

50! The Life, Loves & Psyche of a Male Mid-Life Crisis



Cory Y. Standby

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This is the story of life. It is about love and relationships; about the importance of family; about how real life and human emotions invariably mess each of these up. It looks at death, divorce and dating; losing loved ones; family feuds and other intertwined issues; grief and stress & so much more

Lost Souls

.....This pattern with Zara carried on for another few years. They still loved each other, but had to reluctantly accept that she couldn't live with him while his boys were there. They still had great times together, out partying and still had the spark and chemistry others said was incredible. Too many nights to record here, but one that sticks in his mind was a night in Camden, when she had introduced 'K' into their activities. Their naivety as to its strength and hallucinogenic qualities left them at one stage stranded on a street corner, he believing that his legs had turned to concrete and merged into the pavement, unable to move them, while she tried to usher him back to the safety of his office until it wore off and they could continue home. He recalled seeing a police car drive by them, but luckily it didn't stop. Another memorable occasion was the night England won the 2005 Ashes. Cory and friends had watched the final victorious overs in a local bar, drinking heavily to support and cheer England on. Zara had joined them, looking very sexy and mischievous (as she often did), and performed a sex act on him in her car parked down the road to set the tone for the night. They had ended up in a club, where they met a lovely young lady who came back to a hotel with them and they partied the night away. They sadly missed the team victory procession the next day consequently, but it was worth it!

A year or so later after a work night out, Cory returned home to carry on partying with Zara (the boys not being there), and she told him the photographer guy with a crush had been back in touch. Cory (alcohol-fuelled) rang the bloke and said why didn't he come round to party with them. He was there within ten minutes! As the night's party unfolded, a threesome ensued, and the guy kept whispering to Zara that she was all he had ever wanted. Cory made it clear through all they did that Zara was with him and would remain so (perhaps cruelly, but assertively). Once the guy left, she told Cory she had found it all too creepy; he was too clingy, and although the sexual bit had been fun, it was ruined for her by his obsession with her. Any future escapades they had were with random people, never again with anyone they knew who had a crush. Feelings just got in the way of the fun. But for all of these nights of fun, for every peak, there was an equivalent trough. There were still arguments about why it all hadn't worked, how shit it all turned out to be, and was it really worth it. They started to grow apart, perhaps inevitably, and had a number of break-ups where they didn't see each other for weeks initially and then months. After a period, they started to date and see other people. One of Cory's friends nervously once told him he had seen her profile on a dating site on one occasion; and they talked of divorce a number of times. But eventually, they would inexorably come back together, as when it worked their connection was still there. They were still told by many who encountered them that they were

lucky to have such a strong chemistry together; few people did. It held them together for perhaps longer than it should have.

On one occasion, they hadn't seen each other for weeks and Cory was getting on with his life as usual. One very cold Sunday morning, he was somewhere in the deep south with one of his sons' football teams. His plan was to watch this game, then rush up the A3 to see another of his sons playing elsewhere – the logistical nightmare he constantly faced of having two or three sons all playing Sunday morning football at the same time! He noticed at half-time that he had a missed call on his mobile from a number he didn't recognise and assumed it must be a work call, which could wait. Eventually, when he later listened to the voicemail, he heard a woman explaining that he didn't know her, but she was ringing on behalf of Zara who had been in an accident and was being taken to the local A&E. He immediately called Zara's phone, but it went straight to voicemail; similarly, so did the number of the woman who had left the message. She rang back shortly after and explained she had come across Zara in her overturned car in a roadside ditch on one of the country lanes up in her rural area. An ambulance had been called and taken her to hospital. Cory had to deliver his son at home, arrange for his other son to be returned from his game, then dashed up the motorway to see Zara. She was in traction and apparently had cracked her vertebrae as the car overturned as she swerved around a corner and lost control that cold winter's morning. The medical staff were concerned about potential damage to her spinal cord, and she was under strict orders not to move. This naturally put their latest arguments and separation in focus and they were reunited. As ever though, there was an unusual twist. Cory stayed in the area for a few nights, but had to book into local bed and breakfasts and hotels rather than staying at Zara's house. Years later, she admitted that this was because there was a lot of paraphernalia and debris lying around which she hadn't wanted him to see, as the full extent of it was all still her deep dark secret at that stage.

