

INTRODUCTION

This story is about a young woman, who craves for true love & romance. Although, this is only a small part of her life, it will invite you to question her actions and give you a sneak preview in to her hopes & dreams. It is based on true accounts, where names and dates have been changed, but for a short period, her life is exposed. Will she eventually arrive at a place in her life, where she has peace & genuine love, is the future set in stone, or is this yet another failed relationship, destined to collapse. The story will take you through her journey from one place to another, telling you on route situations, until the arrival of her new life far away from home. Is this relationship going to be the right one, surely this time, her faith in another, will be rewarded.

Shattered Faith

By

Kim Clarke

CHAPTER 1

I would like to share a small part of my life, which began in July 92, where I experienced a significant turn of events, that brought me, joy and happiness but also, lies, deceit and encounters beyond my wildest dreams. It took me to people and places I had never believed possible and I felt a sense of enclosure, locked in a world of unopened doors, hidden nooks, luring corridors unable to ignore the liberating call of a new destiny.

Come with me and feel all I felt, share what I shared and experience a small part of my life which changed my vision, my hopes and my fears.

My relationship of 3 years was a deep and addictive love, which was empowering yet volatile. I believe we were two people so different, yet shared a love and common ground neither of us, could ever sever. We loved so deeply and realised the importance of a faithful bond and true commitment to each other.

We both believed there would never be another in our lives whilst together, we vowed to be as one and work hard to keep the relationship alive. Becky was a kind, generous, loving and an attractive woman, who took my breathe away, a person whom I wanted to share my life with, she had her faults like any of us do including me, but I loved and adored her so much.

There were so many factors hitting our lives, which began to break down, even the fundamental part of our structure as partners. We had a son whom at that time was adapting to me as a new parent from a prior relationship with a different partner, he was beginning a stage in his life where the demands of attention and puberty were running parallel and our focus became him as it

would in any family unit. He knew as a child like most young people do, the pull and strain it was putting on us both, we tried actively to cover our emotions and fight to keep our relationship together. Our energy was also on a business which we both owned and may I add, which we both were excellent together, but the added strain of the business and the trials and tribulations, were clearly showing, our time was pulled in other directions and not only with us. Our son was my partners priority even though I strived to get a balance of discipline and a form of structure, it was a no win situation and I was now fighting for the love I longed for, a glimpse of attentiveness I begged to have and no matter how I tried to compromise and reason, I felt alone.

Becky tried I know she did, but she could not get passed the priority of her son and in many ways I felt he was the excuse she hid behind.

After three and half years of inseparable love, intense feelings, volatile events and the deep love we had, I felt drawn towards another. I didn't know where it was going and had no intention of looking beyond a platonic friendship.

Becky had insisted we got connected.. to the internet that is, she felt it would be good to surf the net, as she said it would add an interest for us both. I constantly said no, as I felt it was not the way to go, I felt it was another escape from us and would only create more problems.....oh boy was I right. After weeks of debate and heated discussion, I gave in simply to save more unrest and animosity. We got the internet, reluctantly.

We got connected, shame it was not us, the internet was here loud and brash, coloured, flashing and costing more money, mmmm, that of course did not matter, shrewd as I am, it was more expense.

Becky was elated and I was skeptical, but hey, who am I to have an opinion, here we go.....

Well to my surprise, I was pretty impressed with what I could do and the more I surfed, the more I saw the potential of it's uses, in more ways than one.

Throughout the first week we surfed and surfed until the early hours of the morning, clicking here clicking there. Oh my, then the hour came where you have guessed it, the chat room, yes the chat room.

What were we doing, why, oh yes I remember, intrigue, fun, curiosity and an urge to take a peek into the inviting smut zone.

Our attentions were focused on the gay sites as we were after all, gay of course oh you didn't know ? of course you did....

We entered the chat room, actually it was many, until we found one we latched on to, yes latched being a true description and at the time, seemed comfortable with, yeah right, how comfortable are these rooms, we were about to find out. We logged on, registered, then up we pop as a chat room user, oh my life, there in front of us lesbians galore from all over the world. We had heard of the crackpots, the cyber addicts and the lonely ones but never the one's who do,

will and did hit hard and draw you in. oh yes, it happened, we fell for it, big style.

A certain lady whom I couldn't possibly disclose her user name, could I, oh I surely would love to but will not, as I don't want the satisfaction to be, all hers and sensationalize her ego, oh go on then, no I can't, sorry.

The anger and deceit, I felt at this time has now passed, but still remains a part of my break up, a piece of my history, I choose to keep locked away in the box, never to be re-opened.

What box you may ask, well the box I am about to open with you. A can of worms which took our relationship from a lesbian chat room to the extremes of lies, deceit and a slow process of our break up.

The woman in question seemed a lovely lady, please don't believe that, for one minute, although my partner would disagree on my judgment. I was not an innocent bystander, I don't want to give that impression but oh my, we rocked.

