

## *Introduction – Welcome to My World*

You may be wondering who I am... so let me tell you a little about myself. My name is Lauren Gale, and I was born and raised in Israel. I started dreaming about coming to the United States when I was about three years old. As time moved on, I developed a strong sense of destiny... Hollywood was calling to me! I wanted to become a famous actress and use my fame to save the world!

Always strong in my convictions, at the age of twenty-one, bright eyed and full of energy, I landed at the Los Angeles International Airport ready to conquer the city.

Then, twelve years later, in my early thirties and still single, when my maternal instincts kicked in, my priorities started to change. While continuing to reside in this big metropolis referred to as “The City of Angels,” I started seriously searching for a suitable partner.

Now I’ll be real honest. Between you and me, I have yet to find any “angels” here while searching for a boyfriend and True Love. Instead, maybe like you (maybe not) wherever you are, I have seen one too many heartaches, one too many breakups, and even some occasional breakdowns. I’ve also run into one too many commitment-phobics, alcoholics, wannabes, you fill in the blank: \_\_\_\_\_. You name ’em, I’ve met ’em and probably dated ’em.

So there I was late one Sunday night, alone in my often messy, spacious apartment in the Mid-Wilshire District. I had just finished eating a veggie burrito (a very good veggie burrito, by the way... more about my relationship with food forthcoming). After yet another breakup had caught me way off guard, I started writing down some serious questions:

- What am I doing *wrong*?
- What am I doing *right*?
- Are there any decent guys out there?
- Could one get a guy by playing games, or playing hard-to-get?
- To call or not to call?
- Can a man and a woman just be friends?
- Do men love bitches?
- Why is it we seem to always want the one we cannot have?
- Are men from Mars and women from Venus?
- Are *The Rules* meant to be broken?
- Is there a Mr. Right?
- Do we need the spark/passion *and* friendship?
- Is a thunderbolt really a thunder warning?
- Can we break our romantic patterns?
- Is it easier to fall for a fantasy than falling for *the real deal*?
- Can you change your life or your romantic destiny by changing your attitude and way of thinking?
- Is there truly a “happily ever after”?
- Do we need to forgive and to let go of the past in order to live a peaceful present?

The length of the list startled me. As I looked at all those questions, I decided to officially embark on my Quest. I also dedicated myself to a new Mission...

QUEST:

*To find a REAL relationship with  
an EMOTIONALLY AVAILABLE, HEALTHY male*

MISSION:

*To take you with me on this journey  
while I “look for love in all the wrong (and right) places.”*

I started writing this book determined to figure out these things related to “love” and “dating” – promising myself that by the last page, I’d find Real Love, or at least a worthwhile companion who doesn’t walk on four legs. I wrote this book with the hope that by letting you into my tumultuous dating world, you would not only be entertained, but could also learn from my trials and many errors. Whether you are braving it out there in the dating world yourself or nursing a broken heart, know that you are *not alone!* It is my wish that you will find not only hope through these pages, but also love for yourself and others, with less pain and no drama, as well as with less embarrassment and a lot more intelligence.

But first things first... Let’s start with yet another ending, on a warm Sunday evening, June 18<sup>th</sup>.

## Part I – Breakup

### Chapter 1

#### Four Dreadful Words

#### Sunday, June 18<sup>th</sup> (Plus earlier background and aftermath)

*“Man’s rejection is God’s protection.” – My Friend Angel*

#### **Daily Highlights**

***Breakup:*** *I had one. **State of being:** pretty much a state of shock, with random thoughts running through head. Initially my mental soundtrack went like this: Why me? Why now? What’s wrong with me? I am going to die alone! No one will ever love me, EVER! Etc., etc., etc.*

“The Breakup” happened out of nowhere, really. But I’m getting way ahead of myself...

It all started during what had been a relatively uneventful April. The year was 2006. It seemed like forever, but really had been only a year and a half since my ex-fiancé (tall, artistic, brilliant, emotionally unavailable, commitment phobic, gorgeous McBlue Eyes) left me with a broken heart and an unused wedding dress (which is still hanging in my closet). After eighteen months, I was finally ready for the possibility of starting a healthy, drama-free relationship with someone new... or so I thought.

I decided to try Internet dating.

