

“That’s a trick question; you know most people are bad at parallel parking. I got my license only sitting it once, and I’ve never really looked back since, the only time I pass on doing it is when I am on a really busy street and there are too many cars coming behind me.”

Joe laughs

Joe

“That’s precisely my point we live in New York City, so what you are saying in general then is that you rarely ever parallel park!” On that note he smiled happily knowing he won that round and went back to eating the bag of nuts he had in his hand.

Kathleen

“I give up on you, but I will say that men are just as bad at it, only they don’t have the patience to drive around looking for a safer and quieter spot to park. So they hold up traffic all over the place trying to get their cars into the first spot they see, making everybody late.” She shook her head and went back to enjoying the boat dock.

Moments pass and the bus has arrived everyone is instructed to bored showing their ticket to the driver. Joe and Kathleen go to the back so they can sit outside on the open part of the bus and see everything enjoying the wonderful weather they were having that day.

Joe

“Well I’ve never seen a bus designed like this before wonder if there is much of a point in having any roof left on at all? When it rains don’t ya think the water would get inside that part of the bus anyway?”

Kathleen

“I’d say the people at the front of the bus inside would be just fine, one would probably only have to worry about the isle having water running down it. But who would be walking around on a moving bus anyway? I kind of think the design is neat myself. This way if you get to hot sitting out here you can go under the roof for protection!”

Joe

“O.k. here we go the bus is moving and the speaking has begun, let’s listen to what’s being said so we can know the significance of all the things we are looking at as the bus drives along. I think this is going to be fun.”

Kathleen

“Did you want to take the pictures (she holds the camera up) or do you want me to do it?”

Joe

“Well let’s take turns because there will be stuff on both sides of the bus to look at and I can get a better shot of the stuff on the left side then you can from where you’re sitting.”

Kathleen

“O.K. Joe that sounds like another good plan to me.” After that they both stopped talking and listened for the story being told over the speaker explaining landmarks and history of the city as the bus tour moved along.

Looking around at the people on the bus Kathleen noticed a few couples cuddled up close to each other kissing. She turned to Joe and thought that didn't look to be like too bad of an idea. She smiled as she moved in for his cheek and planted a big noisy kiss on his cheek.

Joe surprised and smiling said,

Joe

“What was that for?”

Kathleen

“That was just for you being you.”

Joe

“Then why stop there!” He puts his arm around her as he gives her a nice long kiss on the lips.

Kathleen sighed from this welcomed affection, and when they finished she grabbed his hand and held on tight as she went back to paying attention to the surrounding with her eyes and listening to the stories behind them.

Joe

“Look at all the happy couples out today! I am starting to believe this really is the city of romance.”

Kathleen

“Yeah love is contagious they say, like yawning.”

Joe

“Yawning? Love how so?”

Kathleen

“Well if I yawn, (she yawns) then you’ll probably yawn, and the people behind or in front of us will yawn and it just keeps going around like that.” She smiled and turned back to the scenery. Two minutes past and from the side of her eyes she saw it happen. Joe yawned and tried to not make it obvious. She laughed and looked right at him pointing at his face with her finger.

Kathleen

“You see like that.”

Joe

“Oh you saw that? Well then I had better do something about it to keep it from spreading” Joe Kisses Kathleen again.

Kathleen

“Woah that’s 2 in one day, I’m feeling lucky.” She said after they were done. This however was not enough to stop what they both sat quietly noticing as the bus moved on, the yawning spread around passing on to the other happy families and affectionate couples. At least no one knew how it got started. They both laughed.

After being on the bus awhile they found themselves down by English bay near the ice-cream shop and Rose’s bakery.

Kathleen

“How did we miss that? Look at the size of that Inukshuk? Which by the way is really neat to see up close, I’ve only ever seen them in pictures.”

Joe

“I guess we were distracted by the activity that was going on around us to notice what was behind us and being that we are from New York when would we ever get to see one up close if we didn’t take a vacation to see it?”

Kathleen

“Yeah but we had to drive the bike straight to get to this part first, so how could we have not noticed something that size? Did you hear them say how long it has been there for?”

Joe

“A long time” he said trying not to laugh.

Kathleen poking him in the ribs with her finger said,

Kathleen

“Oh Joe you’re too funny!”

Joe kissed her again.

Kathleen

“That’s 3. I think I can get used to this!”

Looking on her right side, she noticed a dress shop, but not just any kind of dress shop looking harder she noticed someone standing on a stool inside the window.

Kathleen

“Ah Joe I think you should look at this.” She nudged him in the arm to make him look.

Joe

“What? He said looking her way.

Kathleen

“Doesn’t that person look familiar are we seeing who I think we’re seeing?”

Joe

“Wow would you look at that dress, sure does look good on her doesn’t it? Wonder if she is like the maid of honor or something?”

Just when the last of the passengers at this stop were getting on, something happened.

Kathleen goes...

Kathleen

“Ah Joe, I don’t think she’s any maid of honor, quick look!”

Joe turning to look at the woman in the window (which happened to be Gwen Louise) watched as someone was placing a veil on her head and trying to get the fit just right.

Kathleen

“She’s getting married!”

Joe

“Yeap it certainly looks that way.”

Kathleen

“Joe the letters I mean what about Josh? I mean who is Josh? What if we did the wrong thing?”

Joe

“Well there isn’t anything either of us can do about it now! (At this point the bus pulls away) The letters are sent and all we can hope for is that everything works out for her in the end.”

Kathleen

“Well I am starting to get a funny feeling and I don’t like it when I get that funny feeling. Do you think there is anything we can do?”

Joe

“Well we could go to her home again and try explaining what we did, I mean that is after all what we were originally trying to do the day we came looking for her address as she was heading out.”

Kathleen

“We might have no choice Oh I just hate confrontations.”

Joe

“You’re a big girl Kathleen I am sure you will survive it. But we can discuss more of that later, for now let’s try and not let it get in the way of the rest of our day.”

Kathleen

“She did look lovely in that dress though, you are right about that. I hope she is making the right decision?”

Joe

“Well if she’s comfortable enough to be standing on that stool being sized for that dress, my guess is she is probably feeling quite confident with the decision she is making.”

Kathleen

“Well I sure hope so!”

Joe

“Enough about her let’s go back to enjoying our site seeing tour and the dinner we are going for after that!”

Kathleen now thinking about how long her and Joe have been dating found herself pondering about weddings but not giving away what was on her mind, she just snuggled into Joe. As she was doing this he kissed her again. (Somehow she thought he knew what she was thinking as he did that.) And she said...

Kathleen

“4!”

End Scene!

Half way through their vacation staying true to her word Kathleen arranged for an afternoon of fun for Joe, Brinkley and herself.

Kathleen

“O.k. you two are you guys ready for our afternoon adventure?” Looking right at them both, Joe holding Brinkley’s leash in his hand with an anticipating look on his face replies...

Joe

“I am certainly a-waiting what it is you’ve got planned for us today. As for Brinkley he’s always excited about anything that’s related to needing his leash.”

Kathleen

“Yes I would most certainly agree with that statement. Well I think you both will enjoy what I’ve got planned for us.” After saying this she grabbed her purse and went to the front door and opened it for her 2 partners in crime and said smiling...

Kathleen

“After you guys!”

Joe promptly walked with Brinkley out the front door, letting Brinkley guide the way. Kathleen followed closed and locked the door.

Joe

“Now where too? I assume we can walk there?”

Kathleen

“Yes we can according to the route we have to follow on the map I printed off from the internet it should only take us about 35 minutes to get there. One can take the bus to also but since this is Brinkley’s day it’s concludable that he’d prefer the exercise and the pleasure of sniffing everything on the way.”

Joe

“Yes I would say you are right, Brinkley definitely loves his walks. I brought a ball to play fetch with him should we find a park along the way to this secret event you’ve arranged.” He proudly reaches into his pocket and pulls out a multi-colored ball and shows her and then puts it back in his pocket.

Kathleen

“Nice Ball, I didn’t buy that, so it must be new since it’s my first time seeing it. When did you have time to buy Brinkley a new ball? Anyway I gave us an hour for the walk, so yes there should be time to play a bit of catch with Brinkley since this is after all Brinkley’s day.”

Joe

“An hour sounds good. O.k. so which way do we go from here?”

Kathleen

“Just a minute let me look on the map.” She unfolded it, and had to figure out where they were standing at, on it first and which way to go from there.

Joe

“Are you having trouble dear?” Giggling at her having to flip the map around a couple of times to try and get it right.

Kathleen

“Shush Joe, I got it... See here it says we are to walk straight ahead about 4 blocks and then make a right and walk straight for what looks to be about 15 minutes. O.k. so let’s go.” She takes the lead by taking the first step forward holding the map in her hand at her side. Brinkley barks and pulls Joe right behind her!

After Brinkley had his well - earned play time at the little open place they found to let him off his leash to chase the ball, they put him back on his

leash and continued on their trip. Before long the three of them arrived at a building matching the address Kathleen had written on the paperwork in her hand. Joe laughed when he read the sign above...

Joe

“Doggie See, Doggie Do, Dog School what an amusing name but wouldn’t it make more sense if it was Doggie See, Doggie Don’t Do School or something? I thought you might have been up to something like this.”

Kathleen

“Well remember what I said at the airport back in New York about taking an evening class while we were here. It occurred to me when you mentioned and entirely all Brinkley day that this would not only help us to possibly nip that butt sniffing issue but also be a way for him to meet other doggies in a larger than usual number but in a quaint forum, or rather hopefully a safe one?”

Joe

“Well I am sure there will be quite a mixture of Dogs in there, some partially trained, some perfectly behaved, and some that don’t know the meaning of it. We must be certain to keep Brinkley away from those one’s so their behavior doesn’t rub off on him.”

Kathleen

“Oh come off it Joe, Really, Brinkley has been a well – trained dog for years, I hardly think that an un-trained puppy in here today would have the powers of persuasion necessary to cause him to deviate out of his normal routined long settled in way of behaving but nice try Joe.”

Joe

“Well let’s hope you are right, what are we waiting for, the parking lot has several cars in it, so it looks like there is company here already, come on Brinkley let’s go have some fun and show them what the perfect dog is like.” He petted Brinkley on the head and then took him inside the building, with Kathleen right behind them!

In the hallway, you could hear people talking and laughing from other rooms while the dogs barked or whimpered or drank water from bowls set out for them. Brinkley was quick to help himself to water as soon as he saw it after the playing he did quenching his thirst was a welcomed priority in his doggie world.

Joe

“Can you smell that Kathleen?”

Kathleen

“Smell what?”

Joe

“Dog... it smells like dog in here, like that wet dog smell.”

Kathleen

“Oh that smell, well we are in a dog school Joe darling, it smells much the same at a vets too. Don’t you remember taking Brinkley to doggie classes?”

Joe

“Well yeah but that was a long time ago, Brinkley was just a puppy, and well I don’t remember the smell being this strong?”

Kathleen

“Is there a point to this conversation?”

Joe

“Ahh well no, not really, I...” Kathleen cuts him off.

Kathleen

“That’s what I thought now let’s get in there and take our place in the class room. I am so excited to see how well Brinkley does.”

Joe

“Fine, but I still say this place needs a good can of air freshener released in here. You finished drinking water Brinkley, follow Mommy!”

Kathleen

“Mommy? If I’m Mommy then our relationship must be getting serious?”

Joe

“We can talk more about that later.” Joe said with a - tell it all look on his face as he took her by the hand.

They entered a large room it looked something like a mini gym. Brinkley started wagging his tail like crazy and panting a smile as he started noticing all the other dogs. Kathleen pointed to a nice spot where she thought they could go stand and wait for dog school to start, Joe agreed so together they went and took their place. While walking in that direction Brinkley of course had to stop and meet every dog along the way. There was a short FAT black poodle that needed a haircut, the poodle sniffed Brinkley’s ear, and Brinkley sniffed the poodle right back before moving on. The next dog was a brown lab maybe 5 months old. The owner tried to get

the puppy to sit, saying... "Sit Rex!" But the puppy either didn't care seeing Brinkley there or didn't care what the word meant, so he continued to violently wag its tail against its owner's leg attempting to jump up on Brinkley when Brinkley got close enough.

Kathleen

"Rex, that's a nice name for a dog."

Dog owner

"Thanks, I think so to."

Kathleen

"Is this your first Doggie don't Doggie Do class?"

Dog owner

"No, we've come to about 2 other classes previous to this one. I am not sure when I will finally get to see that progress I am so anxiously awaiting the results too?"

Kathleen

"Well your puppy is young, so don't get discouraged it will come soon enough, just keep coming to class."

Dog owner

"Yes that I will do. Your dog has a beautiful temperament, what on earth could you be here for?"

Kathleen

“Joe, did you want to answer that question or are you going to leave that to me?” She asked as they settled into their place next to the brown lab puppy and its owner.

Joe

“It’s rather embarrassing and I still say it’s the other dogs fault. But somewhere along the line my boy Brinkley here suddenly decided to pick up the habit of sniffing dogs butts, and this one dog at the airport on our way here didn’t find that intrusion amusing and bit my Brinkley quite hard I say right on the nose.”

Kathleen interrupted...

“So I suggested that we take in a dog class while on vacation, to nip this habit in the BUTT so to speak before it leads to more serious problems!”

Dog owner

“Where are you guys from, I can tell you are not from around here?”

Joe

“We’re from New York I have a mega book store chain called Fox Books there. And my girlfriends store was called little shop around the corner.”

Dog owner

“Was called?”

Kathleen

“Yeah, He ran me out of business, and well that’s how we met. A happy but sad story, I’m still tending to my wounds over it.” She laughed looking over at her boyfriend after saying that.

Dog owner

“Oh that is kind of sad, but you guys look like a great couple to me, and I hope everything works out for you both.”

Joe and Kathleen both said thanks, as they all looked toward the center of the room (as Brinkley sat himself in place) where the instructor was standing preparing to start the class. A minute passed when the dog trainer spoke...

Dog trainer

“O.K. class is everyone ready for some work and a bit of fun too?” she blew this strange sounding whistle to get all the dogs attentions too, only as soon as she did that the funniest thing happened it turned out the sound of the whistle caused a nervous reaction or something but while she blew the whistle a couple of the puppies starting running in a circle it looked like they were chasing their tails and then they stopped and sniffed the floor and right there squatted and took a pee. Everyone started laughing when the dog trainer replied.

Dog trainer

‘It’s o.k. that’s actually a pretty healthy reaction for young dogs, because their hearing is so sensitive and they are still new to the world and the sounds around them. My whistle could very well be the highest sounding pitch in their little lives so far. But as they grow they will of course get used to whistles and go on to be fascinated with the higher sounding pitches they hear around them.’ The Dog Trainer’s assistant followed her cleaning instructions and went over and made the dog owners distract their pets so

that they didn't see her clean up the pee puddles. "It's important puppies don't get the idea that they never have to stop that behavior because you will just keep cleaning up after them." This is what the dog trainer was explaining as the owners followed the instructions given them to keep their pets distracted.

Dog trainer

"O.k. let's start with introducing ourselves to everyone in the room, we will go around the room starting by the door we all came in through and then to the right from there."

So one by one all the dog owners introduced themselves and their pets and their pet's problem explaining their need to be there; Kathleen chuckled listening to all the different dog problems because as it turned out butt sniffing seemed to be one of the more popular ones. So Kathleen and Joe didn't feel so out of place being there now as they told Brinkley's story. Somehow though the replies (which pleased Joe immensely) became all about the other dog at the airport, the biter and how big a problem biters are and what should be done about them etc... Joe chuckled noticing how many agreed that if a dog is a biter then taking them on family trips that require going to the airport should be out of the question.

Joe

"I am guessing that if a dog is young enough you can NIP that PROBLEM in the BUTT So to speak (sorry for the pun he said seriously) as the room chuckled with him for saying it. But left un - attended once a biter gets in the habit of thinking the answer to solving all their problems is to bite everything then it's a problem. Leading to hospital bills and court etc... just how much does a muzzle help with that sort of pattern of bad behavior?" Many of the people in the room agreed with the unspoken conclusion of the only humane thing that can be done in those unfortunate situations!

The evening was very eventful, Joe and Kathleen learned of products they could buy, stuff dogs would turn away from after smelling it and when and how to use the stuff so that Brinkley's reaction when seeing another dog

would be to stay away from sniffing the butt. Kathleen wasn't so sure that it would work for everything but she was certain it would be good for some things.

For it was obvious that Brinkley clearly did not like the smell of the stuff rubbed on the tip of his nose on this night, something that he was stuck inhaling till it wore off. He was sitting in place and kept taking one of his front paws and constantly kept trying to wipe at his nose over and over again, like there was a fly on it that wouldn't leave. He even went so far as to try and lick his nose too. Kathleen and Joe both laughed at Brinkley's reaction to the taste...

Kathleen

"Well I guess it not only smells bad it must taste awful too?" Watching as Brinkley cried and tried wiping at his tongue which for the duration of the doggie class he left the part that he licked his nose with hanging OUT of HIS MOUTH, so not to have to taste it IN HIS MOUTH!

Joe after watching this for a few minutes said...

Joe

"Poor Brinkley, I don't think he's enjoying the experience so much Kathleen, I had better take him to go drink some water, and see if I can find a dog treat for him to relieve whatever taste he's got stuck on his tongue!"

Kathleen

"O.k. Joe go now before they end the class so you can beat the rush to the dog dish and back here to me," she handed Brinkley's leash over to Joe.

Class ended only minutes after Joe returned to where they had all be standing for the entire class. Brinkley had that part of his tongue hanging out of his mouth, but he did look a little more relieved for having gone to drink some water and eat a dog treat to reduce the terrible taste.

Joe

“I don’t think we will have to come back here again with Brinkley, something tells me he’s never going to do that again!”

Kathleen

“Well I guess we will just have to wait and see but for the moment I don’t think Brinkley will forget what’s on his nose and tongue for a while.”

The dogs and owners all spent a few minutes talking to each other after class, and swapping dog training secrets, and talking about foods and places to go with their pets here in Vancouver, before saying their good byes. Joe and Kathleen agreed that over all Brinkley had a lot of fun and got to meet a lot of other dogs making that in itself worth the event.

Joe

“Now we have the pleasure of talking our time to walk back to our townhome, it’s still early so maybe we can find some place to stop for a bite to eat on our way back, I thought I saw a man - made lake somewhere and I bet Brinkley would love to go for a swim?”

Kathleen

“Sounds great Joe, I am all for that. I know I could definitely use a bite to eat my stomach is rumbling as we speak. So shall we?” She said looking at her 2 favorite people in the world.

Joe

“I think we shall,” after waving good-bye to the others and thanking the dog trainer, he then took his girlfriend’s hand and then heading for the freedom of the great outdoors, where he could finally be free of that whole Wet Dog smell he had to endure during this experience of Dog Class with Brinkley; as soon as he stepped outside, he smiled and took in a deep and well enjoyed breath of fresh air before starting the walk back.

End scene!

Back in Winnipeg....

Josh now having read all the letters, and completely at a loss emotionally over the effect of everything he read in them, spent much of his time acting distracted and pre-occupied when dealing with the people around him, like his family and work associates. He could not stop thinking about what he should do. It was decided that a trip was definitely in order, and he knew the focus was then to work on scheduling one after the final vote was put in to place as to how this adventure would take place.

Josh

“O.k. Kids are we going to do Rock, paper, Scissors, on how we are going to take this trip? Car, Plane or bus, each has its own advantages and disadvantages but we want to have the most amount fun on this trip we possibly can right?”

Josh’s kids

Robby

‘Yeah Dad Vancouver is a long way away and there is lots we could see and do if we DROVE.’

