Four weeks before the wedding, Tina and Nathanial sat on the floor sifting through RSVPs.

“Oh, look. Dan replied yes,” Nathanial held up the cream-colored postcard.

“Oh, goody. I can’t wait to see what he’s selling this time.” She looked at Nathanial and caught a slight twitch on his face. “What? What did you buy from him now?”

“Well, I told him if he came, I would pay for his plane ticket.”

“You what?” Tina was careful. She knew it was his money, but she thought he should talk about these things with her. Plus, the first and only time she met Dan, he had been a complete jerk and conned them out of 50 bucks.

“It’ll be fine. I’m paying for my mom’s ticket and Pam’s also,” Nathanial avoided her stare.

“So, are we going to pay for my family’s tickets, too?

“Why would we do that?”

“Well, it just seems if you’re paying for your mom and sister and brother to come that we should pay for mine also.”

“Well, if you want to pay for them, you can.”

“What do you mean, *I* can? You mean, *we* can? Remember, you’re the one who convinced me to quit my job because you would take care of things.”

“Well, *we* can’t pay for *everyone.*”

“Just *your* family?”

“I guess so. Besides your family would be making the trip to Idaho anyway to visit your parents. So now they get to go to a wedding.”

“*Our* wedding; not *a* wedding, Nathanial. *Our* wedding. Do you even understand this? *We* are getting married. For forever.” Tina had been worried lately with Nathanial’s blasé attitude towards the whole thing. Her sister had convinced her though, that’s just how men are. They don’t want anything to do with the planning. But there was something different with Nathanial. He didn’t seem to be taking this seriously at all and it was weighing on Tina. She had overheard him talking to Peter when he commented, “Well, we’ll see how it goes.” She wanted to believe that he wasn’t talking about the marriage. But she wasn’t sure.

“Tina, don’t be silly. Of course, it’s our wedding. I’ve been going to those stupid classes at your church for the last month, haven’t I? It’s all about our wedding.”

Tina was reminded. “Oh, don’t forget we have that retreat this weekend.”

“Oh god. Are we really going to that?” Nathanial headed to the fridge. He pulled a box of Ding-Dongs from the top.

“What do you mean, are we really going to that? You know we have to in order to get married in the church.” Tina wasn’t going to be the first in her family to not be married in the church. “Besides, some of it is helpful. You know, learning how to communicate and being kind to one another.”

Nathanial unwrapped two of the Ding-Dongs, placed them one on top of the other and bit into the double decker. After a few chews, he mumbled, “Oh right, all that ‘life giving’ crap.”

“Now, that wasn’t very life-giving to say,” Tina smiled to lighten the mood.

Nathanial had white filling smudged on one side of his mouth, “It’s just so stupid. I know how to communicate. Those people can’t teach me anything.”

“Everyone can teach everyone something,” Tina huffed.

He stuffed the remainder of the two Ding-Dongs in his mouth and opened the fridge for the milk. While grabbing a glass, he proclaimed, “Not me. I know everything I need to know.”

Tina guffawed, “Are you serious? You’re 25 and you believe you know everything?”

“More than what those people can tell me this weekend.” He set a glass on the counter and twisted the lid off the jug.

“How can you even say something so ridiculous? You really believe that you will not learn one thing that you can take with you? That’s pretty pompous.”

“Not pompous. Just reality.”

Nathanial slopped the milk, getting most in the glass, but sending a significant amount onto the counter. Tina stared at this man she was to marry in four weeks. Maybe they’d moved too fast. She rose and stepped across the living room to grab her coat. “I’m going out for a walk.”

“Ok. Besides if there is anything I need to learn, I will learn it from my dad and brother.”

Tina closed the door on the scene. It was cold out. She walked briskly up Queen Anne Avenue to Highland Park where she sat admiring the view of downtown and contemplating what she had gotten herself into.

She thought of the pros and cons. Nathanial did not sit and ponder ideas with her anymore. Nathanial had stopped going to the gym. Nathanial had stopped going to Jillians since she quit working there. She knew it was odd; he used to shoot pool everyday. And now this latest, Nathanial revealing that at 25 he had learned everything.

On the other hand, Nathanial was kind enough. They did not fight. He had supported her quitting work to focus on her school. He was willing to move so she would not have such a long drive to school. And it was exciting that he was a published author. Nathanial spent all his days working on his second book while she was at school. He couldn’t tell her what the book was about just yet, but she knew the potential was there. But does one marry for potential?

And of course, she couldn’t brush aside the Katrina coincidence; how do you walk away from someone who created you in his head before meeting you? Something about this still nagged at the back of her mind, but she couldn’t quite pinpoint what it was. All she knew was, she fit into Nathanial’s soul mate experiment. Plus, the invitations had already been sent and the deposits were already cashed.

Tina walked back knowing things would continue just as they were.