(I WAS NOT MEANT TO BE ALONE)

VELVET

by;

Martice S. Hanible

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

2003/2004, I met the love of my life. I knew it immediately!!! I was 8 years in, on an 80 year bid. I was in the maximum security prisen, Stateville Correctional Center, located in Joliet,Illinois, only 20-30 miles outside of the Chicago city limits. I was newly divorced, just getting out of the hole after being there for nearly a year in a half. On the good side of my life at that time, I had just recieved a time cut off of my original sentence of prison, due to a change in the law. No longer having to do 80 years straight, I only had to serve 40, years straight with good behavior, she chose to befriend me, through a pen-pal site. Through our friendship, I've fallen **"deeply"** in love with her, as she has inspired my heart to open and learn to TRULY love with unabandon.

13 years later, and another time cut from my sentence, I only hav 9 years left before I'm a free man again. Though now, this woman who has become the 1.ove of my life, is now married with children and all she'll ever allow me to be to her, is a friend,(as it seems).

This situation is so rare, so complicated, that it rivals fictional love stories that we all have seen on television and have read in love novels; because it's happening in real life, in real time, right here, right now. So Shakespear would be jealous that his fantasies of love and conflict within having a true love, has become someones reality. Romeo and Juliet,me and my love, now to Velvet and Louis. Love is one of those things that will be around on this earth and within this entire universe until the end of time. Which the end of time doessn't exist. As one scholar would say; **"Time never existed when man did not."** Meaning, time is the imagination of man, for life is eternal in the Ultimate Creator's eyes.

I'm the author of a love poetry book; **"TO KISS THE SOUL OF A WOMAN..."** It's available at **Midnightexpressbooks.com.** I'll be releasing the love novel, MAKE LOVE TO HER EMOTIONS soon. It will be the love story to the love poetry book. But first, I have included a rough draft of the Romance Novel that I've written called, **VELVET** (I was not meant to be alone).

So I hope you enjoy reading it. I would love for you to send me responses asto what you think about the story, VELVET, in order to allow me to know that my words and thoughts aren't trapped in space, as my body is in prison.

Sincerely,

MARTICE S. HANIBLE

I WAS NOT MEANT TO BE ALONE

Opening up the door to what seems to become a beautiful young couple's counseling session, counselor and therapist, Timothy Mosley extends his hand to greet Louis Dunbar Blackmon and his girlfriend Velvet.

" Hello, my name's Timothy Mosley."

Extending his hand back, with a firm handshake, Louis in return introduces himself.

" How are you doing today sir? My name's Louis Dunbar Blackmon, and this is my girlfriend, Velvet Auset."

" Well, you're welcomed to come in and have a seat. Either in the chairs or the loveseat; it won't matter which. I know you may have heard that therapists are like the psychiatrist everyone see on the t.v. shows, but we're not."

Timothy jokingly says, trying to break the ice that is all so apparent between he and the couple; and it seems between the couple, themselves as well.

" So to answer your possible query, yes, we will actually speak with one another sitting upright. You won't have to lay on some dark leather couch. See, just like your soon to be wife's name, these seats and that couch are covered in the cloth that seems to be, almost, velvet."

Louis mumbles to himself;

" Soon to be wife, yeah...yeah...yeah."

" I can hear you Louis. I'm standing right here holding your hand, you know."

Velvet says to Louis in sign language, due that she has a hearing impairment, that some may call deafness. But she has learned to read lips after she met Louis, in the Harold Washington Library, in the Downtown Chicago area.

Louis laughs, and signs back to Velvet;

" How can you hear me Velvet, when you know you can't hear, baby?"

" The same way you can look at me and still do sign language, to me, as if I can't read your lips. Sometimes it just happens."

They both laugh along with the counselor Tim, as he's a counselor who's condition is similar to Velvet's hearing impairment. Tim is deaf and uses sign language to communicate with other clients who are deaf. He, like Velvet, can also read lips; but unlike Velvet, his voice-box allows him the ability to speak as well. So he's very helpful in situations such as Louis and Velvet's, because he could speak to Louis and sign to Velvet. As well it makes it easier for Louis because he could just speak to Tim, while Velvet uses sign language, and he could understand them both, without having

to have a language mediator. As well it makes the sessions with them, that much more effective, because he could understand excatly what they're both saying, in an accurrate manner, unlike with a language interpreter. See, with any language interpreter, words get lost in the translation, which waters down the message one person is trying to convey to another person. Due that the interpreter, at some point (s), is going to paraphrase and use his or her own words to explain the thought they're trying to interpret.

But with Timothy having the ability to interpret for himself, he gets the full effect of how Louis and Velvet truly feels.

" Well, I see this session has already began..." Tim says laughingly.

" Welcome to, I Was Not Meant To Be Alone.This is a center that I and my wife created for couples who are on the fence about taking that final plunge of saying vows to one another. And it isn't often that I have a chance to see a couple where one person is hearing impaired and the other is not; especially a young couple as yourselves. And I'm guessing that you two met while Velvet had already lost her hearing?"

" I was born without being able to hear and speak."

" So my contentions are correct. He loves

you, and you love him, because it takes love to bridge a gap. And true love to break through boundaries. And I know, because I have true love. Me and my wife met sixty year ago. She was fourteen and I was tweenty-one. Back in our days this was very acceptable and not rare at all. But it still was an age gap that had to be bridged, none the less. As well, I was a guy that couldn't hear and she couldn't speak in sign language, but by her being a latina, with a lot of attitude, she taught me how to read her lips really quick, because whenever I did something wrong, I got a lot of lip movement. And once I learned what she was telling me... I found out it wasn't pretty and some of it wasn't even in english (lol) .So not only did I have to learn how to read her lips, I as well had to cross the boundary of learning another language. But it was worth it to us. Because I wouldn't trade in that love with my wife for anything in this world, not even more life. I don't know if she feels the same way, but I sure hope so (lol). But please can I hear your story, and why you, as a couple, are here today?"

" Well, we met when she was..."

Velvet cuts him off, by waving her hand in front of Louis's face; signing;

" Let me tell the story, because you can't tell the story from my point of view. "

" And you can't tell it from mines."

" But Louis I've heard you tell our story before, and even though I love you, and you can do many things right, telling a story is not one of them."

" So what; you're a female Tyler Perry; hun? "

" Well, he did play a woman in a dress and named himself Madea. I'm just saying!"

They both laugh, and Velvet finishes;

" But anyway counselor Mosley, this is how it went... In my younger years, as a child I had some terible experiences with dating. It all stemmed from this young boy, at the age of ten years old named, LIL Lou acting as if he liked me, until his friends began teasing him about liking a deaf lil girl. He then immediately stop being nice to me and teased me to tears, to accommodate his friend dislike for me, because of my hearing impairment. I was picked up from the schoolyard by my older sister. She explained to me that as I got older, boys would like me for me and the problem of teasing would slowly subside.It wasn't until I met Louis did this change, that one day at the Harold Washington Library."

Now, that day, Louis Dunbar Blackmon, Whom was named after a famous Black poet, because his parents wished he

would also be someone who plays a pivotal part in changing the world somehow, turns around and sees the most gorgeous sight he has ever seen. A nicely shaped sista; a dark carmel complexioned Blackwoman, with natural olive green eyes and curly hair that's natural sandy brown, standing only feet away from him. Louis has never felt this urgency to not miss an opportunity to talk to a woman so badly since his child-hood years; as he approaches her, he says;

" Excuse me, miss lady. I don't intend to interupt what you're doing, but my eyes are attracted to what they see and what they see is your outter beauty. I don't mean to sound all corny, and I'm not the one to run game. Plus I know you've already heard it all! The truth is princess, I hesitated to approach you, but, I couldn't let this opportunity pass. Because I might come to regret it. Thinking about the what is and what's not; what could've been and what should've been; what could be and should be; all speculations with no answers, left with only the what ifs. I don't know if you have a man, a friend, or an associate. I know you're not married because I don't see a ring. But again, I may be wrong you-may-be-getting it apppraised. I saw your smile, and I said, "man that girl's beautiful!" I kept lusting, I aint gonna lie, then I caught your eyes, and they made me want to get to know you. They have the sparkle of the sunlight

striking a blue diamond. It attracts you, it pulls you in, it makes you want it in a way-that you never knew. And I know you've run across a lot of guys, that use this line,"I want to get to know you." But, I've already been there, done that, princes, I'm not getting any younger, so I don't have any time to be lieing. Right now, I'm truthfully looking for someone more than a shell, more than something to look at, more than someone to get on, or get under. I'm looking for a companion. A friend, a guide, when I'm going in the wrong direction, an emergency search team to find me when I'm lost, and bring me to safety. I'm looking for the one who-when I'm down she's going to pick me up, when I'm too weak to walk on my own-she will be my crutch. One that when the world is on my shoulders and it's too much for me to bear, she's going to take it off mines and put it on hers; a woman who will appreciate me,when the situation's vice versa. What good would it be, princess, to have a shell with no purpose? I want a woman that-if her appearance changes, my love stays the same. And the only way I could do that princess, is if I learn to love her, and not her shell. I want to get to know you... I want to get to know if your inner beauty is as extravagant as your outter. I want to know if your smile reflects the shine of your heart. I want to know-that if the eyes are a reflection of your soul- is your soul that

amazing !!! I want to get to know if your heart could reflect the same beauty as your eyes reflect; if not greater, princess I want to get to know you."