Tannis

“Well the Greyhound would be fun, because Dad wouldn’t have to drive, and we could just watch the scenery as the bus drives, and they play movies on the buses now so we’d have that to enjoy also.”

Josh

“What about taking an airplane, I mean if we fly we’d be there in a MATTER OF HOURS which would mean we’d have more time to enjoy our time in Vancouver.”

Tannis

“DAD if you are going there to CRASH a WEDDING over some girl you knew 15 yrs ago, just how long do you think we would be staying in Vancouver if this CRAZY ROMANTIC but insane thing you are about to do doesn’t work out in your favor? I think driving there and taking our time and trying to find some time to enjoy ourselves a little bit before all hell breaks loose would be a much better scenario.” On that note Josh’s daughter gets up to go to the freezer and get herself a vanilla pudding Popsicle and heads off to her room.

Josh

“Where are you going? Is that it, is that all your input is, that we should take the long way? Why don’t we let Rock, Paper, Scissors decide?”

Robby

“I love that game I almost always win, I’m in I say if Rock wins we DRIVE ALL The WAY.. I want to see the L train in Calgary and laugh at how far away I can watch a Dog Run away in Saskatchewan, and well whether or not your car will actually even make it there.” He was laughing at his dad about their family car.

Josh

“My car is fine I bought it brand new and I’ve only driven it locally for a couple of years and well there is no time for a trade in right now so it will just have to do.” Josh’s daughter dragged herself over to where the other two were sitting waiting with their hands out and joined them with her one free hand.

Tannis

“O.k. let’s do this, I have stuff I need to get done today!”

With a One, Two, Three, from all of them, they all chose one. And wouldn’t you know it like his son said ROCK WON. Josh and his daughter both had their fists out while his son had chosen scissors. They all laughed since he almost always chose Rock!

Tannis

“O.k. there it’s settled we are going to trust your 2 year old car, with minimal upkeep to drive us all the way to Vancouver. And well if we are driving then you’d better start planning when we need to be packed and ready to go. Incidentally Dad did that lady Gwen’s letters give a wedding date? I mean otherwise how are you supposed to know when to show up by?”

Josh

“Don’t you worry about that you leave that to dad, now go on and enjoy your vanilla pudding pop and leave the trip planning to me.” She nodded in agreement and went off to her room.

Robby

“Can I call SHOT GUN NOW? Or does it have to wait until the day we leave?” He laughed as he went back to focusing on what was playing on t.v.

Josh

“Well the answer is obvious son, you and your sister will have to share the front seat, after all driving to Vancouver is a fairly long drive, and it wouldn’t be fair to your sister to have her stuck in the back the whole time now would it? And since YOU LOVE YOUR SISTER RIGHT??? (He said pinching his son’s cheek with love to get a smile out of him) you would want her to be able to have just as much fun on this trip as you too, am I right?

Robby

“Yes Dad, you’re right.” He said with a sigh meaning that he agreed that he has a cool sister that deserves to have fun sitting in the front seat for PART of this trip too! After giving into this statement he returned to watching t.v.

Josh then realized he had better check his work schedule and take his time off now, around the date mentioned in the letter that Gwen was to be married on. At the time she wrote the letters that date wasn’t set in stone, she just said that it was likely to be on that day at that time when that letter was written. So Josh was about to plan a trip not even knowing for sure whether or not he’d be getting there on time or a day or 2 to late or something? All he could hope for was the best. What he did know is that he had to do something, because he couldn’t live the rest of his life not knowing what happened to her or what could have happened instead if he were to go so the only thing he knew for certain was that GO HE MUST! Gwen ultimately was his best-friend and the love of his life and if there was any chance or way of having her back in his life at all, then it had to be a chance worth taking!

* * * * *

Josh on the phone...

Josh

“No Dad I’ve decided that I’m taking my kids with me. I know you and Mom are willing to babysit, but they are old enough to come on an adventure like this with me.”

Josh’s Dad

“What about Gwen, I mean it’s been so many years since you’ve seen her do you really think having your children with you when you see her for the first time (especially under what will be such an awkward situation) is something she’d be emotionally prepared to handle?”

Josh

“Dad my children are part of my life we are a package deal and well if Gwen is anything like she was during the years I knew her she will love seeing that I have some, and getting to look at what they look like and who they are turning out to be. I mean it was because of my wanting to settle down and get married and have a family that ultimately caused her and I to part ways. She wanted more out of her life, to go off on an adventure find her life and career, over becoming my wife when we were still so young. She was ultimately right about that, because today I am a DIVORCED single father. But I do not for one minute regret my decision to have these 2 wonderful gifts in my life. I love my kids to death. And I’d love to have Gwen back in my life if it is at all possible, but that will include the 2 of them. And there is no sense in putting off tomorrow what can be done today. You know what I am saying Dad?”

Josh’s Dad

“Yes Josh I hear you, but I am just saying driving half way across the country, with 2 kids to possibly wind up crashing the wedding of a woman you haven’t seen for 15 years whose life could have ultimately changed her so much as a person she might not recognize you anymore nor you her. Because her memories of you Josh could be of someone different in her mind then who you think you’ve never stopped being. Add to that her staring at 2 young little lives that were one of the reasons you guys parted ways, well that’s a really sticky situation. What if she’s mean and hates you

for being there and starts yelling? Or what if that fiancée/or husband of hers is a complete ASS you know what kind of people live in Vancouver!”

Josh

“Dad, you can’t assume everyone that lives in Vancouver is the spoiled artsy fartsy I have to eat caviar and mussels kind of people. If Gwen has picked this guy to marry then she’s obviously had to see something good in him, or she’d never take a step like this at all. I mean look how long it’s taken Gwen to get married in the first place, I’ve had 2 children and been divorced in the time it’s taken her to decide to finally walk down the aisle? And well because it’s taken her so long I JUST NEED to KNOW that it’s the right decision, especially if she hasn’t changed that much and she is the Gwen I remember her to be.”

Josh’s Dad

“O.k. son if you think you are sure, about what it is you are doing then we will support your decision 100%. Just a minute your Mother is yelling something at me from the other room.” He covers the phone and speaks to his wife and returns to the phone when his wife was finished talking to him. Your Mother just wanted to let you know that she is just finishing up making little care packages for the three of you guys for the long trip ahead of you. She has put together stuff she thinks the kids can do during the car ride, and little treats for them. So you won’t have to spend so much money at every little gas station or convenience station you stop in. And well she was just wondering when you would have the time to come and pick them up?”

Josh

“Tell Mom I said thank-you, and that I should have the time to come pick the stuff up a little later today.”

Josh’s Dad

“O.k. great son, you’ve just made your Mother’s day, you know what she’s like about things.”

Josh

“Yes Dad I do, and that is one of the reasons you married her and are still with her today isn’t it?”

Josh’s Dad

“You are quite right son, quite right. Well it’s been nice chatting with you, but we should get off the phone now, so you can actually find the time to come over for you to see your mother now.” His Dad chuckled.

Josh

“The modern age of telephone’s Dad, lol not something that will be going away now that they exist! Ok it was nice talking to you and you tell mom I will be there as soon as I can!”

Josh’s Dad

“Will do son,” after that they ended their call both hanging up at the same time. And Josh turned to the table in front of him, with all the travel information he was still needing to go through to plan this trip right, so his kids could get the most out of the road trip, before he reaches his final destination divorcing the kind of outcome he has no idea he’s about to get. He took in a deep breath as he picked up the map and opened it on the table and rummaged through pamphlets about parks and motels along the route he was now needing to plan, since the Road trip was definitely the way things were going to go from that game of Rock, Paper, Scissors!

End Scene!

Gwen and her Fiancée Greg...

Gwen

“Honey I have a question to ask you that you might find a bit strange but there’s something bothering me and I want to know if you noticed too?”

Greg

“Nothing you say could ever be considered strange to me dear, what’s on your mind?”

Gwen

“Well when we were at Roses pastry shop I noticed something unusual or rather funny, but didn’t mention it at the time because it could have been nothing at least nothing to do with me. But while we were there I noticed this woman looking into the shop, her face was planted right up against the glass, her expression was so funny I wanted to laugh but I dared not let on that I noticed, anyway I was just wondering if you noticed her too?”

Greg

“Yes I think I do remember that, how could anyone in the store not notice someone being that obvious? But I thought she might have just been really admiring the pastries she could see in the window. I wondered why if she liked what she was seeing in the window so much why she didn’t just come in and buy herself something and give in to her obvious sweet tooth, but she didn’t, rather she just fogged up the window. It was really rather funny!”

Gwen

“I thought so too, and found it very hard not to laugh, but I guess one can never tell with people what makes them do the things they do. Anyway I swear I recognized her face from somewhere but couldn’t put my finger on it, I still can’t?”

Greg

“Well honey don’t read too much into it, your mind could simply be just playing tricks on you, you know telling you the image of someone you know is that of someone else like this lady for instance. I am not saying your instincts aren’t right, I am just saying that if it’s nothing then don’t let it get to you too much. Our wedding day is so close at hand and we still have so much yet to do, that you don’t want to be distracted by the memory of some strange woman who would rather stare at the wonderful pastries in Roses shop through the window then taste them first hand for herself!”

Gwen

“You are probably right it’s probably just my mind playing tricks on me, I am probably just thinking of someone she looks like that I haven’t seen in a while or something? But still I swore it was me (us rather) that was so intensely staring through that window looking at rather than the pastries, which has me asking if and I know it’s a BIG IF but IF I am right, who is she and what could she possibly want to know about me, that she would need to stare at me through a window like that? I mean if she wanted to speak to me it would have just made the most sense to come in and speak to me. No matter I guess we will never know now; I just wanted to know if you were able to acknowledge that event with me!”

Greg

“Well I can and I do, and I guess all we can do is keep our eyes peeled for any such strange occurrence should another one like that, specifically with that blonde lady happen again! But otherwise don’t worry yourself about it anymore, and let’s get back to the business at hand, getting the most for our money when dealing with the outdoor table and chair rentals.”

Gwen

“O.k. dear, and as for the answer to our rental equipment issues I made several phone calls, and found the best rate quoted to me was from a place over on Granville island and well I think it’s worth travelling that little difference in location for the huge price difference. So all that seems to

stand in the way of solidifying that is actually going there to look at the chairs and tables they have to see if they are of the quality we are looking for, and see if they have different options to choose from and the availability of that many chairs date wise? I would never dare to agree to something sight unseen for an event such as a wedding and most specifically mine!” Gwen laughed.

Greg

“Did you want me to go with you, so we can both choose together, because I’d love to go for the boat ride over to the island it’s been awhile since I’ve been over there, but I would need to know what day and time you’d like to go so I can know when I would need to take time off work to go with you?”

Gwen

“Well on the phone I discussed going there on Friday and since they are on the island they actually have late hours, this shop is open until 10 rather than 9 pm like most stores, (I guess they really want that extra business) anyway this means there is no need to lose anytime at work. I told them that I should be there no later than 8 O’clock. And yes since this is OUR WEDDING, it would only make sense for you to want to come along, though I am not pulling your arm, I am a pretty good judge when it comes to fashion and you’d probably be perfectly happy with my choice of chair and table rentals.”

Greg

“Oh dear I have no doubt that your wonderful taste would not be disappointing, but I think I’d like to come too because I would love to spend the time with you and very much enjoy picking out the chairs our guests will be sitting in and the table all the food and drinks will be displayed on. So Granville Island at 8pm on Friday it is!”

Gwen kissed her soon to be husband, minutes of silence passed as they stood there in their home embracing each other. What a wonderful future

they were both about to have together she thought as she stopped for just mere seconds to look at him between kisses.

End Scene!

It's the Thursday before the show at the Townhome...

Joe

"Well, I don't know about you dear but I am looking forward to the poetry reading tomorrow night. This should be very exciting indeed. I look forward to hearing her read her work I have a feeling she is very good!"

Kathleen

"I guess so Joe I mean it is her writing, and I'd say a writer like herself would know how to recite her work, you know for us to hear it the way she wants it to come across? If she's had a lot of practice doing this then I'm expecting tomorrow night should be a wonderful and fun event. One I won't likely be forgetting anytime soon."

Joe

"I look forward to having her come to New York and do a show at Fox Books, I have a hunch her success in New York will be overwhelming, she will likely pack the place, and the demand for her to be booked elsewhere will probably be huge from there. I mean you know what New Yorker's are like with this stuff... Hello Greenwich Village didn't get started from nothing! I can see it now how well her stuff will go over there and how much she would fit in that environment, maybe enough to convince her to move to the U.S.?"

Kathleen

"Well I don't know about moving to New York, but she might be convinced that making the move to the U.S. over all would be a good professional one for her. We might be New Yorkers Joe, but that doesn't mean New York is

her style. Maybe she would be better suited to life in let's say OH Seattle, Wisconsin or Los Angeles."

Joe

"Well wherever she goes I am just convinced her success (at least the kind I see her having) absolutely revolves around her taking that step, and making that move to the U.S. and I would always welcome her to Fox Books anytime she wants to re-visit where she got her start in the U.S. I can only imagine how much work she will accomplish in her life as a poet/writer and as long as Fox Books is around her work will always be welcome on my bookshelves."

Kathleen

"Well that is awfully nice of you Joe, and I think she is very lucky for the kind of friend she is about to have with you for the years you two are about to know each other."

Kathleen

"Well it looks like we have the next couple of days fully booked so we've done pretty good keeping ourselves busy, and not wasted much of our time in Vancouver at all since we've been here. That's something to brag about. Deciding which show to go see in theater was difficult though, but I think our decision to go see The Wizard of Oz is a good one. How can one ever go wrong going to the theater to watch that classic movie on stage? I am also very excited to be able to get a little more dressed up than usual. I told you I would have a reason to bring that extra bag of clothes!"

Joe

"You're too Funny Kathleen, all I know is that it's a good thing tomorrow's show isn't until 8 pm at night, because of how late it might be before we get back from today's event. I haven't seen Wizard of Oz in years, so watching it in theater should be a pleasurable one indeed. To see Canadian theater, to see them at their best, and compare notes to what our theater

life is like, for I imagine there are some differences and looking for that should indeed be fun.”

Kathleen

“It was a hard call, I have to say between seeing the King and I, I love that story, but the King and I is ALWAYS playing in New York I swear, or at least it feels that way to me. So my voting for the Wizard of Oz was a pretty simple one, since that one hasn’t been played anywhere anytime recently!”

Joe

“I second that notion. Now I am just wondering what you’ve got us dressed to go to this show in. Since you insisted that we dress to match?”

Kathleen

“Trust me Joe; you’ll love what you’re wearing. You’ll look good and feel great. And together we will look like a sportingly perfect couple!”
Joe smiling say’s...

Joe

“Well I trust I will since it’s you dressing me!”

Kathleen

“My only problem with getting dressed up for events like this is how to eat in our nice outfits? I have chuckled many times when out at nice restaurants seeing what people are wearing and trying to figure out how to get the food to their mouths without spilling anything on what they are wearing. Some people use the fancy napkins, which I’ve done I have to admit. But they are so heavy that they don’t stay in place, they tend to fall while you’re eating.”

Joe

“Well I just look forward to the dinner before the show, Vancouver is known for their wonderful restaurants and great food.” Looking at his watch he realizes that the day has gone by pretty fast and that dinner time is fast approaching and that it’s probably time for them to get ready for dinner.

Joe

“Speaking of dinner, according to my watch it’s time for us to get ready for this evenings dinner and theater. I for one am starving I’ve only nibbled on food all day so as to be ready for this evenings’ wonderful feast.”

Kathleen

“You are right Joe I didn’t realize how late it was getting; well I guess there is no time like the present, shall we?” She was speaking of going upstairs to get ready together.

Joe

“Yes absolutely, after you my dear.”

Kathleen got up from the chair she was sitting in, where the two of them had been playing card games at the table in the dining room and headed toward the stairs excited about their evening out together. Joe put the cards he had in his hand down on the table and got up from his chair and followed right behind her. All you could hear was Kathleen’s giggle saying “JOE” in a sweet way over what could not be seen Joe do to her as they headed up the stairs!

* * * * *

They arrived at their Oceanside location the name of the place was called the Dockside Restaurant. Once standing at the door Joe spoke to the hostess giving his name for their table reservation to be confirmed. The hostess checked his parties name grabbed 2 menus and welcomed them both to the establishment while directing them both to follow her into the restaurant.

Once at the table with a beautiful view of the ocean and the boats docked in the bay, Joe was quick to seat Kathleen for this fine dining experience before taking his seat.

Kathleen

“Why thank-you Joe, I think it’s been awhile since we’ve been somewhere where you could do that for me? I should make it a habit that we do this more often when we get home!” She smiled.

Joe adjusting himself in his seat say’s...

Joe

“Well I guess all lovely ladies like yourself should know the compliment of a gentlemen seating them. I guess I give away my age when I do things like that. I don’t think today the younger couples pay attention to the little things like that?”

Kathleen

“Well I say if it ain’t broke don’t fix it. It’s a good habit you have and you should pride yourself on knowing you are one of the true gentlemen of the world today. Maybe age has a bit to do with it, but over all I think its environment and how fast paced young people are today. (If they are not taught, how are they to know?) By moving so fast they lose out on the little things.” She picked up her menu and opened it she was excited to try some of Vancouver’s best, determined to try something she would not get back home in New York City!

Joe

“Are you reading the menu honey, it all looks so good.. Only I have a question?”

Kathleen

“What is it dear?”

Joe

“What’s Haida Gwaii?”

Kathleen

“Sounds like a question to ask the waitress because I haven’t got a clue, so I can’t help you there?”

Joe

“Well so far that dish is in the winning, if I can’t find it on a menu in New York it must be worth trying. How about you, have you decided on anything yet?”

Kathleen

“The whole menu is very nice, but yes I think I am leaning toward something from the water section of the menu also. This Dockside Cioppino is looking pretty good ordering something named after the place were eating must surely be a good luck thing!”

Joe

“Well that didn’t take us long now did it? Gee it looks like we came at a good time of day the tables are not all full which means we should receive pretty fast service.”

Kathleen

“Well that never hurts when one is having a fine dining experience like this one.”

The waitress returns and looks at them with a smile...

Waitress

“Hi folks so are you guys ready to order or do you have any questions you’d like to ask me about the menu?”

Joe

“Yes actually I have a question for you, what is Haida Gwaii?”

Waitress

“Ahh, I see that you are not from around here? Haida Gwaii, informally but commonly known as the Queen Charlotte Islands and the Charlottes, is an Archipelago on the North Coast of British Columbia, populated mostly by Haida people, one of the native tribes of our Country. Does that answer your question sir?”

Joe

“Yes thank-you it does. So then I guess fish from up there probably tastes even better than inland fish?”

Waitress

“Absolutely, there is far less pollution up north, and there is far less fishing so the fish grow to be much larger than inland. Yes by far you will notice a difference in the flavor of fresh water fish.”

Joe

“Well then you’ve sold me, I will order the Seared Haida Gwaii Halibut, and look forward to that first mouthful.” Joe smiled at the waitress.

The waitress looked at Kathleen and before she could speak Kathleen spoke...

Kathleen

“I think I will go with the item that is partly named after your wonderful establishment, the Dockside Cioppino the combination of items listed in the meal sounds very tasty and I look forward to trying it.”

Waitress

“That’s one of our most popularly ordered dishes. Maybe the name of it has something to do with it, or it could just be how good the meal itself is. I have tried it myself and think it’s absolutely delicious.”

Kathleen

“Thank-you for sharing that with me.”

Waitress

“Have you 2 decided on what you want to drink, and whether you will be having dessert afterwards?”

