

A WORKBOOK

THE SINGLE
WOMAN'S GUIDE TO



*Being
Happy*

And Loving Yourself

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This workbook is dedicated to every woman who has ever questioned her worth because she's single. You are invaluable at every stage of your life.



This workbook is a companion piece to my first novel "Someday".

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DID YOU KNOW...

studies have shown that singles

Are Less Likely to Gain Weight

More Likely to Exercise

Have More Close Friends

Stress Less About Chores & Money



Source: <https://time.com/3446452/how-being-single-affects-health/>

INTRODUCTION

A few years ago, I started a private Facebook group called *Happy & Single*. The purpose was to create a safe place where we singles are free from judgment while we laugh, joke, discuss life, and share our dating experiences and frustrations about being single, as well as, the highs and lows that can accompany it. We refer to ourselves as "Happy People Who Happen To Be Single". Single is our marital status, but it doesn't define who we are as individuals. What I found within this group are people, just like myself, who don't care what other people think about them being single and refuse to let anyone make them feel bad about it. It's our life and we will live it on our terms with or without a significant other. Some of us are dating and some of us aren't. Some of us are sexually active and some of us aren't. We've shared plenty of laughs, personal dating experiences, offered advice when asked, and lent a sympathetic ear when needed. But most of all, what we share is a common goal to live the best life we possibly can during our single season.

For me, the definition of single is any man or woman who isn't married. I don't care if you have a significant other or you are living with someone until you say "I do," in my opinion, you are single. Don't believe me, file your taxes. I bet you file as single. However, for most of the women reading this book, the content is geared toward those who aren't in a relationship. You may not even be dating.

Before I tell you what this workbook is, let me tell you what it isn't. This workbook isn't a how to manual on how to get a spouse. I'm still single so I have no business trying to tell any woman how to get hitched. There are people you can pay for that, but I'm not one of them. This workbook is designed to help you find peace in your singleness until Mr. Righteous arrives. This workbook contains information on how you can make yourself happy rather than waiting on someone else to sweep you off your feet and do it for you. Your happiness is your responsibility. Others can come into your life and enhance or detract from it but the foundation for your happiness must be laid by you. The problem with giving others that task is that when they leave your happiness leaves. If you create your happiness and know how to maintain it, when someone you hold dear leaves it merely interrupts your happiness. In time, after you've come to terms with their absence, your happiness levels will increase.

The information in this workbook are my opinions formed by my experiences. After being single over 40 years, I think it's safe to say I have some insight into the topic. It's my hope that by the time you finish this workbook you have a better idea of how to create a single life you can enjoy that includes peace, happiness, and a whole lot of fun!

PLEASE NOTE: This workbook is a companion piece to my first novel "Someday". I encourage you to purchase it. It is currently only .99 on Amazon.com.

Are you ready to be happy?

It's Okay To Be Single

I don't do pity parties when it comes to being single. I'm too blessed, too wonderful, and too cute to be sitting around sad for long periods of time because I don't have a man. So are you! I've had love, and I've lost love but what I haven't lost is my life and that alone is cause to celebrate. Now, I recognize there is a bit of sadness that can creep into our single spirits when it seems like everyone has someone except you. This is especially true around the holidays, at friends and family gatherings, and inside our heads. When I start to feel this way I remember one thing....SOME OF THOSE PEOPLE ARE MISERABLE!!

I shudder to think that I could be one of them. Going home each day to someone I no longer want to be with...fussing, fighting, cussing, and yearning for peace. Here in the United States, over 50% of marriages end in divorce. So yes, I will take my time and wait to find someone I can enjoy this series of events called life with rather than find someone to just go ahead and marry me so I can say I have a husband. I started writing books in 2011 for various reasons and for various audiences. One of those audiences has always been singles. Especially those individuals I refer to as "Woe Is Me Singles". Those are singles who believe their life has less value because they are single. They sit around sad, not enjoying life, and dwelling on their current relationship status to their own detriment. They believe that once they find a spouse they will magically become the person they always wanted to be and live the life they always wanted to have because the man or woman of their dreams is standing by their side. If that's you, allow me to shake you really hard so I can wake you up from that fantasy. The time for living your best life is NOW! A mate complements your life, not completes it. Begin creating the amazing life you want, radiate good vibes, and when Mr. Righteous is drawn to you, he'll be an amazing cherry on top of an already delicious slice of life. I'd rather be single and happy than with the wrong man and miserable.