Velvet just stares at him with a very compassionate, yet puzzled look on her face. Louis thinks he's struck out big time! Struck out in front of his three friends, struck out in front of Velvet's three friends, struck out right in a public library. The biggest library in Chicago, The Harold Washington Library, on top of that. Struck out where he though he'd made his best move, where he could impress a woman like Velvet, by complimenting her in front of everyone, in a place every ear would hear. Because it backfires...Wow! " I struck out big time,is what Louis thinks in his mind."

Until an unspoken to voice breaks the silence.

" Velvet... he's talking to you."

Velvet looks at her but says nothing.

The three female family members of Velvet breaks out laughing hysterically! Even the library clerk laughs. Because they all know what Louis fails to be aware of.

" Boy, she's deaf! She haven't understood anything that you've said!"

" Girl, he was gone too, wasn't he?! ' your eyes got the sparkle of sunlight striking a blue diamond.' Another of Velvet's female members says mocking Louis.

A third and final family member says; " I want to get to know you. Your soul is so amazing! "

" Well, since she didn't get to hear you anyway; I'll get to know you. My soul is amazing too!" Again laughing, while mocking Louis.

All laughing so hysterically, one of the three females purrs like a kitten, chumps down on her teeth in a biting motion, and reaching out towards Louis, as if she were a kitten scratching him.

Lois's three friends are turning colors trying not to laugh, until one just can't hold it any longer and bursts out in laughter and tears, and sings a Lou Rawls verse;

" You'll never find...
another love like mines."

They all laugh, but Louis and Velvet doesn't think it' funny. Louis, because the joke is on him. Velvet, because she's attracted to the poor boy that they're making fun of, knowing he didn't know she couldn't understand what he was saying. One of Velvet female cousins remarks;

" Aye boy, alright, if you like my cousin, which you obviously do, just say all that you just said, once again and I'll tell her in sign langauge. But say the, you'll never find!"

They all laugh, but Velvet's female cousin repeats

everything that Louis says to her through sign language. Velvet smiles and signs to her cousin, to tell Louis she accepts his invitation of friendship and the date to the The Museum O f Science and Industry, that he didn't mention, as Velvet smiles. This is her favorite place to go, to get away, and she'd like to get away with him, there.

A couple days passes and Velvet comes home to a box, wrapped in a velvet bow, left by Louis, that has a floor length evening gown, and six inch high heels, a manicure and pedicure certificate, along with a note that says, " velvet, what's after the museum?" Velvet smile and thinks to herself, " What is after the museum,; because an evening gown and open peeped toed stiletto heels, isn'tquite museum attire, by far."

Louis picks Velvet up to attend the museum date. He doesn't know sign language, except for the few words a book has taught him, that he purchased the after meeting Velvet. So throughout the entire date they communicated by way of texting each other over the cell phones; and all they don't say over the phone texts, they say through body language.

After dropping Velvet off, he kisses her with a peck and signs to her, one of the few signs he's practiced, "what's after the museum?" He texts her saying, " just be ready, gorgeous, five p.m."

At five p.m. sharp, Louis turns the corner of Velvet's block, of Noble and Division, in a rented red Rolls Royce, to take Velvet to a sign language poetry opera, and a beautiful diner atop the Water Tower, A Chicago skyscraper, overseeing not only the spectacular Chicago skyline, but as well the entire westside communities, from whence they come.

After months of dating, Louis is madly in love with Velvet. And Velvet is smitten with Louis as well. Louis has been awaiting, with a nervous heart, for this day to come. Valentine's Day, 2026. The two families gather in celebration, one couple bringing them both together. But not only for Valentine's Day! But no, no, Louis had a plan of his own! As he has learned how to speak with sign language, he speaks to Velvet in sign, while Velvet's cousin interprets every word he says, in voice, to the two families who has now gathered to hear what he has to say. And to Velvet's surprise, Louis drops a doozy on her... He signs;

" Velvet, I know you don't know this, but years ago, I met you. And you may not remember, but I do. We were eleven years old, and I gave you a card for Valentine's Day, because I liked you, But took it back and joked about you when I found out you were deaf and couldn't speak, as I could speak. I was a child then Velvet. I didn't know any better, baby. And I apologize for that. I didn't say

anything, but I knew who you were, as soon as I found out you didn't hear anything I'd said, when we met in the Harold Washington Library, downtown. Yes, baby, I am Louis Dunbar Blackmon, who everyone called Lil Lou, as a child. And I apologize but I know now Velvet. I know now that, anything that is meant to be, will always be, because when I saw you Velvet, I felt the same exact way then, as I did as a child, gorgeous. I'm just old enough and mature enough now to deal with life as a man should. And if you would ever forgive my childish ways, as an eleven year old boy on Valentine's Day, and accept me as a man now, on Valentine's day of 2016, I would like to tell you that, Velvet, Baby, we see stars who live out a fairytale, and fictional lives that sometimes seem real. But we sometimes fail, to immate the art that we want to make into our lives. And become discouraged because things may have went so wrong, when it seems that we have done all things so right. But sometimes in life, we try to build a path, that wasn't made for us to travel. And we try to fall in love when love is a feeling that is delved into, without even trying. We try to make someone else love us, when love isn't optional, it's destined; we knowing that love love is the only emotion that isn't clandestined (hidden_). Yet it is the emotion that is activated upon the meeting of two soulmates, that once breathe only one breath. The soul

that split twice when it landed onto earth, from its heaven. Once again uniting to become one... once again completing itself and creating within those lost souls, that bond and feeling, that we now know as, true love. And I found my other half in you. I've found what I've lost in seventh heaven, when we traveled down here to earth... I've found what I never want to lose again... I've found my lover...my friend. But most of all... I've found what completes me...and makes me whole....my better half. You are what causes me to live life joyously from day to day. You have found in me... the soul that I've been missing. For without you...I'm no longer living...I'm just existing. Existing in a world alone, whereas me heart will live without a home; and without that protection of the rib....I'll no longer be able to stand strong. And baby, I know they say that...fifty -one percent of marriages, in this modern didn't...and won't make it... but Velvet, with you...I want to be part of the forty-nine percent that has...and will make it...and that's why I'm asking you...Velvet... Will You Marry Me?"

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" But she said no counselor. She..."

" No...no...no... I didn't say no! What I said was this; give me some time to think about it, because you hurt me as a child and you don't even know the profo8und effect you had on my life after that, and it wasn't pretty. Nor was it positive. And it makes noe difference that you came into my life years later and healed me and all my emotional scars. Do you know why, because all of the scars that were there; were scars that began with you that day on the playground. And I tried to find other men to fill the hole that you kicked into my heart. And that cost me even more."

" But Velvet, I was a kid Velvet!"
Louis says emotionally and gently in sign language to her, only for Velvet to sign back;

" That doesn't matter Louis, it hurt me. You just don't get it; do you? That's why when we got up this morning I asked you to go to a couple's therapist before I gave you my answer. To see if I am healed, not from the scars, because you've healed them, and I'm grateful of that. But I wanted to come a couple's therapist to see if I am healed from that little boy, that I just found out was you. And guess what he told me counselor Mosley, when I said to go see a counselor? He vehemently stated, naw...naw...naw... don't no counselor know anything about us! Who does he suppose to be?! We can figure this out on our own! But if we could figure this

out on our own counselor Mosley, I wouldn't have been asking him to come here with me in the first place."

" But I came velvet."

" Yeah, after I beged you! You know how I got him here counselor Mosley? Two things; I had to tell him that, there was no coincidence, that there were one hundred and forty four thousand counselors in this city, just like the angels in his favorite bible verse. And too, I told him that if we go, I would assuredly vow to him."

Counselor Mosley began to sign to Velvet;

" It's not uncommon for men not to want to come to counselors, or even ask for help. Especially when it comes to speaking with another person about their relation - ships. But sometimes it's easier to solve your problems when you have a mediator."

" With Velvet, we need a referee!"

