The First Steps In A Thousand Mile Journey

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For Her

I lie in bed, the the dark, alone
Sleep only a distant memory
Instead of dreams, my thoughts are of her
The one that means so much to me
The numbers on the the alarm clock glow like the fire in my heart
But without her, my soul is ripped apart

Closing my eyes, her face appears
For a moment, everything is right in the world
How can this be? Does true love really exist?
Could my life be changed forever by this girl?

It feels so right, this thing called love
If a single word can describe such feelings
Without her I'm nothing, with her I'm whole
The missing piece that only she can bring

To hold her, feel her, know that she's real
Look into her eyes and run my fingers through her hair
But until that day, these dreams are all I have
For I am here, and she is there.

--Jamie Freeland

The First Steps In A Thousand Mile Journey

It was Valentine's Eve, February 13th, 1991. Fourteen years old and ready to embark upon manhood, or was I? I knew in my heart that there was only one girl for me. She possessed sky blue eyes that sparkled with innocence. Her blonde hair couldn't have been painted to look any better, while her soft voice would sweep reality away when she spoke to you. There was no doubt in my mind, I knew that she would be the one! I just wasn't sure if she felt the same. As a matter of fact she didn't even know how I felt!

Our friendship was a close one for almost two years. We passed notes, innocently flirted, and even phoned one another from time to time. Both of us had been experiencing first dates, movies, and even kisses, just not together. It seemed this was the way she wanted it, but if the opportunity ever arose to change the situation, I would be willing. You see being her friend was great, however it was like having your dream car but no keys!

After doing some serious research I was able to put two and two together and I suddenly realized the way to her heart, or so I thought. I found that her favorite flower was the rose, while her favorite color was yellow, and since the next day was Valentine's, I suddenly had a stroke of genius. I ran home to tell my mother the plan and she delivered what I hoped to be the key to my dream car. That night the most beautiful yellow rose I had ever purchased sat in my refrigerator. This flower knew that it had to look its best for my unexpecting Juliet. I went to bed for the evening and after falling asleep my alarm clock screamed as loud as it could, what seemed to be five minutes later. The moment of truth had arrived, the day was finally here!

The morning of February 14th, 1991 may have been the longest three block walk to school ever. With each step my mouth became drier, my hands clammer, and my heart beat at an unhealthy rate. As the school came into focus my feet decided to take smaller steps while my mind kept questioning such a bold move. After thinking, rethinking, guessing, and second guessing suddenly it was too late, I had arrived!

As I approached my dream girl there were so many things I wanted to say. I had practiced this one moment countless times in my head. When I was alone I always seemed to say the right thing, but when it counted and she stood before me I said nothing! I simply held my hand out and presented a beautiful yellow rose that shook like a leaf on this cold winter morning. As it turned out saying nothing was all she needed to hear. The flower was seized, her smile lit up the hall, and I embraced like never before in my 14 years on this earth.
To this day I get nervous for myself when I think back to that five minute walk that took me close to an hour. I now realize that it wasn’t the rose that I feared giving her, it was my heart and soul that I was offering. Almost seven years later we are both glad that I had the nerve to enter manhood that day. Because after four years of high school, two years of college, countless memories of laughter and sorrow, not only do we still have that yellow rose, but each other as well!

--Scott J. Grapes

Always

Always when he comes
I am so excited,
Always I remember
the memories we’ve shared
through so many years.

When we were young
we always met on Mondays,
we talked and we laughed
Always we danced to
the Carpenter’s slow songs.

As the years went by
we chatted on the phone
we talked about our kids,
our jobs and our homes

We’d get together for dinner
and share some time —
Always laughing and remembering
Auld Lang Syne.

Our anniversary is in
November each year,
and has now become
very special and dear.

We are now older and grayer
and wiser we say,
We appreciate each other
in a myriad of ways.

Our oneness in spirit
still keeps us together,
Always enfolding our hearts
now and forever.

Even now — when he comes —
Always, I am so excited!

--Em Maciejunas