For some reason, there are people in this world who choose to think that there is something wrong with you if you aren't in a relationship or married. There are benefits to being single and if you want to enjoy this single season, I suggest you learn to revel in those benefits. You should also ignore those well-meaning people who would rather see you in a relationship and unhappy than happy and single. You also need to learn to quiet that voice inside of you that is trying to convince you that they're right.

In the Bible, the Apostle Paul said it's good to be single. "I want you to live as free of complications as possible. When you're unmarried, you're free to concentrate on simply pleasing the Master (God). Marriage involves you in all the nuts and bolts of domestic life and in wanting to please your spouse, leading to so many more demands on your attention. The time and energy that married people spend on caring for and nurturing each other, the unmarried can spend in becoming whole and holy instruments of God.

I'm trying to be helpful and make it as easy as possible for you, not make things harder. All I want is for you to be able to develop a way of life in which you can spend plenty of time together with the Master without a lot of distractions." (1 Corinthians 7:32-33)

Not only can you focus on pleasing God but you can also focus on your career, your children, your education, your business, and anything else you feel could use some extra attention. Once you are in a relationship, you become obligated to take their wants, needs, thoughts, and feelings into consideration. There's nothing wrong with that but until that time comes appreciate the fact that you only have to worry about yourself and those people and things closest to you.

Below, write down the benefits of being single. What are some things you can focus on without distractions during this season of singleness?



Changing the Narrative

Before you can purge yourself of negative people and their single assumptions about you, you have to purge your negative thoughts. Start by looking at being single in a different life.

Being Single

DOES NOT MEAN

No one wants you.

You are alone.

There is something wrong with you.

You are desperate or thirsty.

You are lonely.

IT MEANS

You haven't found the right person or the right person hasn't found you.

You have friends and family you can call when you need to but no significant other at this time. When the time is right that will change.

You're awesome and one day someone just as awesome is going to invade your life. Until then, you're living your best life solo.

You don't want just anyone, you want the right one.

You are perfectly capable of filling your time with hobbies, activities, and people you enjoy .

Improving yourself comes with a bit of self-evaluation. If you have pain or trauma that has been ruining your relationships, I implore you to seek professional help instead of continuing to date hoping you'll find someone who doesn't mind putting up with your issues. All you're doing is setting yourself and the object of your affections up for drama and unhappiness that could possibly be avoided with therapy and a little self-work.

Loving Your Single Life

If you want to enjoy being single, there are 10 key components that must be in place.

1 A Good Relationship with God.

There are times when I need to talk to the one who created me, and I don't mean my parents. When others don't understand and don't seem to be listening when you are trying to explain, God will. My prayers are honest and intentional. Here is one I penned for the main female character in "Someday". Tee prayed this prayer for herself and her single friends who were dealing with some of the challenges of single life. (pg. 204)

Father, I know you see me down here. I know you see my tears every time a man tells me he can't date me because I won't have premarital sex with him. I'm asking you to please bless me with a good Christian man in my life. I don't really care if he has money or incredible looks. I just want a man with a good heart who knows how to love a woman. And in the meantime, help me to avoid the bad selections I've been making out of loneliness. Lord, bless Sandy and her marriage. Show her what you would have her to do. Bless Patrick and the kids. He made a mistake, but I know he's not a bad man. I'm asking you to help him with his weaknesses, and make him the faithful husband my sister deserves. Lord, watch over my friends and bless them, too. Give Tiffany the courage to stand on her own two feet and not depend on the money of a married man. Soften Lenice's heart. She's been hurt so many times that she's become bitter, angry, and doubtful that love really exists. Blow some kisses her way, so she knows that you love her and you haven't forgotten her. Thank you for placing Teresa in our lives to give counsel. Watch over her as she works to protect the citizens of Memphis. Amen.

Never underestimate the power of God. He can heal the hurt, mend the broken places, and give you a joy deep down on the inside that has nothing to do with how a man loves you or treats you. I am so grateful that years ago He revealed to me how my pursuit of a man was causing me unnecessary pain, and I thank Him for unleashing His love on me. I'm so much better because of Him.