Velvet punches him in the arm, while biting her bottom lip, in a playful way, and letting out the girlish sound, un, as if to let him know she has punched him hard, while signing " I read your lips boy!"

" I know you've read them, I was looking at you when I said it. Counselor Tim, I told you, she's violent man!"

Counselor Mosley and Velvet laughs. Counselor Mosley continues on saying;

" Well look, you two have the key components. I just want to share a short story with you, to see if I can knudge you two love birds in the direction that you need to go in order to complete your journey. And I want you to pay close attention to the scenario, because you may recall that some of this may have happened in your lives."

In 1958, just like you two, Shirley Jean Collins and Maurice Benjamin met as little children, he was 9 years old and she was ten years of age. They meet, court, and falls madly in love, over a telephone call. It all happened when they met, from Maurice playing on the phone.

They knew they were madly in love, but everyone else, especially the adults, were trying to break them up, telling them that they are not in love at all, because they were too young to even know what real love was all about.

Irregaurdless of what everyone else says, they fought to see one another, to hang out and date, but they could let noone, not even their closest friends know this.

Their friends find out about their relationship because Shirley had to go to the hospital, on a routine doctor's appointment, where Lucille, Shirley's mother, finds out something she would have never known, if not for SHirley having to have this check in order to get accepted into highschool; Shirley, is no longer a virgin.

Lucille's jaw drops in the doctor's office, upon finding out. In her mind she's saying, "my baby's having sex? Innocent, good girl, great grades, super intelligent Shirley; no!"

But Lucille holds her composier, until they get into the car and drive for miles, on their way home in silence. Shirley knows it's coming; screaming, hollering, and name calling. She's been through it before, for less, so she knows it's coming now, especiallly for this! And Lucille's thinking of how to approach the situation, because what has already happened she can never change. No amount of mothering could ever reverse this act of Shirley no longer being a virgin.

Pulling up in front of their two flat, four unit, all family building, Lucille waits as soon as they get in to say; " Shirley, you know, I'm telling your daddy and family."

Shirley's relieved because as long as daddy's around, her mother won't get too out of hand calling her names, because her father would have none of it.

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Lucille calls Shirley's father in the room and tells him,

while asking if she could call his mother and father, as well as her sister who lives down stairs on the first floor, and her sister and brother-in-law who lives on the second floor, next door to them to help her talk some sense into Shirley; to find out who the little boy is, and to tell the family that Shirley will be moving down south, with an aunt and uncle, to save her from herself, and this lil bastard she's having sex with.

As the entire family has gathered and heard the news, grandma and grandpa understands that, she's a young woman, she's not a nun. And even most nuns have, themselves, had sex when they were young. So this only makes her a normal young wo9man, going through pubity and exploring her womanhood.

But everyone else was in an uproar!

" Send her little fast ass down south! I told ya'll she was sneaky! Yeah, that's why her titties and ass been getting so big; she's fucking! I told ya'll she came on her period too early?! I told Ya'll!!" All the women chime in, one behind the other, scolding the young girl, without ever hearing her side.

Shirley's father, who doesn't want her to go down south as no father really wants his daughter out of his sight, steps, and authoratatively stops the verbal mauling of his baby girl.

" Aye, ya'll didn't have her, so shut the fuck up talking to and about her like that! I don't know why my wife called ya'll gossipping asses .Now Shirley, who is he, and why did you go this route so soon?"

" Daddy, his names Reese, and I love him daddy!"

" Girl, stop it!" Shirley's momma chimes in.

" But momma I do love him, " Shirley exclaims!

" Lil girl, you don't love nobody. How in the hell you gonna love somebody at fourteen years old. Hell, you don't even know how to love your damn self yet. Little pussy is getting hot, and now she's in love. I your little pussy had never gotten wet, we wouldn't be having this problem; now would we? You're in love!?! You don't know the first thing about being in love. You nor that lil snot nosed heathen, you've been running around with, giving yourself all freely to. You're sucking dick to; aren't you? "

" Yes, mom," Shirley replies, in a head down mumbling type of response.

" ooooooooooow, Shirley!" Her mother states in a disappointing manner. " Shirley, you're just doing it big; aren't you? Fucking, sucking dick, cumming; you just grown now, talking back, momma but I love him all sassy and stuff

stuff."

" But I do momma," Shirley says, trying to once again convince her mother to believe her."

" You do what; shirley? You do what?!"

" Momma, I do love him! I do love Reese!"

" Shirley, what do you know about love, and how do you know you love this little boy?"

" Momma, I know I love him because, everytime I see him I smile; everytime I heaqr his voice, I have butterflies in my stomach; everytime he's near me, I get goose bumps all over my arms and legs; and everytime he hugs me; kisses me, or holds my hands I get a tingle down there. That's how I know I love him momma. And what I know about love is..."

" Wait, wait, wait, Shirley!" Her mother chimes in, interruptingly. " You know you love him because of that?! Little bitch, please! The butterflies and goose bumps, is a damn stomach flu symptom, and the tingle down there is what they call a yeast infection; have you ever heard of that?" Her mother says, disrespectfully and sacastically. " Now what do you know about love little girl?

" Momma you say I don't know about love, and I'm too young to even know what love is; but you're wrong

momma! Momma, Can disrespect me, call me all types of names, and make fun of my feelings. But you will never do away with the way I feel in my heart. Noone can, not you, not your words, not your thoughts of me, not the family, not the church, not even my dad, whom I love all so much. And Momma, you taught me, the family taught me, the church taught me, and the bible taught me that, noone except myself anf God can truly know my heart. So, I don't care if you don't believe me. But to answer your question about me having the ability to know about love at fourteen, or as a little girl, as you so sarcastically called me, among other names, that I will not repeat, out of respect for you, momma, no matter how young a person may be, he or she was born to know about love. I know I love you and daddy. You never questioned that before

" That's different Shirley, and you know it."

" No it's not momma, love is love! I may love you on a different level; but love is love! So, I have all the ability within me, to love at fourteen, as you do at your age momma. And as far as me not even being able to love myself yet; I do, but if I didn't that wouldn't be on me. A parent is suppose to teach a child how to love him/herself. So if I don't know how to love myself yet, then who's fault is that? Because as the old saying goes; there are no bad

children, just bad parents. And you can't tell me all this stuff about adults always being right and knowing more because they're adults, and that we, children need to always listen and we know nothing because we are young. Because that is not true!

It was an older person that said, Blacks had a smaller brain than Whites, so Black were less intelligent; so was that right?

It was an older person that said; it was morally wrong for a black and White to marry; so was that right?

It was an older person, that said the world was flat; so was that right?

It was an older person that said, if a woman is legitamately raped, she couldn't get pregnant; so was that right?

It was an older person said: a woman's place was in the home, staying barefoot and pregnat; so was that right?

It doesn't mean that you're always right because you're older! And older adults must understand that!

Momma, in your bible it states that wisdom comes from the mouths of babes. And I'm that babe, Because as babes, we haven't been destroyed yet, with the rigors of negativity in life. Nor have we been disappointed and burned by lost loves. We haven't been brainwashed to believe, that what your heart

desires and what your mind thinks, is possible to have. As babes, we haven't been intoxicated yet, with the blinders and limitations on ones mind, that older people place on them, because of their short comings and failures in life. So I say to you, as babes, we know true love in it's purest form; whereas you adults have forgotten what it truly is, from the mis-education of your experiences and from what your parents and older adults have told you. They placed blinders and limitations on your mind, and now you're trying to place them on mines.

But I'm following my heart, because it will never lead me wrong. You told me that; remember?"

Shirley walks off, just knowing the reprecussions of how she had just spoken to her mother, were about to be very dire. But they weren't. Her mother stood there, speechless for a moment, and just watched her daughter walk away. In her heart, she's knowing this is a young woman now, and that Shirley is right about everything she's just said to her. But in her mother's brain, she don't care. She's still sending Shirley's lil fast ass down south, because Shirley will not repeat her family's mistakes on her mother's watch. The bus will stop with Shirley, if her mother has anything to do about it. So Shirley is still going down south to live with family and to get away from Hareese, as Lucille calls him.

You see, sending young children who lives in the northern states, to he south, was a way of, "supposedly," bringing moral value to and seperating the child from the people, environment, behavior or disapproved actions. But what parents didn't understand back then and sometimes now is, irregardless of the child living location you have to treat, cater to, and raise the child's mental mentality, rather than trying to rush them awayfrom what they're being faced with. How else will they learn to deal an cope with the rigors of adult society. If you teach to run now, they'll only run forever.

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Shirley's parents found out, that she began having sex at only twelve years old, with the boy, they they scared her away from. They send her down south, as if the affair would be over. And the little girl and boy's love would be driven away.