Joe

“I think we will need a few more minutes to decide that, but you are welcome to put our meal orders in while we discuss it.”

Waitress

“Most certainly, I will be back in a few minutes for the rest of your order.”
The waitress smiles and heads to the kitchen.

Kathleen

“How about this Joe, You pick what we should drink with dinner and I pick the dessert, because we have to have dessert, our dinner just wouldn’t be complete without trying something from the dessert menu even if we are full from our meals.”

Joe

“When does that happen Kathleen? People come to these places for the experience of expensive and wonderfully tasting but SMALL portioned plates of food. That’s just the way.” He laughed.

Kathleen

“Well SOMETIMES a person leaves satisfied that’s all I’m saying.” She smiles back.

Joe

“Well I am far from the expert on wine’s so I am just going to ask if you if I can order us something from Australia, there is something listed here that the name of has caught my eye, and that’s all I know. I only hope it goes good with our meals?”

Kathleen

“O.k. that’s fine, as for myself I have definitely found what to order us from the dessert menu. Now all we can do is wait for the waitress to return for the rest of our order.”

Joe

“Well if we close the menus surely that would help. He reaches out for the menu in Kathleen’s hand who promptly closes it and hands it to him. He puts his together with hers and lays them on the side of the table. There that should do it!” The waitress was busy dealing with another table at the time, but Joe wasn’t worried he was certain she’d notice them ready as soon as she was finished with that table and turned to face their direction.

Moments later after the waitress dealt with 3 other tables she came back to there’s noticing the menu’s lying there, she picked them up and said...

Waitress

“Well it clearly looks like you’ve decided, so what will it be?”

Joe

“Well we compromised, I chose the wine to go with our dinner and she picked dessert, I would like to order this Mollydooker Blue Eyed Boy from Australia. I only hope it will blend well with what we’ve ordered?”

Waitress

“That’s a fine choice, that wine goes with everything on our menu, trust me you made a good decision picking that. And you she said as she turned to look at Kathleen?”

Kathleen

“Well I decided after dinner we should like to try the Vanilla Bean Cheesecake. It’s also something I have never tried, and its sounds wonderful.”

Joe

“Good choice dear, that’s what I was looking at when I looked over the choices for myself, yes I’d say our meal will be a great one.”

Waitress

“I have no doubt that both of you will be fully satisfied with your experience here at the Dockside Restaurant today. Do you mind my asking where the 2 of you are from?”

Joe

“Why don’t you take a guess first?”
The waitress laughed and said..

Waitress

“O.k. well my educated guess based on your accents I would have to say New York City? How’d I do?” she said smiling.

Joe

“You’re in the right line of work my dear, great guess, because yes that is absolutely where my girlfriend and myself are from. We heard a lot of wonderful things about Vancouver and thought a vacation to check it out first hand for ourselves was in call. I’m a workaholic it’s been years since I’ve been on a real vacation someplace away more than 24 hrs away from New York!”

Waitress

“Well I hope you enjoy your stay in Vancouver and come back again someday?”

Kathleen

“Thank-you we appreciate that, we are going to the theater after our dinner, and hope that will end our evening off great. We are going to see The Wizard of Oz.”

Waitress

“Well I have lots of friends of who have gone to see that, and they all had a blast said it was a wonderful production and a fun evening. Like you sir I am a workaholic and well I have just not taken the time off work to go, plus the tickets aren’t that cheap, and well I’d rather go see a show that none of my friends have seen, I think this would give us more to talk about and something to compare our experiences too.”

Kathleen and Joe both agreed with her, saying that it was a good point makes things more interesting, if everyone you know hasn’t seen the same thing. Once the conversation was finished the waitress took their menus and went to finish putting in their order. While waiting for their food Kathleen was quick to point out Joe’s expense for the night.

Kathleen

“You do realize that you ordered the most expensive bottle of wine on the list?”

Joe

“I didn’t check the prices, I picked it for 2 reasons one the name and 2 where it’s from after all we are on vacation. Is what I ordered a problem?” He laughed, because unless it was like a \$500 bottle or something crazy like that he figured they would get through dinner affordably enough.

Kathleen

“Well I know what you are thinking, and all I can say is that for me \$120.00 is still a pretty expensive bottle of wine. Remember I am just the woman

who owned the Little Shop around the corner, so we have lived most of our lives in different financial leagues!”

Joe

“I see your point dear, but don’t worry about it tonight’s about having a good time and forgetting about our corporate lives back in New York. Just eat and drink and enjoy where we are. I think this place is fabulous, and I am rather inclined to fly people from New York here once in a while just to deal with business affairs in this wonderful environment. Look at that view!”

Kathleen agreed and while she was still looking out the window the food arrived and they began to eat, the restaurant became busier with more people arriving for dinner as they enjoyed their meal. Both of them looking over at times at other tables during periods of silence when their mouths were full of delicious food or just having run out of something to say, and that’s when it happened, Kathleen nudged Joe’s leg with her shoeless foot under the table...

Trying to not laugh too loud she says..

Kathleen

“Joe darling, don’t look over too fast but look at the young couple sitting at the table to the left of us seated near the bar, remember what I was talking about before we left the house to come here for dinner?”

Joe

“You mean about people going to expensive restaurants to eat in clothes too expensive to wear there because of what happens almost every time they do?”

Kathleen

“Yeah that” she starts smiling at him..

Joe

“What about it? Why am I asking when I know you are going to tell me, it’s written all over your face, you saw something funny and your dying to share. O.k. what is it spill the beans?”

Kathleen

“Well I don’t have super hero vision, so I can’t tell for certain what the gentlemen ordered, but I know it’s off the water menu, anyway he was trying to cut into his food, while talking with that, ‘you know that young man sort of seductive look on his face’ wanting to impress the lady he’s with. I just happened to look over right when I saw his tie hanging over his plate to close to the food, and well whatever he was cutting into must have given him a bit of trouble, because fish juice came flying up and out of where his knife had just put a slice in what he was about to eat and it’s like the fish juice had a radar of its own, and in seconds the fish juice was splattered all over his expensive tie. Now I am know laundry expert but I do understand that the smell of the fish juice will never leave his tie, and it is certain he is going to be made to sit through the rest of dinner because it’s way too expensive a meal and they had to reserve the table for the two of them to go home now.”

Joe

“Well dear I don’t want to interrupt your story telling, but don’t look over to their table now.” He tries hard to cover his laugh by turning to look out the window.

Kathleen

“What the, is she doing what I think she’s doing?”

Joe

“You mean washing his tie at the table?”

Kathleen

“Is that one of those Tide to go sticks, it looks orange to me from here?”

Joe

“Well it might be a generic brand but yeap that’s exactly what I watched her pull from her evening bag and lean over the table grabbing at his tie and started dabbing the pen all over it, it seems this one comes prepared for everything.”

Kathleen

“Well if she didn’t even think to ask him to take the tie off and go into the washroom to do it, then I’d have to bet they are married. Possibly a newlywed couple if she has one of those in her purse.”

Joe

“All I know now is that I feel like I am in one of those tide stick commercials.”

Kathleen

“Yes like we’re the extras in the scene quite funny indeed, but all I know Joe, is that she can use the whole stick to try and fix his \$150 tie... and she might get the stain out, but what I know for certain is that she will not get the fish juice smell out of his tie!”

Joe

“But you are right about one thing that I’m certain of, that once a couple has been married so many years they don’t stay on their toes about everything like newlyweds do and so the odds a couple in here whose been together for 25 yrs with one of those in a pocket or purse would be very unlikely.”

Kathleen

“Look he finally thought to take his tie off for her. But I bet his food is cold now!”

Joe

“That’s probably what made him take his tie off finally likely, he’s hungry and wants to finish eating his food.”

Kathleen

“Looks like you’re right about that!” They both watch discreetly as he finally landed that forkful of food into his mouth. On that note they too continue with the challenges of what’s on the plates in front of them and what has indeed turned out to be a wonderful tasting bottle of wine. They clink their glasses as they smile looking at each other understanding one thing for certain, that they both got through eating their meals without ruining their clothes! And as the old saying goes after they were finished their dinner and dessert they went ON with the show!

End Scene!

Friday arrived...

The day of the poetry show was finally here, Joe was so excited to get the opportunity to hear Jennifer recite her work live while in Vancouver, thus also giving him the chance to witness the reaction of a live home crowd audience; he was anticipating quite a positive response.

Kathleen

“Why you seem to be in an extra chipper mood today, is this something that’s carried over from last night’s performance?”

Joe humming to himself stopped to answer her question...

Joe

“Nope, it’s about tonight’s recital I thought I wasn’t going to get a chance to hear her read her work until I got her to fox books in New York, I am so excited to get the chance to see a local crowd’s reaction, so I can have a better educated guess on how well her work will be received when she is in New York. I will have a much better idea of what to be prepared for, and how to advertise and pitch the event for her.”

Kathleen

“Well that is awfully thoughtful of you to think about what her show needs to study up on every little detail like that. I am sure she will most certainly appreciate it, when she sees the result of what your efforts result in for her when she arrives in New York.”

Joe

“Yes, indeed she came across to me as someone who was very kind and appreciative, quite easy to get along with. I suspect she has no trouble making friends, so I anticipate a full house tonight.”

Kathleen

“Well I’m just looking forward to the boat ride over to Granville Island, a small little boat everyone on it all huddled together, the cool ocean breeze blowing through our hair, yes I think it qualifies as being a little romantic; setting the mood for the show.” She smiled at Joe expressing her enthusiasm with fanning her face using her hand.

Joe laughed and replied...

Joe

“Well I think if we were alone on the boat that would be even more romantic.”

Kathleen

“Well we’re alone all the time so I think sharing the evening and boat ride with others who are out for a similar experience in quality is just as romantic in my opinion. Besides it’s a Friday evening during the peak season of the summertime in Vancouver, so you can be sure of one thing we definitely won’t be alone on that boat ride.”

Joe

“You got me there, I won’t argue with the odds they are against me.” He laughed and Kathleen smiled back at him.

Kathleen

“Well speaking of the big night ahead of us, I am going to go get ready now. I have 3 outfits laid out on my bed that I picked but I just couldn’t pick one outfit, so now I need to go grin and bare my teeth and make that decision. You should do the same. We wouldn’t want to be late!”

Joe

“Late, NOT a chance I am too excited about it, how often does a person get a chance to go to poetry readings anymore? People just don’t hold them much, it is so hard for a poet to become popular and succeed financially at doing just that writing and reading, rather reciting their work I should say! But yes I will follow your advice and go upstairs to get ready myself!” He smiled.

Before heading out for their adventure Kathleen took Brinkley for his walk and when they returned and she released Brinkley from his leash she called out...

Kathleen

“Joe? Where are you?”

Joe

“Upstairs, I don’t want Brinkley jumping up on me don’t want any paw prints on my clothes before we go or any of his fur for that matter.”

Kathleen

“Honestly Joe, I swear sometimes you are worse than a girl?” She was standing at the bottom of the stairs when she said this, seeing him standing at the top getting ready to come down.

Joe

“Is that what you are wearing?” Joe said looking at how Kathleen was dressed.

Kathleen

“Is there something wrong with what I am wearing?”

Joe

“Not particularly, I was just wondering if you would be changing again?”

Kathleen

“Well to answer your question, I will be, that is if I can get you out of my way.” as she started climbing the stairs giggling at his girlish behavior over his clothes.

Joe

“You just enjoy making fun of me don’t you dear?” He stepped to the side as he went down the stairs quietly not wanting to excite Brinkley when he gets into the room where he is.

Kathleen

“Well Joe sometimes you just make it so easy.” That was the last thing she said before heading into the room to change into the evening wear she put aside for this nights show.

Less than a half an hour later Kathleen can be heard coming down the stairs, Joe goes to the stairs to look at her and starts to whistle...

Joe

“Woo hoo! I am the luckiest man on earth look at what I get to walk around with on my arm. You look great sweetheart.”

Kathleen

“Thanks Joe, I didn’t want to wear something too dressy but suitable to the weather and the event, and based on your reaction I guess I did pretty good!” She smiled.

Joe

“I’ll say you did” he walks over to her and kisses her. Kathleen was wearing a yellow summer dress with lovely white flowers on it and nice sandals to match, along with a nice yellow bag with a strap. She was wearing just the right amount of make up too Joe took her by the arm and said,

Joe

“Shall we?”

Kathleen

“Absolutely!” She puts her arm through his and they leave the house together and walk to the bus stop that takes them down to where they have to catch the boat.

Joe

“I love the transit system here you don’t have to wait more than 5 minutes for a bus to arrive no matter where you are; look here’s our bus now.” He points at the blue bus about 4 stops away.

Kathleen

“I’m sure it’s just a coincidence dear, must have something to do with the fact that we are on vacation!”

Joe

“Maybe, but what if it simply is just the best transit system in North America? All I know is I wouldn’t have much use for a car living here if it really is this efficient everywhere I’d ever need to go living here.”

The bus ride down to where the boat dock is, took about 15 minutes, next thing they knew they were both standing by the water feeling the welcomed breeze off the pacific ocean as they stared at the boats out near the boat club which is located in the direction they have to walk to catch their ride to Granville Island!

As predicted on this beautiful summer evening there was a handful of people all waiting to ride the boat to Granville, when it arrived everyone got on with relative ease and found themselves the place where they wanted to sit. Joe and Kathleen decided to sit outside so they could enjoy the breeze and have a better enjoyment of the view that surrounded them.

Kathleen

“Isn’t this exciting, what luck we are having with the weather that the storm warning that was given has held off. Look at the sky it’s just lovely. We have done a really good job at getting much of our itinerary done.”

Joe

“Maybe we will get it all done? What a shame that Sea World was closed down though, watching the show there would have been spectacular whales are beautiful ocean creatures. But if everything works out we might just get it all done and that would be very nice indeed.”

Kathleen

“Oh here we go, the boat is moving.” She snuggles right up next to Joe and sigh’s a happy sigh.

Joe

“Are you telling me with your sigh that coming on this vacation was a good idea?”

Kathleen

‘Absolutely, we are going to make it a part of our plans to try and take more vacations, after all we only have one life to live and the idea is to find a way to get the most out of that life.’

Joe

“Right you are my dear, right you are.”

The boat ride wasn’t a very long one, only about 10 minutes long before they reached their destination where it docked and everyone once again climbed off in an orderly fashion to be sure not to slip on any of the water in the boat or on the stairs climbing out of the boat. Once on shore Joe pulls the map and piece of paper with instructions out of his pocket and reads it.

Kathleen

“Why don’t we just ask someone which way to go, these maps are confusing what looks like west somehow always turns out to mean east here?”

Joe

“You read my mind, but still I thought I’d look at it first.” Joe looked around for a local and walked over to ask them what direction the address he had on the paper was in. For once he seemed to have come across someone who knew where they were. The local resident was happy to help and told them where to go. Joe thanked them and returned to where Kathleen was waiting on the sidewalk.

Joe

“Well it’s not far from here we just walk straight down in the direction we are now facing, and when we get close to a bridge where the city traffic is it should be on our right side. We can enjoy looking at the surroundings and all the little shops along our walk.”

Kathleen

“Sounds fun, I hear there are lots of neat little shops on Granville Island.”

Together they started on their adventure, stopping to look into stores at the doors or through the windows since they didn’t really have the time to shop. When they were almost near their destination, they noticed a rental shop of some sort, it had chairs and tables and dishes and all kinds of strange fountains. To their surprise once again almost at the same time they both saw GWEN, once again in the same vicinity as them. This time it was clear that it looked like her and the gentlemen she was with were their picking out chairs and other stuff for renting. When Kathleen and Joe got close enough and Gwen just happened to turn around, she couldn’t help but notice the two of them and that was it for her fuse.

Gwen

“HONEY, HONEY, COME QUICK!” Her fiancée stops talking with the rental person and walks over and says..

Greg

“What is it dear?”

Gwen sure to be loud enough for them to hear her said...

Gwen

“There look it’s them those 2 people, the ones that were outside my condo the day we were going out together, that’s the lady whose face was planted against the window fogging it up at the pastry shop.”

Kathleen

“Who me what pastry shop?” She said.

Gwen

“Don’t try pulling that one on me you were fogging up the window with your face and how planted against it you were, like you were looking into deep space for something. Why are you 2 following me?”

Joe

“Following you what on earth are you talking about? That day we had been tandem bike riding, and we took a break to have ice cream and she noticed the bakery and wanted to see what was going on.” Joe trying to keep from letting on that he knew anything about Gwen.

Gwen

“Then why wouldn’t she just come inside the store instead, I had a heck of a time trying to ignore that face at the window in there that day, because my gut kept telling me you were looking at me starring at what I was doing. And I couldn’t figure out for the life of me why some strange lady would want to have anything to do with me? Let’s review this, first I saw you outside my house when I was going out it was hard to miss the 2 of you since you were the only ones within a one block radius anywhere around me, then the bakery, and now, NOW THIS! Who are you 2 and what do you want with me?”

Kathleen

“Relax, trust me we did not follow you today, we are here to attend a poetry reading that isn’t far from here, and we are just enjoying our walk and window shopping.”

Gwen relaxed a little...

“Well how am I supposed to know you are telling the truth, I mean what about the other 2 times, do you really just expect me to believe that after 3 times that it is still just all a coincidence, that’s a little hard to do in a city as large as Vancouver?”

Joe pulled out the paper with the address and time for the show...

Joe

“Here look see right here on the paper, we are going to an 8 ‘clock showing of local poet, she’s very good. You might have heard of her?” He mentions her name.

Gwen

“Yes I work for the Vancouver Star there has been a write up about her and I did the story and took the photo’s I am a photographer and an occasional article writer. O.k. so what if I let you off the hook for this night, what’s your explanation for the other 2?”

Greg

“Unless you were trying to avoid a confrontation when a person sees a shop they like they usually enter it. I remember your face clearly myself and you were definitely interested in what we were doing in there that day, and why would you do that if you didn’t know something that you are not telling us?”

Kathleen looks at Joe and Joe looks at Kathleen in silence for a moment wondering what to do to get themselves out of this mess since they didn’t want to be late for the show?

Joe answered for both of them...

Joe

‘O.k. O.k. you got us, when we first got into town something happened and well we discovered your name as part of that situation and well yes we original thought to come find you and speak to you, but when we arrived that day outside your home we saw you both leaving together and decided against disturbing your plans, since we are complete strangers.’

Kathleen

“And I will confess that the day we went tandem bike riding while eating our ice cream I noticed the 2 of you go inside the bakery and when I read the name of the shop and what it’s specialty was, I was curious to see what you might be in there for. And well rather than disturbing what you were doing I thought just peeking through the window would be harmless and if

it was busy enough I would just go un-noticed. Clearly I was wrong about that.”

Gwen’s Fiancée laughed...

Greg

“Hardly, it’s not that big of a shop, and with how well you had your face planted against the glass you looked like a blonde haired monkey, intent on eating everything in the window, while watching what we were doing.”

Gwen

“This is my fiancée, and he and I are getting married in about a week’s time and we’ve been busy getting the last minute things arranged and paid for. We are having an outdoor event whence our reason for being here today to pay for the tables and chairs and other things needed to seat and tend to our small group of attendees.”

Greg

“Now that we’ve answered your curiosity, seems only fair that you would return the same gesture?”

Joe looking at his watch realized they had no more time left to talk but knew getting out of this without just coming out with what happened wasn’t going to be easy, but knowing Gwen is just about to get married he worried even more about the letters and the gentlemen they were sent too...