On the next page, write your own prayer telling God what you want and need from Him professionally, financially, emotionally, physically, socially and spiritually during this season in your life. If you need healing, say that. If you need wisdom and discernment, say that. If you want a spouse, you can tell him that but be specific about the kind of spouse you want. List his attributes. Be sure to add in some things that benefit you and your family. Remember, we talked about improving yourself. God can help you with that, too. If you ask God, a question be willing to receive the answer. If you ask for something that will require work on your part, be willing to do the work. Faith without works is dead! God loves you. He wants to bless you, and He wants the best for you.

God knows and He cares



My Prayer



2 Self-Love

Self-love is vital to obtaining happiness. Your love of self is what won't let you fall into the deep abyss of single depression. Self-love will not allow you to let others make you feel bad about your singleness. Self-love propels you to work hard to be successful in your career and life. Self-love enables you to enact self-care and enjoy your own company. Dinner for one, going to the movies alone, pampering, taking a solo trip, or sending yourself flowers are all a part of self-love. If you find that the only time you are happy is when you are around other people, I encourage you to do some self-work to determine why you don't enjoy your own company. I'm sure you are wonderful. You just need to realize it.

I want you to make a list of things you like about yourself. They can include features, accomplishments, characteristics, etc. Tell yourself why you're dope! Whenever you are are feeling so good about yourself, you can review the list to remind yourself of your dopeness.

I'm Dope Because.....



Now I want you to make a list of things you are going to do for YOURSELF over the next 6 months to a year. This is your chance to be selfish.

3 An Active Social Life

When you are single it helps to have friends and family that you spend time with regularly. You may have one best friend you do everything with or a group of like-minded friends who enjoy the same interests as you. You need people whose company you enjoy. People you can call to get out and do things with. There is no reason why you have to have a significant other in order to go out to eat, travel, watch a movie, etc. Human interaction is vital to a happy existence. I once read an article that stated that people who live the longest are those with healthy friendships. That speaks volumes to what healthy friendships can do for our mental and physical well-being. Don't isolate yourself. Share the wonderful gift of you with others.

If you need to make friends, I suggest you seek out civic groups, activity groups, alumni groups, heritage groups, etc. They are filled with people who have similar tastes and interests. There are groups in most cities centered around biking, exercise, dining, bowling, dancing, books, being single etc. Find one to join. You're bound to find a buddy or two at some point. This year, my friend Joyce started bike riding and she found an entire community of women who enjoy bike riding. They get together several times during the week to ride. My friend has not only gained new friends, but she has also lost weight and gained muscle. She looks great and feels even better. Every time I see her, she seems to be glowing. Singles need healthy, happy interactions, and friendships. So if you need to, get out there and find yourself some friends.

4 A Career/Job That You Enjoy

Let's face it, how we earn a living has a direct impact on our happiness. Our jobs provide monetarily for our needs and wants. Most of us spend 30 hours or more doing our jobs and the tasks that go along with them and when you spend that much time doing anything, it helps to enjoy it. Now, I don't expect you to love every aspect of your job, but you shouldn't dread going to work each day. Doing so is draining, and if your job produces stress and anxiety it can subtract years from your life. If your job is sucking the life out of you, it's going to be hard for you to have the energy to enjoy the other parts of your life. True happiness is obtained when we can find it in multiple areas in our lives.

5 Hobbies

What do you do in your down time? Having a hobby gives you something to focus on besides yourself and helps develop your talents. During the COVID-19 pandemic, I've noticed that a lot of people discovered or rediscovered hobbies. People are reading, gardening, painting and sewing all because they had extra time on their hands during quarantine. I took on some home improvement projects. I painted my office and worked on beautifying my backyard. It actually turned out to be very therapeutic and when I was done I had a more attractive place to work and a peaceful spot to unwind. If you could spend time doing something you enjoy or trying something you always wanted to try what would it be?

Make a list of hobbies and activities you are currently doing and a list of things you'd like to try. Then, make time to do them.

