

ADVENTURE OF A LIFETIME

CHARLES E BUTLER

Copyright © 2015 CHARLES E BUTLER

ISBN-13: 978-1518897460

ISBN-10: 1518897452

DEDICATION

I dedicate this story to my dear sweet momma, and my giant of a nephew-Jordan! May she rest in peace and God guide him all the days of his life.

CONTENTS

Introduction	i
1 Chapter: A Tender Heart	1
2 Chapter: Uncle Jared and the “Virgin Queen”	Pg #11
3 Chapter: A Hero's Heart	Pg #18
4 Chapter: Treacherous Waters	Pg #30
5 Chapter: Unks Returns	Pg #49
6 Chapter: Guardian Angel	Pg #62
7 Chapter: A Day to Remember	Pg #82
8 Chapter: Panic Over the Atlantic	Pg #105
9 Chapter: Romance Begins	Pg #117
10 Chapter: A Heavy Heart	Pg #133
11 Chapter: Springtime in Lisbon	Pg#152
12 Chapter: A Time Forgotten	Pg#165

INTRODUCTION

True love is finding that part of you only another can complete. It requires risking our deepest emotions, secret thoughts, and most cherished desires to someone for the very first time. Exposing our heart is the hardest thing we will ever do in this life. We choose only to do this after we find someone we trust, and often adore.

Life was never meant to walk alone. While there are many types of love, there is only one valiant knight for each destitute princess. For a heart comes in halves; and true love has room to share but one other heart.

This is a story in search of that missing half heart. This is a journey through the amazing chain of events that weighs down a particular man's heart. Each heavy link was forged in the flames of fate so many years ago. This trouble no heart should bear.

I often heard it said: you can love many women, but really love only one. That is the way God made our hearts. But, who am I to define love? Better minds than mine have failed miserably to answer this impossible question.

I do know something about love. The greatest love is always found through great sacrifice. It demands lying down one's own life to the benefit of another. Sometimes it requires this impossible burden from even the most innocent of hearts. Sometimes fate wraps its miserable shackles even around the heart of a child. This is just such a story!

CHAPTER 1: A TENDER HEART

A gentle warm spring breeze ripples the red and white plaid table cloth tickling the knees of Cass. He stares at the line of linen dancing in the morning sunshine while smelling the sweet clean sent each mild “whoosh” sneaks past the open kitchen window. His short arms prop his small head as he watches the clothesline become a vast shimmering ocean. A sheet gust upward in the morning breeze revealing it's really a terrible menace. A shirt and a dress dance off in the opposing direction as they try frantically to escape the clutches of this dreadful dragon's claws. They attempt to swim away while holding hands as the fast approaching peril grows closer. Just now, the foe scrapes the shoulder of the valiant man whom has put himself in harms way between the dragon and the distressed damsel whom he is trying to protect.

In this moment, Cass yells, “No!”

The abrupt outburst immediately settles the encroaching dragon, the valiant man, and the distressed damsel back into the gentle formation of attention. But, it also alerts momma.

Cass feels the pressure of a loving warm hand press down and swish his hair. In his solitude he realizes this particular adventure has ended. Slowly, an adoring giant face journeys down beside his.

“Has my beautiful boy taken another amazing adventure?”

A tender warm kiss ever so slightly tickles his cheek, and then her lips reply, “What a wonderful adoring mind.”

Momma returns to her baking as Cass revels in the praise his ravenous heart so much desires. Her unconditional love fills the

room, the house, and his heart every day of his short life.

How Cass loves his momma. This wonderful woman is the most beautiful creature ever captured by such an innocent heart. She is every distressed damsel in every misfortune a seven year old imagination could ever hope to rescue. While his teachers' think his wondering mind is a hindrance, his doting mother claims otherwise. She reads amazing stories to him every day. One of his favorites is the bible story of the amazing "Sampson and Delilah." And at night, she blesses Cass with her own wonderful dreamy imagination. How momma loves her handsome son.

This night is a very special night. As momma tucks her Prince Charming in, she proclaims her special treat to him.

"If you promise not to say a word, I will show you something I made especially for you."

Cass nods his confirmation to momma as she kneels and grabs this hidden treasure from under his bed. She stands and makes a spot on the bed next to him by wiping a flat area on the blanket with her hand. Carefully, she sits on the bed while clutching her surprise. Cass' face looks ready to explode under the pressure of patience. But, he remains true to his promise and bites his sucked in lips.