On a regular basis my partner and I would talk to this woman, it became so regular and due to the time difference of America and the UK, we stupidly arranged times to accommodate our lifestyle and business, crazy so crazy but we did. Our conversations were so tame so interesting so nice. Until a few months passed and in that time we had exchanged letters, gifts and for crying out loud phone numbers. I was fine with this we all were, not a slight inclination of our relationships being any other, than good friends. We talked of visits to America to the UK and still a sense of pure and sincere friendship. How naive could I be.....

Becky became different towards this woman, it felt closer, attentive and somewhat childlike. A photo was mentioned which this woman wanted of us both as I thought. Don't be crazy was I that stupid to think she wanted little me also, well actually, yes, until it became apparent one night, whilst both of us were on the computer speaking with this woman we had commitments to our customers, so we decided to take it in turns to attend to them, leaving one of us alone. Now you see the plot thickening don't you, I am glad you do, as I honestly didn't. So I went to attend to our customers, my partner happily typing away chatting to our so called friend.

Once I had finished with our customers I went back to Becky but for some unknown reason she didn't here me return, as I reached the door of the office, my partner panicked and hit the delete button to her conversation with this woman, in a split second, I knew deep down for the very first time, I had witnessed a weakness in Becky, I felt a sudden sadness for a brief moment and I reacted in a way, that surprised myself.

I drained and so did Becky, I could see the panic in her face, a clear vision of guilt a rush of fear, I felt the anger building inside me, I grabbed her arm and shouted, "get off the computer", I wanted to rip the wires from the wall, instead I sat at the screen, Becky frantically shouting, "its nothing why are you acting

this way its nothing, its nothing“. I began to type but not as me, but as Becky, oh yes, this was my only shot at finding the truth, the words, the reason for her acting in this way.

I typed, “are you ok“, her reply was, “yes are you“, I replied, “yes fine“. My anger was building, I had to compose myself and remember to type the same as my partner, to say the words she did, not disturbing the flow of my partners type. I typed, “tell me again what you said I need to take it all in“, the woman relied, “I love you, I really love you“. Oh god, oh my god I could see in front of me the words, the reply I knew I would see, I just knew it, oh god please say this is not true.

I replied still composing myself, “but you cant love me how can you“, she replied, “I love you and want you“, that was enough for me, I typed hard on the keyboard and replied, “this is me you bitch how could you, back off now”...

I pushed back on the chair I was sitting on I stood up, ripped the wires from the wall, snapped the modem from its connection, turned to Becky, fighting back the tears but the anger, simply got the better of me, I grabbed Becky, spun her around and pinned her to the wall, shouting, “why, why, no, please tell me its not true“, I grabbed Becky, neither of us physically hitting out, we frantically grabbed on to each other, shaking the living daylight out of one another.

Becky said, “please, I don’t love her, I panicked when you came down, I don’t love her she said it to me, I don’t want her I don’t“.

I could see in her eyes, she was riddled with guilt, panic and despair, I felt sick, broken and angry, I realised this was it, I was losing her and I didn’t know what to do but lash out at her.

We forgot for a few minutes, which seemed a life time, about our customers, we both went to attend to them, totally screening our pain for the sake of our business.

An hour passed, our customers left and we closed up. I was devastated, I couldn’t begin to imagine, how we were to get through this. You may think that I over reacted or didn’t give Becky the chance to explain but I knew Becky, her face told a story of guilt and panic, of being found out, a sense of ego boosting smugness, shielding the facade of dealing with my every move and word, my partner being the person she was, didn’t know what to say or do, she just kept repeating “its not my fault, she said it to me“.

We both began to cry, I then asked my partner, why did she say it, why would she say those words, what prompted her to say what she did, why, please tell me all the conversation, please.

As she began to try and tell me in her own way, the telephone rang, I answered it, oh god please tell me this is a dream, it was the woman who had just told my partner she loved her, she began to say, please don’t hang up on me, its not what you think, its ok really, its ok, I shouted its ok, where are you coming from because right now you are not on my planet, don’t ring here anymore you’ve done enough damage and I slammed the phone down. This woman had got it bad, to ring from America, knowing the pain it had caused, perhaps she didn’t care as long as she got my love, my life.

My world was falling apart, Becky's face spoke oceans of panic, I cried uncontrollably, I couldn't fight the deep rooted anger and I so wished I could, at least I could try to gather up the last few hours of my life, to erase it, as though it had never happened.

We looked at each other, where I found the room became unknown, I felt as though I was experiencing an out of body experience a sense of wanting time to rewind, to take away the pain I felt, it was a pain I had never experienced before, betrayal, lies and deceit. I knew this would change everything, my trust was smashed, I love her more than life itself, I could see her face, her everything. the struggles of our life together and love we shared was ripping me apart, right now, I couldn't do anything, I felt weak, helpless and most of all a failure.