“Why Internet dating?” you might ask. Well, let me explain. I was a single woman alone in LA who worked from a home office (as a commercial account manager for an office supply company), and I had no single girlfriends to go out with. So I figured that I wasn’t left with too many choices. Unless I fell madly in love with my mailman

(not really my type, other than the fact that he is about eighteen years old, has braces, and just graduated high school... plus I usually go for the more artistic types), my milkman (don't have one), my exterminator (*REALLY* not my type; if you only saw him, I'm sure you'd know why... I mean, besides the fact that he deals with bugs for a living – and I *HATE* bugs! – he's a little on the older, unattractive side), or my hairdresser (*REALLY* good-looking, sweet and surprisingly very much straight, but unfortunately for me, married plus three).

So on my quest to find Mr. Right (a.k.a. “the one,” a.k.a. “my husband,” a.k.a. “my soul mate”), I thought the Internet would be the easiest place to start. We hear about it *all* the time... *millions* of people are meeting their “one and only” online – *why not me?*

Since there are so many sites out there and I was a little nervous about choosing the “wrong” one, I asked around. When I questioned my happily married co-worker, Chatty Kathy (who was infamous not only for talking a lot, but also for knowing the latest on just about *anything*), she was happy to recommend one particular Internet service.

“I heard this site was the best. In fact, a friend of a friend of a friend of mine met her husband that way, and now they are living happily ever after with two babies, three kids, and one cat,” Chatty Katy proudly told me as though she were the one who married them off herself (and got the commission!).

I decided to live on the edge, take a chance, and signed up.

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Less than 24 hours later, I eagerly logged on and almost had a heart attack as I realized I was flooded with one thousand two hundred thirty-four emails! I was a bit overwhelmed, but nevertheless excited about all those possibilities. I also felt obligated to all these people who had been kind enough to take the time to write me. Trying to be polite, I answered each and every one of the emails! At about Email 134, I realized that the Internet and the dating site had officially taken over my life (not to mention that dealing with this began to feel like a full-time job). I had to learn to be more discerning and only pick suitors who seemed to have true potential (good-looking, wanting marriage and children, stable, with a *REAL* job). And so it was that after a billion and a half bad dates (well, perhaps that's an exaggeration, though it sure felt like a billion... it was more like probably ten) and some not-so-bad dates, I met one man who seemed to be a very promising prospect. *I met McShorty.*

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McShorty was a simple, nice guy and refreshingly enough the complete opposite of my ex-fiancé McBlue Eyes. He wasn't as sophisticated or artistic, nor quite as good-looking as the guys I usually go for. He had a nice face, and an edge – a kind of “bad boy gone good” look. But the worst of it was, well, he was short... at 5'1", *very short*. Given the fact that most of my exes were 6'0" and up, and with my high heels I'm about 5'8" (and the heels were *not* gonna go... I've had a longer relationship with my high heels than I have had with any – and I do mean *ANY* – man), the whole 5'1" thing represented what McShorty essentially was for me – someone I normally would not even *consider*. But after all those past bad relationships with the wrong guys, I was finally ready to give

a normal, good guy a *REAL* chance... to let someone love me, and to love him back... *even if it killed me*. I officially decided I was going to be just a lil' less shallow and overlook some things. *Be open to love wherever it comes from, high or low*, I told myself. *After all, I thought, you have just found yourself a truly kind, "healthy" male in this godforsaken jungle of angels called L.A.!!!!*

And yes, McShorty seemed to be absolutely lovely. He was so very kind. Always a gentleman, he was someone my mother would like me to date. Here are some of the nice things he did:

- ✓ McShorty opened doors for me. (*I felt cherished and respected like a lady.*)
- ✓ When we walked side by side, McShorty made sure he was the one closest to the road. (*If we ever did get run over, he'd be the first to go.*)
- ✓ He took me on the nicest dates (*and unlike the always-broke McBlue Eyes in whose company I had to pay for everything, McShorty always picked up the check*).
- ✓ He brought me roses, fruit and vegetables that he'd grown *himself* in his backyard. (*Not only did he have a green thumb [which I didn't], this also meant that we would NEVER go hungry.*)
- ✓ He called to check on me almost every day. (*I could never die only to be discovered months later when someone would finally realize I was missing.*)