Joe

“Listen we’d love to stay and chat and introduce ourselves more but we haven’t the time right now we have to get to our show so we can get our seats, we’ve been invited to be here by the writer herself and being late wouldn’t be a good way to get things started. My girlfriend and I are from New York and we are here on vacation, I am a business man, I own a book

store called Fox Books, and she had a small classical book store called Little shop around the corner, until my mega store ran her out of business because of my stores location, whence forth that is how we met. Anyway we are here on Vacation and I came to work out a promising future for the poet that is reading tonight. How you've become involved in our vacation is a little more complicated than we have the time to explain right now."

Kathleen interjected...

Kathleen

"But in our efforts to contact you we did hear from one of your relatives about a week passed when the original incident occurred, so we do have your number, so what Joe is saying in short, is that how about we promise to get in touch with you very soon. And we can all sit down for coffee and get into the details of what made us come look for you that day. And I apologize for snooping into the shop but I am a hopeless romantic and when I saw Roses bakery specialized in wedding cakes, I was just curious to see what you two were planning. No harm was done really I stayed outside so as to not invade your privacy didn't I?"

Gwen not so frustrated at this point had calmed down enough to except Kathleen's apology for her snoopiness, and agreed to wait to get the call from them so they could further explain themselves when they had the time.

Joe and Kathleen shook both of their hands, and quickly went on their way, arriving at their final destination just as everyone was taking their seats. It turned out that Jennifer had actually put reserve signs on two seats with their names on it, so they could get good seats for the show. Jennifer was already standing on stage and when she saw Joe she smiled and looked over at the lady with her and nodded her head in acknowledgement with who he brought. She was very happy that they did indeed arrive.

Joe and Kathleen were ushered to their seats where they promptly got comfortable for the show. Jennifer stood back from the podium and sat down in a chair behind the speaker who was coming on stage to introduce

her. The house was full, Joe was glad to see that. The introduction lasted about 3 minutes the audience laughed at all the right places and then the person speaking said....

Speaker

“And now without further ado here is the very special person you have all come to listen to tonight, may you all enjoy the show.” The audience clapped as the speaker moved from the podium and let the writer step forward. You could hear papers rustling, and camera’s going off as she took her place.

Jennifer

“Thank-you all for coming tonight, I am so happy to see every seat in the house is occupied, it is hard these days to hold events like this and have everyone who buys a ticket or is invited to a show all attend. As we know work, family, and life gets in the way and we are sometimes too busy to stop and smell the flowers so to speak to slow down and enjoy the moment. But tonight I am glad to see that everyone here has taken the time to do just that, slow down and put life on hold, by pushing that pause button and come along for the adventure with me in my work tonight. And I only hope that I will be able to do just that, for but a few minutes bring all of you with me on a wonderful adventure, to escape the normal world you know and live in outside this room tonight. On that note I will begin with my first chosen piece that I think says it all as it heads our evening off on a good start.”

The talking stopped and Jennifer looked to her books and pulled the right one from the pile and opened it to the page that was saved with a book mark in it.

Jennifer

“For everyone who has their own copies of my work I am reading from the first book A Special Something, and you can turn to number 27 and read along. This piece is titled Home is where the heart is!” She gave the

audience a moment to open their books while others ran to the table at the back to by themselves copies. And then she began...

Jennifer

" ~ Home is where the heart is ~

*Home is where the heart is
Mine is everywhere,
I like to live free in the discovery
Of everything life has to give,
No rude awakenings
Just strangers pave my way.
There's a great big fine reward
In learning all things new
It doesn't get much better than this
It's always like a new loves first kiss,
Fresh and distinct
Always different and unique
Something sweet
That's always there;
Each new corner you walk somewhere
Someone new for you to meet
To crack a joke and make them smile
Or take a seat and talk about life for a while,
A constant reminder that God is good
Just miss-understood
Cause of the things that 'we' do
You have to like who you are
To understand where you're at
When you're looking out over
That spectacular Ocean view,
Or noticing that dog walker
Smiling back at you;
The love of life is in what we do,
The choices we make that get us through,
Happiness is in the discovery
That we don't need to work so hard
That our hearts ache,
Or our hair turns gray
Or that you never get a vacation
Because you haven't enough pay;
Less is more*

*When you learn to uncover the richness
That's there
In sharing good times and life
With people who care.
It's amazing what ones kindness does
To help make life more pleasant
In all that we do,
I like living free
It's the only way to be
To love so strong
Fear nothing going wrong,
I can't imagine doing things any other way.
Sometimes it's all that we can do
To get from place to place
To discover those things new,
And the joys finding them brings
The more we discover who we are;
From this great big wide open world
Built on hope, prayer and a dream
In our understanding the balance of things,
Home is where the heart is
And mine is Everywhere!! "*

When she was done there wasn't a sound in the room you could have heard a pin drop. Then finally the applause began, and then quickly stopped as they anticipated listening to her read the next piece. Kathleen leaned over at Joe and whispered...

Kathleen

"I can't believe you forgot the books Joe, how embarrassing we are some of her invited guests now we look silly. I am going to go buy a set of the books right now so we can follow along for the rest of the show I wanted my own copy of her work anyway so now I will have books of my own." She got up and quietly slithered to the back to go purchase a set of the books later than the others, but hey better late than never. Which is what she said as she was paying for the books, and the person taking the money just smiled with a yes as she handed her a set of brand new books, they just look so pretty Kathleen thought as she held them in her hand!

Joe whispered back when she re-took her seat..

Joe

“I feel like such a shmuck what does that say about me? Oh they sure do look nice when they are brand new, can I see one?”

Kathleen

‘NOPE, she’s about to read again I have to find the right book and the right page there is no time. Now quit talking and go back to listening.’ She said with a smirk that teased him about forgetting the books. So that’s what Joe did he faced the stage once more and prepared for the next poem to be read.

Jennifer

“The next one, many of you know I’m sure, it is and likely will always be one of my all-time favorite pieces that I ever write. It is number 18 titled Come to me!

*~ Come to me ~
And I’ll show you why!*

*I have never wanted to lie next to someone
Naked,
The way I want to with you,
I want to explore your body
from your head to your toes,
I want to examine every hair on your legs,
Every muscle that twitches,
And understand why:
I want to see every freckle,
every mole, Every scratch and chicken pox scar!
I want to finger your ears slowly,
And memorize every fold.
I want to run my hands through your hair,
And hold on to you so tight,
That just my Love for you
Makes you sweat,
And leaves you out of breath
I want to know your back,
I want to know your hands*

*I want to know your front
I want to know your sides,
I want to know you
Whichever way you stand.
I want to love you, and hold your hands,
I want to know,
the way you sit, lie down and stand.
I want to know,
How you hold your head,
When you're mad, happy, sad,
Or just about ready to cry.
I want to know
All there is to know,
I want to know until you can't stand
How much I KNOW.
Till there is no escaping it now,
Till neither of us want to move
From the others side;
Glued together like mortar and bricks,
For all Eternity;
Our Strength and our Love
Able to withstand everything,
Able to withstand all the tests of time,
All the bad weather
All the rocky roads,
All the wetlands
And in the end still come out on top of it all
Happy and glowing,
Full of life and
A love that shines so bright,
Yours and mine,
To testify on behalf of God so easily,
Just through the love that lives
Between us,
When People look
Because it cannot be mistaken,
What it is they're seeing
For its Amazing, and Beautiful,
Graceful and fine
And belongs to Nobody else,
But US,
A love that's just Only Yours and Mine
Forever and all time,
So come to me*

*And I'll show you why,
My love
Testifies! "*

She went on to share one more piece from the first book before moving on to the 2nd one and reading from there.

Jennifer

"O.k. now in book 2 I have made it rather simple by deciding to read two pieces that are side by side so everyone get book number 2 *The Day My Goldfish Died* and turn to pages 8 and 9 and sit back and enjoy as I now read those 2 to all of you." Jennifer smiled a lovely smile.

Joe

"She really is good at this, an amazing reader, gives me goose bumps and almost leaves me breathless. I am so happy we are here tonight."

Kathleen

"Well it's clear to me she is going to have a huge success at your store in New York when she comes, I look forward to seeing the size of that crowd and success of that event. Now shush, I want to listen Kathleen opens her book to the right page and prepares to follow along!"

Jennifer is reading page 8 a piece simply titled *Purple...*

"Purple"

*Purple
dreams
showers
themes,
Madness in the dark
of a holier walk
through the park
that surrounds me at this time;
A hot desire
a compliment*

*of what's transpired
of where the times
behind the needles went,
As I lose my oxygen
landing forever,
over a perfect kiss
missed
divorcing London's theatre,
without understanding
where that body went
since you left
the difference
launched there
that day!"*

Then she went on to page 9

"~ Ripped ~

*Raped, Ripped, Robbed,
Witnessing the powers of the devil alive,
Raped, Ripped, Robbed
feeling your soul die
as you mourn and cry
to say good-bye to a life
that you long to escape,
Raped, Ripped, Robbed,*

*I often ask myself and wonder why,
we cannot find a way to compromise?
Keeping our eyes open to what
cannot be denied, about the sins
that stand before our lives,
Raped, Ripped, Robbed,
I often ask myself and wonder why,
we cannot find a way
to compromise?*

*Why can't we come to realize
the powers of love in our lives,
Raped, Ripped, Robbed,
I often ask myself and wonder why?
Raped, Ripped, Robbed! "*

The audience clapped loudly after she was done reading this piece, it seems they really enjoyed this one. Kathleen thought one can never tell what really hits home with someone when it comes to poetry. But she agreed it was a good poem.

From book three 5 years ago in June Jennifer read 6 Years on page 15,

Jennifer

“I love this entire 3rd book but realized this is a piece people all ages can relate to because we’ve all had a relationship in our lives that didn’t turn out right, so I won’t waste another moments time sharing this with you.

~6 years ~

*It’s been a waste of 6 years
6 years I didn’t have to be crying
6 years I could have been lying in your arms
6 years I didn’t have to be alone
6 years of time there’s no return for,
Loneliness and an empty heart
Because you failed to do your part
Because you failed to take your
Place in my life.
I have to walk around feeling this way
For the rest of my life,
Because only you could have filled
It before the baby came along;
Now there’s nothing left to do
Except to sleep around on you
Because at least I won’t have to be alone,
No matter the cost of the dignity or Pride,
At least I can look into someone’s eyes
Having someone there by my side
For the years I’ve just lost
Living without you,
6 years!”*

She went on to read another piece, but the last one she shared from this book was on page 50 called Growing Old.

Jennifer

“I wanted to close with something everyone could get a laugh from in relating how it feels at the different times in our life that something reminds us of the fact that AGE is kicking in... in my case it was zit in an odd spot, I hope you all enjoy this with me as I end my readings from the books with this...

~ *Growing Old* ~

*I like indoor ice rinks
And restaurants
With a fire place,
Can't stand the damp
Or the cold
That never leaves
My bones,
Too tired for their university
Watching a zit grow on the
Back of my leg
Eating oatmeal for breakfast
Alone! “*

There was a standing ovation, as she ended her reading and a short break was taken before she would return to complete the show with reading a short story she wrote titled *The Red Fox*, as well as playing a few songs on guitar, singing for everyone! The evening was a true success, after the show Kathleen shook hands with her and asked her to autograph her copies of the books she bought at the show.

The excitement of having her come to New York was mentioned as the conversation ended on Joe asking about her cd, which Jennifer told him her demos could be purchased at the back with the books as well. He thanked her and they said their Good-byes, and shook hands. From there Joe went and purchased her cd, and grabbed a copy of the short story she shared that night as well.

Once outside Joe and Kathleen looked at each other and took in a cool night's breath of air, it was wonderful looking out over the water with the sun almost completely gone for the night as they started their walk back to the dock they had a small conversation...

Joe

“That was spectacular I am going to frame this short story she read It was fantastic I wish I could write like that! Who knows maybe one day it will become a book or movie for her down the road?” He chuckled.

Kathleen

“Well all I was thinking about the whole night was the close call we had with Gwen before the show. What Joe are we going to do about that?”

Joe

“You are right it is a complication in our life that we need to deal with, but do we have to talk about it NOW on the way home or can we just finish the night off enjoying the wonderful show we just watched, and talk about her coming to New York? We can deal with tomorrow when tomorrow comes and obviously based on the time of day, tomorrow is not far away from arriving.” He smiled.

Kathleen

“Yes you are right, we can deal with the matter tomorrow, but still I couldn't stop thinking about it and still wonder what you think we should do? But I will let you sleep on it and wait like a good girl until tomorrow to hear what you think we should do, whether we should tell her about what we did with the letters or not, and if not how we will go about getting our way out of that?”

Joe

“Don't worry everything that is meant to happen will happen, I am certain things will work out the way it is meant to. But you are right I'd just like a night to sleep on it. O.k. there's the boat, you first Kathleen.” He said taking her by the hand to help her down the stairs after arriving at the dock without needing to wait at all. She accepted his hand and climbed down the stairs and went in search of the perfect place to sit for the boat ride back.

Joe was quick to join her, where he put his arm around her and they kissed and snuggled as they listened to the sound of the water against the boat as the motor moved them through the water!

End Scene!

Back in Winnipeg time for the big adventure!

Josh

“O.k. kids last minute run through on the check list we want to make sure we have everything we need before Dad hit’s the highway.”

Josh’s kids come running into the room with their check lists in hand to show him they have everything checked off.

The kids

“We have everything Dad,” they said at the same time.

Robby

“You worry too much Dad your acting like a Mom instead of a Dad.” His son laughs.

Josh

“O.k. then if everything is a go then let’s get this stuff to the car. Everyone go grab what you can carry and meet me at the front door.” A few minutes later everyone was at the front door that Josh had propped open knowing their hands would all be full.

Josh

“Can you guys see all right over that stuff, you sure you can handle taking that much all at once?”

Josh’s kids

“Yes Dad we’re fine, now let’s go.”

Tannis

“Yeah before my arms collapse after all I am a girl you know I don’t have the same kind of muscles as you two guys I won’t hold out forever!”

Out the door they all went and down to where the car was parked. Once there Josh unlocked the trunk and slowly one thing at a time was fitted in to place. It took them about 3 trips back and forth to get everything done before Josh finally turned off all the power in the apt and stepped out into the hallway and locked the door.

Josh

“Well kids, the doors locked nothing left to do now except to get in the car and drive away. You guys ready?”

Josh’s kids respectively..

“Yes Dad.”

Robby

“Let’s get the show on the road this trip should be so much fun. Thanks for being the coolest Dad on earth and taking us by car instead of flying us there in a few hours, that would have been so boring, no adventure.”

Josh

“No problem son, that’s what Dads are for.” He put the keys in his pocket and held his kids hands and they headed for the stairs. Once at the car everyone got in and took their seats.

Josh

“Seat belts everyone!” He listened for the click of both their seat belts.

Josh’s kids

“Done Dad, let’s go.”

Josh than put his seat belt on, and took the keys from his pocket and put the car key in the ignition and started the car. Put the car into drive and stepped on the gas. And the kids looked back and watched the apt building move further away, and then they turned to face what was ahead of them a whole lot of fun.

Josh

“Well here’s to hoping we get there in good time, and have a lot of fun along the way. Remember you two have to share the front seat, it’s only fair that you both get turns sitting up front with Dad.” His kids just nodded their heads without saying a word! Josh drove on.

20 minutes later Josh was making his turn out onto the highway heading west, when his son suddenly piped up and said...

Robby

“Dad?”

Josh

“Yes son?”

Robby

“I have to pee!”

Josh then asked his daughter laughing...

Josh

“How about you honey do you have to go also?”

Tannis

“Yes but I can still hold it a little longer if we have too?”

Everyone in the car busted out laughing... as Josh said,

Josh

“See it looks like we did forget to do something after all!”

He focused his eyes on the highway signs looking for where the first rest stop would be as he was driving. When he finally saw one it said that the nearest one was about 10 minutes ahead.

Josh

“Can you guys hold it for 10 more minutes? I can’t exactly pull over on the side of Highway 101 there’s no stopping room anywhere.”

Robby

“If you stop talking about it, and keep driving I might be able to stop thinking about for that long.” He said as the look on his face said it all.

Josh

“Deal,” He didn’t utter a word, just focused on the 10 minute drive ahead. Josh had a feeling this road trip might take a little longer than he had initially planned for, as he chuckled to himself. But he was sure it would be a trip his kids would not forget. Never mind them it’s a trip he knew he was certain to not forget, unsure of the outcome that lay before him for when he gets there. All he could hope for was a happy ending, whatever that happy ending might mean?

End Scene!

At Gwen’s house now...

Gwen

“Well everything seems to be coming along just great dear. So far everyone we’ve sent invitations to have all said they will be there.”

Greg

“That is good news every seat will have someone in it, and that’s an important detail on the most important day of your life.”

Gwen

“What did you think of my water fountain idea? When I saw them there at the rental shop I just knew they would look amazing in their different colors with the water coming up out of them placed all along the side of the aisles as I walk down to the pulpit. I am so excited to see them in action. I think they will look beautiful.”

Greg

“I think it’s a fantastic way of keeping the guests in their seats and if they want to get out of their seats before the end of the ceremony for some reason they will have to go through all the people in their aisle to get out at the other end. Very ingenious of you dear; and yes I think with the different colors they light up I think they will be a beautiful touch for a beautiful woman on a wonderful day.”

Gwen

“Well it’s your day too you know.”

Greg

“Yes dear I know it is, but those kinds of little things matter more to women than us dull headed guys. It doesn’t matter what happens that day or what’s around us it will be the best day of my life simply because of the fact that after this event I will get to spend the rest of my life sharing my whole world with you, and that’s really all that matters to me.” He takes Gwen in his arms and they embrace.

The phone rings...

Ring, Ring,
Ring, Ring,

Ring, Ring,
Ring, Ring,

Gwen breaks off the hug they were in and goes to answer it.

Gwen

“Hello?” she said.

On the other end was Joe Fox.

Joe

“Yes hello Gwen, this is Joe Fox here. Sorry it took me a few days to get back to you but I am trying to get a lot done on my vacation and only have so many days left to get it all done in. But Kathleen and I promised we’d be in touch with you for a further explanation of why we didn’t formerly introduce ourselves on our first attempt at contact with you.”

Gwen

“I’m listening,” (She covers the mouth piece and tells Greg who it is.)

Joe

“Well as you know I mentioned I am a business man from New York where I have a mega book store chain called Fox Books. Well while I have been here on vacation, simply because of our location and things my Girlfriend and I were doing, I heard of your big event It’s not everyday someone plans an outdoor wedding in English Bay here in Vancouver in fact it’s not too often people plan these kind of public locations for weddings much at all.”

Gwen

“Your point?”

Joe

“I’m getting there, well I was thinking your story would make a good book, and I wanted to ask you if you’d be willing to let me write a book about it and sell it exclusively at Fox Books, and of course you would get a large percentage of the proceedings it is after all, your wedding and all about you?” (Joe covers the mouth piece, I sure hope this works?)

Kathleen

“Well it will at least by us some time while we wait to find out what happens with the Josh guy who got the letters if anything happens at all. If nothing does happen though, you’d better be good at writing books about outdoor weddings and making them sound unique, unique enough that people will want to buy and read it.. She laughed.

Joe

“Oh shush Kathleen we will worry about that road when we come to it.” He goes back to the call.

Gwen

“Well that’s quite an offer, but lots of people have outdoor weddings, what makes mine so special?”

Joe

“It’s where your holding it, most people use special places like Stanley Park or in New York, it would be Central Park, or they use back yards or smaller places. But when have you ever heard of one at English bay? A crowd will surely gather to watch this wonderful event and I think you being willing to share your special day like that with strangers makes the story and even nicer one to tell. You’re being willing to share this important day with the public that will gather around your wedding there at the park that day.”