The telephone rang, it felt so distant, as my ears were ringing, my eyes coated with tears and my head was pulsating so fast, I had to compose myself, I lifted the receiver, struggling to fight back the emotion, it could be a business call, a family or friend chat, oh god no, please tell me its not her again, it was, her voice sent shock waves of anger all over again, she said, "please don't put the telephone down", I truly believed that her persistence was because of her love for Becky and total disregard for me and our relationship. I said, "please don't call here, I will change the telephone number if I have to", I knew I couldn't immediately do this, because of the business but I could and would block her number, if I had too, she replied, "just listen to me", would you believe it, I let her speak, perhaps it was my way of hope and clarification of the situation, not that it would make any difference. She said, "I want to be your friend both of you, I shouldn't have said what I did, im truly sorry". I replied "let it be please, don't call us, you have damaged our relationship cant you see that, are you that insensitive to see any different", she replied, "yes I'm sorry please forgive me". Becky was silent not one word came from her mouth, she seemed scared briefly and said nothing. At that moment I became so calm, I was listening, taking in the last few hours of unplugged drama. I replied to the woman, "please just let it be, please don't call us ever again". I hung up and turned to my Becky and said, "I want the computer disconnected today, I don't want any contact with her again, if we have any chance, please do this", she replied, "ok but what about the business", as calm as a cucumber I replied, "we are more important than the business".

A calm between us both was apparent and for the sake of our son, the business and us, we resumed a form of normality, what the hell was that now, I had lost all sense of a normal life and instead a creation of hidden agendas, deceit and lies, always at the back of my mind, what was really said, would I ever know. I suppose, I could have insisted on the detail of the conversation, well I did in many ways but it didn't seem to fill my appetite, would it be the truth, no it wouldn't, it would be words accommodating what I wanted to hear, not what really was said and also the trust I had in Becky, was broken in to fragments dispersed everywhere, but where they really should be.

The following day, I opened my eyes, for a few seconds, wondering whether it was a dream, was it?, why would I believe that. It was somewhat calm and quiet on the western front, knowing this day was going to be the beginning of regaining our true status and a disconnection of a woman, who said just three words and blew our relationship apart and made a significant change in our future as partners, oh god help me.

I got out of bed slowly walked to the bathroom and looked in to mirror, I was looking tired and exhausted, I glanced again in to my eyes and I was so sad, a face which truly said it all, I shook my head in disbelief, I saw a woman who leaned heavy on the basin, moved her body closer to the mirror, hoping and praying that this was just a blip, a reality check, to embrace the bad times and find a solution to repair the breakage, a time to try, in any way possible to believe her partner again and regain the love and loyalty, I so desperately needed back. Inside, I gave myself reassurance by a half hearted smile and shrug of my shoulders. It was time to face the day, I needed to regain fragments of what was left to save, if anything at all.

As I reached the top the stairs, I knew I would see her face and I had no clue what I would see, expect or feel, I couldn't even think straight, although I vowed to try to stitch parts of us together, knowing the scars would always be there. I opened the door and I walked slowly in to the lounge and there she was, curled up at one end of the sofa, her robe wrapped around her, no facial expression just looking straight at me, wide eyed. I just said, "good morning, how are you". What a stupid question to ask but she said, "I've felt better". I sat down on the chair opposite, not invading her space or mine. I wanted to hold her badly, I love her, I'm crazy about her, I just couldn't. she said, "please this can be all ok, it means nothing to me, nothing". I replied, "I cant believe anything right now, you must understand, you have to help me to believe, I'm hurting deeply, I want this to go away, I want us, just make me believe, please"..... I could see in her eyes guilt, yet the child within, she wanted to come to me and make me believe, I wanted her to, but just couldn't.

The silence was too much it became a build up of wanting, longing, needing, I couldn't stop myself bursting in to tears, she came to me slowly and took my hand, I held her hand, she began to sob, we looked at each other and embraced, we held on so tight, I wasn't letting her go nor was she. We sobbed uncontrollably, we couldn't breathe, we were gasping for breath through the tears, we weren't letting go for no one. I shouted, "please let this be untrue, please say this is over, tell me it won't happen again, tell me you love me not her, tell me it will be ok, tell me, please".....she held me tighter, I could feel myself falling, I was draining and couldn't think of anything but being in her arms. She held me, then tighter and it felt like she was saving me, she did care, she wanted me, she really was sorry, she loved me so deeply, I felt her. It seemed hours we held on, as I thought it was our last embrace, surely it wasn't, was it.....

We pulled away from each other and we looked in to each others eyes, I saw

from Becky, remorse, sadness, exhaustion and the deep love she had for me. We couldn't split, we wont. I said, "I love you so much, she wouldn't die for you like I would", she replied, "your right I wouldn't die for her but I would for you". It was that moment we knew we had to fight harder, we couldn't live without each other, we knew we had to fight and work harder, to keep us together. As of that day, we became so great together, she was so close to me, so attentive, I was reciprocating three fold, it couldn't be better. We agreed trust had to be paramount between us and we kept the internet, simply for the business, yeah right, what the freak was I doing, being so god dam trusting.....here we go again.

Two weeks past and all was well, the business was good, our son was being a teenager, oh joy, It was all normal again, as I thought.

Becky was on the internet, yes that screen which provides a license to be who you want at any given time. She was typing away, it was early evening and our business was closed, therefore, freeing up sometime for us, us what was us, you guessed it, the two of them yet again.....