CURRENT HOBBIES

FUTURE HOBBIES

6 Volunteer & Helping Others

Helping others just feels good! Often, we volunteer or help others because they are in need but when we're done we feel better too. We all share this thing called humanity and it endears us to one another. There's something in each of us that wants to make things better for others, if we can. Whether it's doing something for a friend or family member, volunteering at a community event, or serving on a board. We should all find ways to give back. God blesses us so that we can be a blessing to others. Some call it paying it forward. The byproduct of helping others is a sense of satisfaction and pride because you did a good deed and the lives of others are better for it. Good deeds yield good vibes.

7 A Consistent Exercise Regiment & A Healthy Diet

Exercise does a body good and it also gets those endorphins going! Endorphins are known as "happy hormones". According to experts, endorphins are structurally similar to the drug morphine and are considered natural painkillers because they activate opioid receptors in the brain that help minimize discomfort. They can also help bring about feelings of euphoria and general well-being. So, our bodies produce "natural dope" to make us feel better. How dope is that! If you don't exercise, I challenge you to start doing so 3 - 4 times a week for 30 minutes to one hour each time. You will probably start to feel better and possibly look better, too. And when you look good, you feel good!

When our body isn't well, we aren't well. Lack of good nutrition can lead to sluggishness, weight gain and negative feelings. If you are serious about being happy, you will pay attention to what you are putting in your body. Develop a healthy diet with plenty of fruits and vegetables and drink water. Keep sweets such as cakes, cookies, pies, and candy to a minimum. Fruit is full of natural sugar that can help to satisfy a sweet tooth. Give it a try!

8 A Positive Outlook

Our attitude impacts so much of what we say and do. It also influences our outcomes. We can each create a more positive outlook by being mindful of the words we let come out of our mouths. Words have power. Remember, our words begin as thoughts and thoughts control our emotions. I want you to create a positive daily affirmation, put it on your bathroom mirror, and every morning as you are getting ready, speak these words to yourself and over your life. Stick your chest out and say it like you mean it, too! If you need some help, here is mine.

I am intelligent, kind, beautiful, and funny.

I am a good woman.

People like me and I have the ability to make things better wherever I go.

I am a smart businesswoman.

I plant seeds and they grown in abundance.

Peace, prosperity, joy, love, and happiness are drawn to me.

I will think big and execute big plans.

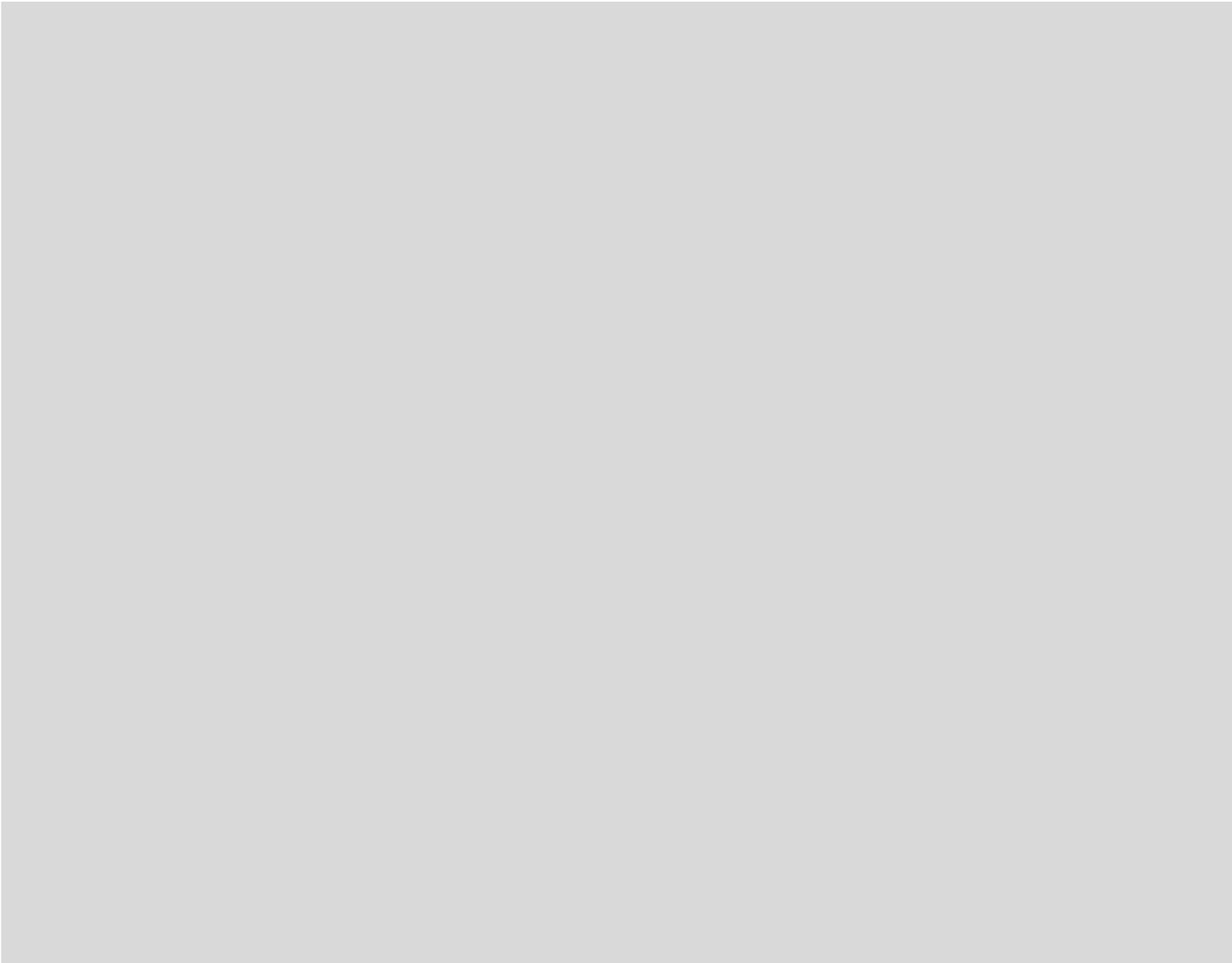
I deserve God's best.

