A Sweet Memory Tainted by MS

by LEEANNE LAPUM

Our Daughter's Wedding

Early last year our daughter started rock climbing with a former student of my husband's. She claimed that they were "just friends." They had known each other in the past because they had attended the same school and we didn't think anything of it. Over time his name came up in conversations more and more frequently.

One day he contacted us and asked if he might come over for a visit. Of course, we said yes. On that particular day we sat in the family room and carried on a pleasant conversation with our daughter and her new friend. During that conversation he asked our permission to date our daughter. Upon receiving our approval the two of them left and went straight to his parents' house and asked their permission as well. We were quite impressed, as were his parents.

His visits became more and more frequent. At one of his prearranged visits he brought us a framed collage of them on various dates. He also brought a photo album, which he assured us that he planned to fill in the future.

A month or so later I had surgery. He stopped by that evening after work to see how I was doing. I remember vaguely that he sat on the edge of the bed. He looked me in the eye and asked how I was feeling. Still in my somewhat groggy state I replied, "I feel like I've been hit by a truck." He left the room and I went to sleep.

Proposals and Planning

A few weeks later he asked if he could come by for a visit after work. Of course, we said yes. We had a feeling that this visit had a specific purpose. We were definitely right. During that visit he spent some time talking to us about his purpose in dating our daughter. He talked about what he felt a relationship should be and the role of a man as a leader in the relationship.

He told us what a blessing our daughter had been in his life. It was then that he "popped the question." He asked our blessing on marrying our daughter. We didn't even have to think about it. He has included us in every aspect of their relationship, something not many young men do. We've felt honored throughout the entire development of their relationship to each other and to us.

Because MS has limited my abilities, our daughter planned the entire event. All we had to do was follow instructions. She had spreadsheets that covered everything, down to the smallest detail. She is extremely organized — she works as an office manager, which prepared her for planning any event.

Our daughter had always wanted a garden wedding. Fortunately her future in-laws had a 6000 ft.2 backyard. She worked with them planning the layout. She even helped them lay sod. No surprise to us because she has always been a real hands on type of person.

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The Special Day

The day of the special union arrived. All we were required to do was show up at a specific time. Thankfully she had arranged for someone to do my hair and makeup. It was the first time in many years that I've left the house without looking my best — I was truly blank canvas.

Upon arrival a pleasant young woman introduced herself and began working on my hair. She spent much more time on it than we would have at home. After using a lot of hairspray and doing a lot of "teasing" she managed to make it look decent. I was relieved because my chemo for MS had taken its toll and left my hair thinner.

Our daughter had arranged for someone to do my makeup as well. The first question the makeup artist asked was what kind of look did I want? I told her that I wanted to look natural — though I hoped for better than natural if the truth be told.

She opened up an amazing makeup case. It was filled with more makeup than I've ever seen in one small place. She worked on me for a while and when she got done, I almost didn't recognize myself.

I was walked down the aisle by our son. I managed to ignore the fact that I was in a wheelchair. What I couldn't ignore was the pain I was experiencing due to a recent injury. It made it very difficult to sit without being in excruciating pain.

Still, I managed to make it through the entire occasion. We did have to leave before the bride and groom left for their honeymoon, though — we will have to rely on pictures in order to experience that.

Every mother looks forward to the day when she can walk down the aisle at her child's wedding. Thanks to MS my situation was different. Most people in attendance knew of my situation. Some of them came up to me and graciously extended their congratulations. Others were obviously too uncomfortable to do so. As I've said before, I’m used to it.

The memory of that day will live in my heart forever. I have to refuse to dwell on the negative aspects. I was able to attend. I enjoyed myself as best I could. I saw many people that I hadn't seen in years or had never met before.

This is just as another occasion that was tainted by the existence of MS.