Sure enough Becky was typing to the woman again, as if nothing had happened, as though everything was great now, no problems at all, all is well, I can speak to this woman again...hell no.

I went in to the office, I said who are you chatting to darling, she didn't have to tell me, I saw this time she didn't delete the screen she was so blatantly open to the fact it was her again.

I hit the delete button, the chat disappeared, once again, history came back to haunt me, I felt a surge of anger rise and pour towards Becky. She had done it again, Becky had totally disregarded the pain and turmoil we had gone through, she chose to ignore everything we had said and engage in chat with this woman all over again, why ?, oh God, why ?.

This time Becky went ape, she pinned me to the wall and said, "for f... sake its nothing I'm only chatting to her, I didn't delete the chat with her did I?". She kept shouting, "for f... sake its nothing, I want to talk to her, its ok now". I shouted and pushed back, "you don't think anything is wrong, she was the one who tore us apart only two weeks ago, sharing her undying love for you, I cant believe this, please let her go". Becky's reply was, "she is only a friend, no I wont let her go, I've missed her".

I pushed Becky against the wall and held her tight so she couldn't move and looked straight in to her eyes, I said "its me or her, make your choice".

Becky disconnected the computer, as it seemed an acknowledgment of, I understand, I'm sorry, I cried with relief and feeling at that moment, Becky had chosen me. Becky looked at me and began to cry as well, we held each other, I, feeling secure again, I felt apprehension that the situation was not over and this time was one too many, why was she so addicted to this woman, I wasn't even jealous of her, my goodness, no way was I, I had no respect for this woman nor a physical attraction and I'm sure Becky wasn't either, what the hell was it, was it me, what was I doing wrong, she didn't want me anymore, she wasn't attracted to me anymore, it happens I know, oh god please, help me.

Yet again we gathered our relationship to a stage, where we could regain some form of sanity, a place where both of us, needed to once and for all, to be honest and work out a simple closure, that's funny, a simple closure, how on earth could this be a simple closure, I had tried so hard, to get our relationship back on track, to enable us to re-ignite some of the lost parts of our connection. We promised to put all this behind us and yet, although I had been the forgiving one and the instigator of keeping our relationship together, we were fighting again. Our son still the ever growing and demanding teenager, a young person who was becoming more of a strain and pull on us both, was needing the attention he deserved and although we maintained a protective screen, for him, the cracks were beginning to weaken and it became harder to hide the damage happening in front of us.

I felt I was losing my mind, I was looking, reasoning and trying so hard to please everyone else but me, I was up against so much and although I was of strong character, I was falling fast and I felt alone yet again, I became a weepy and weak person with no idea of direction. My family were so loving but I couldn't even talk to them, I had good friends but they were sick and tired of hearing me and my partner. It was left to fate but I didn't want fate to take the decision from me, I was too scared of that.

Weeks went by and although the relationship was strained, we were holding tight, it was a bumpy ride to say the least but that was pretty normal now. Can you sense my attitude of flippancy well your right, it was somewhat carefree.

Oh I forgot to add in the mix of all this, Becky was told by her GP, that due to her severe mood swings, she was suffering from a chemical imbalance, which certainly contributed to the way she coped with every day life. I'm not making excuses for Becky but I felt at the time, if she could understand the reasons for her behavior, then she could receive the help, she needed right now.

I'll explain.....

In a space of months, I cant quite remember now but it became progressively worse. Becky showed significant mood swings which were pretty nasty and effected her approach to me, this by the way was prior to "the woman" and I was on the receiving end of verbal abuse, rejection, cold conversations, anger and her ability to make me feel an enemy instead of her best friend.

I knew I had to be there for Becky and endure her inner pain as I loved her so deeply and I knew, deep down, she loved me too.

After my subtle suggestions and persuasions, I encouraged Becky to go to the doctors and seek advise and help. She agreed and eventually, she went to her GP, I was so happy and relieved that Becky was doing something for her well being.

When she arrived back, I reassuringly said, "well what did he say".

Becky replied, "I'm on these god dam things", I could see what they were and I knew she wasn't happy, to tell you the truth nor was I, but we had to try and see

if the results were going to be positive.

In two months, the signs were so remarkable and she was coming back to me, I was so happy, so elated and you know what, so was she. Becky's whole persona was incredible. She became calm, focused and most of all close to me, inside I really did thank god for giving me a breakthrough and hope of a new future with her, I was dancing inside. I hugged her for no reason, she smiled and sensed my happiness for her and us both. I knew now when she woke up in a morning, she wouldn't feel anymore aggressive thoughts or an urge to verbally lash out with regrettable attacks. We were going to be fine again.

It was a normal day and business was good, it had been for sometime, so we decided to decorate, you know that homely stuff you like or dislike, well we did like, so the day was set, painting galore.

Becky looked her sexy self as usual painting away, the radio playing and we were both swinging our butts to the music having fun and laughing again, i was so happy.

It was lunch time, I made a cuppa and we sat down for lunch. Becky said "I'm just going to click on chat to see if our buddies are on line", I said "ok, see you in a bit". I was trusting, why not, things were great, I had no reason to worry, its ok.