Gwen

“Good point, I didn’t actually think about that part? Maybe I should hire security to keep strangers 100 feet out of the area of the wedding?” She laughed.

Joe

“Well I think having guards would sour the experience personally!” Joe chuckled.

Gwen

“Well I have to discuss it with my fiancée first to see if he’d be willing to share the story of his future adventure after all this wedding is a very important part of his life too you know he is the groom!” she smiles at him holding the phone away from her mouth.

Joe

“Yes, yes of course, take your time, well the little time you’ve got to spare I mean, you can call me back when the 2 of you have made your decision.”

Gwen

“Alright let me grab a pen and paper and jot down your number.”

Joe

“Alright,” (he whispers to Kathleen) I think it’s going to work, all suspicions of the letters for the time being subdued.”

Kathleen

“You do realize that we are sort of lying to a complete stranger, I mean yes you may wind up making a book out of this, to make real what you are saying today. But what if nothing comes from the letters we mailed, won’t we owe her an explanation of that at some point still?”

Joe

“Yes AFTER they’ve tied the knot and they are a happily married couple. Then she can hate our guts but in the meantime I will have a happy event to write about for this book project if all goes according to plan.

Gwen comes back to the phone,

“O.k. sorry about that I couldn’t find a pen that actually worked, but I have one now. So go ahead Joe and give me your number.” Joe told her the number to where he was staying, and said he was looking forward to hearing from her.

Gwen

“Well thank-you for calling to clear things up, I was beginning to get edgy with how many times I saw you guys, and tell your girlfriend the next time she finds herself in a situation like that one at the pastry shop to go inside and order something and introduce herself you’d be surprised how far that might take her, instead of fogging up the window looking silly like that.”

Joe

“I will pass the message on to her.” They said good-bye and hung up the phone.

Gwen

“Now where were we?” She went back to her honey’s arms and they went back to hugging one another.

Greg

“I have to go for my final fitting for my tux, with my brother and cousin still, what’s left for you to do?” He asked.

Gwen turning to look at him said...

Gwen

“Well I have to go in person to deal with the catering service, to make sure all the food we ordered is right and that the bill is squared away. I don’t want anything ruining this day, no un-expected surprises this especially includes un - expected sky rocketing high bills arriving in the mail after we’re married thinking we’ve paid for everything, we don’t have it in our budget for much of any kind of surprise bill like that not with how much you spent on my ring.” She smiles at him then looks at her finger and back at him and they share in a wonderfully powerful kiss. After they kiss...

Greg says...

Greg

“You are right our budget on this event comes from how much extra I spent on buying the only ring I thought you should have, the best so we don’t need any extra surprises that’s for sure.” He went on to say that the final suit fitting would be a rather boring event, and it’s not really traditional for women to be there, so it wasn’t necessary for her to go.

She agreed, that he could obviously handle that excursion on his own, and that she was certain there was work she probably needed to focus on doing for the paper, after all it wasn’t like she’s on vacation or maternity leave she still had a job to do for the Vancouver Star. Earning a living is vital especially when one is getting married! Only days away they both looked at each other as they left the room they were standing in to go sit down on the couch to relax alone together before the big event. This would be a good time for her to mention the conversation she had with this New York Book Store guy Joe Fox to him, she thought!

End Scene!

At the vacation house...

Kathleen

“Writing a book was a good idea, now do you think you can pull it off?”

Joe

“It’s me were talking about Kathleen, Joe Fox, I can do anything if I put my mind to it; especially if I have the support and love of a great woman behind me?”

Kathleen

“Well of course then if you put it that way, you have my backing, 100%. If you say you can make an interesting story out of this wedding than of course you can. But I’d sure like to know whether she ever hears from that Josh fellow?”

Joe

“Well I guess there is no real way of knowing whether we did the right thing or not, no matter what happens, whether Gwen succeeds with tying the knot or whether she receives some kind of communication from Josh.”

Kathleen

“Well I guess you have something to email back to the office about, you don’t have any time to waste getting started on this project now with the wedding date so close. Do you think if she says yes to the book idea that she will invite us to the ceremony?”

Joe

“Well it would make my job writing the story about her wedding easier if I were actually there first hand to witness things, however if not we could always try sneaking around and hope we don’t get caught?”

Kathleen laughs and says...

Kathleen

“AHH I think Gwen has made it quite clear that you and are not so good at that whole sneaking around having nobody notice us sort of thing. You sure you still want to try that avenue?” Kathleen laughed.

Joe

“You’re right but what else is there to do, what if something happens that we’re not there to watch, than we’d be missing something important that I couldn’t take notes on if I don’t know it’s happened?”

Kathleen

“Well let’s just see if she phones before her wedding and hear what she has to say.”

Joe

“That sounds like a plan. Now would you like to get dressed up for the rain and go out for a walk with Brinkley and me, I don’t feel like staying inside the house all day just because it’s wet outside. It’s still a warm day, and Brinkley would have a great time, he loves the rain.”

Kathleen

“A little rain never hurt anyone, so I don’t see why not. Sure just give me a minute to go find my stuff, I will meet you at the front door.”

Joe

“Alright I will go find Brinkley and get my rain gear on also, see you in a few minutes. The two of them went their separate ways to get the things done that they needed to do! Rain, Rain, Go Away, Come Again Another Day!

End Scene!

Saskatchewan...

Josh and his kids now somewhere in Saskatchewan a few days after the phone call between Gwen and Joe...

Josh

“Interesting, I seem to be going through so much gas, but yet everything looks to be normal?” He said out loud to himself as he was standing at a gas station pump in some small town in the vast expanse of the Province of Saskatchewan. He wandered to the gas tank, took the lid off and went for the nozzle and turned on regular fuel and put it in the gas tank opening and started to fuel his car. His daughter coming from the washroom at the gas bar came around to the side her dad was on, and well she happened to be looking down when she noticed a wet spot and some dripping.

Tannis

“AH Dad, how long have we been driving around with that problem? Could explain why we’ve had to stop at almost every gas station we’ve seen?”

Josh looked at what his daughter was talking about...

Josh

“Good eye sweetheart, I can’t hear a thing I wonder how many stops I missed this happening at I’d better stop fueling and get down there and take a look?” He stopped bumping the gas, but left the nozzle in place. He then got down on the ground and staying to the dry side of his car looked underneath to see what he could see.

Josh

“Well I’ll be, we have a cracked hose down here darling, good thing you spotted the problem before we got too much further, hate to think of how much money I might have spent on gas had we kept going, especially with the price of gas today.”

Tannis

“No Problem, your welcome Dad, that’s what daughters are for, I am going to go sit in the front seat now, since it’s my turn and wait for the two of you. I hope this doesn’t take long to fix, this place is kind of spooky, there is nothing around I am starting to miss the city.” She walked away sucking on her freezie and headed for the front passenger seat of the car. Josh wiggled his way out from under his car and went inside to the gas bar attendant and told him about the problem he discovered, noticing that they had a garage attached to their facility.

Josh

“Can you fix my cracked hose? There is no sense in me going much further if I have to keep filling up my gas tank in every other town.”

Gas attendant

“Yes we can fix it, but based on the car you have, it’s highly probable that we don’t have the kind of hose you need in stock. We’d have to send away for it, which means it won’t get here until tomorrow.”

Josh

“Tomorrow, that’s the fastest you can get it here really?”

Gas attendant

“This isn’t a big city, so we usually have to send for parts from a bigger town and unless the order is made early in the morning most times it’s a

next day delivery because of travel time. I will go and look just to confirm whether or not we have anything that would fit your car, but don't be disappointed if I come back with bad news." He asked for the year, make and model of the car Josh was driving, Josh told him and after paying for the gas he just put in his car the attendant then went to look through their stock in the garage.

A few minutes passed and the attendant came back looking greasier then when he left, with hoses in his hand and showed Josh.

Gas attendant

"This is the closest types of hoses I could find, now we could probably force one to fit on, but that would inevitably just wind up being a temporary solution because it would more than likely lead to the new hose cracking also and probably worse than how bad the one you have on there is now."

Josh thought for a minute, realizing that a temporary hose NOW would mean he might make it out of Saskatchewan but, thinking of his kids and the possibility that when the hose breaks again they could possibly wind up in a worse position, (meaning at least this gas bar has a service center) he decided against it.

Josh

"No that's alright I have 2 kids to think about if it was just me I might chance it but I am not alone, waiting until tomorrow will be fine. My problem now is where is my family going to sleep? Is there a bed and breakfast or motel not too far from here where we can stay overnight?"

Gas attendant

"Yes, 5 miles west in the direction your trip is heading on the right hand side of the highway you will find what you are looking for. The garage here is open at 10 in the morning, but the gas bar is open at 8 am."

Josh

“Thanks, I will be back in the morning I guess around 10 am.”

Gas attendant

“I will phone in for the type of hose you need delivered right now. Enjoy your night in our small community and I will see you here tomorrow morning.” The gas attendant then picked up the phone and made the call as per what he said.

Josh returned to his car, disappointed about the time he was trying to make in order to arrive in Vancouver when he wanted to, but still he knew there was time that is why he left when he did, for situations just like this one.

Once in the car Josh said,

Josh

“Well kids I have good news and bad news, which would you like to hear first?”

Robby

“Break it to us gently Dad what’s the bad news?” He was giving his Dad a sarcastic look making fun of him.

Josh

“You just think you’re so funny don’t ya? Making fun of Dad, because we’ve run into a problem, well it is a fixable problem. The bad news is that the car has a cracked hose and is leaking gobs of gas when I fill it and losing gas when I drive it, so we have to get it fixed, the problem with that is we are in a small desolate Saskatchewan community so it can’t be fixed today.”

Tannis

“So are we like going to have to sleep in the car or something Dad?”

Josh

“No honey of course not, the gas attendant told me where to find a motel a few miles up the road in the direction our trip is heading.”

Robby

“Well I hope so because we just came from the other way and there wasn’t any place to stay back that way.”

Josh

“O.k. kids seat belts,” Everyone buckled in and Josh started the car and drove in the direction he was told. It felt like forever but in reality it probably was only about 5 miles, there on the right side of the highway was a motel with a sign so old that it was no longer legible, so he dubbed it the no name motel. But the room available light was on, so to his relief he new his house hold would have beds to sleep in tonight and a place to shower. He parked the car and everyone climbed out.

Inside the motel there was an older gentlemen chain smoking himself to death and watching something on this little old TV.

Josh

“Hello sir, the sign outside said you have a room available?”

Motel attendant

“Why yes indeed we do, I am guessing from the looks of your lot you will be needing a room with 2 double beds in it?”

Josh

“Yes, you guessed right.” Josh pulled out his wallet and removed his credit card from it preparing to fill out the guest form and pay.

Motel attendant

‘Here’s the paperwork, just fill in what you are comfortable with and sign at the bottom. It says there that check out time is 11am but we are not that busy around here, so you don’t have to rush out in the morning, I won’t charge you for a 2nd day.’”

Josh

“Thanks, I have a cracked hose on my car attached to the gas tank, and the soonest the part will be here is tomorrow, the gas bar doesn’t open till 10 am. So I was hoping to be able to go and deal with that and then come back for whatever stuff we leave in the room before continuing on with our trip.” Josh filled out the paperwork, the attendant ran his credit card and it was fine so he told him he wouldn’t have to pay until tomorrow and gave him his room keys. Josh turned to his kids and said,

Josh

“Let’s go guys, we can park the car in front of our room and take out of the car what we want for the night. And based on how early it is in the day, we still have time to pack up and go for a nice hike to see what we can discover?”

Robby

“Well we won’t be discovering any FISHING around here we’ll say that much for Saskatchewan.” He starts laughing and so does his sister.

Josh

“Boy you’re just the one with the funny bone today aren’t ya?”

Robby

“Well I try!” He said smiling. The lot of them got back in the car and Josh drove to unit number 14 and parked right out front. Once again everyone climbed out of the car, Josh popped the trunk of the car before closing his door. While the kids ran to the back of the car for the stuff they wanted he went and opened the door. Taking one whiff of the room you could smell the fact that nobody has stayed in this room for a while.

Josh

“Well kids the door is going to have to remain open for a little while it’s a pretty old smell in there. While you guys get settled in I am going to ask the motel owner if he has some air spray or plug in and what kind of things there are for us to do around here. I won’t be long just stay in the room and figure out which bed you guys want to share.”

Robby

“O.k. Dad, we got it covered, just unpack the basics for the night and wait for your return.”

Josh

“Yes and remember to close the trunk when you are finished I will get my stuff out when I come back.”

Robby

“Why we’d never forget to do a thing like that, we’re kids we remember everything.”

Josh laughing,

Josh

“That’s precisely my point, that’s why I said it!” That said Josh went to the motel sign in office to ask his questions. About 10 minutes later he found his kids sitting on the bed of their choice glued to the television, (well we know even cable reaches the middle of nowhere, he thought to himself.)

Josh

“Knock, knock are you 2 still on planet earth or has that television stole you guys away from me?” They both look over at him to acknowledge his return looking at their Dad they could see him holding a can of air spray and some tourist pamphlets.

Josh

“I have accomplished the mission,” he said proudly holding up all the things he had in his hands.

Josh

“Who wants to have the fun job of spraying everywhere, including the bathroom?” His daughter put up her hand.

Josh

“O.k. here catch,” he did an under toss and the can flew lightly in her direction and she caught it perfectly.

Tannis

“Maybe I missed my calling in life, maybe I should be a catcher on a baseball team?” They both laughed.

Josh

“Yes, very nice catch sweetheart, and who knows maybe you are still young enough to chase that baseball dream?” He wondered how it is sometimes that kids today came across or behaved rather like they were so much older than they were, like their lives were over already or something when life is clearly only just beginning for them? He went and sat on his bed and started fumbling through the flyer’s he was given to see if he could find something they could all go and do so that his kids wouldn’t be stuck to the television for the rest of the day.

Josh

“Well there is a place not too far from here where we can go have a picnic or bbq there’s enough stuff in the trunk for us to go on a hike of this sort and I have the map so we won’t have to worry about getting lost. I most certainly don’t want you 2 vegetating in front of the TV when it’s still so early in the day.”

Tannis

“Agreed Dad, what we’re watching is a re-run anyway.” She got off the bed and went over to her Dad to look at the map he had. After that they both went to the car and got what they’d need from the trunk. When they were done and ready to go, it took the two of them to get Robby away from the television. But once they got him outside the motel room and the door was closed he finally came back to the land of the living.

Josh

“Well Tannis do you think your brother is going to be able to keep up with us?” Josh said with laughter.

Tannis

“This is Robby were talking about, when is he ever fast about doing anything, except calling shot gun for the front seat in the car?”

Josh gave one back pack to each of his kids to carry, and took each by their hand, together they started walking toward their destination. He had the map partly sticking out on his front pocket so he could easily access it should he be in doubt on their walk as to where it is they were going.

Josh

“O.k. kids let’s go have some fun and eat some good food.” These were Josh’s last words before they set off into the unknown smiling and walking hand in hand together.

End Scene!

Back in Vancouver in an earlier time zone on the same day ...

After explaining what took place over the phone between Joe Fox and herself Gwen and Greg had both agreed that it wouldn’t hurt to let Joe and his girlfriend come to the wedding, but they would likely be standing on their feet to watch the whole ceremony, since they only ordered enough chairs for all those guests with invitations. Greg thought the idea that some big shot from New York with a mega book store wanting to write a book about their wedding was an absolute joke, but on the off chance that this guy whoever he was could pull it off and it could earn them some money in the not too distant future he didn’t think there would be any harm in letting him come to the wedding and do his thing. If it worked great if it didn’t it didn’t cost them anything right?

Gwen

“Did you want to phone the guy or did you want me to do it?”

Greg

“Well it doesn’t really matter to me, but if you were the one last on the phone with him it would seem logical that you should be the one to continue the correspondence don’t ya think?”

Gwen

“Alright I will phone him,” She went to the table where she put the paper down the other day with Joe’s number on it and picked it up and walked over to where the cordless was sitting, grabbed it and proceeded to call the number.

Ring, Ring,
Ring, Ring,

Kathleen answered...

Kathleen

“Hello?”

Gwen

“Hello, this is Gwen I spoke with Joe a few days ago he mentioned wanting to write a book about my wedding and I’m calling to give my reply.”

Kathleen

“Yes Joe is rather excited about the project, did you want to speak with him or is talking to me alright?”

Gwen

“No talking to you will be fine my fiancée has agreed to give Joe a shot at this whole wedding book idea. So together we decided that in order for him to do this project it would involve the obvious, that being an invitation to the wedding. Now we have no more formal invitations to give out, nor do

we have any extra seats. So in short the 2 of you are welcome to attend but you will have to bring your own folding chairs or stand for the ceremony.”

Kathleen

“Well that’s awfully nice of you to say yes to the book and allow us to come to your wedding, and you need not worry about a seating arrangement we have strong legs I’m certain he and I can survive standing through the ceremony, if Joe doesn’t want to buy any foldable chairs. He will be so excited to hear the good news.”

Gwen

“One other thing before we end this call.”

Kathleen

“Yes what is it?”

Gwen

“He’s allowed to bring a camera to take pictures, but not some big crew of TV people or camcorder sort of deal. It’s not necessary for a simple book project and would ruin the ambiance of the environment.”

Kathleen

“Absolutely, Joe would never do anything like that without discussing it first. So if he never mentioned anything like that then you don’t have to worry it’s not in his plans.” Gwen told Kathleen where in the park the wedding would be taking place and on what day and at what time, and welcomed them to come a bit early if they wished, to look at everything before anything gets touched if that would help Joe and this project he has planned. The call came to an end, and after Kathleen hung up the phone she immediately went and told Joe the good news.

Kathleen

“Joe do you really think it’s a good idea for us to go to this thing? I mean we are complete strangers and she still doesn’t know what we did? We could kind of call us worms in this situation and I am not liking that much.”

Joe

“We are not worms, and after she is married if nothing goes wrong we can tell her everything then, because we will be free of there being any risk’s that there will be any problems because the wedding will be over.”

Kathleen

“O.k. Joe if you think so!”

Joe

“When’s the last time you’ve been to a wedding anyway? Besides we are on vacation, and going to a wedding while on vacation just isn’t something we should pass up as vacationers.”

Kathleen

“It’s been so long since I’ve been to a wedding it feels like I’ve never been to one at all almost. I have to admit weddings are wonderful things to watch, and this one will be particularly beautiful because of where it is. And I’d love to see how she’s decorated, what her fashion taste is like. I’m betting it’s exquisite. O.k. you’ve convinced me, to take our chances with this and go. But you PROMISE ME JOE, that afterward when we are in the clear we tell her about the letters?”

Joe

“I promise sweetheart it’s the only decent and right thing to do. She’s probably going crazy trying to figure out where those letters are and rather

than rock the boat with her soon to be husband, probably has chosen to not say a thing about it to him.”

Kathleen

“Yes I bet she’d love to know the answer to what happened, if they haven’t appeared to her by now, as I am certain she has probably quietly looked for them around preparing for this wedding!”

Joe

“Ok so it’s settled, now we need to go shopping for a card and gift. Are you busy right now?” Joe smiled.

Kathleen ignoring that he actually asked the question just replied with...

Kathleen

“We can bring Brinkley along with us to go shopping he’d love to see downtown, all the people, garbage to smell, stores, and food.”

Joe

“I wouldn’t have thought to leave him home, he’s my best-friend next to you that is of course honey.” Joe walked over and kissed Kathleen on the cheek. Then he went off calling for Brinkley and looking for his leash.

End Scene!