- ✓ He made me get an IRA and gave me further advice on my finances, including my car loan. (*He really cared about my well-being, and I will be all set when 65.*)
- ✓ McShorty seemed to be committed to self-growth, and even had all those same self-help books in his library that I did – all about love, relationships and commitment phobia. (*Wow, I was thinking, this one could really “get” me.*)
- ✓ Like me, he had been married before and claimed to have learned from his mistake. (*One would hope that after marrying the “wrong” person, you’d know how to choose the “right” one.*)
- ✓ McShorty checked my oil and knew everything there is to know about cars (*no more expensive car repair bills, hence more money for shoes...*).
- ✓ McShorty was all into martial arts and gave me some very important self-defense tips. (*He wanted me to be safe, and if we were ever attacked, I’d be protected.*)
- ✓ He was stable, had a *real* job, and even his *own* house. (*I could just move right in and have babies with him almost immediately!*)

And on our first date over lunch (two Diet Cokes and Cobb Salads –mine without the chicken and as always drenched with ranch dressing) at *The Grove* shopping mall, McShorty told me he wanted kids, marriage, the works! I thought that maybe, just maybe, my luck had turned for the better and I had been fortunate enough to have found *the last decent guy* on this planet (who is still single).

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At the beginning “honeymoon stage,” McShorty and I were doing well. We had dated for about a month when we made the decision (or it was more like I pressured him and he finally agreed) to see each other *exclusively*. We were not having sex, *not yet*.

I had been celibate for a year and a half since McBlue Eyes. Not always by choice. It seemed that I couldn't find anyone to break my celibacy with for the life of me. I also couldn't scare men away from me fast enough – especially when I volunteered the very painful, unnecessary information that during the last eight years, I had only been with one very messed up man (McBlue Eyes). But now I thought McShorty might be *the one to break what I named the “McBlue Eyes Spell.”*

One funny thing was that McShorty did not pressure me sexually. Even though my friends thought this was a bit strange (some even suggested he might be gay?), I couldn't have been more touched and thankful for his patience and understanding. It seemed almost like he *wanted* to wait. I felt cherished, adored, respected... and maybe even loved.

We did spend some nights together. It became a routine perhaps a bit too quickly. Every Saturday, I spent the night at his wonderful, immaculately designed (like he had an interior designer, even though he didn't), *CLEAN* (McShorty often referred *to himself* as a “clean freak”) house somewhere out in the San Fernando Valley. And we spent every Wednesday night together at my apartment, with McShorty tearing his eyes out because he was deathly allergic to cats. (I share my life with Peanut, a bi-polar [diagnosed by yours truly] but full-of-life, red-headed tabby, and Pumpkin, a beautiful, 20-pound, white, full-of-wisdom, long-haired Himalayan.)

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Our relationship was absolutely perfect (well, other than the whole cat allergy thingy... McShorty being a clean freak, me a slob... no sex... etc.), and there were absolutely no warning signs to speak of.

*Or were there?*

The date that turned out to be our final rendezvous was on Saturday, June 17<sup>th</sup>. After getting a makeover at *The Grove* (I thought I looked *fabulous*), armed with my small carry-on bag, I arrived at McShorty's house, as always, a bit early. I was a little upset that he hadn't called me for a couple days. However, after reading many self-help books all about being a bitch and not showing emotions, I knew better (or so I thought) and promised myself that I'd stay poised and collected and not even mention it (at least pretending I hadn't even noticed because I had been so busy living my *own* life).

"You look beautiful," McShorty said, greeting me at the door with a warm embrace and letting me in.

He finished getting ready, and we discussed a few options for dinner. Since McShorty lived a bit out of the way, we didn't have too much of a selection. After a few suggestions, we both finally agreed on a little casual restaurant that was nearby. We hopped in his big SUV, and McShorty drove quietly listening to Josh Groban, "You Raise Me Up." Traffic was a breeze and soon we arrived. We parked and walked into the crowded, cozy restaurant as McShorty reached for my hand. I felt a bit awkward (towering over him with my high heels), but I ignored my feelings, grabbed his hand tight, and told myself, *I should feel proud to be standing by MY (short) man.*

The hostess sat us at the best table in the house (or so she claimed) in a candle-lit corner while Kenny Rogers' "Have I Told You Lately That I Love You" played in the background.

"You haven't," I whispered without thinking. Then I smiled to myself when I noticed that despite the candle-light, McShorty had turned bright red. He looked away.

