

Our Love Story

My Favorite



I had just finished college and, at my sister Pam's insistence, attended a Friday night college football game with her because she wanted me to meet Dave McCoy, one of the players where she and her future husband Rick attended and where Rick played as well. I found myself in the stands on that Friday night listening to more college girls than I could count calling Dave's name and yelling for Number 51. I leaned over to Pam and said, "Dave McCoy obviously doesn't need a girlfriend." She insisted we would be perfect for each other. At the end of the game, I left without meeting him because he was tied up with post-game obligations.

Prior to that night...

I had just "broken up" with someone whom I knew was probably not God's will for my life—not that there was anything "not right," just that he was "not the right one" for me and what I felt God wanted me to do in life. There were some tears. Okay, maybe more than some, and my dad told me that the next guy who asked me out, if he were a Christian, I had to go. Sure enough, a guy I knew from church soon called and asked me out for Saturday night of that next week. I knew without going that he wasn't the one either, but he was a Christian, and so I had to say yes.

But before Saturday night arrived...

Dave *also* called that week and asked me out for Saturday night. Oh no! I had to say I couldn't go because I already had a date, scheduled with the other guy from the same college! As it turned out, Dave said he could come to my church on Sunday night, then, when he was finished at his church on the other side of town, if that would work for me. I was impressed with this take-charge guy who was undeterred. The Saturday night date went nowhere, as expected.

And then it was Sunday night...

The sight of Dave McCoy walking down the aisle at my church that Sunday night. Oh my goodness! So good! Dressed in what looked to be a suit tailor-made for him that fit his muscles perfectly (he had looked good in his football uniform but it didn't come close to this look), a tie with a perfect knot, shined dress shoes, and walking with complete confidence and smelling like a million dollars, not to mention the absolute epitome of a gentleman, I have no words. I had been praying for the man I would one day marry since I was fifteen years old. I think my heart knew immediately that he was the one. Sometime later, he told me that he never forgot his first impression--how I looked, how I walked, what I wore, how I smelled so good, every detail.

It was a simple meeting. We went to Shoney's, a popular place back in the late 70's, ate supper and talked. Easy conversation. Even at our brief meeting that night after church, I knew he was someone I wanted to know more. He didn't kiss me that night. That was probably the respectable thing to do, but I remember thinking he had nice lips and wondered what it would be like if he had kissed me, and good grief, that cologne made him even more irresistible. Little did I know then that for forty more years I would get to enjoy his kisses and his cologne.

We've only just begun...

We started as a blind date and became the best of friends. We enjoyed each other's company more than anybody else's, and we had great conversations about literally everything. During the last two summers of college, he traveled with two different men's singing groups, and during the school year he traveled sometimes as well. I missed him so much. This was before cell phones, of course. Since I wasn't on campus anyway, I had to be creative, so every Sunday night when he arrived back to the college, there was a note and some type of treat or small gift on his pillow that I had one of his friends put there. He said he could hardly wait to get back to school on those travel weekends because he knew there would be something there for him from me.

By the time he started his last year of college, we were almost inseparable. I attended all of his football games, home and away, as much as possible. Since I had gone to a different college and wasn't on campus with him, I had no idea how many girls had been hoping to win his heart. At one of his games, a female student remarked, "I see you with Dave McCoy a lot. Are you his sister?" *Uh, that would be a no.* His mother said I got him because I "played my cards smart," when in reality I got him because I convinced him he couldn't live without me. Neither could I live without him. I was sure of that.

Even after we were engaged—and married—old girlfriends would occasionally appear out of the blue. One day when he picked me up from work, there was a sticky note with a name and phone number that his secretary had given him. He knew it would get a rise out of me. It was from one that I was pretty sure was

waiting for me to die. I immediately sparked when I saw it. “What’s this?!” Dave said, “She just wanted to know two things. She wanted to know if I’m happy and if you’re healthy.” He hadn’t called her back; he made that up just to see the fire in my eyes. It worked. I decided then and there that I was going to love him so well that I couldn’t be easily replaced. *Sorry, girls. He’s mine, now and forever.*

A lifetime together with him? Yes, please!

We had talked about getting married and prayed to know for sure it was God’s will. In 1981 he had surrendered to preach. During that same year, after being named Small College All-American, three professional football teams had scouted and wooed him, Dallas being the most persistent. All he had to do was show up for training camp in the spring. But he and I could never get peace about it, not even for a temporary career, since it would involve playing on Sundays. We had been told that almost all sports venues held their own services before games, but we knew that wasn’t God’s plan for us.

On September 24, 1981, he and I took a walk. We had planned to go out to eat that evening, but he decided we should go for a walk before we left for the evening. On the far side of the subdivision, we held hands and walked. I remember thinking how good it felt to enjoy such an everyday thing with him. There was a long stretch of road outside the subdivision that was a bit more private; and as we came to a city drain, we stopped to talk. I stepped up on the concrete slab so that I could be closer since he was several inches taller. He casually said, “Will you marry me?” I said, “Sure. We’ve talked about this.” But then he reached into his pocket and pulled out a black velvet box and said, “This time I mean, really, will you marry me?” Oh my goodness, that moment! How we didn’t drop the ring down the city drain, I have no idea. How could life be any better than at that moment! We married on Friday night, June 18, 1982, and life did indeed just keep getting better.

Without a doubt, nothing is better than being married to your best friend. We spent forty years together loving God and loving each other until God called him home to Heaven. I hope at this moment he is busy dragging my mansion over next to his. After seeing the One who died for me, I’m looking forward to seeing the love of my life again, sharing all the memories we were blessed to live. God’s good.

And now we wait...