The next day back in Saskatchewan

Robby

“Did you hear that? Hello Dad, Tannis did you hear that or am I losing my mind?”

Tannis barely alive mumbles

Tannis

“What, what did you hear?”

Robby

“I could swear, I heard a ROOSTER CROW... either that or I’m losing my mind?”

Tannis

“Well we know you’re crazy already but we are in farm country so it is probable there is a rooster not that far off. Can I go back to sleep now if that was all you wanted to say?”

Robby

“Yes, go back to sleep, I’m too excited to sleep I will just watch TV with the volume on low.” Robby scoots to the end of the bed propping his pillow under him with the remote already in his hand he turned the TV on and immediately turned down the volume so not to disturb the other 2 sleepy heads in the room.

Everyone was ready to go back to the gas bar by 9:45 that morning Josh thought, ‘good time.’

Josh

“Everyone in the car, by the time I drive us there we should just be arriving around the time the shop opens. And while the car is being fixed we can eat at the restaurant there.”

Robby

“Great because I’m starving, I’ve been up since 6:30 to noisy for me to sleep.”

Tannis

“You mean the sound of nature is too noisy for you? That’s ridiculous, it’s beautiful, beats listening to sirens and trains and cars and dogs barking throughout the night.”

Josh

“Well I guess your brother just isn’t a country kid, Outside being the typical liking all sorts of creepy bugs sort of things kind of boy?”

Tannis

“You can say that again Dad, well I for one find being in this much solitude and country refreshing.” By the time everyone was finished talking they were all buckled into their seats, and Josh drove back 5 miles east awaiting the relief of being able to move forward on this trip.

It was 10:05 am when they pulled into the gas bar, and the attendant was the same one as the night before, he smiled at Josh acknowledging that he recognized him when he came in the store.

Gas attendant

“Well the part IS definitely on its way, but it is NOT HERE YET... But it should be arriving anytime. I know that’s not what you wanted to hear it’s never what the customer wants to hear when these kinds of things happen in the middle of nowhere when you’re trying to get somewhere.” He chuckled politely.

Josh

“I was kind of expecting that there would be a possibility that the part wasn’t in yet, but I wanted to be sure my car was IN THE SHOP so that it would get priority for when it does arrive. My Plan was to go sit in the restaurant and have a long breakfast with my kids.”

Gas attendant

“Good plan, by the time you finish eating, either the part will be here and installed or at the very least just finally arriving. Either way there will be some form of progress by then. Please enjoy our hospitality and I hope you enjoy your meal.”

Josh

“Thanks, I plan too I am not going to let a little thing like a cracked hose get me down too much. I am fortunate a cracked hose isn’t all that expensive to replace it’s the waiting time that hurts the wallet, motel fees, meals, etc.. I am just lucky it wasn’t a muffler or transmission problem, because THAT would have been problem. O.k. so what do you want me to do with my car?”

Gas attendant

“Well if you are comfortable with it, you can just give me the key and I will drive it into the garage and put it up on the hoist before another customer comes along, since you are the first one to arrive this morning.”

Josh

“I absolutely do not have a problem with that it’s not like I am driving a Bugatti or something? He laughs as he pulls his car key off his key ring and gives it to the gas attendant.”

Gas attendant

“Now go sit down and relax and leave the job to us.”

Josh went outside and waved his kids in, they were still in the car, which he couldn't understand. Kids being kids are known for having ants in their pants so by now he assumed they would have joined him. Anyway it did not take them long to exit the car and scurry over to the door.

Tannis

“Is it time to eat yet? Because my stomach is seriously growling now that I'm fully awake.”

Robby

“What about the car is the part here? Will it take long?”

Josh

“Let's go inside, sit down and have breakfast/lunch to talk about it. I will explain everything then.”

Tannis

“I think that's called brunch Dad?” She laughed at him for thinking he was trying to be funny..

Josh

“No, No I'm pretty sure I meant what I said let's go have Breakfast and Lunch. Because it might be that long before we are finally driving away from here.” He laughed and cleared his throat in a matter of fact way and opened the door to the building and watched them enter one by one before he followed. About an hour later the attendant came to where they

were sitting and told Josh the good news that the part had arrived and it is the right fit.

Gas attendant

“I will come back here when the work is done, there are only 2 of us working the garage and we have about 4 vehicles to work on and the gas station to run. But don’t you worry; your car is top priority.”

Josh

“Thank-you for coming to let me know, when you’re done I’m certain the three of us (he looked at his kids) will still be here, working on eating our lunch.”

Gas attendant

“Right then, enjoy your time at our establishment and I will have you back on the road before you know it.” The Gas attendant left quickly after saying that to go tend to his work, Josh and his kids went back to slowly ordering everything on the menu. At this point his 2 kids were working on monster size milkshakes; he figured that should keep them busy for awhile. This was an old fashioned establishment the kind that served the shakes with the big TIN canisters with the extra in it to pour into the large glasses when they’ve drank enough. Josh could not remember the last time he was in a restaurant that did that? It was nice, and watching his children having a great time trying to meet the challenge of drinking it all gave him great pleasure.

* * * * *

Josh

“Well it’s just a little after 2:30 in the afternoon that’s not so bad is it? We can still get a lot of driving in while the sun is up, so you guys can still see what’s around you. Now before I drive away has everyone gone to the bathroom? “

His kids replied in laughter...

“Yes!”

Josh

“O.k. so you’re both sure you don’t have to go, you’re absolutely certain? And you’re both full right? You are not hungry or thirsty for anything before I drive away?”

Robby looking at his sister answered their Dad for both of them he belched this big tremendous burp came roaring out of him and everyone started laughing...

Robby

“You guys might want to open your windows!”

Tannis

“You satisfied now Dad? It’s safe for you to drive we won’t bug you for anything that’s a promise.”

Josh

“O.k. then on our mark, get set, away we go.” He started the car and off they went heading west, not sure how far he’d get trying to make up for lost time!

End Scene!

Joe and Kathleen’s Itinerary!

Kathleen holding the list in her hand said,

Kathleen

“We are running out of time with the wedding coming up to achieve the goal of doing everything on our list but we did manage to do quite a bit of it. Here are the choices remaining of the things we can still do before returning to New York let me know what interests you the most of what’s left on the list?”

Joe

“O.k. go ahead I’m listening!”

Kathleen

“Well we haven’t gone to experience what it’s like to try and eat one of those famous Robson BLVD Foot long hotdogs, I’m really up for that challenge, I can just imagine how stuffed I’d be by the time I ate the whole thing. We also haven’t been on the Vancouver Trolley... Joe interrupts

Joe

“Yeah We’ve seen that going around town a few times now, that looks like fun, what else?”

Kathleen

“We haven’t been over to North Vancouver at all, and I hear that it’s quite beautiful over there, a little world of its own the boat ride is about 15-20 minutes long. Then there is the Vancouver Aquarium and Science World also on our list as part of the choices we have to choose from.”

Joe

“Well I really want to try a FOOT Long Hot Dog I don’t think I have ever heard of a restaurant that serves foot long hot dogs my entire life living in New York City, how about you?”

Kathleen

“Yeah I’m game for that, and no I’ve never seen a restaurant serve those anywhere. I have heard of supersize corndogs but I am not entirely sure that’s the same thing?”

Joe

“No I wouldn’t think it is, especially once you have all the condiments of your choice stacked across a foot long hot dog. I’ve never had one of those supersize corndogs either come to think of it. I stopped going to fairs years ago.”

Kathleen

“Remind me to make sure we go to one when we get home. I would love to see how your stomach handles rides at your age now, and I’ll have to be sure to bring a camera with us!”

Joe

“Hey you never know I might surprise you!” They both laugh.

Kathleen

“I’d like to see the Vancouver Aquarium since we didn’t get the experience of Sea World learning that it was closed down some years ago, and I was hoping being the big kid that I am at heart to get the chance to go to Science World also.”

Joe

“Well we could probably get all of that done on the same day if we time everything right, and take buses instead of walking, or we can do a coin toss between the two, your choice?”

Kathleen

“I don’t think we need a coin toss Joe, if we start at Science World right when it opens at 9 or 10 am whatever time it opens, we would probably be done by lunch, we could then walk over to Robson Blvd where the Foot Long Hot Dog and all its trimmings awaits us, since it’s not far from where we start. After that we just hop a bus going towards the park and ask the driver where we transfer and what we transfer too. Seeing the Vancouver Aquarium and Stanley Park will probably be enough to take up the rest of our afternoon!”

Joe

“Hey you’re getting to know this place pretty good, sounds like you have it all worked out, guess I won’t be needing this?” He show’s her the coin he had in his hand that he had prepared to toss to make the decision for them, she smiled and nodded her head and then he put it back in his pocket.

As they continued on in conversation the phone rings...

Ring, Ring,
Ring, Ring,

Ring, Ring,

Joe was closest to the phone so he answered it...

Joe

“Hello?”

Greg

“Hello Mr. Fox? This is Greg, Gwen’s Fiancée!”

Joe

“Oh yes, how are the wedding plans coming along?”

Greg

“Well I’ve just returned from my final suit fitting with my brother and cousin and that went as smooth as one could hope. I’ve only been home about 15 minutes or so. Since Gwen last phoned there we both discussed something else pertaining to our wedding, and whether or not to include you and your girlfriend.”

Joe

“Oh and what would that be?”

Greg

“Our wedding rehearsal, I told Gwen that I didn’t have a problem with the two of you coming to the rehearsal and that if you wanted to use a camera to record anything respecting this book you’d like to write that would be the time to do it. Now I know you are on vacation and probably have plans of your own, but I thought I’d phone you and make the offer. The invitation to come is completely up to you?”

Joe

“Thank-you very much for the invitation to your rehearsal, I will have to discuss it with my girlfriend first and see how that fits into our schedule and then get back to you. But before I can do that I need to know when the rehearsal is and what time?”

Greg

“The day after tomorrow at 1:00 O’clock almost everyone with invitations will be there for the practice run to figure out where everybody sits etc...

With people of all ages the seating plan for a wedding is relatively important believe it or not.” Greg laughed.

Joe

“Oh yes I can certainly see that, do you have flower girls or a ring bearer I’m just curious to know if you don’t mind me asking?”

Greg

“No I don’t mind at all, we actually are fortunate enough to have both, the ring bearer is from my side of the family and the flower girls are related to Gwen’s, and they are all just old enough to understand their job and get it just right.”

Joe

“Well then the practice run could only help make things better, children love that sort of thing and this way they get to do it twice coming to understand that their job is a very important one.”

Greg

“Yes indeed, well you talk it over with your Girlfriend and Gwen and I will wait for your call back, letting us know whether or not to expect you at the dress rehearsal. Have a nice day Mr. Fox.”

Joe

“You too Greg and I will get back to you as soon as I can.” The call ended Joe hung up.

Kathleen

“Well I heard it was something to do with a dress rehearsal?”

Joe

“Yes Gwen and Greg’s wedding, he thought inviting us to the rehearsal would be a good idea allowing me an opportunity to get any kind of video footage I might want for the book I am now writing about their English Bay Wedding. But since we only have so many days left in our own vacation, and we don’t really know them all that well, I am not so sure I want to go to the dress rehearsal. I think I would feel a bit uncomfortable in front of all the people they know, especially under OUR KIND of circumstances!”

Kathleen

“Wouldn’t this be a two person decision? It sounds like you’ve gone and made the decision for the both of us already!”

Joe

“Well you can still go, if you’d like I wouldn’t stop you from doing anything you want to do. It’s the day after tomorrow at 1 O’clock.”

Kathleen

“Now why would I want to go to a wedding rehearsal with a bunch of people I don’t know without you? And what if something disastrous happened while I was there alone? Forget it, if you’re not going then I won’t go either.”

Joe

“O.k. Are you sure about that? I don’t want this to ruin the rest of our vacation together?”

Kathleen

“No, No I am fine with only going to the real wedding I do want to finish trying to have as much of a normal time with you as possible for the remainder of our holiday also.”

Joe

“O.k. great, I will phone them back after dinner to let them know, now what were we discussing before the phone rang?”

Kathleen

“Which day to finish doing the things on our Itinerary, that’s what we were discussing.”

Joe

“Oh right, how funny ha, ha, how could I forget that since I was thinking the day after tomorrow which is when their wedding rehearsal is because I had something else planned for us to do tomorrow.”

Kathleen

“A surprise? I like surprises!”

Joe

“Yes I know you do dear, but now I am wondering if that idea can wait and we should switch to doing this trip tomorrow because the sun is supposed to be back out and we want to go while the going is good?”

Kathleen

“Is the other thing an indoor surprise?”

Joe

“Yes it is. And it’s something I have never done before, nor likely have you and I can only hope you will have as good a time with me as I know I will with you.”

Kathleen

“O.k. stop talking about it before I tickle you to death for the answer because of how much I’m dying to know. Isn’t that the best part of a surprise?”

Joe

“Well, actually the SURPRISE should be the best part of it all!”

Kathleen changing the subject confirming their plans says...

Kathleen

“So it’s settled then tomorrow we tackle our itinerary of things to do, and the day after that you surprise me?”

Joe

“Yes, sounds perfect. But in order for things to work out just like that I have a phone call to make, a private one!” He said the last part firmly to hint at her not to listen in, and then he went to his temporary office to make that call. While in the office he also phoned Greg and Gwen back explaining how they wouldn’t be able to make it for the dress rehearsal but that they would be at the real one for sure, before heading back to their real lives in New York City.

Kathleen

“Come on Brinkley let’s go play ball before Mommy tries listening in on Daddy’s phone call!” Brinkley who was in front of her looking at the ball in her hand woofed and the two of them then went outside in the backyard.

End Scene!

Wedding Rehearsal day....

It's now the Wednesday before the big event, and everyone who could make it, was there. Trying to figure out where everyone would be sitting when there wasn't actually any chairs was a bit difficult but somehow with a little patience and working through the commotion everyone found there place for the big day. The children showing as much patience as they could muster finally snapped and started tugging at Gwen and Greg asking if it was time for them to walk down the aisle yet? Gwen laughed and took them all to their places and said,

Gwen

"Now Stay here, and wait for the signal, you girls know to follow me right? After that the minister has to give his talk, but when he looks at you and nods his head then you will know it's time. She said to little Justin the ring bearer, then she finished with, Does everyone understand?"

All the kids shook their heads yes. The ring bearer was very excited holding the ring pillow, but was sad and said,

Justin

"How come I can't practice this with the rings on the pillow to make sure I have perfect balance so I don't drop them at the real wedding?"

Gwen

"Well the rings are very expensive and important, and the jewelry maker wants to be sure they are absolutely perfect for the real day, so the rings are not here today, they are with him still. But I am not worried as long as you carry that ring pillow right today I am certain you will do fine on my real wedding day; Thank-you for being such an important part of my special day."

Justin

“No Problem, I like my job, I am going to remember this job always, and will put it on my resume one day when I am older.”

Gwen

“I am glad you will remember this experience and I am certain you will get whatever job you apply for with this experience on your resume.” With that Gwen left to go take her place.

The music was started and on q she was walked down the aisle with her Dad, while her mom and other family were in the front row watching. Her parents still lived in Winnipeg but being retired came to Vancouver a week and a half early to have a bit of a vacation of their own on top of watching their daughter finally get married.

It took about 4 minutes to walk to Greg, with the flower girls behind her, but there she was finally standing in front of him beaming from ear to ear realizing she had finally gotten over her fear of commitment, (well at least that’s what she was telling herself) standing there looking at him. The minister gave a short talk since it was after all only a rehearsal, but when it was time he nodded his head and the ring bearer finally got his chance to walk the aisle. The young boy took a deep breath and walked very carefully holding the pillow just right until he got to where he knew he needed to stand. He didn’t trip everything went perfect. All the guests were smiling.

* * * * *

Now somewhere across town on this same day, were Joe and Kathleen busy doing something altogether different than what was happening in English Bay. Just before getting off the bus at the stop he was instructed to get off at when he phoned the transit people he pulled a blind fold out of his pocket and turned to Kathleen and said...

Joe

“Now Kathleen dear so as to not spoil the whole surprise I have come prepared, you are going to have to trust me from here to get you to our final destination in one piece. It will only be a few minutes and I promise I won’t let go.”

Kathleen

“You want to put a blind fold on me, on a bus in the middle of the day in front of everyone on the bus with us? Great now what will they all be thinking?”

Joe laughing say’s

Joe

“Let them think what they want to think. Now turn your head away from me.”

Kathleen does what she’s asked saying,

Kathleen

“Careful not to cover my nose I’d still like to breathe through this.” She giggled.

Once the blind fold was tied in place, Joe looked for the building and pulled the bell for the next stop when he saw how close they were. Once the bus stopped Joe got up and said...

Joe

“Now put out your hands Kathleen and let’s go.”

Kathleen put her hands straight out and Joe grabbed onto them and she stood up. He led her off the bus and walked her to the set of lights where

they waited to cross. Kathleen could hear the sound telling them when it was time to start walking... Beep, Beep, Beep, the walk sign went. Joe holding her hand firmly all the way across the street where he said,

Joe

“O.k. there is a curb two steps in front of you, so count two and step up.”

Kathleen took one step, put her foot out and felt for the curb and took her 2nd step feeling how far away it was. This time she knew she was right in front of it and took a step up and found herself now safely back on the sidewalk only on the right side of the street toward where they were going.

Kathleen

“This is so exciting I just can’t wait to see what you came up with that you needed to blind fold me for it?”

Joe

“Just wait and see, you won’t be disappointed I know I was surprised when I learned about it.” He turned her to face the right direction and once again got a good grip on his girlfriend’s hand and started walking over to the building to do something he has spent his entire life never ever thinking he could do. He wasn’t sure why, he thought maybe it was just some kind of subconscious thing having to do with the season’s. Anyway once to their destination he opened the door and guided Kathleen inside where she said..

Kathleen

“Brrr why it’s quite chilly in here compared to the summer heat out there that you’ve just caused us to escape from.”

Joe walked her a little further to where she would need to sit down for him to do the rest; once she was on the bench he took off her blindfold and said...

Joe

“Surprise!!”

Kathleen looked around and saw people putting on ice skates, and looked in front of her and saw the largest indoor public skating rink she’s ever seen in her entire life. But then again she hadn’t exactly been inside all that many ice rinks in her life either. She looked up at Joe and smiled... He looked at her and replied...

Joe

“Well I wanted to do something special with you here in a country known for its cold weather and beautiful winters with lots of snow to make up for not knowing when or if we will ever get to come to Canada to witness a winter of there’s this was the idea I got from someone I heard talking about their summer skate schedule and which rinks were still opened in the summer time for public skating and not just lessons of some kind. And I asked some questions and was informed that this location was the biggest one in all of Vancouver and that the temperature and ice were always perfect. And I knew that I had to bring you here to make up for no sleigh rides or snow covered Xmas trees.”

Kathleen

“This was a wonderful idea Joe, I will cherish this afternoon for the rest of our lives!” Joe told her to stay sitting and went and paid for the skates and skate socks and came back. When he returned he then proceeded to put them on and do up Kathleen’s skates first.

Joe

“Are they tight enough?” He asked.

Kathleen

“They are Perfect! Now I will just wait for you to do yours.” She said.

Joe made sure he did his up just right he wasn't the best skater but new that how secure the skates around ones ankles were played a large part in how comfortably a person could skate. Once he was happy with his footing he turned and helped Kathleen get up on her feet. Together they wobbled their way to the gate that took them out onto the ice.

Kathleen

"I have never seen an indoor ice rink so big I can't believe this place, look at all the room and the size of the rink floor we don't have to worry about anyone bumping into each other on here."

