

## Lee and Ken Kelly's True Love Story

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It all began on a tour bus going to the Arabian Nights Dinner Theater. It was a show of live horses performing, with dinner to follow. I didn't want to go. My friends kept talking me into it. I said that I didn't want to go just to see some horses jumping around. Finally, I gave in to it just to shut them up.

But Lee wanted to go because she was lonely. She called the touring company to see if there was a seat available. They said, "Yes, there is one seat left." Lee ended up sitting right in front of me. She was so tiny; she looked like a princess. She was four feet and ten inches tall, and her weight was 78 pounds. Right away, I asked if she was married, and she replied, "No, are you?" I said, "No, but I don't date. I only flirt, and I only flirt with pretty girls". Lee said, "That's ok, we can be friends." I said, "By the way, I am going to be Santa Clause for the next three days at Kmart." She asked, "What time do you start?" I said, "From ten in the morning until two in the afternoon."

She came, and stayed the whole day for three days.

On the third day she brought me fudge candy. She said, "I told my sisters about you." Her sisters wanted to meet me and had asked if that was ok. She told me that one sister was married and one was single. I said to myself, she's setting me up with her sister. Then she asked, "Can we go meet them today?"

When I got to her sisters' house, Lee introduced me to the married sister, Beverly. Beverly said, "Lee told us about you, and she likes you a lot." Then, Lee introduced me to her single sister, Lisa. This is the part that you won't believe. Lee told Lisa, "This is Ken, and he is mine. Don't you try to out-dress me or take him away from me, because he is MINE." Her sister said, "I won't, but I want one just like him." And Lee said, "Good luck!!" When Lee said "he is mine," I wanted to truly be hers. So we started dating. For the first 30 days, I respected her so much, that I would only kiss her hand. Two weeks later I invited her to a Valentine Day dance. I told Lee that there was going to be a love story contest and Lee asked me, "Are you going to enter?" I said, "Yes; if I tell the truth, we will win."

I was the first to tell my story. After I had finished, the Host asked, "Who's next?" But all the competitors said, "We can't top that story, and none of us wants to try." So the judge said, "You've automatically won!" After 30 days had passed, I'd fallen in love with Lee without once kissing her on the lips. I didn't want to tell her that I loved her; I wanted to show her. So I worked out a plan.



I invited Lee to my house for dinner one night. Lee said, "Do you cook, too?" I said, "Yes, I will make a salad, cook a dinner, and make a chocolate cake." She said, "Wow that sounds great!" With that, I told her that I would pick her up tomorrow. I made two separate salad plates. With Lee's plate, using sliced cheese, I carved out the words "I LOVE YOU." I put the salad in the middle of her plate, covered it and put it in the refrigerator. Then I called Lee and told her that I was going to pick her up for dinner. When she saw her salad plate, she said, "This is the first salad plate I've ever had that says: I love you. It's so fancy. I love it!" After we'd finished eating, I gave Lee a box of chocolate

candy and she said, "Wow, would you like a chocolate kiss?" I said, "Yes, that sounds great."

This is another part that you won't believe. After about two months, I got my first love letter. It said: Dearest Ken, I will love with you, and I will laugh with you; I will take care of you if you are sick; I will never have a romantic interest with any other man. Love you forever, Lee. When I read this letter, I said if she's going to love me forever, I had better get an engagement ring before she changes her mind!

So, on her next birthday we celebrated at her sisters' house. I told them that this was going to be the most exciting birthday that they've ever seen. They said, "We doubt that, because we've seen a lot of birthday parties." After giving Lee her gift, I said that I had forgotten something. Then, I got down on my knees and gave Lee an engagement ring. I said to her, "Would you marry me?" Lee's sisters were speechless. It took Lee about 5 minutes to recuperate from what she'd heard. Then she said, "Yes, I will."

I promised her that we would have a more exciting wedding and marriage than anyone in the world, and you won't know what that means until after we're married. "We are going to have the wedding in 119 days." I just picked those numbers out of the hat. I told Lee that I had made an ID card with our pictures on it. I wrote days to be married, starting with 119 days. "I will change the number on it every day, and on the last day, it will say 'day to be married.'" I wore this card on my shirt every day, so that when others saw me they knew that I was getting married, and how many days it would be before I did.



After the wedding, I took Lee home and she could see that I intended to keep my promise. From the living room to the dining room I had placed 250 lights. I'd made a sign in the the living room saying, "Lee, I will love you with all of my heart." Over the big window in the living room, I had a sign saying "Happy Anniversary" with years ---- months ---- and days ----, but there were no numbers yet. In the dining room there was another sign saying, "Thank you for being my wife."

I told Lee that we were going to celebrate being married every day. I told her that I would put a card in my pocket saying how many days we were married. I also told her that I would bake her a cake and give her flowers every week, and we were going to celebrate our anniversary every month, not every year. I told my wife that I would never get angry with her, because if I had five minutes of anger, I would lose five minutes of love, and I never wanted to lose even 5 minutes of love with her.

After being married for one year, I had to take Lee to the hospital. The doctor said that she would have to be admitted. Lee said, "No, my husband will take care of me." So the doctor asked, "How about one night?" She said, "That's ok but for ONLY one night." I told my wife that I would stay with her so she wouldn't be scared. That was when I found out that she had end-stage kidney disease, with a life expectancy of five years. Lee didn't hear the part about five years, and I never told her. I told the doctor, "That's ok, I will just have to take special care of her."



When we first got home, I made a princess bell for her, using a regular doorbell, only the button would be on the inside. Whatever room I was in, I would plug in the chimes, and when she pushed the button, I would come running. If I was outside, I would plug it into an extension cord. Once in a while she would push the button, I would come-a-running, and she would just be laughing and say, "Just Checking."

Two years ago I took Lee to the kidney doctor. The doctor told her that she would have to go on dialysis or live in a hospice pretty soon. Then he gave her a book titled "Living with dialysis." I told the doctor that she didn't need the book because she wasn't going to the hospice or doing dialysis. The doctor asked, "How do you know?" I told the doctor that I loved my wife, and I would take good care of her. I told him that I would do whatever I could to prevent her from going to dialysis or hospice. The next time she went to the kidney doctor he said, "Do you know what I want you to do to make your kidneys stronger? Nothing, because I can't find anything wrong with your them anymore." I gave thanks to God instantly. Lee never had any problems with her kidneys again.

On September 30, 2017, my wife passed away in her sleep due to a heart attack. I wasn't mad at God. Instead, I thanked God for giving us extra time to show our love for each other. I thanked Him for letting Lee pass away in her sleep, so she did not have to go through a lot of pain and suffering. I thanked Him for taking my wife to heaven where she would be happy for eternity. I thanked God for giving my wife the opportunity to love and serve Him and I asked Him to let me do the same when my time comes.

On the prayer wall at the Cemetery, the plaque I chose for Lee doesn't have the words "Lee Kelly" with the day she was born and the day she died. Only the words "PRINCESS LEE" in big gold colored letters. We have 118 cards, and none of them are missing. I was looking the cards over just the other day, and I found a note with them that I'd never seen before. It was written by my wife. I felt like she was right beside me when I read it. (Mr. Kelly is tearing up now). The note says: "...and that's our story," and then it says, "Honey Bunny, I will love you forever. With all of my love, Lee."

That is my love story. I don't have to add anything or take anything away to make it real.

\*\*\*Mr. Kelly is sharing his love story. "I hope it will reach the world," he said. Mr. Kelly, I say to you today that we are a love-race of people, and we will do everything we can to make your dream come true.