*Yes, I thought, no doubt, McShorty was acting strange because he'd become utterly taken with me, if not hopelessly in love.* I already saw in my head how McBlue Eyes would finally come around after hearing about me and McShorty, confessing that he had made the biggest mistake of his life leaving me and begging me to take him back. I'd stay as cool as a cucumber, telling him how he returned too late (and that I was now with a man who was good to me and not only very much in love but planning to marry – soon).

Then McShorty went into an hour-long speech, telling me about the custom car he was building, naming each and every part (as well as what they did and how much they cost). Although I was almost bored to tears, I remained determined to be a part of a "healthy" couple (even if I did turn into an alcoholic in the process as a mechanism of self-protection from dying of boredom). I ordered an apple martini and was having yet another one of my own conversations in my *own* head, going back and forth between being good and ordering my salad or forgoing all diets for the weekend. *Maybe I should let McShorty see the real happy me when I'm not feeling hungry and deprived,* I considered.

"You know what I like most about you?" he asked, which tugged me toward his conversation and back to reality.

“What?” I smiled kindly, giving McShorty my undivided attention (since now it was again all about *me*), while at the same time deciding to definitely go *all out* and forgo all diet plans until Monday (and order the veggie burger with lots of fries, with a side of ranch dressing).

“You really listen.”

“Yes I do...” I murmured softly and looked away, thanking God for my acting lessons and making a mental note or more like a promise to self to be more present and pay attention.

“Have you called the acupuncturist yet?” I asked him after we ordered our food and another round of apple martinis. “A friend of a friend of mine got completely rid of their cat allergies and now they are living happily ever after with their four kids and three cats, completely allergy-free...”

“It sounds interesting,” McShorty whispered, coughed and laughed nervously. Starting to sweat, he chugged the entire apple martini and immediately ordered another. “Not really sure I want kids...”

“I thought you wanted children,” I said trying not to panic, as my voice betrayed me and got PITCHY HIGH. Still I tried to remain calm and collected. *After all*, I told myself, *everyone knows that when men get really close they also retreat* (i.e. *Men Are from Mars, Women Are from Venus*).

“Yeah, I thought I did, but all my friends that have ’em are just about pulling their hair out...” he responded and then changed the subject back to (in this order) cars, his vegetable garden, the weather, and karate class.

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The rest of our evening went surprisingly somewhat smoothly as I mustered pretending all was well, ordered my third apple martini, and concentrated on devouring my fries dipped in ranch dressing (LOVE fries with ranch).

Managing to completely numb my overwhelming feelings with food, I then ordered a delicious, rich chocolate-mousse cake (*if already breaking my diet, got to go all the way, as to not feel deprived when going back to my diet on Monday*). At that point, just before having my very last bite, as McShorty was looking at me strangely (and somewhat disgustingly, shocked that I was capable of eating ALL this food), I couldn't help myself.

"You haven't called for a couple of days..." I said ever so lightly and gracefully (kind of like a joke even) in a confident and not-at-all needy way. Then (as if I didn't do enough damage), I added: "Have you found that it is easier to fall for those who are emotionally unavailable?"

*Seriously people, the facts were right there.* Both McShorty and I had very similar histories and patterns. We both chose relationships that could never work, not to mention people who were a mess and completely unavailable.

"You could have called me," McShorty said softly.

We both became quiet as he paid the bill and then we left the restaurant.

McShorty and I stepped into his car and rode back to his place in a complete and utter silence that continued.

"I am beat," McShorty said when we got to his home. Soon he was asleep in bed, while I tossed and turned the whole night beside him.

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The next morning, June 18, on what would prove to be a very hot Sunday, McShorty and I woke up early. After applying the new lipstick and blush the makeup artist convinced me to buy the previous day, I told McShorty I had to run, and got out of his way, ever so gracefully (to seem like I have a life of my own and also *so he could miss me... you know what they say, "Distance makes the heart grow fonder"*).

"I'll call you later..." he shouted out to me as I was walking to my car.

I drove away deciding (since I had nothing better to do, and if I stayed at home, I'd keep staring at my phone, waiting for McShorty to call, not to mention obsess endlessly over what happened last night) to accompany my friend Tawny to a barbecue in the Hollywood Hills.

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Tawny's a wonderful hangout buddy. We met at a mutual friend's over Thanksgiving dinner a few years ago. Lately, she and I had started to spend a lot of time together. She was going through what seemed to be the one-hundredth breakup with her Ex (I had nicknamed him "McJerk" after Tawny found his X-rated email correspondence with numerous girls on dating sites), and I was determined to have my own life and not to make any guy the center of my universe (as I have been known to do). Essentially, she and I were perfect for each other.