Joe

"Yes it is pretty large isn't it? Maybe I should build one this big in the state of New York somewhere, wonder how many people in the U.S. would come to the rink just to skate there?"

Kathleen

"Probably a lot that doesn't actually sound like all that bad an idea, and well it would give me something to do, now that I don't have a little shop around the corner to run. I could learn to sharpen skates instead." They both laughed and got their footing on the ice and began to move in slow motion around the rink, which at the speed they were going could take them 5 to 10 minutes to get around. But after a couple of strokes the two of them began to pick up speed. There was wonderful skate music played on the speakers over them, and it sure beat the hot air of the summer that was happening outside.

Once they got to the middle of the rink Joe stopped skating and told Kathleen to stop too, where he had her stand in front of him, where he reached into his pocket and while doing that told her to close her eyes. She did. After Joe put his hand with the important item in it over Kathleen's head he told her to open her eyes. Kathleen opened them up and followed his arm up, where she could see mistletoe hanging from his fingers. She looked back at him flushed, feeling the moment. Wasting no time to jump

on that moment Joe Fox leaned forward making sure they were both under it tipped her head up and kissed his girl! They spent the afternoon having the greatest winter experience in the summer time either of them have ever had!

End Scene!

Now in Alberta....

So far the new hose line for the gas tank was holding out, Josh could see the sign telling him how many miles to go before they'd finally be in Calgary. He wasn't able to reach Alberta as quickly as he had planned they stopped a second time in Saskatchewan to rest, he never realized how big that province was it takes more than a day to drive across it. But as the saying goes you learn something new every day!

Josh

"O.k. you two we are almost in Calgary, we will stop here and have a great time I promise..." and right when he said those words a sound went... BOOM on the right side of his car, and then suddenly the car was moving with a thud, thud, thud, and his kids started laughing.

Tannis

"AHH DAD, I'm fairly certain you just blew a tire, still think we're gonna have a good time in Calgary?"

Robby was laughing so hard, he was crying... but when he managed to regain his composure he said,

Robby

"At this rate we will wind up living in some town between Calgary and the border of Vancouver, Dad will have to get a job to earn enough money for us to finish this trip. But at this rate there is no way we are going to reach

Vancouver in this car. I wonder what will be next, the alternator?" He went back to laughing.

While they were laughing Josh managed to slow the car down and safely pull it off the highway, then he shut it off and told his kids to stay inside the car while he went to look at the damage. Watching their Dad walk to the right side of the car they rolled down the window so they could talk to him.

Josh standing at the blow out took a deep breath over this road trip they were having...

Josh

"Well the rim looks fine, it doesn't look like I will have to change that, so that saves your Dad a few dollars, only needing to replace a tire."

Robby yelled out...

"Do you have CAA Dad, or do you have to pay for the tow too?" He went back to laughing. And said to his sister that he didn't think Dad was going to have enough money to get them to Vancouver.

Josh

"I heard that Robby, I may not be a millionaire, but your Dad does alright for himself, so it might set me back a few more dollars but we'll make it to Vancouver alright." On that note he pulled out his wallet and looked through it to find his CAA card to see if it was still valid. He's let it slip now and again because he's never needed it until now.

Josh

"Well we're in luck kids my CAA card is good for another whopping 60 days." He started laughing at himself.

Tannis

“Well that’s definitely calling it close enough to me. Now the question is does your cell phone work out here?” She put her head back in the window shaking it wondering how long they’d be sitting there before they’d be out of THIS mess?

Josh walked back to the driver side of the car opened the door leaned inside and started searching for his phone his daughter asked a good question. Would it work out here? Finding it he closes his car door and goes back to the safety of the flat tire side of the road and tries to use it. He knew Telus was Canada wide, but wasn’t sure about any of the other cell phone providers. He turned his phone on, tried dialing the CAA 800 number got nothing, dead air.

Josh

“Well I guess when I get home Tannis, Dad is switching his cell phone company to Telus because I am not getting any service from MTS out here.”

Tannis

“Well I guess it just goes to show that you are not the type of person to travel much to be an MTS customer. I’m only 7 yrs old and I already know that I will always be a Telus customer because I plan to travel lots especially after witnessing how much adventure there is to be had.” She was poking fun at her Dad’s dilemma as she pulled her head back in the car.

Realizing there was nothing he could do standing there staring at his tire, went back to the driver’s side of the car and got in. Everyone sat quietly for what felt like forever, when suddenly after watching loads of traffic pass them by a car finally came to a slow stop and pulled in, in front of them.

Robby

“We might get out of this sometime today after all!”

Josh

“Very funny Robby this is no time for your sarcasm, I will deal with you later.” He shook his head and went out to meet the driver to explain his dilemma.

Other motorist

“So your phone doesn’t work this far west huh? You’d think it would but just charge you roaming fees?”

Josh

“Yeah you’d think. Anyway I have CAA I just need the 800 number phoned and the location of where I am at told to them. If you could help me with both of those things, I might still be able to get into the city before the sun goes down.” They both laugh for knowing how long people with flat tires have been known to sit on the sides of roads. When you are always glad it isn’t you sitting there.

Other motorist

“Sure I can do that for you, since I live here I can tell them where you are because I know, that’s probably extremely useful to you, since you have clearly expressed not knowing where you are.”

Josh

“Well I know I am on highway number 1 heading west! 40 kms out of Calgary because that’s what the sign on the side of the road said as I passed it just before my tire blew!”

Other motorist

“Yeah I guess in a worst case scenario that would have to do, but this area we are standing in has a name and that helps CAA a lot more. Hang on and let me call them, can I have your card?”

Josh hands the local motorist his card saying..

Josh

“Oh yeah I guess that would help!”

Other motorist

“Yeah I guess it does help.” The helpful motorist got on his cell phone and waited on hold until someone answered, and then gave the CAA info, and location, before handing the phone over to Josh who finished dealing with the person from CAA on the other end for himself. The call lasted about 10 minutes then they hung up.

Josh

“You have saved my day, thank-you very much. If you hadn’t stopped who knows how long we would have been sitting on the side of the road in the car waiting for a police cruiser or another motorist realizing I have no cell phone service!”

Other motorist

“You are right, today everyone has a cell phone and they are either too busy talking on it to notice who needs to use it... for obvious things like yours or they just assume your phone works.”

Josh

“Yeah that did look like the case for myself today, the assumption that my cell phone worked. Anyway let me shake your hand and say thanks once

again, before you continue on your way.” They shook hands and the ONLY Friendly motorist Josh and his kids believed existed in Alberta that day went back to his car and continued on with his day.

Josh went back to the car and sat in it with his kids, with the windows rolled down and the emergency lights blinking all they could do now was wait!

Tannis

“Dad can we go fish around in the trunk to see what we have left for food, I’m kind of getting hungry... don’t know if it’s from the boredom of just sitting here, or how long it’s been since our last meal... either way my stomach is talking to me.”

Robby

“ME TOO!”

Josh

“O.k. you guys can get out on your side of the car and sit on the safe side of the road, instead of keeping you stuck inside the car waiting for the tow truck, but I will go to the trunk and fish around to see what we have left. We should be doing o.k. still we brought a decent amount of travel food. Anyway I don’t want either of you near the passing vehicles, understood?”

Both his kids agreed to behave and they opened their doors and went and sat someplace safe on the side of the road and stared at the flat tire waiting for their Dad to bring them what he could find. Josh arrived with a couple of handfuls of different products for them to fight over and hoped that would get them through till they got in to town where they could have a proper meal. They all sat together and had an off road picnic of sorts. About 45 minutes passed from the time the call was put in before they all finally saw their rescue driving in to the side to save them. They hollered,

“Hurray, we’re being rescued!” Josh walked over to the driver who was standing outside the front of the truck and told him which side had the

blow out, and the tow driver discussed final destination and took his CAA number and Josh went back to his kids while the car was hoisted.

Tow driver

“It’s going to be a tight fit getting all of you in the truck with me, good thing I have a large cab.” He hollered as he was working on the equipment.

Josh

“Well they aren’t too old to still have sit on my lap if I need to do that, I’m certain we’ll work it out o.k. They are just happy to finally see someone with the power to get us somewhere that might eventually lead to us being able to continue our road adventure.”

Tow driver

“Adventure is right, I’d say. I’m certain we’ll work it out o.k. They look like they are just happy to finally see someone with the power to get you all somewhere that might eventually lead to your ability to continue your road adventure.”

Tow driver

“How far are you guys heading?”

Josh

“All the way to Vancouver, someone I used to date is getting married on Monday so I haven’t much time to get this tire thing worked out if I want to make it to that wedding on time with my kids.”

Tow driver

‘No, I’d say you don’t have much time. Let’s hope the tire shop I take you to has a tire to match your car. Otherwise you are stuck waiting for one to be brought to you from somewhere else or phoning around for yourself to see

who else might have one. The more popular the car the harder it is to find them in stock. They tend to fly out as fast as they come in. And you unfortunately have a rather common car.”

Josh

“Thanks for reminding me of how dull my life is maybe when I get home I should spend my life’s saving on buying a sports car? It may not have room for both my kids but I am sure they’d love it!” Everyone laughed.

About another 20 minutes passed and everyone was in the truck and the car was secured into place and the paper work was all filled out, when the truck finally started moving.

Truck driver

“We’ll be in Calgary before you know it from there you should be o.k. and before long you will be continuing on with your trip and I hope you don’t run into anymore problems and you reach your final destination!”

Josh said thanks, and then turned back toward the window and watched the scenery in silence along with his kids, and thought about the letters Gwen sent and what was going to happen when he got there!

End Scene!

Monday....

This was it, the big day... Alarm clocks were going off everywhere around the same time that morning all over the city of Vancouver. People climbing out of their beds, at home or their hotels moving forward toward the event that brought them all there at this time. Gwen and Greg were finally getting married. Today they would be tying the knot, something they and all their family and friends have been waiting for them to do for years. How exciting to watch two people with their love for each other take the stand of coming together in the being of one in the exchanging of rings and vows.

Greg hadn't seen Gwen since the dress rehearsal, for the sake of tradition, to not see his bride again until they were looking at each other standing across from each other at the altar. True he knew most couples who did this usually plan a longer span apart, but these few days were all everyone's schedules allowed them for the sake of that rehearsal it was the only time they could get everyone together. Yet still he was excited to see what she'd look like when he finally laid his eyes on her later on this very day. In the meantime he was busy getting himself ready, meeting up with his best man and going to pick up the rings, that his very important ring bearer would have the honor of bringing to the altar, something Greg was certain was a job well looked forward too. He left the house to accomplish his tasks for the morning seeing perfect weather and thinking without certainty that today would be the beginning of the rest of his life sharing the rest of his future with a woman who would very shortly be his wife.

Back at the Townhome...

Kathleen

"Are you ready for today?"

Joe

"For being the 2 most stared at people outside of the bride and groom at this wedding today? Sure never better, we're old enough that I think we can handle all the strange looks we're about to get from people wondering who these strangers are and what is there purpose for being here?"

Kathleen

"Joe don't be so sarcastic, maybe everyone will be very friendly, and very receptive to us, and we have a pretty good plause behind why we're there I'd say most people would think it's cool. Someone writing a book about what kind of planning and work it takes to put together an outdoor wedding at English Bay a rather high trafficked, busy spot in Vancouver during the summer. It's not as simple as putting out 250 lawn chairs and telling everyone to sit."

Joe

“No it isn’t you have to contact different offices, and deal with licenses and actual fees, for things like Alcohol being consumed in a public area like this... A lot goes in to planning any good wedding, so I guess really a book could be written just about all of the best ones ever planned and achieved without complications. I just personally feel like it feels like we’re treading on water for how we got around the truth.”

Kathleen

“Don’t worry it’s almost over, then we can come clean about everything and if they both get mad at us and want nothing to do with us, that is something we will have to except and be understanding about. But if their kind and thankful we told them AFTER they were married that too will show how we’ve done what we believed was the right thing.”

Joe

“Yes, soon my conscience will be clear again, I am not very good at this lying bit that is why I became a business man instead of becoming a lawyer.” They both laughed really hard at what need no comment, as they went about getting organized for this afternoon’s event.

Elsewhere in Vancouver...

Gwen was crying on the phone with her Mother, who told her to stay put and that she’d be there shortly. They hung up the phone and Gwen went to the bathroom to look at her face. Her eyes were swollen and red and her face was flush and her cheeks were red. She knew she had to find a way to stop the tears if she were to be ready for this afternoon. She’s come too far along to change her mind now. Greg was essentially everything she ever wanted, everything she could have ever asked for, after giving up her relationship with Josh someone she dared never speak about with Greg. The one man in her life who she passed up being with so she could spread her wings, grow in her career and find herself instead of doing what her

mother did and what many other women have done all too often through the years. They get married, and settle down and start having children as soon as they stop being children themselves, without ever going anywhere, doing or seeing anything.

Gwen thought about the tough decision she had made all those years ago, when Josh had said that he was a simple guy with simple needs, and that all he wanted was a job he loved, a house he could call his own, a wife to support him and children to fill that house with laughter and adventure, she knew that she was still too young to be able to give him that, rarely is it that you see the guy mature faster than the girl, but there it was, and so they parted and it's taken her all these years to find someone new she could bring herself to be with, to have a future with. And to just now finally feel like she might be ready to have children of her own.

After her Mother arrived..

Gwen

“But it's just that I am not certain about what to feel after what happened on the day of the dress rehearsal Mother, how would you feel if that had been you? Would you still be ready to go through with this only so many days later?”

Gwen's Mother

“Well it was probably just nerves on Greg's part, these kinds of events are stressful on soon to be couples and all kinds of things can act as trigger's to cause people to react or act out in ways they don't mean to or even understand sometimes. For all you know he's not even aware that he's done anything to hurt your feelings at all?”

Gwen

“That’s exactly it he left to go stay at the hotel so as to not see me again until today and well he didn’t seem to have a clue about it at all. So I let him go and have been trying to deal with how I’ve felt since on my own.”

Gwen’s Mother

“Well I think once you are there standing in front of him today, all of that will be settled once and for all time. You’ll see when you look at him, it will be like nothing ever happened because all you’ll see is the love he has for you in his eyes and the love you have for him.”

Gwen

“Well I hope you are right, because my dress wasn’t cheap, and I really want the memory of my wearing it to be a wonderful one.” That said they moved forward with everything that needed to be done. It was going to be a long but hopefully successful day one never to be forgotten!

Now somewhere just inside the city limits at a super 8 motel where Josh and his 2 children had safely arrived they were all running around in the room trying to find everything that they needed for the day; each one taking their turn in the bathroom all of them agreeing with how little room they have to work with in there, only slowing them down in reaching their final destination on time.

Josh

“O.k. Are we ready to do this?”

Robby

“You mean crash a wedding with you?” and he laughs at his Dad.

Josh

“Ouch! Did you have to put it like that?”

Tannis

“What else would you like us to call it?”

Josh

“I’m just going to see an old friend, and if she’s as happy as she should be today, then our being here won’t affect her decision. If it does change things then I guess it was a good thing I was a good enough friend to come, after receiving those letters, to save her from making a lifelong mistake. That’s not exactly crashing a wedding!” He said in a statement format. His kids both looked at each other and then look at their Dad and said at the exact same time with matter of fact looks on their faces....

‘Yes it is!’

Tannis

“We’re wedding crashers!” She laughs

Josh

“Well are my partners in crime ready to go? Anyone missing anything?”

Robby

“We’re wearing our outfits, what else is there? Shouldn’t we be asking you this question? Like ahhh where are the letters?”

Tannis

“Yeah where are the letters?”

Josh

“They are right where I left them in the car.”

Tannis

“Well then what are we waiting for, you have no idea where you are driving or how far you have to go, and we need to eat before we get there. I’m sure the catering providing the food for this wedding hasn’t included enough to go around for the guest’s that have been invited never mind 3 un-expected ones. It’s always that way. Everyone always leaves hungry, I don’t like being hungry.”

Robby

“Me either, we are growing kids after all.”

Josh

“Okay then what are we waiting for? Let’s get going, because you are right it will take Dad some time to figure out how to get around this city. Who wants to be the map reader?”

Tannis poking fun at how old he is says...

Tannis

“Should of bought a car with Onstar!”

Robby

“I’ll read the map, since its Tannis’s turn to sit gunshot, gives me something to do in the back seat.”

Josh handed Robby the map he had somehow brought into the room with them when they finally got into town last night. Walking to the door he opened it and took one last look around, making sure everyone’s ties, bows

and clothes had nothing missing. Making sure that though they weren't dressed as if they were invited to the wedding, he made sure everyone brought something decent enough to make an appearance for an event like this in; seeing nobody missing anything he closed the room door and they headed for the car.

End Scene!

English Bay...

Everything was set up right on time for when the first guests started to arrive. The tables with all the food from the catering service looked great, and so did the wedding cake. Greg was looking forward to cutting into that with Gwen, after 3 years the love of his life will finally be his wife and that moment will solidify it.

Greg went to sit with his parents...

Greg

"Well Mom, Dad what do you think of your son now? Finally reaching the moment you've both been waiting for since I first introduced her to you?"

Greg's Mother smiling said...

"Well its better late than never I say!"

Greg's Dad

"It's ok to be a late bloomer it helps to guarantee that you're sure this step your taking isn't a mistake."

Greg

"Alright have it your way rub my age into it if it makes you feel better."

Greg's Dad

"Son you know we're proud of you she's a wonderful catch for the right guy, and we are proud to be here to watch you take this step in your life." His parents both hugged him, afterward they all looked around and saw more guests were arriving and all of them realized they had some greeting to do.

When Joe and Kathleen arrived it was around 12:30, not wanting to show up late or too early they went with arriving in between. They noticed the groom busy with other guests Kathleen looking around said...

Kathleen

"Wonder where the bride is?"

Joe

"Don't know, but she's definitely not within eyes view."

Kathleen

"You have the camera let's go look at the tables with the food and cake on it and take some pictures before something gets moved and too many people are standing around it and we can't get any good shots."

Joe

"Yes good idea." Looking in the direction of the display he goes on...

"Sure looks beautiful doesn't it?"

Kathleen

"Yes, it sure does!" Kathleen got quiet thinking the obvious to herself, about what she'd like at her wedding if such a day should ever finally arrive?

Joe

“Okay I want some pictures of you dressed so beautiful so don’t be shy get in there. Then I will take shots of the tables and its displays.”

It took Greg about 10 minutes after they arrived for him to finally be freed up from talking with other guests to notice that Joe and Kathleen had indeed arrived, he walked over to them right away.

Greg

“I see you guys haven’t wasted any time, getting your work done while others arrive?”

Joe

“Yes, we are just finishing up. I wanted to be sure I got good shots before anything was tampered with or it became too crowded to get quality shots.”

Kathleen

“It is quite a lovely display I should hope to be so fortunate myself one day.” She said out loud giving away her thoughts from just moments earlier.

Greg

“Thank-you I am glad you like it, Gwen worked really hard on what she wanted and how she wanted it.”

Kathleen

“Where is the bride, we haven’t seen her hiding anywhere?”

Greg

“Well I haven’t seen her since the day of the dress rehearsal for tradition sake to give some excitement to the day she is with her Mother waiting the grand entry. For it would be hard to hide her out here somewhere without me seeing her. If all goes to plan she will be walking down the aisle right on Q.”

Joe

“Well we promise not to be of any bother, we won’t get in the way understanding we are not formally invited guests. But we are glad just the same for the invitation to be here.”

Greg

“You are welcome, and I look forward to seeing the end results of this little wedding book project you have in mind when it’s completed.” Greg shook hands with them both and went on his way realizing that it was approaching time for everyone to take their places.