Good people with honorable intentions are drawn to me.

I will have a great day with blessings pouring on me so I can bless others.

Did you notice that I didn't say anything about a man because this isn't about "him" whoever he may be. This is about YOU becoming the best YOU that YOU can be. I believe that positive thinking shifts the atmosphere and puts you in a position for good things to happen.

Now, It's Your Turn 



Now that you've done some work on *your* positivity, I must point out that there is a second component to this. You have to surround yourself with positive people. You can't remain positive if the people around you are always negative, complaining, or generally unhappy. I've had to distance myself from people like that or at least limit my interactions. I've also learned how not to let their negativity impact me. I have a male friend named Anthony who is always in a good mood. I hardly ever hear him complain and he knows how to enjoy life. Just being around him puts me in a better mood. When we're together we generally don't talk about our problems, we talk about life experiences, laugh, and eat. We are both major foodies. Soon after I met him, I realized that our type of friendship is therapeutic and I didn't have to pay a dime for it. I implore you to make friends with positive, optimistic people who want to see you well and winning!

9 Journal

Journaling is therapeutic. The simple act of putting pen to paper is a form of creative expression. Journaling has been found to reduce stress, improve a person's mood, strengthen emotional function, and even sharpen the mind. Penning your thoughts allows you to have an outlet for them and your emotions. Sometimes, you just need to get it out and rather than telling someone who may repeat what you said or misunderstand what you are trying to say, you've shared it with a non-judgmental, non-speaking piece of paper. You can write a few lines, a few pages, a poem, a rap, or a dissertation. The point is to get it out no matter what it is...sadness, anger, joy, or frustration. Bare your soul on that bare piece of paper. You may feel much better after you do.

If you don't know how to begin, I suggest asking yourself these two simple questions. How am I feeling? And why? Then, write the answers. Write as often you need...once a day, every other day, once a week. There's no formula to this. The key is to purge some of those powerful emotions inside you so that they don't over power you. I recently released the *Live, Laugh And Love Yourself* Journal in my store, www.literaryjewels.net. I hope you will support.

10 Be At Peace With Being Single

One of the worst things you can do to yourself is beat yourself up about being single. That "Why doesn't anybody want me?" thinking isn't helpful. It's natural to want companionship. However, wouldn't you rather have a healthy relationship with someone who loves and values you? Until that happens, you have to make peace with your single situation and resolve to find happiness in whatever phase of the journey you are in. The easiest way I know to find joy and peace in my life is to count my blessings. I find very little room for sadness when I focus on how good God has been to me. It's also a way to focus on the positive and not the negative. I can't help but smile when I look at who I have in my life, what I have, and the things I've been able to accomplish.

