

It was a perfect picture. Not even its familiarity could have faded its perfection. I can see every line. They sit across from each other and the man, tall, leans forward, his sleeves rolled up to the elbow, to hold her outstretched hand. Their gaze is unwavering...

Suddenly he grins, almost boyishly, and asks aloud what he had already telegraphed over to the woman he was in love with. "Will you marry me?"

She meets the question with calmness and fingers one of the stray tendrils of hair around her face. I knew the answer was there from the beginning of time.

"Yes".

My father slowly pulls her, his wife, onto his lap to kiss her as he always does when it's 8:55 in the evening.

It's easy to forget how long my parents have been married. Was it two years... or eighty? Each one seems to be an extension of the other sometimes comprehending each other's thoughts without words.

My mother and father are inseparably close. She misses him every day, and says so, waiting for him to phone at intervals from his small office. He kisses her every day, before anyone else, the moment he walks through the door. They pray together, every day, their voices barely audible from behind the bedroom door. I am positive they are holding hands. One hand is never far from the other...

One heart is never far from the other...

This is closeness.

Marriage is not what a great percentage of our population thinks it is. Marriage is usually painful, sometimes full of hardship, and always self-sacrificial. Marriage involves honest and unassuming communication.

Marriage is a complete act of faith.

Marriage is sanctifying... and
marriage is the most beautiful union God has created.

Communication is undoubtedly one of the essentials of this marriage. Where is the “oneness” in a relationship where conversations are either agitated grunts or frustrated outbursts? A heart subject to God holds no deceit or secret falsity from its spouse. When there are anxieties, disagreements or offenses there is conversation and most vitally, prayer. Otherwise a wall is progressively built. Faults are inevitable. The unfailing depravity of the human race explains the disturbing voices behind the closed door. The unfailing grace of God explains how every time, my parents come forth singly, and not separately. Communication is to the wedded couple an essential the Lord never wished to be neglected.

Marriage in itself stands against the real and strong glare of accusation from the world. It is unpopular. They pity the man convicted to be faithful to, and work for a wife. They pity the woman whose heart, body, and affections are submissive to her husband. Pity them who are partakers of blessings no one could rob them of? Our world lusts after self-promoting sensuality and gorges itself on the desires of the flesh, partaking of marriage’s privileges without the vows and accountability. It stands, often alone, against these things relying upon God in a complete act of faith.

The things I learn as an observer of my mother and father often admonish me without words. Nearly everyone has a lovely, wistful perspective of their future spouse. And so they should... but who ever dreamed of such sanctification? It is a very true and very unpleasant reality. God meant marriage for fond kisses on June evenings and for the

tearing off of the “old man” piece by wretched piece. “It is easy to forget you are married to a sinner”, they say. Each one is so completely opposite, fitted together to sharpen each other, to forgive each other, to encourage each other. Marriage... yes... is sanctifying.

But it’s not all uphill. Wedded life would be miserable toil if it weren’t for the beauty of it. Beauty for my parents is those nights of respite when they go out for sushi, just the two of them, simply enjoying each other.

I love watching them.

There is contentment in their love. There is unequaled happiness in their laughter. There is a constant rest in their God. If there is anything I hold highest in esteem or as the greatest blessing to hope and pray for because of my parents’ example... it is marriage.

(The End)