The children try to keep their relationship going from long distance. And they do. They secretly talk over the phone almost every night. The little boy starts a hustle, in order to pay the secret phone bills, in order keep in touch with

One another.

They meet up on the summer breaks, once a week, whereas the little boy, Maurice has to hustle harder in order to pay for the weekend trips to where his mother believes, he's over to a friends house every weekend. Out of this entire weekend trip, they only spend a few hours together out of one day, but that's enough for them. They plan to do this until eighteen. It worked, until at sixteen, Shirley got pregnant once again.And now the family pays for and forces, upon Shirley a second abortion. From there things went haywire, for both of the children.

She becomes promiscuous to show that she could control her own body. This is a portion of the negative effects of a girl not believing that her body is any longer her owns. Whereas Maurice jumps into drug abuse and alcohol addiction to drown his sorrows; to use these consumptions as a coping mechanism, to deal with his pains.

Neither Shirley or Maurice will go on to have children. Her body is too damaged from the abortion, so she just can't have children anymore. And Maurice was beaten with bats, because he'd run off with the drugs of local drug dealers, who were younger boys, basically still children, where they had opened his legs and stumped his balls, to the point whereas they were nearly crushed, but damaged for life.

Shirley had been raped numerous times in her life, since those days of innocent love, by some of the same uncles and preachers that told her and her family that she wasn't old enough to know what true love was, while she was sixteen and seventeen. She was being statutorily raped by pastors and preachers, sometimes even in threesomes. She does this, because they gave her mother the counsel of how to deal with the situation of getting Shirley an unwanted abortion, on two seperate occassions and telling Lucille, Shirley's mom how Lucille could still get into heaven, behind that. So, thi s was to really get back at her mother and the wives of the pastors and preachers who called her all kinds of names, behind her back, whereas even they had threesomes with her, at the age of sixteen. Showing they're hypocracy, as human beings, and saintly people.

Years go past and neither Shirley nor Maurice could ever find true love again, period. Until at fifty years of age, Maurice finally goes to prison, and Shirley could finally find him, by doing a google search, as she had done until she found him.

She contacts him. They rekindle their love. He repairs her emotionally, through letters, as she repairs him with simply the power of words.

This was able to occur, because Shirley and Maurice's aborted daughter's, worked from the spiritual realm, and asked God, if they would have permission to bring their parents back together. And they did. They sent their father to prison in order that, their mother would find him. This is an example of , everything happens for a reason.

" So what would go on to happen to them?" Velvet signs to counselor Mosley. " Does he get out of jail; do they live happily ever after? Do they make everyone regret what they'd done to them as children?"

" well Velvet, no, he doesn't have the chance of reuniting with her, as a free man, ever again. In fact he dies in prison, at an early age of fifty-one, and she die only two years later; he of a heart attack, and she of multiple strokes. His parents believes that he died from the harshest points of life that prison takes on a person who knows that he will never come home again. And her family believes that her strokes had stemmed from years of doing drugs and alcohol abuse. That she'd brong it onto herself, but believed that it was God simply bringing them home. But Shirley Jean and Maurice's friends and other family members all believed that they'd both died from a broken heart, of not being able to be with one another. And that death was their escape from lonliness, as well as their only way of being together again."

Velvet signs aggressively, with a frown on her face, so that both, Tim and Louis knows that she is extremely frustrated and angry.

" why do parents do these things?! Children do love! They do! Everyone loves, at one point or another! Why can't people see that?! Why couldn't their parents see that?! Why didn't they?! And counselor Mosley, you said that, losing their unborn child, through forced abortions, cause all of that undeniable pain and turmoil in their lives, right? But they were both so very young,; why weren't they just able to bounce back from that, in their youthness? Especially Maurice?! I didn't know that would effect a man, better known a young boy that much."

" Velvet, losing his child destroyed him It destroyed him so much, that it took him hours to walk to school, whereas it usually only took 20-30 minutes. He was in a slumber. A calm demeanered kid, now ready and willing to fight at the drop of a dime. A kid who once respected all adults and authoritative figures, now a rebel against them all. A straight "A" student, except in history class, whereas he didn't put in much effort, now cares less about what grade he gets, and what employment he is offered, upon graduating; if he even graduates. Their parents, making the love of his life, have an abortion, wrecked him! And demasculated him, because he could never look into the eyes of Shirley Jean ever again,

ever again, knowing that he had failed being able to protect her and their unborn child. Because even in his young mind, he knew that to protect, is one of the most essential duties, of a man to his household.

And Shirley Jean, she wasn't any better! She was so distraught, that she couldn't stop crying. In her mind, she blamed Maurice for not protecting her and their child. She cursed him, and wished that he would be killed as well; but she didn't really mean it, because in the same thoughts, she wished and longed for him to be by her side, holding her, comforting her, letting her know that everything would be alright between them, and for them both.

But she was also, a mess humanly. Humanly, she felt that she didn't even own her own body. She didn't even own her own child's life, whom she and Maurice's bodies had created! It was like, when you give a child a gift, and once you get upset with the child you take the gift back, saying, that was his or her punishment. The child then realizes that the toy doesn't really belong to them. It belongs to the one who can give it and take it away. So what does the child usually do once they realize and begin to feel like this? They may still enjoy it, but they begin not to value it as much, because the know that at any given time, someone, in authority, could come and take it away from them. And most children, when they get

point of realization about the property which was given to them, but is not theirs, they begin to willfully destroy it. Why; because if you want to take it back again, they don't really care anyway, because they've done you one better, they've severely damaged it, so it's not worth much now anyhow.

And this is how Shirley Jean began to feel about her own body. Her parents had given it to her, in giving her birth, but over and over again, she's realized that it wasn't hers to own, because at will, her family takes it back and does with it, what the please. So she planned on destroying it. So that the next time someone took it away from her, it would be worth nothing anyway, so she felt that they could go ahead and have it. "

" Counselor, Shirley Jean and Maurice, really felt that they'd killed their babies? "

" Yes Velvet, they did."

" But it was just an abortion! And we all know that life doesn't start at conception, counselor Tim!"

" Maybe not to you Louis, but what about to the other billion plus, to two billion people who think and feels that it does? Are they wrong for feeling this way? Are Shirley Jean and Maurice wrong for feeling that their child's life began once their sperm fertilized their egg?

Were they wrong for feeling that, to force them to live through someone else terminating that life, that she and he have created, is in fact a murder? Are they wrong Louis?

Thing is, some people believe as you do, that life doen't begin at conception; but I don't think you could ever tell a mother and father, who loses that fertilized egg that.

Just as, there are many people who believe that forcing these two children to have an abortion, was for their own good. And that it would enrich their lives in the long run; that these two young parents, just don't know it yet. That they'll get over it, they're still young; when they get older, they won't even remember this, and they'll thank their parents for it later. And sorry to tell most parents; that isn't the case. As wasn't the case with Shirley Jean and Maurice."

Louis speaks, agreeing with Velvet;

" I feel what Velvet is saying; that wasn't right for the parents to interfer with true love, regardless of how young or how old the people who are in love. But counselor,please tell me that the next story is a little more happier and upbeat, because you have Velvet over here crying on my shoulders, and it wasn't a good ending to be a love story."

" Well Louis, whoever told you that all love stories shall end happily? That's only in a children's fairytale book, or a Tyler Peryy movie, or a Terry McMillan's romance novel. But eal life, was just a little bit more complicated than an Hour and forty-five minute movie or a two hundred and fifty page book. Life, is what we make it out to be. And sometimes, many won't make it out to be as they wish it could be. But the answer to your question is, yes. This second story will be alot different than the first, and a bit more upbeat, yet the story-lines are similar, all except, it was in the year of 1914, and between two consenting adults. Adrian Spates, who was thirty - eight years old and a established lawyer, born and raised in Chicago, Illinois, at a time where Black were not the favorite sons, as human beings, better known as attorneys. But Adrian was a break out, strong and intelligent, defiant, and held his own in every way that a man is suppose to.

In 1914 it had been taught that Blacks were nothing more than ex-slaves, scavenging for a tiny piece of the American pie. But that was the furthest thing from the truth, in the east, the west, the north, and the south. And this attorney was the proven fact of it all. And his unavowed to, better half, was a gorgeous, dark complexion, Jamaican born, thirty-eight year old, named, Taneya Mitchell, who once

lived in New York city, but had moved down to a newly established Chicago, to take up a nurse's job, as well to find this big shot Chicago lawyer who had come to Harlem one evening with Paul Robinson, being introduced as an attorney, who aspires to be an author and poet, when he grows up, so they joke. She instantly feel in love with him. And after he recited this poem that he wrote called, Cada Dia Cada Noche (everyday and every night), she wanted him badder than america wanted a cure for turburcolosis and polio, in those days. And she sought after him! She will never forget that poem and the night they had afterwards. A poem that still resonate with her mind;

You are always on my mind-
Everyday... and every night...
You are always on my mind (!)
Listening to my thoughts of you,
Making me fall madly in love with you,
Even more than I already am.
Invisioning holding you tightly,
And making love to you nightly;
Our thoguhts so inviting,
And emotionally so enticing;
That I think of you,
Even more but-

I WAS NOT MEANT TO BE ALONE

More than anything...
It makes me want to live with you,
In my mind,
So that I would never have to live,
Without you,
Ever again...