I want you to write down the things you are grateful for. Try to come up with at least 20 things that make you exude gratitude. I took the liberty of putting a few things on the list to get you started. Keep it going!

I Am Blessed Because....

I am alive.
I have family and/or friends who love me.
I have a place to stay.
I have food to eat.
I have clothes to wear.

Once you finish, go over your list. Does it make sense for you to think your life is less fulfilling because you don't have a significant other? You are blessed and when you operate with an attitude of gratitude, I'm convinced that you subconsciously make room for more blessings to rain down on you.

Retraining your thoughts and finding fulfilling friendships and activities will take time but you can make them happen. When you do, you'll be glad you did.

Happy & Single



More Than Just A Little Sad?

I would be remiss if I didn't mention the big "D" known as depression. It is normal to feel sad some of the time. That is our reaction to loss and the struggles of life. Yet if those feelings start to overwhelm you, you may be depressed. There are several symptoms of depression but the most common are frequent sadness, crying often, fatigue, insomnia, feelings of guilt, worthlessness, and helplessness, loss of appetite, and suicidal thoughts. If this sounds familiar, please seek professional help. You will not find the happiness you seek in that state.

Now Go Live Your Best Life!

I'm not going to lie to you, there will be times when single sadness still creeps itself into your life. It might be triggered by news of an engagement, attending a wedding, the holidays, or that Singles Awareness Day known as Valentine's Day. Don't allow yourself to stay in that dark place. Implement the techniques you've just learned to put yourself in a better mood.

The Bible tells us that the devil comes to steal, kill, and destroy. He will steal your joy, kill your spirit, and destroy your self-image, self-esteem and self-worth....if you let him. Those Pitiful Patty, Debbie Downer, and Negative Nellie moments that sometimes manifest themselves in people are the moments when you have to put your motivational speaker hat on and give yourself a pep talk. Encourage yourself into a better head space because you are wonderful.

I truly believe if you incorporate the 10 things I mentioned into your life, you will achieve overall consistent happiness. If you don't have all 10, it's okay. Commit to as many as you can. Life is truly what you make of it, and the only person responsible for your happiness is you. With a little work and positive thinking, you can create the happy and fulfilling life you desire. Thank you for downloading this workbook. I hope you found the suggestions in it helpful as you seek to find joy and happiness as a single woman. God wants to give you His best, but you have to be in a position to receive it. You deserve God's best!

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Join Happy & Single Worldwide

I recently started an international community of singles called Happy & Single Worldwide and you can be one of the firsts to join. Each day we share great content geared specifically toward singles. See you online!



[Happy.and.Single.Worldwide](https://www.facebook.com/Happy.and.Single.Worldwide)



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Here's a bonus for you. On the next page, you will find an excerpt from my book of short stories "Things Every Good Woman Should Know 2: Dear God Did My Boaz Get Hit By A Bus?"

It's an entertaining and encouraging look at dating and relationships.

What Goes Around Comes Around

Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus.

— Philipians 2:3-5

Alayna looked at her phone, rolled her eyes, and then looked over at her mother. "In what alternate universe is it okay for a man to text you all day instead of call and use high school shorthand text talk when he does? Malik and I have been dating for three months, but I don't think this is going to work. I keep feeling like I settled," she said.

Her mother turned her body toward her and then cocked her head to the side. "Settled? Darling, what do you mean?"

"I'm a successful executive assistant at a Fortune 500 company. I have a degree. He crawls around in people's attics and in their backyards, fixing their heaters and air conditioners. You taught me to use correct English. He

"really believes that 'be' is a verb. It's embarrassing sometimes."