About half an hour passed, I wondered where my little worker was, I shouted at the top of the stairs, "where are you come on", she replied, "ill be up in a minute".

I carried on painting, no problem, really there was no problem

Another half hour passed, I became anxious, I knew there was nothing to worry about, there wasn't was there, no don't be crazy, ill just go and see if she is ok.

I reached towards the door, history repeating itself, I half smiled looking unperturbed about her chatting away. She didn't delete the chat, oh lord i was relieved. "Who you chatting to", I said, Becky replied, "oh the woman has just clicked for a chat, so I carried on chatting".

I calmly said, "do you know we have to finish off painting", she replied, "its ok ill be up in a bit ok".

I turned and walked away. What was I to do, we had been through it all before, nothing meant a thing, our fights, our shared tears, our love, our moments of weakness, our strengths, our life, our everything.

I went up stairs, lit a cigarette, sat down amongst the debris of paint, ladders and brushes, a half completed room, it really didn't matter, I had a blank expression, a blank mind, a blank and empty inner self, nothing simply nothing. Minutes passed, my partner came upstairs eventually.

She saw from my face that all the belief, trust and love I had was draining from me, my face was saying goodbye and I have lost all drive to keep this relationship going.

She became blaze and held a stance of total disregard of us, after all she had the attention from someone new, someone she was unable to let go, an addiction I was unable to compete with any longer.

I didn't even challenge her, we got on with the decorating, with the odd word of, are you ok, yes, we are nearly done, yes it will look good when we are done, what shall we have for dinner, I don't know you choose. Crazy is it not, two people so in love, so in sink with each other, shared so much, lived in depth with the vows of in sickness and health, thou shalt not lie, thou shalt not forsake for another, trust in each other, etc, etc, etc, what a waste of love and energy, a part of my life I didn't want to let go, but I had no choice, we were done.

That night I packed my bag, my heart was in pieces but no tears, no nothing, it was as though emotionally, I had been preparing for this day, I didn't feel alone anymore, I felt strong, I wanted to leave her behind, I wanted to leave her with the blaze and confident attitude she held. I knew Becky so well, it wouldn't last, I knew her so well, oh so well. She watched me walk through the door, she stood at the end of the road until I got to my car, I sat and thought she has let me go. I started the car, reversed and saw her petite silhouette in the distance, I drove away from her. I had no clue where I was going or what to think, I just drove, I headed for the motorway and drove like a bat out of hell, still no thoughts, no feeling, no nothing, just foot to the pedal and drove straight, my eyes focused, my mind not my own.

My mobile phone was switched off, I knew she would call, did I ?, did I think she would call me, I switched my mobile phone back on. Sure enough, Becky had called me, I rejected the call, tears began to trickle down my cheeks, it was an uncontrollable heart felt jerk of emotion, I was a mess, I couldn't blank my thoughts any longer, I was reaching out for her and I couldn't get to her, I longed for the attention and love I gave her to come back at me, I needed her and I had lost the one person that I loved so deeply.. I drove for miles knowing the only place I knew that was safe, that was my home town, I didn't know where to go or what to do, I took the exit I knew so well, tears pouring down my face I couldn't see for the tears, I constantly wiped my eyes and gripped the steering wheel, in a frenzied attempt to compose myself, I was so lost, so alone and desperate to be held.

I pulled into a well known burger drive through car park, it was dark and empty, I reached for my mobile phone and there was no missed call, no missed message, no nothing, I hit the steering wheel over and over again shouting, "why" "why", what had I done to deserve this why was my life falling apart, no one cares, no one is here, no one needs me. The emotion was so overwhelming, my head was bursting and my heart breaking. I sobbed relentlessly, I couldn't stop every thought, every shared moment, every smile, every word, my everything, oh god please help me.

I slumped back in to my seat, my vision blurred from the rivers of tears, my head was surging with pain but then in an instant, a sudden calm came over me, I reached for the mirror and saw my face, it told the whole story, of a woman who was losing the one woman she truly loved, a relationship which was not short of highs and lows, a partnership which coped with volatile

outbursts, I, who needed more than this, me, who had strived to have a great relationship, who loved, supported, committed and devoted herself to this one woman.

I got out of the car, I took a deep breath, walked calmly into the burger bar, not a care in the world that my face had distress written all over it. I entered the fast food bar and it had a few scattered people in there, as I approached the server there was no reaction or indication of my appearance, in fact no one else bothered for that matter, perhaps, some people know when not to react and simply understand, that a woman alone late at night, is an indication to them, not to ask nor comment and choose to ignore situations that don't concern them or may encourage interaction, they really don't want to engage in or perhaps, they are simply not bothered. I bought a coffee, used the bathroom and took hold of what was left of myself, I was going back home, home, they say home is where the heart is, right now, my heart is not at home, it is a heart which, is seeking answers and home is the only place, which is familiar and can give me a chance to mend, to piece together for once, my needs, oh yes, I was going back. I drank the coffee in haste, it was hot but my mouth was so dry and the heat from the coffee was the least of my worries.