You are always on my mind,
Cada dia cada noche...
" Everyday and Every night..."

You are always on my mind Baby-
Every day and every night...
You are always on my mind (!)
So much that,
My thoughts seem as if they're trapped,
And my fantasies seem as though they're always of you.
My nights are filled with sleepless hours,
Cause my mind keeps racing to this
Love that's ours.
And my heart keeps racing,
Cause my thoughts keep chasing,
The woman that I love,
And the fantasy that my mind

Just keeps remaking...

Baby (!),
You are always on my mind (!)
Cada dia...Cada noche...
" Every day and every night...."

After that poem, she was hooked. She had looked into his eyes and he'd looked into hers, all the while he was reciting it to her. There was an instant connection between the two. And the conversation ensued effortlessly, all the way into the next morning, through coffee and through him walking Taneya home.

The hands that touched her, and the hands that touched his, seemed to entangle in physical energy, one from the other, as if their energetic vibes were of handcuffs that wouldn't allow them to let one anothers hands go, in order to say goodbye. And they're eyes were magnetically charged and transfixed for neither to blink,hoping not to miss, even one miniscule moment of the other. As their bodies auras, in pink and red vibrations, grasped and cluthched, onto each others, to hold on as long as they could, before their physical flesh were commanded by the tissued brains of one to walk away, her from him or him from her.

So she had to follow this connection ! And although he was running from love, she was running towards it; chasing it with every bit of passion that she had, that God had compacted into her tiny, womanly frame.

When she made it to Chicago, they made so much love, over and again for days, for weeks, for months. But Adrian never misled Taneya at all. He'd always told her, since they've met in Harlem, that he wasn't one to settle down, and that he didn't know if he ever would.

But as many women do, Taneya was convinced that she would change his mind! But would she?

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One day he had this huge case, down in Washington D.C., in front of the United States Supreme Court. He was noticably nervous and shaking in his boots, because although he'd argued many big cases before, he'd never argued in front of the most important court in the country. Plus, it seemed that things were crumbling in front of him, even though the sun was actually shining bright on his argument. But you can't tell this to a person who's nervous, because everything that happens will seem like a curse or a sign of proportional

downfalls. And we all gets this way at one time or another, so it's good if we have someone in our lives as a calming agent. And Taneya was at this point Adrian's calming agent.

This was at a time before the internet, texting and emailing. Adrian could have called her, though; butsince it was so late, he figured that it would be more considerate not to call her, and even more therapeutic, for him to write a letter to her. So that what he did. In his letter to Taneya he wrote;

" Dear Taneya,

A new year is fast approaching, and my New Years Resolution is starting right now. That resolution is, of I getting to know you more, and as best I could, this year (smile).

Taneya, I'm up early this morning. It's a few minutes after midnight. I'm sitting in my hotel room, in this great Washington, D.C., at the moment, just awaiting my next court date, of December 12th. There's a lot on my mind, because we're suppose to conclude this argument. But the thoughts of you are somehow seeming to sooth all of my worries (smile).

Satan has jumped in on me though; or maybe not, maybe it's the Most High paving another way. I mean, I came down here Wednesday, and could you believe the train station has lost all of my luggage?! Books, changes of clothing,

soaps, deodorants, shaving material, extra money and alas!..my legal documents, that I need to represent to the courts.

Yes, I have nothing to go into court with, except myself. And I have no other clothes, besides the clothes on my back and the money I have in my pocket.

But as you can see, I'm writing you this letter, so I can tell you that, the Most High has most definately made a way out of what I deemed at the moment, no way. I have luckily kept one uncashed check, in my wallet, which helped me buy everything that I've lost in my luggage. All except my legal paperwork.

Though at the same time, I'm rewriting my presentation for the court, from scratch. But now I'm wondering, is me losing my property a new thing, or a sign to get another court date. Or was this just another sign to rewrite my presentation. And that's the thought that I'm wrestling with right now.

It's extremely mind boggling, to rewrite this presentation, because some of its facts of law that none in Illinois who's fighting the same issue, has found yet! So I have to argue it precisely, in order to pull a rabbit out of my hat, wa-la move in court. As well, other issues that I have before the court haven't been argue before either; not in Illinois law, anyway! So it has to be delivered and argued right!

Not to mention, that three other top flight attorneys and a ton of inmate are watching this struggle that I'm fighting, because if I can pull this off, it will open many door for better treatment to prisoners who are imprisoned within the confines of The United States Of America. Plus it will create entire avenues to have them being treated as human beings, rather than as free laborers. But, no pressure, right (smile)?

But even if this doesn'tgo as planned, I have other things in the works, that'll create the same results.

Taneya, a friend of mine's told me, about a week ago, that he believed that I am going to find a way to have these men and women no longer in chain gangs, working as chained free labor, building railroads and busting rocks on the side of towns.

I dig that he has belief in me, Taneya! Because I have that same belief in me! Taneya, I don't know how to lay down and just take it, as they would say. All I've ever known how to do is fight, struggle and work to get what I want out of life. My grandfathers embedded that fight in me. They never laid down for anyone Taneya. One of my grandfathers gave me a lesson of manhood that I will never forget. I was four years old and he took me fishing. As a child does,I was playing around in the car, eating sandwiches,all the while

the fish were stealing my bait. my grandfather kept walking over to the small pond, where I was. And he kept asking me, have I caught any fish? He'd check the fishing rod and see that the fish had stolen the worm. So he'd tell me; "hey, I'm not going to sit here and watch you. But you can't keep letting the fish keep stealing your bait." But I was only four years old, so I kept playing around, and the fish kept stealing.At last, my grandfather gave me his final lesson of the day.

The first lesson was, noone should have to watch over a man, to make sure he does what he has to do to feed himself and to provide for his family. The second lesson was, he sat me down, looked into my little eyes and told me; " whatever you catch, is what you're eating. Now I'm going to give you one more worm. If you let the fish steal it, you're not eating tonight." And he left.

I watched that pole, and was estatic when I caught my first fish, ever! It was a tiny one too. I mean, I could bare ly see the thing! But I was excited because I caught! My grandfather congradulated me, packed all the equipment into the car, and we went home. He took the fish to my grandmother to clean and cook. He gave her his, and then gave her my one little fish. He told her, that was all I would eat tonight, and nothing else.

Grandma, being grandma, whispered not to worry. And that was the first, and only time I saw my grandfather get stern with my grandmother. He put his deep voice on, and told her, that would be all I at that night, and he meant it!

And that second lesson me ; that a man only gets and deserves out of life, what he works to have. And I live by that till this very day, Taneya.

So I have faith in me, Taneya. I just wish I had a better half who has as much faith in me, as I have in myself. You know Taneya, I was married before, and when my wife divorced me, I was doing a year in a hospital bed, bandaged from head to toe, tubes all in my throat, down my nose, and in places I need not describe. I was nearly dead. She came to the hospital and told me, she couldn't do it any longer, because she had accepted the fact that I was never coming back home to her, and even if I did, I would never be the same man that she fell in love with anyway; and she couldn't do it.

Taneya, me not making it, was the initial diagnosis that doctors had given to me and to my family. Thing is, she believed them; I didn't. And look at me now, I'm doing twice as good as I was before I went into the hospital, from the car wreck, and now I'm on the verge of making history in the biggest court that the world has known in modern times.

I want a woman who, when I'm down, she will help me get back up. A woman who has the potential to be well equipped, to place the family on her shoulders, to carry us on. A woman who will bring something to the table, other than good looks and great sex; because I can walk down any street in the world and find one more beautiful than the next; and one who has a greater sexual ability than the other.

I want to find a woman who, if for some strange reason, she has a dramatic accident in her life and she's no longer physically the same or able...that I'd still find her gorgeous. Because I'd know that the beauty inside of her, radiates outside of the physical; which makes her, still, the most beautiful woman in the world to me.

I want a woman who, if I find myself physically decapitated or unable...she'd still love me.

A woman who'll say that, money is not an object in a relationship, because then I'll know that she's in it for me and my heart; not for the size of my wallet.