"How do I look?" I asked Tawny after she picked me up at my place, and I sat in her car waiting for her to say something about my new and improved self.

“The blush is orangey and the lipstick is pinkish,” she stated the obvious. “It really doesn’t go, unless you are going for the punk thing.”

*I wasn't.*

I had been going for the looking beautiful, fabulous and unforgettable thing! I was a bit mortified that McShorty had seen me this way, but decided to remain calm and compensate by looking even better when I got together with him the next time.

On the way to the BBQ, Tawny was driving me more than a bit crazy obsessing over her McJerk, taking *all* the responsibility for his bad behavior and their numerous breakups and blaming herself for just about everything.

“If I wasn’t so needy, he wouldn’t have had the need to stray...” she told me over and over and over again. I tried my best to hold back and *not* tell her how I really felt about her jerky McJerk (always backfires and she’ll hate me when eventually getting back with him as she did about a million times before), while *ALSO* staying objective.

Twenty minutes later, we made it to the BBQ, parked and stepped into a beautiful house overlooking a man-made “Hollywood lake” (that I didn’t even know existed). Strangely enough, besides Tawny and me, there were only two other people there: the owner of the house (a quiet, skinny, tall man) and his boyfriend (a dancer named Elvis).

As a vegetarian, I couldn’t find anything to quench my hunger and for once I could concentrate on the people rather than get engrossed with food. I listened intently as Tawny told everyone how she and McJerk were not only soul mates, but destined to be together and just needed some time apart. Plus Elvis told us all we *never asked* about himself.

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After it got dark, cold and late, Tawny and I excused ourselves. Still starving on our way home, I made Tawny stop at El Torito where I got a fat juicy veggie burrito to go. We even stopped at a shoe store, where I bought heels one whole inch shorter than my usual 4 inches. It was still almost as hot as hell, but for the first time that day I recognized that this was by all means a very good Sunday. For my anxieties were, at least at this moment, gone. Work was going relatively OK (and I was finally not dreading getting back to my work on Monday), and ironically enough, my abandonment issues (*a lot* more on those to follow) were almost somewhat under control, too. I felt secure and safe, like McShorty wasn't going to go away, and I couldn't wait to tell him all about the strange BBQ and the eccentric characters I had just met.

All this proves a very vital point: *You never really know what is right around the corner, and just when you relax a lil', and think that life can be swell, it slaps you in the face.*

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At around 10 p.m., Tawny dropped me off at my apartment in the city. Since I hadn't eaten anything at the party (salad does not count when not on a diet), and as mentioned previously, I had given myself a "*DIET OFF*" weekend, I was happy to be armed with that fat, juicy, veggie burrito I got earlier. When I walked into my place, I saw that there was a call showing up on my caller ID, and that the caller left no message.

"McShorty," said the name on the caller ID (well, it didn't actually say "McShorty"... it said his real name, but I can't tell you that!).

*That's strange, I thought, McShorty usually leaves messages. Hmmm, is this because of the comment I made last night? Was he trying to make a point that he is making an effort, and calling every day?*

Boy, was I wrong!

Decisions... decisions. I was truly perplexed. I mean... what should I do? See, there was this burrito, and I had not been eating any carbs for like maybe a year (well, truly, maybe a day that seriously felt like a year), and then there was McShorty who didn't leave a message... In all honesty, I was hungry, even starving, especially for carbs, and I really *LOVE* food. I have had a longer, more successful relationship with food than I have had with any man... sadly enough, food always seems to be more reliable than any men I ever meet. So naturally, first I ate my burrito (*y-u-m-m-y*), and then I called.

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"You called?" I asked.

"Yes," he said and sounded a bit tired, but fine... *The bastard!*

We chatted for a while about nothing... but to be honest, I blabbed more than he did, which was very out of character for him. You see, McShorty could talk anyone's ear off forever (a habit, truthfully, I found extremely annoying, especially as his conversations of choice were about martial arts, cars and all these godforsaken things I could care less about... but as mentioned previously, I was committed to being a good listener, or at least looking like I am listening while my eyes glazed over and I thought about more important things like what I want for dinner, or shoes...).

“We need to talk,” he said out of nowhere.

*Four dreadful words in any relationship...*

*We do??* I asked myself, and hoped against hope that this was when McShorty would finally tell me he loved me.