As I drove back, the reality of the present and an uncertain future didn't scare me, in fact I felt a sense someone with me, a surge of strength inside, my mind seemed to clear putting the past on hold and the present at the fore front of my mind and clarity of it all, it was for me, the beginning of a somewhat, car boot sale, a sort out, it was time to take a hold of my life no matter how hard or messy it was to be, I had to grip normality in my life, after all this relationship had so many fundamental positives, yet when I met her, my dream of a normal relationship, "normal being to me", a loving, faithful, friendly and devoted life, on the whole it was throughout our time together, but I had to contend with added turns, twists and up hill struggles which were constant, grinding me down, draining everything I gave, stretching my outer limits which were truly alien to me, also my character and way of life, changed to the person I did not want to be, so I had to accommodate me again and pull back at least some of my old self.

As I approached the street where I lived, I still kept myself in check and remained focused and calm, the inner strength was imbedded inside me, It was as though the whole picture was becoming clearer by the second, I had to resolve this once and for all.

I put the key in the door, so bold, so easy and walked straight through to the lounge, where I dropped my bag down and sat quietly. A few minutes passed, wondering where Becky was, still concerned of her whereabouts and the love and care I still had for her, she appeared, pushing the door wide open, her smile beamed, she seemed so relieved, so happy to see me as though she was saying thank god your home and its all ok, it really wasn't.

I calmly said "how are you", she replied, "I love you thank god your home ive missed you". A bombardment of questions flew my way from her, where have

you been, how are you, who have you been to see, you have been a long time, I wondered when you would come back. Would you believe it, she even knew I would come back, don't we make so many assumptions in life, that's why taking people for granted is so dangerous and conceited and right now, that was Becky all over.

I began to tell Becky, from the minute I left where I went, what I did, what thoughts were flashing through my mind and the decision I had made, to release us from the ongoing mental and emotional torture I was enduring, due to the fact of her addiction of this other woman and the way in which her life was consumed, with the attraction of contact, through a screen of an unknown entirety.

Could you believe it, well I am sure you would by now, I asked what she had been doing whilst I was away, you know, whilst I was driving away from her, whilst I was dying inside and leaving this whole nightmare behind, she replied, "I have been on the internet", "oh right" I replied, "talking to who", now I was not that naive anymore oh no I wasn't, her reply was "the woman". well I rest my case.....

Was I surprised, no, of course not, but inside I was shattered and destroyed, what was all this for, how could one woman demolish and destroy such a unique relationship with three words and then blatantly manipulate another. I broke down and sobbed, Becky hesitating to approach me, wondering would I lash out or embrace her, she stood there watching me, like she used to when I cried. I didn't even rise to an argument or sarcastic response not even any sudden movement of my body, simply a rye smile through the tears of, it is the end of us, no more of this, no more fighting, no more thinking, no more planning, no more story telling, its goodbye to this part of my life and you.

I had a business to run, in fact, we had a business to run and we had a son whom we had to consider and his future, along with his reaction to our gradual wind down of the business and his immanent move away from his home, to live away from me and in another house, another new start for him.

We continued to be as amicable and friendly as possible, I was so up to a point, blank minded, my memory was assisting me to erase temporarily, the years of mental torture, anxiety, anguish, disappointment, the fighting, the longing, the hopes, the anger, the torment and the sheer blatancy of addiction to another.

For the sake of people around us and the business, we had to continue for a while to maintain a successful living until it deemed the right time to sever financial ties, although the deep rooted emotions were still rife, bouncing around within me, with no particular direction, I was fighting to keep them suppressed, for the sake of my self respect and dignity.

Months passed by, in the height of our busiest time, we maintained a false screen between ourselves and customers, even our friends and family. It wasn't easy as you can imagine but the mind is a complex tool and how to this

day I kept a sane mind I don't know. Also Becky, soon to be my ex, was struggling also and coming to terms with the inevitable break down of our relationship, one which in many ways was happy but suffered too many multitudes of sins.

The day came when it became appropriate for the sever of our relationship, financially and emotionally.

CHAPTER 2

It was one day in October 92, I cant for the life of me remember the exact date, its funny I should have done, seeing as it was the start of a new turn in my life, a part that slotted in to position at a time where I can reflect now, a breathe of fresh air, where the attention I was longing for and a per occupation away from the negativity of the last 3 years.

I was on line, you know that flat screen with a key board, the one that brought all the attention and heartache in he first place, yes the internet, where you click here, you click there and arrive at the chat rooms, the one where there is a mine field of Lesbians, looking for love, friendship, lust, lies and deceit. Why did I do it, well I regard myself as a sensible, trusting and truthful person. You would think this loving and truthful person was far from sensible and entering everything she had fought against but I thought I could change people's views maybe, was the naivety setting in again, no it wasn't I honestly believed I could genuinely seek friendship, someone non judgmental and I could relate to although through a screen.

Becky, whom I still regarded as my partner, in fact we both were still pursuing our relationship, yet we were hoping and praying for a miracle to happen and possibly to erase the past, of course not, but we were together and the love was holding the last strands of what we held in common.

