

Girlfriend 0
(from the Book Listen To My Kaleidoscope)
Robert J. Moore
MooreWriting Publications (2013)
www.moorewriting.com

Brian walked into the bar of the five-star hotel and stopped. He took a moment to survey the occupants of the establishment before selecting his target. He calmly walked over to the bar and placed his arm around a woman seated there.

“Is this seat taken?”

“Yes, it’s reserved for a man who looks like you who is also late,” she replied.

The two shared a laugh before embracing with a kiss.

“I’m sorry, so many things held me up and…”

“Isn’t that one of the perks of being the boss? No one can tell you what to do?”

“I wish it were really that simple, Emily. You look fantastic by the way.

“Emily wore a shimmering form-fitting blue sleeveless dress. Her only jewelry accessory was her long black hair which nearly covered the entire back of her dress.

“I do what I can,” Emily said smiling.

“With those dimples you will always be the most beautiful woman in any room.”

“Aw, what book did you steal that from?”

“The Book of Love. I love you so much, Emily. I can’t imagine myself being with anyone but you. I want to spend eternity with you.”

“I love you too, Brian. Eternity does sound nice but let’s concentrate on enjoying tonight.”

Emily leaned in close enough to Brian to touch his ear with the boundaries of her lips.

“I don’t want to rush a single moment with you.”

Brian looked into Emily’s dark eyes. Without saying a word he stood up holding her hand. He proceeded to walk her to the elevator. As he hailed the elevator Emily slipped her feet from her blue stilettos and hung them from a single finger. The two stepped into the elevator as the doors opened. Emily immediately grabbed Brian’s waist and pulled herself as close to him as she possibly could.

“Promise me we will be together forever.”

“I…”

The elevator stopped and the lights went out.

Brian woke up in his armchair in his living room. He stared at the deceitful clock that sat on the table next to him.

“Great, a power outage. I’m late,” he mumbled.

Brian quickly jumped in the shower, groomed himself, dressed and was out the door.

As soon as he walked onto the patio of the restaurant Brian was heckled by his friends Graham and Tyrone.

“Man, we’re going to have clocks installed on your eyelids so when you blink you’re reminded of the time.”

“Sorry guys, I overslept and I’ve been fighting a terrible headache for a week,” Brian said, shaking his head.

“What confuses me is how can this guy be so busy and always show up late when he’s by himself all the time? I could understand if you were out having fun but you’re always at home sleeping,” Graham said.

“How can you be tired when you always sleep? You need a woman to get you in line,” Tyrone said laughing.

“He has no woman and he won’t let anyone hook him up. What’s up with that? You’re living the worst of both worlds.”

“Maybe I do have someone and I didn’t tell you two jerks about her yet. Maybe I was with her all day today.”

Graham and Tyrone looked at Brian. Both men focused their eyes into the center of his slowly advancing their heads towards his. Sensing the energy radiating from his friends, Brian dropped his head.

“I knew there wasn’t anyone,” Graham yelled.

“That’s it, I’m handling this,” Tyrone said as he revealed his cell phone.

“What are you doing?”

“I’m calling Monica.”

“Brian, we hate seeing you like this. We’re your boys. We can’t let you go out like this. You may not like this now, but you will thank us later.”

Brian walked through the door of his hotel room to find red rose petals sprawled across the white carpet. As he walked inside he could see rose petals covering the majority of the room. He could smell a familiar aroma circulating throughout the room. His eyes caught Emily standing by the door that led to the balcony. She wore a long white gown. Her hair was pulled back, exposing her ruby necklace. Her ruby red lipstick magnified her lips.

“What’s all this?”

“I wanted to make my man happy.”

“You didn’t have to go through all this to make me happy. But I appreciate it,” Brian said with a smile.

Emily took Brian’s hand and led him out to the patio. A small circular table sat in the middle of two chairs. A single lit candle stood in the center of the table in between two covered plates and cutlery. Emily motioned for him to sit. They

sat and in unison and uncovered their plates. The sight and smell of a large steak with mashed potatoes rushed into Brian's face.

"Honey, this is amazing. I love you. "

The two enjoyed their meals as they listened to soft music and sipped delicious wine.

"Graham and Tyrone love making fun of me. One of these days I'm going to put those guys in their place," Brian said laughing.

"Did you tell them about us?"

"No, not yet."

"Don't you think that it is odd?"