She extends one of her arms and drapes it around Cass' other side, and then pulls him slightly towards her lap. With her other arm, she lowers the surprise from her bosom, and then places it in between them.

Momma whispers, "I know how much you love adventures. So, I decided to make you one of my own."

Cass marvels at the pastel pallet of colors covering the book.

As he begins to open his mouth, momma raises her "Shhh" finger and replies, "It's called 'The Monkey Puzzle Tree.' I want this to be a very special gift for a very special little prince."

Momma explains that the monkey on the cover is named Pepito. The tree behind him is filled with impossible obstacles that no monkey has ever been able to overcome. The tree is unbelievably huge, and its impossible branches begin in the misty clouds towering way, way above. Glistening spiked thorns cover the base of the tree; which is way to round for any monkey to wrap its small arms around.

She asks Cass, “You do know how much monkey’s love to climb trees?”

Cass looks into momma’s smiling eyes and slowly nods up, and then down.

“Well then, we’ll have to see if Pepito has an imagination like yours.”

She turns the cover and begins to read. Each turn of the page brings another astonishing illustration of Pepito’s life, and one more obstacle for him to overcome. Momma slowly speaks her poetic story as Cass’ imagination wanders along with Pepito. Momma reads the last page as she points to the conquering Pepito on top this incredible tree. Cass’ eyes finally begin growing heavy as they push down on his cheeks forming a comforting smile.

Momma continues reading, “Pepito looks from north to south as his head spins all around. ‘I can see the Monkey Sea and several other towns.’ He then pulls out his Monkey Scope to see what else he’s found, just to see monkeys climbing trees in every other town. Tears of joy, so filled with pride, as his tiny heart pounds, pounds; while hearing, ‘Boy, we knew he would,’ and cheering from the ground.”

Momma finishes her story as Cass’ eyes finally close. She speaks very softly the last sentence, “And, all the world was right.”

She stands while quietly closing the book. Momma leans over and kisses her baby before placing her treasure on the nightstand next to him. Finally, she turns off the light while closing the door, leaving just a peek of light.

Through the crack she whispers, “Goodnight my knight in shining armor, and may God lead, bless, and protect you all the days of your life.”

Most of Cass’ days are spent in momma’s classroom. She decides she is the best teacher for her handsome son. She takes him on picnics as they explored the country side. Each day is another shared adventure. His momma is more than amazing. She is a brilliant person with the knowledge only a well educated woman would possess.

Cass does not know much about his momma’s past, just that she is here now, and loving him totally and unconditionally.

She teaches him science as they explored the nature of nature. He learns how all living things are born, live together, work

together, reproduced, and then return to the dust. She teaches him geometry and mathematics using things around them. She shows him how to find out how tall a tree is just by using a tree branch the same length of his arm.

“Stand the branch upwards and hold your arm level. Now back away while looking at the top of your branch until it touches the top of the tree.”

Cass does as momma instructs.

As he stops, momma states, “Now draw a line at your toes. If you were to cut down that tree, its top would just miss your toes. That’s using what is known as a 45 degree angle. You can also pace off the distance between you and the tree to figure out how tall the tree is.”

She continues teaching him equation; but also practical ways to use this new found knowledge. She also instructs him on foreign exotic languages, such as: French, Latin, Portuguese, and German. Momma becomes his best teacher, because she always knows how to inspire his learning. The history, the arts, and literature become his favorite subjects; especially those dealing with romantic adventures.

She only tells stories with unforgettable moral endings. She knows her little man loves her, but she never knew how much. You see, Cass was falling more and more in love with her everyday. He has no desire for anything else in this world, accept being in the shadow of his sweet momma. That will soon change!

As so often is the case, the joyful simplicity of life is interrupted by the complexity of the unexplainable and unimaginable. This is to be the beginning of sorrows for Cass.

Momma develops a cough that soon becomes uncontrollable. For two long days and two sleepless nights, she tries every remedy she can remember, and even new concoctions her scientific mind can create. Nothing helps her in the slightest. She knows she needs special attention, but she seems to dread going into town for help.