A woman who will live with me in a cardboard box, a penthouse or a mansion, all in the same.

A woman who'll tell me, that she loves me, as much as I tell her.

Taneya, I want a complement who believes in me enough to say, " Aye, my husband is going to make it all alright for us. He just will have to find a way ",and she be confident that I will assuredky find that way.

A complement, who believes in me through it all. Not just when times are good and or when they are convenient for her.

I want a complement who, when I go out into the world, and that world fucks me up, something decent! She will wait for me to come back to her; she will patch me up; bathe me; feed me to get me back healthy and strong; make love to me like never before; then in the morning, she'll walk me back to the front door; give me a big hug, and a nice, wet, tongue deep down my throat kiss (smile), because she knows that I'm going right back at that same world, that had just fucked me up. But in her heart, she believes in me enough to wait on me to come back home. Because she knows that I will bring home a dinner meal to put on the table; no matter how scarce or how fattening; she believes in me enough to know, that I will not let her go hungry. That's the type of woman that I want.

I want a woman who, if all I could bring home was enough for her to eat, she'd share it with me, in order to let me know, that we're doing this thing called life,

together.

But, will I ever be able to let another woman into my heart again, Taneya? I don't know. But if I was ever able, I think that she would be you. Yes you, my Moonlight Goddess... (smile)."

See,Adrian always loved her. But he was just afraid to go through what he'd already went through with the two most important women in his life; his mother and his ex-wife.

When Taneya first got the letter her heart fluttered and a smile came across her face so bright, as it always does when it comes to Adrian. It always delights her to either hear from him or to see him. And as she read these words in his letter, she thought about him, as she always does; that she was one step closer to proving to him that he and her were the soulmates, that he should give his one last try to. Taneya found a card that fit her nicely, a card to say exactly what she wanted to say to him, in response. She hoped the card would work.

It was feminine in nature, but strong. She knew Adrian like green, due that it was the color of money, and her favorite color was burgundy, because it was girly, commanded attention, so she made sure the card and envelope matched their personalities.

The card was light green in color, with money green flowers and designs around the edges. It looked nearly as vines encasing a greenish reflection of the sunshine. The envelope was white, but with a little of her special touches of creativity she turned it burgundy, by mixing red and purple ink into a bowl of hot water. This turned the ink into a burgundy dye, that she would dip the white envelope into, turning it a pretty shade of burgundy and hanging it to dry in front of the open oven.

Though the words of this card was so profound, they had to, atleast, move him an inch towards her. It was like the poet had reached into her heart and verbalized Taneya's feelings for Adrian, at this moment, when the poem of the card stated;

" If I could turn back the hands of time
I wouldn't let another woman have you
In order to turn her back on you
And leave you
In your time of needing someone to
Stick by you
And to be by your side to have a
Companion
With what you're going through.

If I could turn back the hands of time
I would love you enough to protect you
From the hurt and pain you've had to
Go through
In order to find yourself...
Though in the process,
You were loving her...
But she was only loving herself.

If I could turn back the hands of time,
I would show you what a real woman
Would do,
When times get hard and it's just me
And you
Depending on only one another and I have to
Carry you
In order to get us through
Though never looking down on you
Never throwing it back in your face,
At you
Never thinking you weren't a strong
Enough dude
Never losing faith in you

Never trying to degrade you
Just because it was my turn to
Bare the weight of pulling us through

If I could turn back the hands of time,
I would show you...
That you were always mines....

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" Her card made it to him only a day after he had lost his argument in front of the United States Supreme court, as it happened. He took a beating. I mean, it's 1922 in the United States Of America. A time when racial discrimination was rampant and high. But he stood firm throug h it all and stood toe-to-toe without faultering.

He was wounded after that war though. And her words were like tiny finger tips massaging his heart. How was she able to do this when he needed it the most; is what his mind said. But thankyou was the word from his heart. But the prostitute, who lay next to him, the one who tried to erase the battlefrom his mind, wanted more of his body.

So this easy feeling that Taneya had worked so hard to make sure he had, was short lived. It was interferred with by someone who, know matter how hard she tried, could never make Adrian feel whole; Yet the woman that he fears to vow to does, and that woman is none other than Taneya Mitchell."

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" In the back of his mind, he always knew that he was a scarred man, and emotionally he gave it every - thing he had to protect Taneya from his damage being spewed over, from his life to hers. It wouldn't be fair to an innocent woman, who only wanted to be in love with him, to feel all of the pain and insecurity that he held inside himnself, because of what other women had done to him. How would that be fair? She didn't deserve that; and he felt as though he didn't deserve her.

But Taneya wasn't the type of woman who gave up. She believe in love. And she knew that whatever was keeping Adrian from completing their cycle of life and becoming avowed to one another, she could conquer. Whatever that was paining him, she felt that she could soothe it. And whatever it was

that was in his past that had broken him, making him unwilling to love her, she felt that she could it.

Just as when he'd come home from Washington, D.C., after learning that the United State Supreme Court actually ruled against him, in a five to four ruling, as it's final rule of law, asto the humane treatment of prisoners. He came back, head down and bodily moping. Good thing Taneya had come over to his home, to greet him, unexspectedly. Because if she hadn't, who knows how he would've rebounded this seemingly defeat.

As a woman usually does, she knew exactly what was wrong with him. She said nothing about it, but instead asked him if he had eaten any good meals, since he'd been away. His reply was, no. And she knew just what to do; fried rice with vegetables, eggs and sauce; toasted bread buttered nicely with a tap of sugar sauteed into the butter and nice freshly squeezed orange juice with a secret hint of lemon, a few cubes of ice and nice sweet drops of sugar, melting smoothly with the taste of honey.

After eating he moped into such a slumber that Taneya had to speak and explain to him why he should be proud of the accomplishment he'd made, as well as the attention he'd placed upon the inmates causes, that probably would've been unnoticed to the public hadn't it been for him.

Taneya knew all the right words to say at every given moment. And soon after, they made wild passionate love, for the thousandth time.

As he rests, Taneya would leave him, to be alone, and awiat his call in the morning."

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" Hello," Taneya says with a groggy voice, as it's two in the morning and she's actuall still fast asleep, but wants to speak with Adrian every chance she gets.

" Taneya, why do my heaviest thoughts of you come around midnight? I mean, I know that man, woman and child are synonymous to the sun, the moon and the stars; and that woman is the material matter that the moon represents. And I'm understanding that, one of the moon's sole purpose is too emit light onto earth, as a reflection from the sun, in order that man may have light upon this barren land,in the midst of the midnight hour, so that the darknes may not prevail him. But you've taken the case Taneya, because here I am in this barren land of loneliness, where I sit awaiting my soulmate, the love of my life, that is all so anticipated,

To Be Con't...

"Velvet"

with mere glimmerings of miracle. Where four walls stand before me, as gaurd to my heart and the only life I see moving outside of the loveless grand canyon is another concrete wall. see, nothing else, but constantly hearing dozens of voices of strangers, that I cannot see, echoing throughout this shell of an empty lover's tunnel. Voices who are echoing out in hope that someone, whom they cannot even see nor know of their existance will hear them and echo as well, bringing them the solace of knowing that there is someone else in the thralls of love searching with them, and that they aren't alone."

" Adrian, you know you don't drink like that; are you drunk or something?! I know you haven't been doing those young folks drugs again? You know what happened to yo last time."

" What was that?!"

" I caught you humping my teddy bear, the one you won for me at the carnival, talking about how fluffy and soft I'd gotten. I still can't look at that bear the same, because I'm jealous that she's had sex with my man.

" No, no, I'm not drunk, and I'm not high either. I just wanted you to know that; even though I run from you emotionally, I know and appreciate, that I don't have to echo for another, because even if you left me today,

here, in my mind, I have my thoughts of you that brings me solace. Thoughts of you, whom bring me light to my darkest moments. Taneya, you are truly... my moonlight in my midnight hours. Yeah, you're my moonlight! That's what I'll begin calling you sometimes; I'll call you my Moonlight Goddess!"

She lay quiet, just holding the phone, awake now, but barely breathing, because she doesn't want to miss not even one tone of his voice, not syllable of his words, not one vibration of energy that flows from within him, inwhich manifests itself outwardly to convey a message for another human being to comprehend,and on this day, that meant to her.

But he lay silent as well, hoping that she'd missed atleast one portion of his vulnerability so that he could turn it all around, as if she'd misunderstood him. His grandfather had always told him, that as a man, you have to think before you speak. And his grandmother always told him, to follow and say what was on his heart and not what was inside his brain, because the brain will decieve, but the heart tell no lies. And if you follow it, it will never lead you wrong.

