



VEGAS VIBES

By Esmeralda Padilla-Gould

Can Love Conquer All?

They met many years ago due to the series of highly unlikely events which unfolded on September 11, 2001. Both laid off their respective places of employment and coincidentally, were each hired by the same property, in their shared profession. They often reminisce about the fact that their family wouldn't exist if not for the horrific events of that fateful day in American history. Perhaps the notion of "it was meant to be" resided in her heart; however, unlikely to take up residence in his analytical, skeptical heart and mind.

All is well and good, for he doesn't need any mystical foundation to set as a footing for a solid, meaningful relationship to be real and fulfilling. His brutally logical mind would prove to be a welcome yin-yang type compliment to her emotional, faith fueled heart and soul.

They married 4 years later and decided to start a family.

They soon had a healthy baby boy to make their new family whole. Everything was falling into place just as they planned. They enjoyed a stress-free life without a worry in the world. It was a perfect marriage and family.

As they slide into a routine, he couldn't be happier, as the consistency and predictability demonstrated a flawless marriage and easy-going family life in his mind.

She was happy, but started to feel less fulfilled as the years passed by. Perhaps, he was growing a bit too comfortable, causing her to question his love and commitment to her. She often felt unloved and alone as his display of affection waned as it hid behind the curtain of his comforting, steady routine.

Unbeknownst to him, her feelings of isolation and unfulfilling existence festered into a depressing state of mind. She had come to realize in her mind that she was alone in

her quest for public status and acceptance. Within a year, she had achieved more than she dreamt, winning a popular beauty contest, and as a vocalist, performing on stage regularly. Her newfound popularity began to change the person her husband had married a few years ago. She relished in all the attention, never missing an opportunity to be in the spotlight. She had soared into a new life on her own, often alienating her husband and son.

After agreeing to a divorce, resulting from a year of turmoil in the family, the family structure had turned into a common fateful statistic. The child fell victim to his parent's, unwittingly discarding the dire need for spousal communication between them. The husband had been blindsided by all the new developments bombarding his precious wife, not seeing the transformation of her changing into a frigid roommate.

Fortunately, with God's intervention, the family is still

intact today, perhaps stronger than before. The marriage had suffered tremendous heartache and pain, through which they learned many great lessons.

Never take anyone for granted, take the effort to keep the marriage healthy by showing love and affection, and above all, communicate. Communicate when something seems awry. Never let depressing feelings go unchecked; communication between one another would have made all the difference to this couple. Fortunately, their love for each other was strong enough to overcome a situation where an innocent child would have grown up without both parents.

It is indeed important to keep the lines of communication going between husband and wife because it's very difficult, if not impossible, to read another person's thoughts. What we may take for granted and assume the other person ought to know, may not be the case.

Communicating our needs, in the spirit of love, to one another is important. Also, what we may perceive as being a certain way may not be the case at all. Sometimes we misread one another believing they're thinking or feeling one way when they may not be thinking or feeling that way at all.

Personally speaking, I can be on top of the world, but people often misread me and asked me what's wrong? Why am I so depressed? When that isn't the case at all.

That being said, husbands need to support their wives, as long as what they're doing is a good thing and for a noble cause and in accordance to God's will. The Apostle Paul said, "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her (Ephesians 5:25). Wives also must assume their most important role in the family relationship, which is to love their husbands and family and be good homemakers. This is God's plan.

The Apostle Paul also said that the older, more mature women should "Admonish the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, homemakers, good, obedient to their own husbands" (Titus 2:4-5). Anything else they do outside the home and family must be secondary to the family relationship. Keeping things in their proper priority is the key to a happy, contented and meaningful relationship. It's not wrong to seek other aspirations outside the home and family, just make sure to place family first.

The most important thing husbands and wives can do is to both have a close relationship with the Lord. When a husband and wife grow closer to the Lord, they automatically grow closer to each other, and, when a husband and wife draw closer to each other, they automatically grow closer to the Lord. It's like a pyramid with the husband on one side and the wife on the other, with Christ at the top being the head of the home. This is the plan God laid out for the priorities of the family. This will keep the family in balance and in harmony. To reverse any of these plans will cause the home to be out of balance and out of harmony, and there will be problems.

In a nutshell, here's God's plan, and it works: First: God. Second: Family. Third: Work/jobs/other activities. That's God's plan. If we stick to it, we'll be more apt to have fewer problems and have a happy home and family that will stick together through thick and through thin.

And finally, always, always, always pray together, when things are going smooth and especially when things are going a little rocky and rough. Remember, "We can do all things through Christ who strengthens us" (Philippians 4:13). ■