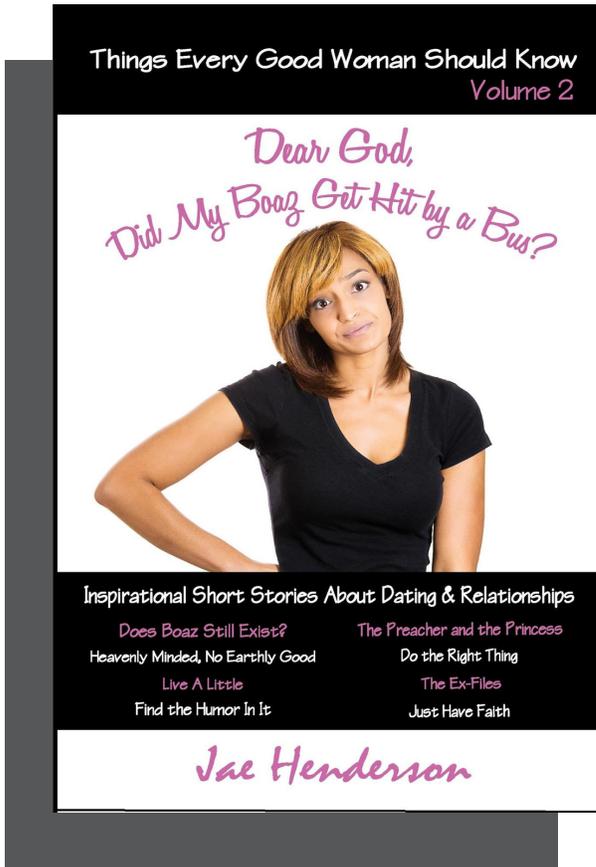
"Young lady, when did you get so high and mighty? Did you forget that your father gets dirty for a living? He is a mechanic, and he makes good money too. If it wasn't for him, you wouldn't have your fancy degree. He sent you and both your brothers to college. How dare you look down on a man just because he works with his hands! Do you know how much he makes? Last I checked, it cost a minimum of \$40 for someone to show up and look at your air conditioner. That's not a bad fee just for pulling up in someone's driveway."

Alayna took a deep breath. "He makes a decent amount of money, Mother, but that's not my point. I want someone more refined. Someone who doesn't come home with dirt under his fingernails every night. Someone who does more than drink beer and watch sports. Malik is a good man, but he's a simple man. I believe a woman should date a man who is above her social status, not below. I need more."

She pulled her BMW into the corner gas station and parked next to pump one. Alayna spent the day with her mother. She took her to her doctor's appointment, and then they had a late lunch at Evergreen Grill. They both tried their famous lobster burger. It was so big they were unable to eat it all and took the remainder with them. The day had been pleasant; she really didn't want to ruin it with a lecture from her mother. She should have known better than to bring up her love life to a woman who had been married to the same man since she was 18. What did she know about dating?

Candace Kincaid looked at her only daughter and thought to herself, *What am I going to do with this woman-child? My husband spoiled this girl rotten, and now some poor man will have to deal with the monster he created. She thinks she's too good for her own good.*

"I wondered why my daughter was 35 years old and still single. Now I know. Your standards are too high, young lady. If you were all that, you'd be married by now. Last I checked, you couldn't cook, and 15



you are a terrible homemaker. You think you know everything, and this year alone, I bet you've gained an additional 50 pounds. You need to take some self-inventory and be happy that a good man like Malik even looked your way. That degree doesn't make you better than anybody else, and Malik's lack of one doesn't make him inferior. When it comes to men, what you need is a God-fearing man who loves the Lord, doesn't mind working hard for what he wants, and has a good heart. That man adores you. What did his text say?"

Alayna was fuming. She didn't understand what her lack of culinary skills or her weight had to do with any of this. She had plenty of girlfriends around her age who were still single. Yes, she had gained a few pounds, but so what? She still looked good every time she left her house. This was about class, and Malik was mannerable enough, but he lacked class. She probably never would have even looked at him, but when he came over to fix her air conditioner, her date for the evening had cancelled. He gave her a horrible excuse about his car insurance lapsing, and he didn't want to drive his car, and he didn't like riding in other people's cars, blah, blah, blah. Malik noticed something was wrong and asked if he could take her out after his shift "to put a smile on your face." They went to dinner and had a great time. Malik was good company, but she never meant to get serious about him. He was just supposed to be someone to go out with until someone better came along, but somehow, they ended up becoming more. She liked him a lot but wasn't sure if she could see herself sharing a lifetime with him. He was so rough around the edges.

"I asked you a question, Alayna," said her mother.

