

LOVE STORY EXCERPTS

FIRST MEETING:

From Paul & Cindy Portillo

Back in the spring of 2009, Cindy Sanchez was a receptionist at Endurequest, a plastic manufacturing company in Porterville. Paul Portillo was one of the men in brown, working for UPS, crisscrossing town, stopping here and there to pick up and deliver packages. One day, his route took him to Cindy's place of business where he popped in, his usual happy self but once inside this UPS man "picked up" on something unique.

"I immediately noticed this receptionist who had these incredible eyes and I immediately became lost in them. So much so that I had to force myself to look away!" Cindy said, "He looked at me and said 'Hi! How's your day going?' then he smiled. We made small talk and it was easy conversation." Cindy says, "you might think that the first thing I noticed about him was his 6' 4" height, but actually it was his cheerful/optimistic personality. But, like his smile, it just came out from a little bit higher up than on other guys I'd met before." It seems, ladies & gentlemen, Cindy had just met a "smooth drink in a tall glass!"

From Andrew & Angela Flores

Ladies & gentlemen, I have to tell you at the top, this Love Story is just full of romance and even Destiny. It actually began in a place full of romance exactly 8 years and 4 days ago tonight in a setting much like this one - at a wedding. Andrew said, "My cousin, Ricky Estrada got married that night and I was there." Angela said, "I was there that night but at the time I was going through a separation so meeting new people was not really in the cards for me."

But Andrew Flores had noticed the lady in the (quote) “*tight little black (dress.*”(unquote.) And he immediately made his move – “to the bar,” he said, “for some liquid courage before he approached.” While there, he had time to talk with his cousin Sara, pointing out the mysterious lady in black resulting in Sara’s going over to Angela and introducing herself while Andrew continued filling his confidence cup at the bar.

Angela said, “She asked my name, said she loved my shoes, my dress and asked where I was from and even how old I was. In the back of my mind I’m thinking, this girl is either crazy or just a really friendly person!”

Angela said that the “interrogation” lasted about another 15 minutes and then Sara left in the direction of the bar where by now Captain Courageous was practically breathing fire through his nostrils and pawing the ground, ready to charge. **(BULLFIGHT TRUMPET, CROWD ROAR sound efx)**

From Joel & Liz Garcia

We have to go back 7 years for the beginning of this love story and to the YMCA in Visalia. There was a first aid class being given and it was a requirement for the job that Liz was applying for at the time. It was for working with the handicapped or physically challenged. This wasn’t a particularly good day for Liz because she was fighting a pretty bad case of the stomach flu.

Now, purely by coincidence, there was another person there applying for work at the same place as Liz. “When I walked in,” Liz said, “I noticed this guy sitting all by himself, looking kind of clueless, so I sat down by

him.” Joel said, “Right off I noticed she was the youngest girl there and that suited me fine because at that time I was a girl chaser.”

“I introduced myself,” said Liz, “and found out that we would be working at the same place. I liked his appearance, he smiled a lot and he was pretty easy to talk to.” The first thing I noticed about her,” said Joel, “was her face, because everything else was covered up. So focusing on that, I noticed that she had a very smooth clear complexion and a baby face. I also noticed that she got up to use the bathroom a lot.”

Liz said, “I was up and going to the bathroom it seems like every 10 minutes.” Joel was thinking, “Man, chasing this girl could wear a guy out, she doesn’t hold still! And I wished I owned stock in Charmin tissue!” **(TOILET FLUSH sound efx)**

MOST MEMORABLE DATE

Paul & Cindy Portillo

Cindy said, “I’m going to go with our first official date. I was so nervous. We went to dinner and the conversation just flowed...actually I think I did most of the talking.”

Paul, picking that same date, said, “ Before I could get 2 words out, Cindy was off to the races! She told me about her parents, her brothers and her sister, her aunts, her uncle and her cousins. She told me her favorite foods, favorite colors and places. She traced her family tree from the early

1800's to now, she brought out a laptop, visual aids, charts, graphs and a laser pointer.... (I just threw that part in) (*audience reacts with laughter*)

Cindy said, "I felt so comfortable with him. I could tell he was analyzing me all the time, smart guy" Paul said, "I smiled and nodded politely, just trying to make sense of what had just taken place!" Cindy said, "After our date, I realized I had practically told him my whole life story. How embarrassing I thought. You'd think that would have scared him away, but I guess he liked my honesty because it didn't."

Tammy & Denny Pettyjohn

Both Tammy & Denny said that after meeting there was still a lapse of a couple of years before they actually began dating. Now don't forget that Tammy had "locked her sights" in on Denny from that very first meeting, so it's no surprise that even before their official first date she was "tracking" the object of her affection. Denny said, "Tammy seemed to have me on her GPS, because no matter where I was, she seemed to conveniently "just happen to be in the neighborhood" as she would say. Location or time of day didn't seem to be a factor either, because whether I was at the bar, my parents house, a friends house or anywhere else – she would find me!"

Tammy said, "He was always a friend and someone who made me laugh, so naturally I wanted to see him and be with him as often as I could, even when he shined me on and was a jerk!"