"What's odd?"

"A man not telling his best friends about his girlfriend."

"It's not that easy. Those guys are tough. And our situation isn't exactly normal."

"Whatever Brian."

"What's wrong?"

"Nothing. I just have this feeling."

"What feeling? What's going on?"

"I have a feeling like something is going to happen," Emily said, lowering her head.

"Honey, everything is fine. I love you so much."

The table and its contents began to rattle. The couple both held onto their plates. After a moment the incident was over.

"An earthquake? That's impossible. Not here," Brian said.

"See, something isn't right. Something is wrong."

The next day Brian walked into the lounge and immediately detected Graham and Tyrone seated at a table in the back.

“Why did you two idiots pick this dark table in the corner?”

“Why don’t you invest in a watch?”

The three men sat together and enjoyed laughs and drinks. Brian noticed the two men sarcastically exchanging glances.

“Okay, what’s going on?”

“Nothing dude, quit being paranoid,” Graham barked.

“Hey, guys.”

“Heyyyy Monica!”

A beautiful woman with red hair stood at the head of the table where the men were seated. Brian’s face filled with a red hue.

“Monica, I’d like you to meet Brian. Brian, this is Monica,” Tyrone said as a smile slowly grew in the middle of his face.

“Sit down, Monica,” Graham said motioning toward an empty chair.

“I forgot that I have to take my girlfriend to the airport. I have to split,” Graham said sarcastically as he left the table.

“Can you believe that guy?”

“Yes I can, because I forgot I left my socks drying in the microwave. I don’t want to burn my house down. Peace,” Tyrone said, making his escape.

Monica and Brian were now alone.

“So, your friends say you’re a really nice guy.”

“I try to be,” Brian answered with his head lowered.

“I’m a nice guy too.”

Brian immediately spit out his drink into his plate.

“What?”

“I’m joking. I just wanted to get a laugh out of you.”

The two exchanged laughs in between conversation throughout the night. Complete strangers were now compatible friends.

“Tyrone told me you have trouble meeting people but you seem like such a cool and funny guy. How can that be?”

“It’s complicated,” Brian said, turning his head away.”

“Explain it to me,” Monica said, turning his head back towards her.

“Is it someone?”

“Sort of.”

Monica never dropped her smile.

“What’s her name?”

“Her name is Emily. We’ve been seeing each other for three years. She’s my best friend and the love of my life. All of my time and energy go to her. She’s everything I’ve ever wanted in a woman and then some. I can feel that she loves me just as much as I love her.”

“Sounds pretty easy to me. What’s so complicated about that?”

Brian quickly finished his drink and set it on the table. He took a deep breath before responding to the question.

“She exists only in my dreams. She’s not a real person. God, it hurts me and embarrasses me to even say that. But the fact that she isn’t real doesn’t mean anything. She makes me happy. I’m happy with her. Life is good. I’m happier now than I’ve ever been with any real woman.”

“It must be hard having a woman that you can’t share with your friends or your family.”

“It is. There’s no way I could explain this to Tyrone and Graham.”

Monica grabbed Brian’s hands.

“You don’t have to settle for perfection. You can have that and include your friends and family.”

Brian squeezed her hands.

“Thank you so much for listening. You are fantastic.”

“I do what I can,” Monica said, smiling.

“I would ask you to dance but I have this killer headache that I can’t get rid of.”

“Maybe you had too much tonight,” Monica said, winking.

“No I haven’t had any. I’ve been getting bad migraines for the past couple of months.

“You’ve had a lot on your mind. Let’s get out of here. But listen, let’s get together again in a few days. I’d love to see you again.”

“I’d love to see you too. Thanks again.

The two engaged in a long embrace.

“I think you’re right, Monica.”

“About what?”

“About not settling for perfection,” Brian said as he gave her a wink.

That night Brian entered his hotel room and found the carpet covered with glass. The bed was overturned and the pillows on the couch were cut. The patio door was wide open allowing the rain to rush into the apartment. The curtains had blown inside the room pointing in the direction where Emily stood. She was wearing the same white dress from the romantic dinner but her hair flowed down her back. Mascara painted the sides of her face.

“Emily, what happened? Are you okay?”

“What’s her name?”

“Who?”

“I know there is someone else,” Emily mumbled without looking in Brian’s direction.

“Emily.”