Becky knew my need to have some form of release, after all what could she do or say to keep me away from this beast which lured her away from me in the first place, to extreme distraction.

I logged on and not to my surprise had a hit of many women, as you do, well you do it's the norm, desperate to chat and make that crucial contact with potential pray.

It is said, out of all the clubs and bars and in this case screens, you walk in to mine. Out of the flashing hits of women, I chose and clicked one, just one. Oh my, was I in for a blast and total turn around in my life, a corridor of bright lights and enticing invitations, I wasn't about to turn down, I was intrigued and certainly hooked.

Towards the end of our break up, the tension was so high from Becky, for me it was many anxious moments, accommodating her erratic moods and indecision's of what she wanted and the realization of the break up.

We talked, we argued, I tried so hard again to calm the situation and plead with her to keep hold of and treasure what was important and that was the love we still had deep down for each other.

After long and draining discussions and a clear path of deciding who was walking away with what, the final chapter of us was to close.

It was agreed I kept the business and Becky moved out with our son, whom for a 14 year old, seemed to be taking it in his stride, we knew deep down although he was experiencing our break up and signs of excitement to move in another home, he really was suppressing his real feelings, he dealt with the situation very well, I was very proud of him.

I could not run the business alone and as business partners, Becky now, was the best around, we worked as a great team, hence why the business was so successful.

For a further one year and a half, we worked together on a part time basis and it felt so sterile, a platonic and for once a fantastic partnership without the pressures of the relationship, the crazy part was we were still in love.

I was living alone, I felt lonely, isolated and the reality of beginning a new life was terrifying. I knew it was the only way forward even though I still missed her and thought could it change, could we re kindle the relationship using the love we had for each other to build and strengthen us.

This was always in my mind and heart but as our relationship had meaningful and deep reasons for our split, I had no choice but to end the misery for both of us.

Well my loneliness became a tool to prompt me to take advantage of my spare time, I worked hard during the day and maintained a successful business, even though it was somewhat on a smaller scale, relying on Becky for support in the peak business times, which she did willingly and with dedication, she was incredible.

As I said earlier, this corridor of bright lights, was about to illuminate the next chapter in my life and it was an encounter, which blew my mind, it took me half way around the world and back.....

Ok, I turned my sole attention in the evening to the dreaded net, I mean the internet, well what I mean to say is erm, erm, lesbian chat rooms. I sound embarrassed, I'm not but lets face it, was that not the devil in disguise, the answer nowyes, then.....no, I was somehow excited, I felt freedom from guilt because I was after all, single and could explore without question, even though I remained in love with my ex partner, I was scared, so many emotions were surging through my heart and mind, I even trembled at the thought of pressing the keys of the keyboard but guess what, I did.....so here goes.....

I'll cut to the quick, picture this, a house with 11 bedrooms, 4 storey, 4 other rooms and I am alone.

I am in the lounge with a mug of tea, dim light, lovely and warm and a bright

square screen in front of me, I was ready to enter the labyrinth and walk straight into a world of mystery, lure, entice, unknown, pretense, a number, a world I could get lost and forget my pain and everything around me, in effect an escape, a release to explore without question.

I clicked on the lesbian chat and oh my life, I was hit instantly, it felt good, I had a buzz, my adrenalin was rushing big style, for a brief moment I went deaf, you know that ringing in your ears and your head starts to pulsate frantically. I sat back in the chair and waited until I calmed down, calmed down I was buzzing and terrified all rolled in to one.

I typed my very first words, which were, "hi how r u", so common, so original...not....but hey I'm new to this.

Oh my life, I had a reply, "hi I'm good, where r u from".

I was not that naive, I was careful and replied "I'm from the UK, and u".

The conversation went on for about 15 minutes, it was light refreshing chat and so normal, I felt great and then the next question was "so r u good in bed", mmmmm.....not what I expected, oops, I had to make a quick exit, I replied "sorry not my conversation type, take care good bye", I was so polite, but I owed this person nothing and it was simply an intrusion on my privacy, who the hell was I kidding, I was the one who clicked to chat and opened myself up to an influx of unknown and bizarre questions, what did I expect, to be honest I was not that naive to understand anything goes, it was simply the content of the conversation, not what I was looking for.

I then became cautious and toying in my head, with the fact, should I just stop now and go to bed, it really was late, I could sleep for England. I went to switch off the PC and stopped, hovering over my little mouse the little clicker which determined whether I was to quit or carry on, I took a sip of my tea and paused just briefly.

It was late but you know what, I clicked my little mouse, my one and only friend this night, well it was my friend for sometime, as I used and abused it for the next few months, simply to engage in spare time frivolity, which then that was all it was.

I went to bed eventually after chatting to numerous anonymous people, whom I hadn't a clue who they were, where they were from or why they were chatting, even though they told me, was it true, well I would never know but it was clear to see I was not the only one typing away, lonely and reaching out to exchange chit chat simply to escape from whatever their issues may or may not be.

The following day was like every other day, a routine which involved making sure my business was running as smooth as possible and ensuring I didn't become too distracted from the night before.