Now ladies & gentlemen, without getting into the whole "who is the stronger sex, men or women," I have to stop at this point and say that I personally believe that women are the more intuitive sex and that they have a natural instinct for when they have found a mate, whether that mate knows it or not. And I suggest that this was the case with Denny Pettyjohn. He was about to get a lesson in what a woman will do for love.

Denny said, “She has always been a nice, caring, beautiful person that I always enjoyed spending time with. I’ll never forget, for my 20th birthday, she bought me a 20 pack of Bud Light. That is classic. Talk about caring!”

And so you see ladies and gentlemen, this was just one example that Tammy was not going to leave their destiny to chance, time, location or circumstance. And nothing was going to stand in her way, not even CA Business & Professions Code 25658BP providing alcohol to a minor under 21yrs of age! **(SO THIS IS LOVE) (HICCUP, BURP sound efx)**

THE PROPOSAL

Andrew & Angela Flores

And Andrew said he knew Angela was the one for him the very night that they met. At that wedding reception. “She walked me to my car, “ he said, “it was dark outside and the sky was filled with stars. I looked up and saw a shooting star. I made a wish. I was 21 years old, it was September 14, 2002 and I wished with all my heart that one day this beautiful woman would become my wife.”

Now, the 7 years that *Angela* had to wait to find out Andrew’s wish finally ended for her on Valentine’s Day February 14, 2009 when Andrew proposed to her in this way.

“I wanted to make it a Valentine’s Day she wouldn’t forget,” said Andrew, “My friend Andy & I went to look for a valentine gift. The first

jewelry store I saw I knew what I was going to buy. I spent hours picking out the perfect ring while Angela was at work.”

“Andrew kept calling me when I got off work and was making the long drive from Children’s Hospital Central CA to our home.” She said, “Where are you? How much longer? I want to take you out to dinner for Valentine’s day. I said that’s nice but I’ve just worked a 14 hour shift, I’m tired, can’t we just order a Me & Ed’s heart shaped pizza and stay home? He said `yes, I guess, but just call me when you’re getting into town.”

Andrew said, “I had it all planned. I put on my black suit and my favorite cologne. I spread rose petals on the floors and had chocolate dipped strawberries ready to serve and a chilled bottle of champagne and all that remained was to adjust the lighting **(TURN OFF THE LIGHTS)**

Angela said, “As I approached the front door, I heard music inside, I walked in to find him in his suit, with rose petals everywhere, candles, sweets and champagne. My heart began to pound. We made small talk about work and how my day had gone. I rose to get a chocolate dipped strawberry and he followed me, came up behind me, whispered, `Happy Valentine’s Day and handed me a little black sash bag. My heart was now racing, Yes! He is finally going to propose!” I opened the bag, reached in and pulled out....

A necklace! **(MUSIC SCREECHING HALT)**

“She looked at me with a “let down” look on her face,” said Andrew, “I knew what she wanted me to ask her but I wanted to make her wait awhile. So I pretended that the night was over and that was it.”

“He walked into the kitchen, “Said Angela, “I followed him to pour

another glass of champagne and this time he turned around in front of me and got down on one knee.” Andrew said, “When I got down on my knee, I began to stutter as I was suddenly at a loss for words.”

Angela said, “He looked up at me and said, `Angela, we have been through a lot and I know what I want in my life. I love you, will you marry me? I said `Really? Are you serious?’

“With his eyes slightly watery and voice shaky & smiling, he said `yes, I’m serious, I love you with all my heart and I want you as my wife – I started crying and said YES! And gave him the biggest hug and kiss ever.”

Paul & Cindy Portillo

So, in keeping with restaurant terminology, “the table was set” for Paul Portillo to start planning the next most important move of his life, the proposal of marriage!

“Paul was so sweet,” said Cindy, “He went our of his way to make it a special day. Our one year anniversary was to fall on a Tuesday, but he happened to have Monday, the day before off and he surprised me with a dozen roses. He took me to my favorite restaurant Olive Garden where we reminisced about our early days and the future ahead. It was cute how he began to ask some hypothetical questions about getting engaged. “What if” this and “Would you prefer” that. “What would you think about” this, and “How do you feel about” that. I had to laugh and then the texts from home began to come in as it was a work night for me and they reminded me not to stay out late. On the drive home, Paul placed a ring on my finger that he had made from the chocolate wrapper of the candy we’d gotten at the restaurant. He was happily surprised that I didn’t freak out. But instead of

taking me straight home he made a turn and took me up to the top of snob hill and a beautiful view of the city. I remember it was a clear cool starry night.”

Paul said, “I got out, walked around to her side and opened her door.”

Cindy said, “What a gentleman! And he just stood there in the doorway, actually blocking my way out. And I thought, ‘Awww, how sweet, he doesn’t want me to get cold.’ And then I got another text from home, ‘Don’t be late’ I responded, ‘don’t worry, I won’t’ and when I turned back to Paul I got the surprise of my life. He had shrunk!”

“I had gotten down on my knee, “said Paul, “and I asked her if she would marry me. She looked at me, smiled lovingly and casually said “well, yeah,” as if I meant sometime in the future, then she saw the engagement ring. She caught her breath and asked if this was a *real* proposal?! So I proposed again! And she said, “Of course, silly! We laughed and cried together.”

“It was a very emotional moment,” said Cindy, “it felt like a dream. We ended up crying with me looking like a raccoon!”

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