But Adrian, wasn't having it. Even though his grandmother's wisdom rang true, his grandfather's knowledge, in his life, at this moment, rang supreme. He had to hold his gaurd. He couldn't break now, for Taneya, and go back on his word to

self, never to fall in love again. And if he did, he would never show it, because once you've shown it to a woman, she's like a shark that smells blood, she's running all over you. And he couldn't have that any longer. He couldn't have a woman trample all over his heart.

You see, a lot of woman don't know, that good men are good men naturally. It's in their hearts, it's we know. But a man's heart is not nearly as strong as a woman's. And that's why we fear committment and womanize most of the time. Not because we're dogs, as women usually say, but because we've been hurt somewhere in our lives before, and we don't ever want to feel that feeling before! Or we've had someone close that we know or have seen, get hurt, and we watched him in pain, and we vowed to stay far away from whatever had made him so destroyed as a man, because when a man hurts, it doesn't look pretty! So, if love does this; we want none of it. Even though in our hearts we do, because it's the natural order of things.

But in our brains, we're no longer seeking love. And most times, as the world knows, our brains, as men often over power what we know to be right in our hearts.

And a lot of women may think, that's not fair to them, because they never hurt the guy who's running from committment.

But women must know this about most men, our hearts are delicate, so when we finally fall in love, we love hard. So once our hearts are broken, just once, we may be done. Broken twice, it's over for real then ! See, a woman can love a thousand times and have her heart broken a million more. And although each heartbreak may alter the way she loves, she could always find a way to emotionally rebound and love a trillion more times, searching for that one man who will save, protect and cherish her being. Look at Mary J. Blige.

But with a man, if you break his heart once, he'll find himself breaking the hearts of innocent women. And most of the time, this one heartbreak occurred in kindergarden, on the schoolyard playground. And as women, you may think this is absurd, but for men, this is our absolute reality. So I hope you're listening, Velvet?

And Adrian was no different, his first heartbreak was the one woman that should have never hurt him emotionally; his mother.

She was a wild-flower! I'm talking cursed like a sailor and was more brutal than a country bar drunkard. She knew no affection, because she, herself wasn't raised with affection. And She crushed Adrian's heart over and over again.

She use to always call him names to demean him. Scary; ugly ass; punk; you're a little sissy girl; and her favorite, with your black nappy headed ass!

Adrian, struggled to stay emotionally strong. But how can you stay firmly emotionally strong, when the one person that is suppose to strengthen you, tries her hardest to weaken you.

And even though Adrian didn't know it, as a young boy, but realized as a young man that he tried hard to satisfy her. He fought some of the biggest boys to prove he wasn't a punk or sissy; he took every dare that anyone gave him, to prove he wasn't scary, and he even processed and burned his hair so that he would no longer be nappy headed, and pronounced every syllable that he said properly, to not sound as all the other Blackmen in his community, so that she would stop calling him black in a negative way. But even with him doing all of this, as a teenaged boy, she left him to his grandfather, telling him that she never wanted him anyway and that noone else would want him either.

This pushed him into the arms of his ex-wife, a woman whom he was attracted to, but forced himself to love. He married her because she accepted him; yet he knew her ethics and morals in life didn't meet his. They were always meant to

be two ships passing. They were never suppose to try and become one. They didn't fit. The only thing that fit, was she liked him sexually, and he liked that she liked him sexually. This sexual prowess kind of evened out the hate and disdain that his mother had for him as a boy; it made her wrong, someone would want him.

But in the end, maybe his mother was right after all. Maybe noone would ever love him. Not his sex nor what he could do for them physically or monetarily; but love him, the person.

This all hit him like a rush after his divorce, and he promised himself that he'd never let a woman into his heart again. No matter how much his heart dersired; no matter how good of a woman that she may be, he would never allow her to penetrate the walls that would keep his heart from breaking again. Ever...

So when he met Taneya, it was nothing that she had done wrong, or hadn't done right that made him not want to vow to her. It was simply, his heart probably couldn't take another pounding. And although it felt different and totally right, when being around Taneya, he just wasn't willing to take the chance.

That's why he devoided those feelings with work,

prostitutes, or talk with the fellaz of womanizing ways, although he never even believed in womanizing in the first place.

Adarian, lived on two ends of the spectrum of life and love; on one hand he wanting love and knew that it was to be something that every man needed to be complete; and on the other hand he wanted nothing to do with love, because it had never been fair to him in this life-time, nor any others that he knew about. But Taneya was his soulmate, and he knew this in his heart. But in his brain, she would be just another to wait on her chance to hurt him and trample on what's left of his heart and his belief in love.

And women may think that, because a man runs from love he doesn't think that love exists! But he may; just as Adrian does. Adrian just doesn't believes it exists for him. He believed that maybe he missed out on her, when God sent her his way? Maybe in this life, he's being punished for something he'd done in another life? But all-in-all he was in love with the thought of being in love; he just felt that he'd never find that one true love that was meant for him, and that was formed *from him*, she, which is his missing thirteenth rib. Nor was he willing to ever find out if she truly existed, if it meant that he would have to put what was left of his heart on the line to find her. And in that conversation Adrian laid

out the rest of his fears.

Velvet signs, while looking at Louis, saying sarcastically; " a man with fears...wow...who would have ever thought that would be possible? Hun? Let me think, did he fear what other people would say about him, like other people that I know?"

" Well, as a therapist, I can say fear. But Adrian didn't call it fear. He stopped short of saying that. But he did go on to say... "

" Taneya, the only reason I won't vow to you is because, I'm looking for something within you. I'm looking for something that I don't think exists. I'm looking for certainty. Certainty that the next time that I shall avow to any woman, it would be forever. I want to be sure that if my life was to take a drastic turn, she'd be there for me, the same way I would be there for her, if the shoe was on the other foot. A certainty, that if I were to pass from this physical form first, that she would never fall in love again. That she would wait to reunited with me on the other side, in our spirits, as I would be waiting patiently, on the other side for her to return to me. And I know this sounds strange, but it's what I think Taneya. It's what I feel.

See, I don't want to be lonely on the other side, living an eternity alone, when I prepared to have an ever-

lasting love, with someone. Taneya, me waiting for her on the other side, expecting her to return to me, for it to cease because she has fallen in love again, with someone other than me, with someone after me, simply because I could no longer b be in the presence of her flesh, she becoming weak to her earthly flesh and blood temptations. And if she can't love me enough, in my absence of her flesh, in order to return to me, in our natural form, of spirit, then I'd rather be alone on earth, as I will ultimately be alone in spirit.

So the woman I avow to. I don't want to place that burden of her having to be avowed to two men, because of the situation that has left her on earth. Because even if the woman could never love another, the way that she loved me, though while she still remained on earth, she fell in love with him. Which means that whenever she may pass, from her fleshly life, she may in fact come to find me in spirit, in hopes that we will be reunited as one. But, what happens when the man, whom she fell in love with after me passes away,then seeks to find her in spirit ?This is a situation that I do not want to occur, because I'm never going to share the woman whom I avow to... wether we're here on earth...or rather we're away in spirit."

" But Adrian, I want the same thing;

59

Baby, I love you so much,
That if you shall die first...
I'll never love again.
I'll stay loving you, and only you,
Until I die,
And we meet again in heaven...
For noone can ever love me again,
As you have,
Down here on earth.
And noone can ever make me feel,
As I've felt, in my years of loving you.
For you have made my heart what it is,
From what it was;
And I appreciate that because...
I was at my bottom;
And you, single handedly,stopped my little heart,
From drowning.
When no other man could heal me,
You found a way to make me know,
That you loved me.
And that is something that I truly appreciate;
And that... I will always cherish.
And that's why,

Baby I love you so much,
That if you shall die first...
I'll never love again;
I'll stay loving you only,and only you.
Until I die,
And we shall meet again...
In heaven..."

Louis chimes in, along with Velvet agreeing with his inquiry; " counselor, so you know that was a profound statement that she gave to him in reply to his greatest fear of being alone after death and in the spirit world. And if she would've given me that answer, I think that would've convinced me to avow to her. So what did he do? Did he bend, atleast... or did he finally break down to give her what she wanted and what he actually needed, which was a better half!"

" No Louis, he responded to her most compelling statement as he always had. he tried to push her away by saying; Taneya, truthfully speaking, I want you more than anything! I love the woman that you are. And I want that, and need that in my life. But you need to truly give all of that to a man who's able to love it. To a man who's willing to love it, and who's capable of appreciating

every-single-bit of it. To a man who you know will always protect it and cherish it, because he knows that it is too important, and too precious for him to ever lose.