Cass has never seen the town, and this seems like an exquisite chance for adventure. Momma feels otherwise. This is why they live on a farm far from town producing everything they both need to live, and then some. Cass will soon find out the reason for her apprehension.

It seems the chill of the morning air is just too much for her. As Cass stands in the doorway, he notices momma is wearing her warm winter coat on such a wonderful warm autumn day. Cass exits the house and waits on the porch while momma grabs her rather large purse.

Cass proclaims, "You see momma, it's not cold out."

Yet, he watches as she still shivers under the monstrosity of fur.

She grabs his hand and hurries off walking towards town. Her other hand is dedicated to covering her coughs. Cass knows something is wrong while feeling his mother's clammy trembling hand. After the second mile across the beautiful countryside, momma stops a moment to rest.

She coughs while asking, "How's my little man doing?"

He wants to tell her everything is wonderful, but he senses something's just not right. He thinks a moment, but he cannot remember her ever being sick. This begins to worry Cass.

Momma sees the wrinkles of worry forming on his forehead. His puzzled stare and down-turned frown is something she cannot remember either.

"Don't worry my son. We are going to see the doctor. He will give me the right medicine to make momma all better."

These words of encouragement seem to lift his spirit. His face returns to smiling. He finds new strength to help lead his momma along, as they proceed towards the doctor in town.

Cass can feel her strength diminish with each further step she takes. Soon, he finds his ten year old body is pulling her weight. She continues to cough between each gasping breath. She gradually becomes harder and harder to pull along.

Cass sees the town first. His worry turns immediately into great expectation. This is not the adventure he longs for, but for the help awaiting his beautiful dear momma. They turn off the old country path onto the asphalt pavement. Cass has never seen this type of road before. He is about to see many things for the first time.

The nearer the town they get, the more he notices the colorful hanging decorations. These obscure objects soon turn into numerous American flags, draping every street corner.

Across the entrance of the town is a white cloth banner.

Big bold letters state, "Welcome Home Heroes!"

Cass asks momma what this means.

She tries to explain, but she can only say, "The great war is over."

Cass did not even know there was such a thing. He sees that momma's white handkerchief has turned pink and red. Momma continues to cough harder with each passing step.

They reach the first of many white concrete walkways that require they step up. This is something else new to Cass. Seeing all the tall buildings and glimmering glass of the "display windows" is another. Cass tries to glimpse inside each passing shop window with his eagerness to venture inside. But, he knows the doctor's office is much more important than his immediate desire.

A crowd of young men stand just ahead. Momma and Cass approach this group of unruly teenagers that will rudely change Cass' heart forever.

The group is very slow to move aside and allow Momma and him passage. Only one young man bothers to bid them "good day." Momma's coughing seems to scare them though. This causes the boys to notice her stained hanky, and her face. As momma and Cass pass between them, one of the boys starts calling momma a "witch."

"I think she may be the most hideous creature walking the Earth."

He moves backward hastily, as another thug calls momma an "elephant" before darting off. This is due to her unusually large long nose. In this moment something beautiful breaks in Cass. It is something that will follow him the rest of his life.

He grows angry and pushes aside the remaining juveniles hindering their progression; even though they are much bigger. Cass has never felt this sensation before. As they pass the herd, he learns how to hate for the very first time. His momma was, is, and will always be the most beautiful creature God ever created. In his heart he knows this. No greater love is there than his.

They notice another crowd about two blocks ahead of their current location.

Momma tells Cass, "That must be where the doctor's office is."

She continues to cover her mouth along their brisk walk. They hear a strange term being echoed throughout the crowd as they approach. It seems everyone is upset about something. A particular confusing word is repeated over and over in their strange conversation. It is the word “influenza.”

The crowd hears momma's cough and sees her crimson stained handkerchief. They quickly move aside to let her pass. Cass feels the respect this group gives towards this woman that Cass knows possesses such dignity and honor.

Cass urgently pulls his coughing momma inside the front door to find many others in coats holding red stained handkerchiefs. There is no place to sit, so momma and Cass stand and wait. It seems like an eternity waiting for the attending receptionist to address them.

Cass feels momma unintentionally stoop several times. Suddenly, her hand loosens from his clutch. He looks around to request help, but everyone seems preoccupied with their own coughing and stooping.