His mum very sensibly asked him why he seemed to end up with such troublesome women. He answered that he liked mad women; they were more interesting and exciting! The truth, of course, being that Cory has a mad, wild side that terrifies many people, particularly nice normal ladies. He seeks and craves those who share his 'Live Fast, Love Hard, Die Young' (Faron Young) thirst for life, largely because of their own damaged backgrounds. It is a mutual need and attraction. Of course he didn't ever really want the last bit (although it may have seemed like it during the very bad times), like James Dean, Amy Winehouse, and so many others, but enjoys partying and so much more with people with a similar psyche to his own. So he is inevitably drawn to people like him who have been hurt, whose hearts have been broken, but not just in the normal course of everyday life and love (that is too common and mundane); who have had some major seismic loss in their lives that has skewed their approach to life, sometimes even their moral compass. These people want more than just normality in all aspects of their lives, nice dinner parties and idle social interactions. They have a burning desire for more. If people do not fall into this category, they can never understand those who do. Those in this group (whether knowingly or not) are drawn to each other like vampires in the night, seeking solace and seclusion with each other from the rest of the world as daylight dawns in the real world, from which (emotionally at least) they are slightly detached. Mutual attraction, need, and knowledge of a true understanding of each other's pain (whenever it happened, it never fully goes away) are powerful emotions that fuel the chemistry required in any relationship. They are drawn to each other like moths to a flame, and as we know, that doesn't always end well! Sometimes the mutual pain, suffering and baggage can implode and become too much, too destructive for the people involved. Perhaps too many of Cory's relationships have been like this, but those are the women he is attracted to, spiritually and emotionally. And they to him, it seems. So add in the essential physical and intellectual attraction elements too, and it is a complex, highly charged, volatile package; as his relationship history and issues probably illustrate!

But such people do generally have to live in the real world too; they have to conform to some extent (although they generally hate it) and seek their escape often in their nocturnal activities, real life again interfering with the true emotional happiness we all crave. The turmoil this can cause in their lives, relationships, friendships, work, social life and every aspect of their existence should never be underestimated, but only like-minded tortured souls will truly understand. The normal people will just dismiss them as different, mad, eccentric and weird, believing that they don't give a shit, are rebels and non-conformists; all so wrong. They care about much deeper issues than the things society deems important. Normal people can have no comprehension until something life-changing happens to them, at which point they become one of the lost souls and can never return to their normal lives properly again. All very profound, but sadly true. As the sayings powerfully convey (along with many other variations on the theme):

'Don't judge me. You can't handle half of what I've dealt with. There's a reason I do the things I do, there's a reason I am who I am' (Anonymous), and

'Don't judge me unless you have looked through my eyes and experienced what I have and cried as many tears as me. Until then, back off, 'cause you have no idea' (Anonymous)

Divorce

As with anything in life, the more strain you put on it, although it may stretch and bend for a while, eventually it will break. Their reunions were great, and although they lasted for a while, things always went

wrong again. Over the ensuing years, they had more Caribbean holidays, Barbados becoming a firm favourite during the good times; that is, apart from the night they were asked to leave one very posh, but dull, hotel full of very old people, as a result of one too many of their many loud arguments! He took her to Paris, staying at the George V, dining in the Eiffel Tower restaurant and watching an amazing show at the Moulin Rouge for her fortieth birthday. He bought her a Tiffany diamond and paid for her increasingly regular Harley Street visits for endless cosmetic injections. They holidayed at the Sandals Royal Bahamian Resort and had endless weekends away and short breaks in places like Capri, Amsterdam, Brighton, London, and enjoyed life when they were together. Fine dining in top restaurants, clubbing and partying, regular shopping trips for her, and yet it was never enough.....

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