

Remembering What We Wanted

Excerpt taken from Love and War: Finding the Marriage You've Dreamed Of by John and Stasi Eldredge, Copyright (c) 2009 by John Eldredge and Stasi Eldredge Published by Doubleday, a division of Random House, Inc.

Where do you pick up the story of a marriage? With the first kiss? (It was intoxicating.) The late-night phone calls? (They went on for hours.) With an evening picnic on the beach? (It was romantic.) Getting caught by a college roommate making out? (Now that was embarrassing.) When is that moment you decide, *I want to be with this person for the rest of my life?*

Maybe the best place to pick up this story is two years after "I Do," when we are talking divorce.

It was a Sunday. John and I were sitting at our hand-me-down card table having breakfast, in a tiny little matchbox of a house we rented. It was a pretty spring morning in southern California. The hydrangeas were blooming pink and blue on our front porch. I remember the sun filtering through the windows; a beam of light falling across the table between us. But it felt like a wall of glass. I was on my side, John was way over there. It was only a foot or so, but he felt miles away to me. Again.

The day was fresh but I was tired. Tired of trying. Tired of feeling like an utter disappointment to my husband who not that many months ago had pledged his heart to me for life. In front of everybody, I might add. Did he even mean it? It wasn't working. Our marriage wasn't anywhere near what I had imagined it would be.

I broke the familiar silence. "Maybe we should just get a divorce."

We had been married less than three years; our marriage had

been full of promise, hope, and possibility. Heavens, I had known the man for five years before we even started dating, and we dated for three years before getting married. We were bright and rising stars. John worked on the staff of a church; I was working for a Christian ministry reaching out to troubled teens. Everyone thought we were the ideal couple.

How did we wind up here? What had gone so terribly wrong?

At the time, I would have said that I was utterly lonely-and to be lonely in your marriage is the loneliest feeling on earth. John was busy with his life and getting busier every day. It was a good life; he was involved in good things. The problem was, I didn't feel a part of it. I felt unnecessary to him. I, too, was working full-time, putting him through college. I came home to a man who was too tired to hear about my day, my world, all the dramas of the workplace. And I was too tired to care much about his. Sure, I would type his papers-but what happened to the shared vision? The desire to live life *together*? Two being better than one and all that?

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