Momma collapses onto the man in front of her. Her unintended intrusion forces the man to automatically step forward, allowing momma to fall the rest of the way down onto the floor.

Cass screams, “Momma!”

Several potential patients wave frantically to the receptionist attempting to alert her about momma. Several others try yelling to the receptionist about the woman lying on the office floor.

Cass tries turning his sweet mother over. The office door suddenly swings open. A large man with a white coat abruptly appears with another man. A woman with a white cap follows just behind. The large man wearing hoses around his neck helps turn momma over.

He barks out a command, “Make room for her!”

The other gentleman following him asks, “Doctor, is she alive?”

Cass' heart drops. He yells, “Momma, momma, wake up!”

The doctor proclaims, “She's alive son. She's just very weak.”

He continues to probe momma by pointing his tiny flashlight into her eyes. He opens momma's coat, and then presses the end of his long black hose on her chest.

"Yes son, she is alive, but she is very, very tired."

Cass starts to cry tears of joy and sobs of concern for his dear wonderful momma.

The doctor tells the lady with the white cap to contact the hospital.

He quietly says, "See if they have room for one more case."

Another lady appears. She pushes a rolling bed through the crowded waiting area towards momma. Both men grab momma and place her on it. Cass watches as they extend the bed amazingly upward. They urgently begin rolling momma through the door they first came out of.

The doctor is the last person through the door.

He stops the door from completely closing, and then waves towards Cass, "Come on son, you can come."

Cass darts towards the bright opening shining through this darkened waiting area. As he enters, he sees more people on expanded beds lining the long white pristine hallway.

The exhausted doctor pats Cass' back while telling him, "Son, you wait here with momma until the men from the hospital come for her."

The doctor's compassion comforts Cass' worried pounding heart.

Cass moves close to where momma's resting head lay. He looks down the bright hall and sees the doctor entering a room at the far end. Cass remains confused to all that is happening, but he is content in knowing momma is being taken care of. He grabs the rails surrounding the bed, and then proceeds to stretch his body upward. He brings his face close to momma's head. He leans over and gently moves her hair away from her eyes with his small warm hand.

"Momma, oh momma," he whispers.

Tears slowly drip down on momma's face. Cass moves closer, and then slightly kisses her forehead. As he pushes slowly away, he notices momma's eyes open slightly. Cass' beautiful momma strains out her wonderful smile. She tries lifting her arm to touch

him, but her strength is drained. Cass grabs her hand and presses it to his mouth and kisses it. Tears form in the corner of momma's eyes.

She whispers, "My sweet handsome boy. How I love you."

Cass tells her, "Momma, please get better."

Her eyes close as he finishes speaking his request.

Moments later, two men wearing blue jackets appear.

One man asks Cass, "Is this your mother?"

Cass slowly nods his small head up and down.

"We're here to take her to the hospital. You'll have to wait here young man."

Both Cass' hands immediately clench tight on the top railing.

Cass proclaims, "I'm going too!"

Another man grabs Cass around his body and tries to pry him away. Cass' elevated flinging body refuses to let go of the gurney.

The first man says, "Let him come along. We need to hurry. Son, you can ride with us in the ambulance."

Cass finally let's goes, allowing the men to push momma down the long white hall.

Moments later they arrive at the "Emergency Room" entrance of the hospital. Cass follows the men wheeling momma quickly inside. Cass' short legs run to stay just behind the fast moving gurney.

"Stay close kid," one of the men commands.

They cut a path through the packed entrance way filled with many coughing people of all ages. Many have the same colored red and pink hanky momma has.

A woman with a funny white hat stops the men. She grabs a flat board lying atop momma's coat, and then stares at it. Seconds later, she tells the men to follow her.

As she rushes up this long white hall, she yells, "Doctor, doctor, we have another case!"

The men speed towards the doctor as the lady with the fun hat stops.

She states, "You can't come son."

Urgency fills Cass' face once more.

She asks, "Do you see the 'Nurse's Station'?"

Thank You for previewing this eBook

You can read the full version of this eBook in different formats:

- HTML (Free /Available to everyone)
- PDF / TXT (Available to V.I.P. members. Free Standard members can access up to 5 PDF/TXT eBooks per month each month)
- Epub & Mobipocket (Exclusive to V.I.P. members)

To download this full book, simply select the format you desire below