Taneya, you need to give all of that fabulous woman that you have housed within you, to a man that you know will have your back. to a man whom you can feel comfortable knowing that, if you were to fall backwards in life, for any reason at all (!), you'd never worry able even an inkling of dust ever touching you, because he'll never allow your back to touch that ground. But Taneya, I can't offer you that, because right now in my life, I don't have the strength, the will, the courage to give to you all that man was made to be to a woman; due that without there ever being a test of desaster in my life, as had occurred to me while I was married to my ex-wife, and like her, in such an instance I don't know if you'll be to me, all that God made a woman to be to me. And Taneya, truthfully speaking, again if I may; I'm not willing to give that of me anymore, without being certain that I will recieve the same."

" But you speak of your past Adrian. You speak of Your life when you were young and in marriage. But you're older now, you know better, and you make wiser decisions. And, when you were younger, you attracted what you put out. So that was the type of woman who gravitated

to you. And you accepted her, because of your insecurity. But now you're different, so you have attracted different. Adrian, I'm different than her.

Adrian, it's like, if you were a muslim mosque, but you had crosses of Jesus hanging over every wall and door. Adrian, who do you think you will attact; muslims or christians? Christians, right?! Why! Because that's the image that you're putting out about your mosque. But when you remove all of the crosses and replace them with crescent moons and stars, you'll then begin to attract what you truly are, a muslim mosque.

And that was you, Adrian. You weren't representing inside, what and who God wanted you to be. So that inner misrepresentation of who you were meant to be, shined outwardly and attracted the mate of that particular and current potential. But now, you are being, as a person, inwardly and outwardly who God meant for you to be. So don't you think that God would magnetically pull to you your true soulmate? The woman whom he parted from you in heaven, so that you may find her again on earth? And that's what I saw in you, that first day that I sat eyes on you in New York. Paul Robinson introduced you as, an aspiring poet and author. And when you spoke, you had me, without touching

me, with anything else besides your words; yours spirit.

Adrian, we...are suppose to be one. You were suppose to find me, and I was suppose to find you."

Velvet waves her hands, with impatience; signing to counselor Mosley, as she calls him; " Counselor Mosley, so does he ever give in? Does he ever avow to her? Do they ever become one?"

" No Velvet, they will never as they were meant to be. Taheya would finally give up and move on with her life. But she never finds another man that made her feel the way Adrian made her feel. So she would grow to the ripe old age of seventy-nine, but never give a vow.

Adrian, would pass away eighteen years earlier. Still frequenting bars and prostitutes, but never trying to get married. He was too scarred emotionally to ever love again in the way that Taneya would need and truly deserve. So he dies how no man should ever die; alone. "

" See, counselor Mosley," Velvet signs, " I have an uncle like that named, Jabarrius. And the only woman he would ever give his heart to anymore is to his daughter, Wanda. And I always tell him, to find a good wife because no man was meant to die alone."

Louis interjects; " well then, won't you take your own advice, Miss Steve Harvey, with your, Act Like A Woman Think Like A Man philosophies. "

" And won't you..."

" And this is why I used these two stories in this session with you, because I don't think that you two get who you truly are to each other. and how important it is that you two avow, one to the other.

I want you two, to think about the lives and stories of Shirley Jean Collins and Maurice Benjamin, as well as the lives and stories of Taneya Mitchell and Adrian Spates.

But for now I need both of you to stand up. And I need you to put your hand onto her heart. And I need for you to put your hand onto his heart as well. Do you feel the beat? Now I need you two, to be quiet, and close your eyes. Just listen for a minute."

He taps Velvet, to regain her attention after two or three minutes, and asks them both; " now do you feel how they beat just the same? One at a time; but at the same pace, so that your hearts will never miss a beat? Now I want you two, to come closer together, so that your bodies are touching, stomach to stomach, with hands remaining on each others hearts, but now putting your face on the other side of hers, so that you two are now jaw to jaw, and your

ear is to her mouth, and her mouth is to your ear. And I want you two, to pay close attention, to not only how both of your hearts beat one at a time; at the same pace, but as well, how every breath you breathe in, she's breathing out. How every-time her stomach pushes in, from breathing out; to fill that empty space, and to assure that your two bodies are always touching in a manner that makes you two, but one.

And we each, know that breath is life, so the reason why everytime you breathe in, she breathes out, is to be certain that you never go a moment without life. She is feeding you, and you are feeding her the most essential element of our lives, among earth; breath.

See, this is how you recognize your complement when you're down there on earth. See, when you're up here in sixth heaven, you know that you two are the masculine and feminine qualities that makes you once again whole. Up here, you two know that you began as one. It's when you chose to descend onto earth, into human form, that you would split to become two; one male and one female; one masculine and one feminine. And here in sixth heaven, you knew that down on earth, one would have to find the other if you were to ever be complete or whole again. But see,

earth has this strange way of causing you to deminish from being, All Knowing, to being all learning. And most of the human beings fail to understand the valuable meaning of, never put off for tomorrow. what you can do today. because, in your case, if you had've adhered to that message. you would have accepted his proposal, Velvet. And if you would have, your cousins, who were over to your home and had gotten extremely intoxicated, may I add; would not have gone home, next door to you, early and hungry. Therefore, they would have never left the gas stove on for hours. with no fire on, with only the gas seeping, causing their home to explode. And since it was so close to your home, it caused a domino effect, to cause the early ascention to heaven, of you two.

See, in the human form, we fail to understand a lot of things, and one is,that it is not always your time to go, because you die, as you young one have. Sometimes it's from the cause of human error, of human irresponsibility. And the irresponsibility of your cousins to cook, while so intoxicated, caused you two not to complete your final journey upon earth. See, when you descend to earth, you have purposes to fulfill. And if you pass away, in the human form, without fulfilling each of these purposes,

you have to re-enter the human form and relive the human experience all over again, until you complete your journey.

And this is the reason you're in sixth heaven instead of seventh; because you have fulfilled each and every purpose, except one. That unfulfilled purpose, is you have failed to find one another and become with each other, in vow; which a vow, is a seal of a union, which makes you two; one, comple and whole.

See, you two have been trying to complete this one final task for over one hundred years now and can't seem to do so. And I don't know why!

I I mean, the two stories that I've just told to you, Shirley Jean Collins and Maurice Benjamin, Adrian Spates and Taneya Mitchell, were stories of you two. About the past two lives, inwhich you two have been living and trying to fulfill the final purpose of becoming whole again.

This is a purpose, you must complete, before you will ever reach your completeness, your seventh heaven again.So when I send you down onto earth, in human form, I need you two to find yourselves. To find the masculine and feminine portions of yourselves. connect and vow to one another, so that you can become once again whole; so that you can become complete; so that you can become once again the one spirit

that you were in the beginning, in your seventh heaven, before you chose to journey upon the planet earth, in the human form.

So my question to you is; are you ready to descend unto earth once more, in order to fulfill your final purpose?"

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28 YEARS LATER, IT'S 2056 AT A CLUB CALLED, CARTHAGE

T, a young Black male 22 years of age and strappingly handsome, in his own way, spots a young Mexican Woman, who has this long brown hair, out-going personality, long legs and great smile, on the other side of the room. So he has to make his move, because this woman has ignited something in him that he has never felt before. It's like a magnetic charge is surging through his entire body, which has his stomach churning with butterflies and his toes with a tingle in them. So he has to make his way across the room to introduce himself:

" Excuse me, miss lady. I don't intend

interupt what you're doing. but my eyes are attracted to what they see. and what they see..."

" Bay. bye. You don't have to do all that. I heard that somewhere before anyway..." with laughter she says. " My name's Preciosa. What's yours Mr.my eyes are seeing lol."

So tell me;

What do you think of the story "VELVET"?

Did it hold your interest?

What part did you like more and why?

Was it too short, or was it just enough, but made you want to know more of what's to come next?

Was this book like any other book you've read before? If so, can you share the title? If not, can you tell me why it was different to you?

Did any character spark your interest more? Why?

Should I keep writing, or shall I give it up and keep my day job lol?

What would you rate the story line; 1 out of 10"? and why?

Do you want me to keep posting my writing of novels and poetry on this website? Why or why not?

Your critique is very valuable and I thank you for reading my words; so please do respond and also let me know if you would like for me to respond to your letter, or if you were just giving your opinion as to the story; and I need not reply.

Any other comments and responses are welcomed. I pray that your day goes as great as your heart wishes it to be.

Sincerely,

Martice S.Hanible
(Hanibal K-70069)
Hill Correctional Center
P.O.BOX 1700
Galesburg,IL.61402

P.S.
Please note that my name is spelled, HANIBAL by I.D.O.C. and anything dealing with it. Though my book, "TO KISS THE SOUL OF A WOMAN," is written under ~~the~~ my birth name spelling of, HANIBLE.

Martice

If you'd like a response, please enclose your return address on envelope and inside letter.