

When God Writes Your Love Story

By Eric and Leslie Ludy

Chapter One :

Eric: The Babes and the Big Egos

All the Kens and Barbies sat around the table. Amid glistening smiles, moussed hairdos, and Coppertone tans, the fragrance of Polo, with a hint of Skin-So-Soft, wafted through the cafe' booth. I nibbled at my burrito as the conversation around me finally arrived at its ultimate destination.

"So, Kevin?" Barbie #1 flirted across the table, "Tell us who you're seeing now."

Kevin was used to having eyes upon him. Being a Tom Cruise look-a-like in the early nineties has a way of boosting the ol' ego. Having a senator for a dad didn't hurt either. While crunching a chip between perfect teeth, an "I thought you'd never ask" smirk found its way across his face.

As all of us camp counselors leaned in, eyes bulging with expectancy, Kevin finally revealed the secret in a low monotone, "Her name is...Sandra!"

This only added to the excitement and wonder, because no one had any idea who Sandra was.

"Is she a babe?" begged the resident Brad Pitt, alias Mike from Wyoming.

Say no more! Swift as the bionic man, Kevin whipped out his wallet. Moments later we all observed a photograph of the "Babe of the Century," as Tom Cruise wanna-be so proudly referred to her.

"Ooooh!" was heard from the corner of the table where Brad Pitt and Leo DiCaprio, (Wayne from Denver), were discussing the finer points of her femininity.

"I think she has a huge nose!" grumbled two of the super models under their breath.

I continued to pick at my burrito.

Barbie #2, sitting beside Top Gun, was next in the heart-throb inquisition. The photo was removed to shouts of, "You go girl!" from the Barbies, and low disapproving rumbles about his skinny neck from the Kens, Brads, Leos, and Toms.

After a week of having to exhibit saint-like behavior to all the little campers, and being super-spiritual while around the camp leaders, it was time to let our hair down—time to let the real passions of our life come out. I mean, in your late teens and early twenties, you can sing only so many spiritual camp songs before you need an infusion of good old-fashioned romance!

One year prior, it was talks like this that really lit my fire. I used to love to brag about my love life at camp and exaggerate about *my* "Babe of the Century" in a way that would make all the guys jealous and all the girls insecure. You could say just about anything and get away with it; no one was going home with you to check out your story.

I used to crave these love chats, but something about Eric Ludy (alias Pee-Wee Herman in *this* group) had changed—something big—something that made me want to slide under the table when all those inquisitive eyes turned my way.

I'll never forget that moment! There I was, my fork picking at a jalapeno stranded on the corner of the plate and my mind screaming over and over in my head, "*Please don't ask me...please don't ask me.*" Well...they asked.

"So Eric? Tell us about your exciting love life!"

All the periwinkle, emerald, and dark brown eyeballs were twinkling at me with expectation. I gulped.

"Uhhhh," I mumbled. My palms were sweaty. My tongue was dry and thick, like I had a felt eraser in my mouth. Finally, Pee-Wee Herman spoke up. "Uhh, I uhh, actually, uh, I am waiting on God."

But, to be honest, it didn't really come out as clearly as I just wrote it. The last part of my sentence was mumbled under my breath sounding something like, "Ima waying on Gaw."

I hoped I could answer quickly and have them move on to Elle McPherson, seated next to me, poised and ready with a photo of a hunk. *The plan backfired!* They became even *more* interested.

"Uh, I *think* we missed that, Ludy!" Tom Cruise sarcastically challenged, "Was that a girl's name or your favorite Chinese food?"

After the laughs subsided, I began again, this time a little more clearly.

"I know this may sound strange, you guys, but I've decided that I won't give my heart to another girl until God shows me it's my wife!"

I have often wished I could have been more eloquent, that I could have made my resolve sound a little more appealing to my audience, now staring with mouths ajar. But I guess God wanted me to know that I was following a different path, *not* for the approval of Kens and Barbies of this world, but simply to honor and love him.

It was a lonely moment. Silence filled our corner of the restaurant, and all eyes focused on the jalapeno I was ruthlessly stabbing to death.

"That's...*interesting!*" Super-model, Kayla, awkwardly noted as her eyes grew large with disbelief.

"Oh, give me a *break!* How in the world do you expect to find someone, Ludy, if you're not out there looking?" Leonardo chimed in, accompanied by "yeahs" and "exactlys" from around the cafe' booth.

After a moment of reflective silence, I took a deep breath and stated, "I believe that God wants me to be married" (another deep breath), "He will pick her out for me."

A dark cloud settled over the entire group and rained down bewilderment and shock in the form of ghostlike faces and rolled eyes. I glanced up from my tortured jalapeno to discover a long bony index finger pointing at me, about twelve inches from my nose. Kevin used that finger like Clint Eastwood used a gun. He didn't shoot to maim—he shot to *kill!* Kevin's bronzed features had taken on a deep shade of red and his lips were bubbling like a lava pool ready to explode. After three long seconds, he finally erupted.

"I totally disagree with you!" He fumed with his index finger still targeting my right nostril. "God doesn't want us hanging around nagging Him about something like *that!*"

A few "amens" from the crowd textured his passionate sermon. He continued...

"I believe God wants *us* to pick," he preached, "and then He blesses our choice!" He paused and then came to a climactic finish, "It's sappy Christianity like yours that gives us Christians the image of helpless orphans! It is absolutely *ridiculous* to think that God would care that much about *your* love life!"

The finger held fast for another few long seconds, then slowly dropped as if to say, "*You show any sign of life, and I'll shoot you again!*"

I was the ultimate bummer to their titillating conversation. If ever you want to drain the juice right out of romance, just bring *God* into the picture. I had committed the unpardonable camp counselor sin, and all the eyes around the table were letting me know it.

Growing up, I had always gotten along with everybody. I knew how to hang with the crowd and not offend anyone. I was careful to say the right thing in order to avoid disagreements. Eric Ludy had never been known for his backbone, well, except

maybe when it came to the Denver Broncos. But when it came to things that *really* mattered, I was a serious wimp! This was one of the first times in my life I can remember actually standing up for something I believed in (that wasn't orange and blue).

Ironically, I didn't even know exactly what I was talking about. Just twelve months before, I, too, would have "totally disagreed" with what I had just said. But over the past year, God was challenging me to apply my Christianity to *every* area of my life. Was it ridiculous to think God would be interested in my love life enough to lead me and provide a wife for me?

I shifted in my seat, stabbed my jalapeno one last time and spoke. "All I know," I said, "is that every time *I* have tried to pick a girl out for my life, I realize in the long run that I have *horrible* taste."

Everyone wanted to chuckle, but everything was still a little too serious for that.

All eyes were wide and all ears were open in wonder and bewilderment as I concluded. "Kevin, if God had ten women line up in front of me and said, "Eric, you pick!" I would fall flat on my face before Him and say, "God, you know me better than I know myself...*You pick!*"

I bet no one present other than myself remembers that moment. To them it was probably just the ramblings of a lunatic named Ludy. But for me it was a defining moment. It was almost as if God was saying, "How seriously are you going to trust Me, son?"

So there it was, in front of the babes and the big egos, that God challenged me to officially trust Him with the "pen" of my life. I had held onto that pen for twenty years, and now, over a chicken burrito and a mangled jalapeno, I handed it over to the great Author to allow Him to work His wonder.