“I don’t feel what it is I think I should be feeling...” he continued, and my heart climbed all the way up my throat.

*You could have fooled me*, I wanted to yell, but instead I said nothing. My mind started racing, it seemed, at 120 miles an hour on a 25 miles an hour speed-limit road. Our short-lived relationship flashed before my eyes – the sweet moments, my premonitions, the red flags I missed or chose to ignore.

“When you made that comment the other day about me not calling for two days...” he said, interrupting my thoughts and bringing me back into a very painful reality.

*Here we go*, I said to myself, as McShorty continued with his good-bye speech.

“I started thinking about why I am not calling you each day.... Why don’t I have that need to speak with you every day?”

I had no idea what to say.

“I don’t want to lead you on,” he continued.

*You don’t want to lead me on? What exactly do you think you have been doing the last couple of months?* I wanted to scream, but I was determined to stay graceful throughout this ordeal and somehow managed to stay quiet and calm. “Do you want to be friends?” I asked softly.

“Well, no, that will be too hard...” he mumbled. “I still want to see you, but want to be open to the possibility of meeting other people.”

There were a few moments of silence that felt like forever.

“Let’s talk in a couple of days and see how we feel,” he concluded, and we hung up the phone.

*I was shocked.*

*Stunned.*

*Overwhelmed.*

My mind was racing again and my whole relationship with McShorty flashed before me. Many things began to run through my head – all those *red flags* I should have paid attention to *much earlier*. For instance, there was the fact that he never let me leave any of my personal belongings at his house (and I do mean *not anything*). Every time I left McShorty’s place, he had all my stuff waiting neatly by my purse. Even little things like my daily planner, bra, stockings, earrings, toothbrush, sunglasses, etc.

This reminded me of that episode of *Sex and the City* (miss that show so, so much) where Big brings Carrie a bag she thinks holds a present. But when opening it, she finds *ALL* of her stuff she left at his place.

*That definitely should have been a red flag*, I realized, thinking back to McShorty.

My friends had always told me that I have a slight blindness when it comes to red flags, or at least perhaps selective seeing and selective hearing. When all my girlfriends see red flags, all I can see are green lights saying; “Go Lauren, go!”

But while dating McShorty, I was rationalizing and thought I might be projecting all my past hurts from my prior relationships on him. So I cut him some slack. After all,

he seemed to have the whole package (well, maybe a small package, if you know what I mean, but a package nonetheless... and, please, no smirking, this is an assumption only, with him being short and having really small feet, hands and all).

Since I didn't know how to start making sense of what had just happened, I called my best friend, Angel. I had met Angel about eight years earlier after my divorce, and we'd gone through many breakups, tears, and broken hearts together. Through the years, Angel and I had "grown" together as women and friends. Recently, she decided not to wait for Mr. Right anymore and adopted a baby girl all on her own.

*Maybe Angel could make sense of this?* I thought sadly.

With my hands still shaking, I dialed Angel's number.

"McShorty broke up with me," I said quickly as she answered the phone.

"Are you kidding me?" she asked, and I was not sure who was more stunned, Angel or I.

I wasn't kidding. "Nope," I blurted out, confirming the news.

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So I drove over to Angel's house in the Valley and we talked for a while.

Fortunately, Angel always has the best saying for every occasion. "*Man's rejection is God's protection!*" she reminded me when I arrived. "It's best that you found out now that McShorty is probably just like the rest of them – a commitment-phobic."

"*What's wrong with me?*" I cried. "*Why can't I find one healthy, functional relationship?*"

And that's when Angel and I, over some tears and two glasses of two-buck-chuck red wine, went down my Yellow Brick Tragic Relationship Road – kinda like Dorothy and Toto in *The Wizard of Oz*.

A few words of caution... Just before you go down that yellow brick road with us, please be warned. *It ain't pretty*, even though I wish I could say it was.

**Today's Insights:** It is my experience that settling and lowering your standards backfires, *always*. Do not talk yourself into anyone; hold off for what you truly deserve and really want. Also, always listen to your gut and intuition; it knows what it is telling you. And last but never least... if a person does not see you for the amazing treasure that you truly are, it is not because you are not AMAZING enough, GOOD enough, BEAUTIFUL enough, etc. IT IS **HE/SHE** who's near-sighted. You deserve someone who can see and appreciate you for ALL that you are.