“Don’t ‘Emily’ me! You said you loved me! You said we would be together forever! Now you are just going to throw me away? After all this time?”

“Emily please,” Brian said, as tears began to form in his eyes.

“I thought we would be together forever. I thought our love was stronger than reality.”

“Emily listen to me, please.”

The ground began to shake in unison with the thunder outside. The shaking began to steadily increase causing the remaining pictures on the wall to join the others on the ground. The entire room began to dance back and forth. Emily ran out of the room with Brian in quick pursuit.

“Emily!”

The two were thrown into the elevator.

“Emily talk to me.”

“No, I just want to disappear.”

As soon as the elevator doors opened Emily ran out into the lobby with Brian running after her. The two ran into the war the sky was having with the Earth. Brian called out for Emily but the thunder muffled his calls.

“Emily!”

The slight movement on the ground suddenly became a tantrum as the buildings began to shake. Glass began to descend from the windows. Cars began to roll along the street smashing into one another. Buildings turned into brittle cookies as they fell from the force of the earthquake. Emily stopped to look up at a building that was leaning in her direction.

“Emily!”

Brian walked into the lobby of the restaurant and immediately spotted Monica.

“Hey Brian, how are you? I haven’t seen you in a few weeks. How have you been? Those are some nice shades you’re wearing but it is night. I didn’t know you were one of those people who wore shades at night.”

“No, I’m not. The light makes my migraines worse.”

“Have you had any interesting dreams about anyone?”

“No, not at all. I haven’t dreamt about anything.”

“Wow, that’s really good,” Monica said as she flashed a large smile.

“I have a great night planned for us. First we’ll go to...”

“Monica, I came here to tell you I can’t do it. I can’t see you.”

“What? I thought you said...”

“I haven’t seen her but I miss her all the same. I am lost without her and I can never get over her.”

“Brian, it hasn’t been that long,” Monica said, pleading.

“It could be a thousand years and I would never be over her. I’m sorry, I really am. But that’s how it is. You are an incredible woman. Some guy will love you like I love Emily and you will understand when he says he won’t leave you for anything.”

“So it looks like I’m losing out to an imaginary woman,” Monica stuttered.

“I’m sorry. I can’t be with you.”

“Okay, I got it. I’m not going to beg you.”

“I’m sorry I can’t be with you.”

“Okay.”

“I’m sorry I can’t be with you.”

“I heard you.”

“I’m sorry I can’t be with you.”

“Brian, are you okay?”

“I told you I can’t be with you. I love Emily and I will do anything for her.”

“Brian.”

“I’m sorry. I can’t be with you...”

Brian's line of sight went from Monica's face to her hair and proceeded up until he was looking at the ceiling of the restaurant. He focused on one spot of the ceiling as everything around that spot began to fade into darkness. Eventually the single spot was swallowed by the void.

Brian's eyes briefly opened to see Monica, Tyrone, Graham and a handful of doctors standing over him. The tiles flying passed him indicated that he was being moved at a brisk pace. Slowly, everything faded once again.

"Well it appears that Brian has had a tumor on his brain for quite some time," the doctor bluntly said.

"What happens now?"

"Right now he is in a comatose state. We will continue to monitor him. His brain is still firing and it seems to be active but there is no response from the body. Not even his reflexes are active. We are not sure if he will improve from this condition."

A tearful Graham leaned over and placed his forehead on Brian's bandaged head.

"Hey, buddy. I know you're in there. I don't know what's going on inside of there but whatever is happening, hold on."

Brian walked along the shoreline in a white tuxedo. The top two buttons on his shirt were undone and his bow tie hung down around his neck. The waves battered the sand along the coastline. Brian looked to his left and saw the remains of a defeated city. The hotel where he lived had been reduced to a single wall. He saw a rainbow that began out at sea and ended in the middle of the ruined city. Brian advanced toward the city and roamed through the depressed buildings. Beneath the rainbow stood the person he was looking for.

"Emily!"

She wore a white wedding dress that was torn at the knees. Her veil was pulled back attempting to cover her hair blowing in the wind. The two ran toward each other until they were locked in a passionate kiss.

“I thought I had lost you,” a crying Brian said.

“It doesn’t matter. The only thing that matters is that we are now together.”

Brian picked her up and began to carry her down the coastline.

“Emily, I want you to promise me one thing.”

“What is it?”

“That we will always be together forever.”