"It said he was thinking of me, and he hoped I was having a good day," Alayna replied through clenched teeth.

"That's sweet. No, it wasn't a phone call, but at least he let you know that you were foremost in his thoughts. What's wrong with that?"

"Nothing, Mother. You are absolutely right." She knew this conversation was not going to end in her favor, no matter what she said, so she might as well agree.

Alayna exited the car to pump her gas. She wished she didn't have to get back in because she had no desire to continue that conversation. Her mother didn't understand. Yes, her father was a mechanic, but he was also well-rounded. He actually came from a middle-class family himself, but because he had an affinity for cars, he chose to be a mechanic. Grandfather actually wanted him to be an accountant. Besides, her father wasn't merely a mechanic. He was the owner of a very successful repair shop for luxury cars. He hadn't gotten his hands dirty in years. He paid people to dirty theirs.

Alayna thought about going inside the gas station to pay for her gas so that she could avoid her mother a little longer but decided against it. It was hot outside. It wasn't exactly a short walk to get inside, and she was wearing six-inch stilettos. It would be in her best interest to take advantage of modern conveniences. She slid her debit card into the machine located on the pump and followed the prompts that told her to put in her pin number.

A voice behind her said, "Excuse me. I hate to see a woman as beautiful as you pumping her own gas. Would you do me the honor of allowing me to do it?"

She was slightly startled and turned around to find standing there a gentleman with golden brown skin, a close-shaven head, and a goatee smiling at her. The sparkle of his smile seem to rival that of his brown eyes. Although the gleam coming from the expensive Movado watch he wore had them both beat. Alayna smiled at him and then peered over his shoulder to the Jaguar he must have abandoned to come talk to her. She was familiar with that car. She actually test-drove one before she purchased her BMW. That was an \$80,000 car, which was exactly why she left it sitting on the showroom floor.

“Are you sure you want to get your hands dirty pumping my gas? I mean, you look so nice in your suit.”

“I wouldn’t be a gentleman if I let you do it.” He extended his hand. “By the way, I’m Lucius.”

Alayna extended her hand in return. “I’m Alayna, and since you put it that way, far be from me to prevent you from fulfilling your gentlemanly duties. Pump away, sir.”

“Alayna. A lovely name for a lovely woman,” he said, then stepped closer to her and grabbed the 93 octane pump that was located to her left. Alayna could smell his cologne. It made her want to come closer and breathe it—and him—in more deeply. Lucius was nicely dressed in grey pants and a pink dress shirt which fit snugly to reveal a muscular build. It was obvious he took great pride in his appearance. His hands were nicely manicured, and his freshly shined shoes shone brightly in the sun. He was definitely a man who knew the importance of details. She wondered what he did.

“Thank you for your kindness, Lucius. Did you have a good day at work? I hope they didn’t work you too hard.”

He smiled. “It has been a productive day. As a principal of a successful brokerage firm, every day is a critical. People trust me with their money, and I don’t want to let them down.”

“I’m sure you don’t.” *Handsome, a great dresser, and successful . . . Niiice*, she thought to herself.

“Alayna, I hope I’m not being too forward, but you are breathtaking. If you don’t mind, I would like to get to know you better. Would you happen to be available for dinner tonight?” She bit her bottom lip. She and Malik were dating but technically, Malik wasn’t her man, so if she went out with Lucius, she wasn’t actually cheating. Besides, this man had class oozing out of his pores. The very thing she felt her current love interest was badly in need of.

“I would love to,” she said.

“Wonderful.” Lucius finished pumping her gas and then reached into his pocket. “Here is my card. Please call my office shortly and leave your number on the voice mail. My assistant will call you with the details. Do you mind meeting me at the restaurant? I have a couple of meetings to attend before I conclude my workday, but I know I’ll be famished when it’s over. Also, I don’t want to keep you out too late.”

“Sure. I don’t mind at all. I look forward to hearing from your . . . um . . . assistant.” That was a first. No one had ever asked her to schedule a date with their assistant. Maybe a meeting, but not a date. Alayna got back in the car and put the card in her purse.

Her mother watched her with a look of interest. “Did I hear you accept an invitation to dine with that gentleman? I know it’s none of my business, but aren’t you dating Malik? How would you like it if he accepted a dinner invitation from another woman?”

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