My spare time at night was taken up with the 15 inch flat screen with a keyboard and my little friend, mouse. It sounds sad don't you think but at the time for me it wasn't, it was my saviour and escape to a world that wasn't real, well it was but I could be whoever I wanted to be, in the privacy of my own

home.

During the next few months I continued to run my business as usual with the help of my ex partner, who I told, that I was engaging with the Lesbian chat rooms. I could tell she was reluctant to comment too much, as I sensed a feeling of the questions in her head, why ? Who ? Are you really ?? I could see she was clearly uncomfortable with this and it was not appropriate to continue the conversation, after all, although I wanted to be open and honest with her, some things were just not up for discussion.

I knew now this was going to be a huge seed in the mind of my ex partner, I knew her, she was not going to let this issue go but I could see and feel how on the edge she was, every time we were together as the odd comment would be mentioned, the occasional question would be asked, this was the start of yet another chapter of letting go.

Throughout our break up it was clear to see and feel that we both had a long way to go and although we had finalized our relationship and agreed to be strong and have a lasting friendship, we still had a depth of love, which was not going to disappear overnight.

As I said, the next chapter in my life was one of intrigue and enticement, which I was not going to ignore, after all I believed I needed a breath of fresh air, an avenue to seek adventure and repair what was damaged inside me, along with hope that, I could find a person, who could share who I was and in return feel the love I had to give with all my heart.

Well, I did....

From one simple click of a button, up pops an American lady, willing to chat with me, yes with me, mmmmmm, I really want to chat with her, ok, here goes....

The conversation was so easy, so light hearted and so informative, with no intrusive questioning, it felt normal.

Ok, I have to admit, I do wear my heart on my sleeve but I was still cautious and pretty sad, my heart was not repaired nor was it really ready for a new encounter but I needed someone, something that would pull me up, pull me through the pain and emotional turmoil I felt, not an excuse nor an escape route, simply a battered woman, who craved for peace and to smile again.

Our conversation remained light, funny and unchallenged and after 3 hours of chat, I was flagging, it was so late, actually 3am and I had to be up for business but I didn't want to stop the chat, I was in fact hooked. I questioned was I hooked to the PC or this wonderful stranger I was chatting to, a someone, something, where I typed words in from a keyboard to communicate with a total stranger, what the hell was I doing. For a person who was pretty skeptical of the internet, I was portraying hypocrisy, I had to admit, I was hooked.

I typed good night and I sensed this person felt the same as I did, reluctant to end our link, it seemed crazy but we had only just met, just met, what the hell was I thinking for goodness sake, this was a total stranger, some fruitcake

maybe, or simply a real person in the same lost and sorry state as me. We said goodbye with an edge of sadness but the chat ended with goodbye. This woman asked if we could chat again, I replied yes I would love to, oh how desperate I sounded, ok I was in my bubble of madness. The window of chat closed and she was gone, I leaned back still staring at the screen, whether in hope she would come back on or simply I was lonely and desperate to have a link of interest in me, yes someone was interested in me, I wasn't the washed up wreck that I felt and looked, I, who actually had an interested party.

That day, I had drunk tea then coffee and water, infarct I was bloated with fluid and smoked until I was all puffed out, time to sleep, sleep, I didn't want to sleep even though I was so tired, my mind was spinning with excitement and intrigue, I felt a teenager again, I wasn't of course but I truly felt it, that feeling you get inside of opening something you have and no idea what it is. Well ok, I gave in and slept.

As my excitement and intrigue increased, I couldn't lose sight of the business and my everyday responsibilities, they seemed such a chore and boring, yet I was a woman who took great pride in keeping everything in order and making sure I was responsible, in control and appearing not to be falling apart, even though I was. I couldn't wait for the time of day to reach 10pm UK time (5pm USA time), this was the time I could talk to this mysterious woman and continue to block out what was going on around me and be carried away onto another road, leading to my escape, yes an escape which was to become, so irresponsible and foolish, a misleading and calculated journey, where I, sincerely believed.

We continued to talk over a period of a few more months, where the conversation became deeper and informative, the word subtlety, was no longer in the equation at all. The chats were sexual, intense and I felt this was going further than I had truly anticipated, although deep down, I wanted to invite her to be with me, yes I wanted to meet her. I actually prayed for the day to come, I was anxious, with a mix of driven excitement, but I felt compelled to take our journey, just that little more further.

The last time we spoke on line was in December 2003, where she wrote, "I am coming to England", "meet me in London, I will book the hotel simply be there".

I was stunned, I paused for a few minutes, staring at the screen, reading over and over again what she had said, it seemed I was paralyzed, too shocked to move or think, so much so she wrote, "hello, are you there", it triggered me to answer immediately, "yes" "I mean, yes I am here" "yes I will meet you". my head was spinning, you know the spinning you get when your in deep shock and the rush of blood circles your brain, your breathing becomes deeper louder and your heart pounds so much you are breathing to keep conscious. Tears appeared in my eyes, I broke down and cried, at first it was an emotion I

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