5 minutes before it was time for the music to start and the bride was to finally make her appearance everyone was sitting quietly in their proper places. Joe and Kathleen were standing on the side at the back they’d be the first ones to see her walking down the aisle Joe knew he was going to get some great pictures.

Suddenly the little water fountains on the sides of aisle started up and water was displaying itself in arrays of color up and down the sides of the aisle. It was very pretty, nothing Joe had ever seen before. He started taking photograph’s thinking what a smart way to keep people in their seats until after the event. Just as he took the last picture the music started, and Kathleen tugged on his sleeve. He turned to look there she was Gwen dressed to the nine’s in what she probably believed was the most beautiful wedding dress in the world and it definitely was a nice one.

Kathleen

“She looks amazing you would never know she’s old enough to tie the knot with a guy Greg’s age.” She whispered to Joe.

Joe

“So will you one day, he whispered back and then kissed her on the cheek witnessing her blush.”

Gwen was walked down the aisle by her father and the flower girls did a great job not missing a step, and then like that she was finally there looking at the greatest moment of her life standing face to face with Greg waiting for the vows to begin. Once her father was in his seat and the priest had his site on the ring bearer waiting for his moment, he began to speak. You could hear quiet crying in the seating from the words being spoken and heard.

Kathleen

“Here it comes Joe, isn’t this exciting?”

The priest gives the ring bearer his q and as he was walking with the pillow holding the actual rings on it so intent on getting it to them without either one falling off, the priest turned to Greg and asked the formal question...

The Priest

“Do you Greg Marks take this woman to be your lawfully wedded wife, to have and to hold, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and health till death do you part?”

Greg taking only seconds to look at Gwen and smile answering with...

Greg

“I do!”

The priest looks at the ring bearer and says...

The Priest

“Do we have the rings?”

The ring bearer smiled, forgetting to answer he just shook his head, and held up the pillow. The guests all smiled at his good job.

The Priest

“You may put the ring on her finger Greg.”

Greg looked at the pillow and reached out for the most glorious item in the world to him at that moment, and proceeded to put it on the ring finger of the most glorious woman in the world to him at the very same moment. Once this was done, the priest turned to Gwen and proceeded to start repeating the whole thing all over again. When Kathleen was the first one to hear it... Noise coming from around the corner, voices whispering.. Joe looked seconds later in the direction of the sounds as well.

And then it happened right there in front of everyone one very Good looking man and two adorable kids holding his hands all well dressed for the occasion were suddenly in plain view of all the guest's and Gwen. But before she looked at him and said anything the priest new exactly what to do while Kathleen was whispering to Joe...

The Priest

“Wait you are not supposed to make your appearance until I say does anyone here today have anything to say about these two people coming together, speak now or forever hold your peace?”

Kathleen

“Well looks like we got our answer that must be Josh?”

Joe

“And those must be his children, their beautiful.”

Kathleen

“Look, hanging off his wrist a small bag, its full of white envelopes, looks like he got the mail!”

Joe

“Yes and right in the nick of time.” Then Josh spoke answering the priest

Josh

“You mean I’m early? Or I missed my Q did you want me to make a re-entry?”

The Priest said nothing as he realized this wedding was now on an instant hold. Gwen turned her head and her eyes became so engaged with the view it took her almost a moment to speak, and when she did she said...

Gwen

“Josh, is that you? They’re beautiful” Focusing immediately on his kids after speaking.

Josh

“Yes, it’s me and yes these are my 2 children. Remember the ones I spoke about wanting to have with you, when we were discussing what we wanted with our futures before ascertaining that it was 2 different things?”

Gwen

“How could I forget that day, look at where I am just NOW STANDING so many years later?”

Josh

“Exactly!”

Gwen

“Wait!” She realized what got him there instantly. “The Letters you got them?”

Josh

“Yes, I did and I read every one of them.” He let go of his daughter’s hand and lifted up his arm with the small bag full of envelopes and pulled a handful of them out of the bag.”

Gwen

“But how? I didn’t mail them?” She started looking around the room.

Josh

“Well I got them.” And as he was moving forward in opening up the envelopes preparing to read from the letters Gwen suddenly had a flash back to the day she took her car in to get fixed and how she had to ride the bus and had just finished writing another letter and had added it to the others. She stored them in the corner of the trunk in her car, but didn’t feel safe leaving them there when her car was in the shop so she brought them home with her. But left them on the bus bench on the transfer over to the 2nd bus that took her back to her condo and until now could not remember what she did with them, though she did make an effort to find them before today.

Joe and Kathleen spoke up right then realizing they were busted and it was now or never. The ball was in their court.

Joe

“We did it, my girlfriend and I we mailed the letters.”

Kathleen

“Joe found them on the bus bench when we got here from New York, we saw no return address just a name.”

Joe

“Kathleen searched through the phone book for that last name and between the 2 of us we called the numbers we could find to reach you. But we had no luck. We waited some days for return calls, but all the ones we got were from people who didn’t know you.”

Kathleen

“So we took the letters with us on a walk one day, and decided together to make the final decision that we would send them and hope it was the right one. It wasn’t until a few days after the letters were already on the way to Josh that we got a phone call from your cousin telling us how to contact you.”

Gwen

“So that’s how come I saw you two outside my house that first time?”

Joe

“Yes, we had come to try and resolve the situation, now that we had an address. But when we saw you with a gentlemen which we now know was Greg we got nervous, a little scared that we had made the wrong decision

and saw that you were going somewhere in a hurry so we didn't finish approaching you we stayed on the other side of the street."

Gwen

"Yes that was the day we were going to pick up the invitations from the printer so what about the other times?" She asked.

Kathleen

"Well either it was bad timing or just coincidence. We did not follow you intentionally to the bakery. But when we went on our tour bus ride through town, we stopped at a place that picked up passengers and there you were having a dress fitting done standing on a stool in the window and we just put the whole thing together."

Gwen

"So what about the book?"

Joe

"Well we didn't know what was going to happen, and didn't know what to tell you when confronted on the night we were going to the poetry reading event that we were invited too that we didn't want to be late for, which I am certain you remember us talking our way out of giving an explanation at that time. I needed to come up with something to answer you with so Kathleen and I talked it out, and I came up with the book idea as a solution understanding that if Josh wrote back, or showed up before today, that it would make for a good book, and it would be a way for me to try and do a little something to apologize for the choice my girlfriend and I made on your behalf whether it turned out to be the right or wrong one."

Gwen

“So basically you made the whole thing up to get out of trouble for as long as possible?”

Kathleen

“You could look at it that way if you want too.”

Greg finally spoke up...

Greg

“Well we do, and I had a hunch there was more to this story than you were telling us. I have always felt like Gwen was holding something back from me that she didn't feel she could tell me.”

Gwen

“Well you've never liked it when I tried talking about Josh!”

Greg looking at Josh and then back at her spoke again...

Greg

“And I guess it was for good reason, now are you going to finish answering the priest and put that ring on my finger? Because I didn't come this far with you not to see this through, I am here today to make you my wife. You haven't seen whoever the hell that guy is in who the hell knows how long? You are not going to let some idiot with bad timing, whose obviously very inconsiderate to do something like this in the first place get in the way of our dreams are you?”

Gwen looked at the priest and the ring on the pillow and then back at Josh, Greg got angrier watching her not answer quicker.

Josh

“Is this really the guy you want to spend the rest of your life with? If you are still the Gwen I know you to be, then you know what to do about this situation for yourself, since you do know who I am and what I’m like divorcing what he’s just said to you.”

Gwen

“I don’t blame you Josh, you didn’t know it wasn’t me that sent those letters I blame them. You didn’t know that I wasn’t sure I had the intention of ever mailing them, they were just a source for me to find closure in the relationship we had and the decision we made when we split up and I moved west for my career. I was not able to talk with Greg much about you, the subject of you would infuriate him, and I never understood why so I wrote those letters as a way of dealing with everything.”

Josh

“Well probably because he could still hear LOVE in your voice and see love in your eyes when you were talking about me. Because that’s what I read in all of these.” Holding up the first one removed from its envelope.”

Gwen looked at Greg and then the pillow and slowly reached out to the ring sitting atop of it when Josh started reading out loud.

Josh

“Dear Josh, Do you remember when we first met? We were both so young and had so many years of life to still live ahead of us. I remember even at that young of an age thinking almost right on the spot when I first met your eyes with mine, that I wanted to spend the rest of my life knowing you.”

He went to read from a 2nd one....

“Dear Josh, Do you remember our first kiss under the tree in the park near our school where we carved our initials in a heart on the tree?”

A third letter

“Dear Josh, Do you remember our first time? Do you remember knowing we both knew that it was right with each other, and how many more years of love there was for us to look forward to sharing our worlds together?”

A fourth letter

“Dear Josh, Do you remember going to the Prom Together and how we danced the night away with each other, and talked about the CHILDREN, and the LIFE we wanted to have together?”

Josh stopped and looked at her still holding one of his children’s hands and spoke.

Josh

“Does that sound like letters from someone trying to say good-bye? Trying to come to an end of knowing someone they had such wonderful times with? Or does it sound like someone asking the only person in the world she’s ever truly known and could trust whether or not what she is about to do is the right thing for her instead? I read every single one and in each of them I heard the Gwen I knew in high school, and the Gwen I went on to college with, the Gwen I never stopped loving, so much so that I am now a divorced father with 2 wonderful children. I am here today because I believe you weren’t sure if you might still be in love with me too? And you didn’t want to finally get married and have it be the biggest mistake in your life.”

Josh turned to Kathleen and Joe and said to them...

Josh

“I don’t know who the two of you are, but I am thankful that you made the decision to put these letters in the mail box so I could read them and come to understand my own marriage and divorce, and in return know what to do for the only girl that is essentially still my best friend, Gwen Louise!”

Joe and Kathleen just nodded their heads not knowing what to say to him. He looked back at Gwen and so did all of the guests sitting their today, including her parents who were beaming with smiles from ear to ear to see Josh again after all this time, and that he was still terribly good looking and had 2 wonderful children a part of the invitation he was giving Gwen to become a part of his life again. Gwen holding the ring in her hand saw her parents' expressions and then looked at Greg before speaking...

Gwen

"Josh is a wonderful man, a great person and clearly today also a wonderful father he would not ever do anything intentional to hurt me, or my family or our friends. Witnessing your response and behavior towards his appearance here today has shown me your true colors, and I am now aware that your personality is not as nice as I have always been trying to tell myself it is. And that if this how you plan to continue to behave as I suspect you will especially after we're married then you are not the right person for me to spend the rest of my life with." Gwen looked at Josh and looked at his children and smiled...

Josh spoke...

Josh

"If you are still my best-friend and the Gwen I read in these letters, then I don't have to tell you what to do next, I will just stand here and wait till you're finished."

Gwen looked at Greg and took his hand and opened it, and put the ring she took from the pillow and put it in his hand and closed it. Removed her vale, lifted her dress and turned to walk toward Josh without saying another word. Once standing in front of Josh, he looked at her and started shaking his head with a smile before saying...

Josh

“Aren’t you forgetting something?”

Gwen tried to act like she didn’t know what he was talking about.

Josh took her wedding hand and removed the wedding ring sitting on her finger and turned to look at Greg and said...

Josh

“Hey Greg, you any good at catch?” Josh tossed the ring down the aisle at him, and to everyone’s surprise Greg rushed for it and succeeded in catching it telling everyone there that he certainly wanted his money back.

Josh

“I’ll save you a few dollars for the mess that’s happened here today, you can keep that. I’ll get her a new one.” He smiled at Greg and then looked at Gwen and took her by the hand, noticing how she was already holding hands with Tannis his daughter a girl whose name she’s yet to learn, but already falling in love with because of how much of her father she could see was in her. How happy Gwen was to know that Josh is the great father she always knew he would be.

Joe was busy taking as many shots as he could without being heard or paid attention too. And so it seems were many others there that day. From the look of Gwen’s parents they couldn’t be any happier then to see her with the one person they always loved most for her to be with in this world, Joe got a beautiful capture of their expression. Now this book really would be a story that should be told, and apparently this one with the right happy ending. He already knew what the title of the book would be... Dear Josh! Right then one of the maids of honor spoke up and said to Gwen...

Maid of honor

“Hey Gwen what about the bouquet? You wouldn’t want to waste the magic of the moment would you?”

Gwen looked at Josh and said..

Gwen

“Just a minute hold that thought!” The one she could see clearly on his face, and let go of his hand and told him to stand to the side with his children. Once she had the bouquet in her hand she told all the women who could gather together at the back as best as they could to do so. And she turned her back to them all and with a great heave Ho tossed that bouquet into the air with all the luck that she could bring it. And at the back of rows where the women were all standing, not paying attention to what the bouquet was doing, someone said to Kathleen...

Random guest

“Hey lady, you’d better look up and catch that thing or it might just hit you in the head!”

Kathleen looked up... wondering how this bouquet could be heading straight for her? She put her hands up mostly to protect her head, and with all the luck Gwen through it with, Kathleen caught it. And Joe suddenly felt uncomfortable and was looking at Josh who was acknowledging the expression on his face and the future he was about to have with the woman he attended this event with today who was now the luckiest other lady standing there today. The bride’s maids were all disappointed and started talking amongst themselves, and went their way complaining about how much longer this meant they might have to wait to be the next one to be proposed too. Gwen returned to her place next to Josh and once again reached out for his hand, and he lovingly took it in his.

Gwen

“Okay now that, that decision is made where too?” Joe took a picture, as Josh answered...

Josh

“Anywhere but here!” he said as he kissed her on the cheek and together all 4 of them holding hands with each other walked away from the table full of food, the wedding cake and the crowd that was all now standing around watching and talking to one another. Gwen looked back at them and said...

Gwen

“What are you guys going to do now?”

Joe

“Well you can be certain I am still going to write your book, it will be our way of apologizing to you for what we did indeed do. And hopefully the proceeds from the sales of that book will be enough to help you start your new life together getting to re-know the most important person from your past and his 2 children. In short maybe it’s your turn to go on a nice long vacation, somewhere all 4 of you can go together?”

Gwen

“Good answer, good luck with wherever you go from here, and I look forward to hearing from you when the time is right in our near future.” She was gone from site just minutes later heading into a new life that she had no idea would entail but was looking forward to whatever it was about to bring.

Joe turned and held Kathleen’s hand who was pleasantly surprised in her catch, and smelling the flowers as they too dispersed from the wedding and headed back to their townhome and Brinkley their bosom buddy awaiting their return.

Joe realizing he had some other serious decisions to make now of his own on top of what he had to do to plan this book and the future visit of Jennifer the Canadian Poet that he came to Vancouver to see! He smiled welcomingly at the thought of what it was he knew he'd have to find the perfect time and place to do as they got further and further away from where the groom from today was left standing at the Altar!

End Scene!

Day returning to New York.....

Kathleen and Joe settled into their seats and did up their seat belts once in place they smiled at each other; Joe noticed this puzzled look on Kathleen's face and says...

Joe

"What? What is it? I can see that something is bothering you tell me what you're thinking!"

Kathleen

"No it's not something that's really bothering me, it's something that's left me puzzled?"

Joe

"Well what is it?"

Kathleen

"We just spent three weeks in Canada and spent money all over the place, getting all kinds of change back" Joe interrupts....

Joe

“Yes I know, isn’t it wonderful? Canada’s money is so colorful? You can’t confuse a \$10 with a \$20 bill!” He smiles with satisfaction.

Kathleen

“Not that, did you know their new 20 and 50 dollar bills are made from plastic?”

Joe

“Now I have a very important question about that, it’s been bothering me since I got my first one, if it’s made from plastic can one really even call it money anymore? It’s plastic?”

Kathleen

“Good point, but it seems Canada is quite use to frequent changes being made in their currency so it seems to be working for them. Anyway that wasn’t the point I was trying to make I was going somewhere else with the conversation.”

Joe

“I’m sorry, please continue!” Trying not to laugh he attempted to say those words like it was some serious matter.

Kathleen reaches into her pocket and pulls out her little handful of souvenir’s and open’s her hand showing Joe what was in it she began saying...

Kathleen

“One nickel, one dime, one quarter, one loonie this is their dollar now, one toonie this is their two dollars but if you noticed (and this where it gets important she continues) if you noticed, which you probably didn’t there

are no pennies, Canada now no longer has any pennies, how can you have a sale on something now for \$19.99 or even .99 cents, no one can ever get any change back? They are going to have to change the prices they have on everything!”

Joe

“No more pennies? How’s that possible, pennies have played such an important part to the world and its progress. You know back in the civil war that’s all the men used to get paid, and that’s what they got paid in, they made 8 cents a day some of them, and got paid in pennies.”

Kathleen

“And all the saying’s that go with pennies, they too are now obsolete, you know the one a penny earned is a penny saved? Well now they are going to have to come up with saying something about nickels instead.”

Joe

“Or what about the saying Pennies from Heaven?”

Kathleen

“Well not anymore, no more Pennies from Heaven in Canada, now they are going to have to look to the ground. You know when you see one laying there that’s obviously been there for some time well that’s all their going to have now.”

Joe

“Well I like pennies in my system I wonder what are they going to do with all the copper now? Build the world’s biggest penny, or make a Penny motel somewhere in Canada in memory of the penny?”

Kathleen

“Some lady at one of the stores I went shopping in explained the mints reason for its decision to me when she saw the look on my face as I was watching people not be given their proper change. She said it cost 1.6 cents to make a penny now it cost more than a penny to make a penny so what is the point in having the penny around anymore? All I know is where there’s a will there’s a way, if Canada really tried they could have found a way to keep the penny in its system if they wanted too.”

Joe

“Sure they could have, all they had to do was use less copper, you don’t have to get rid of the penny just make a new penny .6 cents less worth of copper in its new, size, weight and design. Then the penny would be new like other changes they’ve made and still it would only cost a penny to make!”

Kathleen

“Agreed, that would have been a great solution, to have a new penny in the system. Just imagine the reaction of people with new Canadian pennies floating around in America, it would become the new rage everybody would have tried collecting them and they’d all be talking about the new penny all the time!”

Joe

“Well no cents (sense) in talking about that now!” Joe starts laughing at his witty comment then a few seconds later he turns toward the window to watch for the plane to start moving when they’d finally be on their way home.

Kathleen laughed with him at his quick remark and turned to look toward the front of the plane and observe other passengers before looking at her hand full of change and putting it away, one last time she mumbled to herself...

Kathleen

“No more Pennies earned, No more Pennies saved, No sense in talking about cents, and No More Pennies from heaven,” shaking her head she just giggled realizing they wouldn’t be needing those saying’s and any others that are penny related in Canada anymore. She couldn’t imagine what the new phrases would be to replace these ones that have been around all of the penny’s life?

Joe turned to look at her, smiling he took her hand and said...

Joe

“Well no cents (sense) thinking about it anymore, we’ll just have to wait and see what our next adventure here will discover!

Kathleen holding his hand firmly back plainly agreed while smiling with simply saying,

Kathleen

“You make good cents (sense) dear I think I will just have to agree.” As the plane took off from the ground both of them sat back and relaxed happy to finally be going home!

As for Gwen, Josh and his two kids they lived happily ever after, the two of them tying the knot together, and having a baby adding one more member to their perfect household and having all this shared in the book that Joe Fox did indeed accomplish the task of writing once returning to New York keeping his word as promised. The book Dear Josh was very successful affording Gwen and Josh an even nicer life together and a vacation to Disney world for the new family they had now become. As for Jennifer (the Canadian Poets) story well that’s an altogether completely different adventure, still waiting to unfold in New York city, at all of the Fox books stores and in the rest of America!

The end!
Or is it?
😊

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