



Point of Origin:	Love at first sight
Destination:	Happily ever after
Estimated Time of Arrival:	Five years later

Love in the Slow Lane

by Jennifer Teel-Wolter

YOU CAN'T HURRY LOVE!

Patient, hard working, and loyal – Josh Barrett is the steady type of guy who knows exactly what he wants. And when it came to love, he wasn't going to let anything stand in his way – no matter how long it took.

Lindsay Clark first caught Josh's eye at a birthday party in 2002. Beautiful and engaging, Josh felt she was special right away. Sparks flew immediately between the two, but despite ending the evening with a romantic kiss, Josh found himself without Lindsay's phone number or any way to contact her.

But this was a man on a mission.

"The next day I got out the phone book and I called all the 'Clarks' until I found her," recalls Josh.

His persistence paid off. Lindsay was impressed by his initiative and the couple decided to meet for a casual date. Lingered over conversation into the morning hours, Lindsay and Josh soon found their attraction bolstered by a common set of values, beliefs, and goals. From that day on, the two knew it was love and instantly became inseparable.

LONG DISTANCE LOVE

Despite their instant bond, there were big tests in store for Lindsay and Josh's relationship. Lindsay was just 19 and had plans to attend San Diego State University in the fall.

"We'd only been dating for a few months and I didn't want to leave," says Lindsay. "But Josh really encouraged me to go. He said I'd always wonder if I didn't...he was so supportive. It shows a lot about his character."

Josh's support brought the couple even closer together and added an element of confidence and trust to what was still a new relationship. After dating only three months, Lindsay headed to San Diego for school, but her heart remained in Sacramento with her boyfriend. They spent countless hours on the phone, supplemented with frequent weekend visits.

"There were a lot of Rapid Rewards," jokes Lindsay. "Still, I

missed him a lot. Three months into it, I was miserable."

Not wanting Lindsay to rush into a decision, Josh encouraged his girlfriend to stick it out in San Diego for a year. Regardless, Lindsay was more comfortable in Sacramento and knew her future with Josh was waiting there. She returned home and resumed her studies in communications at Sacramento State University with Josh by her side.

TIME TO GROW

With their long-distance days firmly behind them, Lindsay and Josh relished the chance to put down roots together. Between going away to college, living apart, and moving back to Sacramento, there had been no shortage of excitement in their relationship; still the couple lacked what they wanted most – quality time together.

Lindsay and Josh took stock of their lives and decided to make each other a top priority. Already best friends, the two began to build a life together, starting with their families. They introduced their families and began celebrating holidays together as a group. Building on their similar backgrounds, Josh introduced Lindsay's family to his childhood church, which soon became another commonality for everyone to share.

The commitment quickly spread from Lindsay and Josh to their families. It wasn't long before Josh's sister and Lindsay's brother were dating. Lindsay also became best friends with Josh's sister.

"We're not into the crazy life," says Josh. "When we get together with close friends – it's almost always our family. We like to hang out, linger, and take our time together."

The couple was also careful to take time for themselves and to build a strong foundation of shared interests. An avid outdoorsman, Josh wasn't able to convince Lindsay to take up camping, but the two soon found a common love for golf. They also instituted "date night", a tradition that still continues five years later.



GOOD THINGS COME TO THOSE WHO WAIT

Despite love at first sight, Josh and Lindsay took their time settling down. The couple talked about marriage, but wanted to wait until the time was right.

“We knew right away, but we didn’t want to rush it,” says Lindsay. “We really wanted to support each other in our goals first.”

Building a career was a goal for Lindsay, who took a job as a loan consultant upon graduation from CSUS. Artistic endeavor, such as scrapbooking and photography were also a passion. Encouraging Lindsay to explore her talents, Josh bought Lindsay a digital camera, and has since followed up with classes for her so she can take photographs on their honeymoon.

For Josh, who works in mechanical construction, owning his own home had been a lifelong dream. After careful planning and saving, Josh bought a house in Rancho Cordova in 2005— a fixer he knew could make into a home. He began the remodeling project right away, handling all the work himself with Lindsay as a constant support and sounding board for ideas.

A unity so strong can take time, but the much-in-love couple was more than willing to go the distance in order to build the life they wanted. From education, to career choices, to buying a home, Josh and Lindsay spent five patient years supporting one another – growing their love and commitment with each step.

“He’s my biggest cheerleader and I try to be his,” explains Lindsay.

TIME FOR A WEDDING

With so many items finally checked off their mutual to-do list, the longtime couple decided to take the plunge into marriage after five years. They took a few trips to browse for rings, but Josh opted to keep the timing of the proposal a surprise.

The big question finally came on August 4th, 2006, when Josh arranged to take Lindsay to Lake Tahoe for the weekend. Knowing that Lindsay wanted their engagement to be a private moment, Josh planned to propose near scenic Emerald Bay and celebrate their engagement with a dinner at a special restaurant.

Once again, the couple would have to wait.

Traffic nearly ruined their plans when a serious car accident brought the freeway to a screeching halt. Agitated and nervous that they’d miss daylight and their dinner reservations, Josh finally decided to get out of the car and share a glass of wine with Lindsay while they waited out the delay.

“We just pulled over and parked right there on freeway,” says Josh. “I had to calm my nerves; my whole plan was being shot into the ground.”

Eventually, traffic resumed and Josh took Lindsay to the lookout cove over Emerald Bay, where he surprised her with a diamond ring. Lindsay was so shocked that she initially forgot to give her answer.

“You think about that moment for five years and when he finally asked my whole body went numb...I remember thinking: Is this actually happening?” Lindsay recalls. “He finally said, ‘is that a yes or what?’”

The long-awaited answer was definitely a “yes”. To celebrate, Josh and Lindsay went out for a special dinner in Lake Tahoe. Josh had purchased Lindsay an outfit for her birthday a week prior, knowing the engagement would come. The outfit was formal, but it seemed fitting for the most memorable day of their lives.

“We were definitely the fanciest dressed people in Lake Tahoe you’d ever seen,” laughs Lindsay. “But I didn’t care. We’d just got engaged!”

After the weekend, Lindsay and Josh’s slow-paced lifestyle kicked into high gear. Lindsay had lost her job as a loan consultant shortly before getting engaged. With strong organizational skills and the time to devote it, she set out to plan her autumn-themed Lake Tahoe wedding along with the assistance of the ever-creative Debra Hiebert of Très Fabu Event Planning and Design.

Lindsay and Josh looked to project their fun-loving and laid-back personalities into the event. They settled on a golf course location near the spot of their engagement in Lake Tahoe. Never much for formality, the couple designed whimsical invitations featuring an engagement photograph of the two of them jumping into a pool – dressed in a tuxedo and a white gown and veil – inscribed with the message: “Come join us as we jump into life”. To build the bright and cheerful atmosphere on wedding day, the couple rented confetti cannons and Lindsay selected a disco song for her father-daughter dance.

It’s been a whirlwind of planning for the do-it-yourself bride and groom. Despite the flurry of activity, Lindsay and Josh have stayed true to themselves and focused on the meaning of the day. Building a future together that’s focused on family, commitment, and quality time remains a primary goal. They dream of a quiet and peaceful home built on open land, with a slow pace of life that allows for plenty of time with family, friends, and even farming.

“We just want to grow old together,” says Josh with a smile.

“We’ve never been in a rush to get through life,” agrees Lindsay. “We just want to sit on the front porch and watch our corn grow.” ☺



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