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**Pen Pal Romance**

**By Skye Thomas**

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We have all heard the wonderfully romantic stories of pen pals that wrote to each other for years without meeting because they lived hundreds or even thousands of miles apart. Some friend of a friend set them up as pen pals or she decided to write to some unknown soldier away at war. They exchanged a few pictures and spent countless hours drafting letters back and forth, baring their hearts and souls to each other. Without ever dating, they fell in love. When one could eventually travel across the distance to finally meet the other, they both knew immediately that this was indeed the one they'd spend the rest of their life with. The physical attraction was every bit as strong as the emotional attraction they had felt for each other. It's a classic story that's existed as long as there's been a postal system for delivering the letters between would be lovers.

Today we have an Internet version of the same thing. People go to these dating sites to find love. It seemed a bit weird at first like most things that are new and different, but eventually we became used to the idea. Is it really any different than meeting in any other manner? You still have to weed through the riffraff. You still have people presenting themselves as something other than what they really are. You still have crooks and cheats, predators. And you still have honest real folks looking for true love. You still have single parents worried that people won't accept their kids as part of a package deal. You still have married folks looking for a way to cheat on their partners. The only real difference is how fast the system works. You can weed through a heck of a lot of less than desirable matches really fast and you don't even have to waste time or money on dinner and movies, or on babysitters and a new dress.

It's my hope that you would take your time with the ones who do seem promising. When you find a profile that seems interesting, don't rush through the process. Sure, a lot of people say that the eyes are the windows to the soul and that you need to meet in person to get a real feel for each other. And there is a lot of truth to that. Ultimately you do have to meet in person to determine if there's any type of chemistry between you or not. It's not something that can be logically determined You feel it or you don't and you won't know until you meet them face to face. But what about those old pen pal stories? They fell in love without it being about sexual attraction. When we meet face to face with someone that

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we are physically attracted to, it's human nature to want to speed up the process so that we can get to the really good stuff! I'm thinking that if we took more time in the passing notes back and forth portion before actually meeting face to face, then we'd be more inclined to fall for the person inside rather than for the physical beauty that can be so blinding to the truth about people. We all know someone who's been completely consumed by a hot passionate attraction for someone who was so incredibly wrong for them. It takes forever for them to open their eyes and see the sexy person for what they really are. Please don't think that I'm saying that all good looking people are bad relationships waiting to happen. I just don't want you to confuse sexual attraction with real intimacy.

If you're just looking to get laid, then by all means disregard this article! It's not written for you. If you're looking to find that once in a lifetime incredible love, then why not take the extra time to do it right? Why not agree to write emails back and forth for a while before meeting in person? Chances are you've already seen their picture on the matchmaker's web site. Make up fun questionnaires for

each other to fill out. Ask them all sorts of interesting questions about themselves like 'if you could invite four people to dinner regardless of what time in history they lived or died, who would it be and why?' Ask them what their number one biggest regret is in life. Ask them what their number one most embarrassing moment in life is. Ask them what their number one best shining moment was. Ask them if they felt loved as a child. Ask them if they have felt loved as an adult. What is their next wild adventure in life going to be? Have fun really getting to know each other before you meet in person. Have a real bond based on more than the fact that you both like moonlit walks on the beach and want to someday have children. When you do finally meet, you won't suffer those uncomfortable silences either, you'll have shared laughs and have plenty to talk about. You'll already be real friends.

So many people put in their profiles that they only want to meet people that are close to home, 50 miles, 100 miles, etc. Why not reach out across the globe. Why not find new pen pals to write to? Even if you never fall in love, you've gained a new friend and the experience of feeling connected to others. Who knows maybe your soulmate is just across the ocean. Perhaps they're waiting for a note from you in their inbox. Perhaps you'll become one of those wonderful love stories worth telling your grandchildren about. "Yep, your grandmother and I wrote back and forth for a year before I finally saved up enough money to fly over and meet her. And let me tell you, the first time I laid eyes on her I knew that she was the only one for me. She was well worth the wait!"

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Skye Thomas began writing books and articles with an everyday practical approach to life in 1999 after twenty years of studying spirituality, metaphysics, astrology, personal growth, motivation, and parenting. After years of high heels and business clothes, she is currently enjoying working from home in her pajamas. Go to

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## Stone Deaf

By Wayne and Tamara

Direct Answers – Column for the week of July 12, 2004

I have been married a dozen years, but my marriage has been purely platonic for the last four. We are good friends, nothing more.

Recently I contacted a pen pal I've been writing since the age of 13. The two of us lost contact 16 years ago, but back then we had very strong feelings, and you could say we were in love. He lived in the USA, I in Holland, and we would talk every day on the phone.

When we spoke for the first time in 15 years, it was amazing! It was as if time stood still. We took up right where we ended off. We never met, but I am still completely and utterly in love with this man. I ring him every day.

He is an honorable man and does not encourage me knowing I am married. But I cannot help myself. When I married, I knew my husband and I did not have what my pen pal and I had and still have. Except for my children, I would leave everything I have for this man. He is the only man in the world I desire.

This morning my pen pal told me, even if I divorced, he would still see me as a married woman. His motto on marriage is "Once a Freemason, always a Freemason" and "Thou shalt not steal another man's wife." I want my pen pal, yet he wants me to stay in this dead marriage.

Merika

Merika, we often get letters from people who are unhappy in their marriage. The letters usually begin with reasons the writer is unhappy with their spouse, then one or three or five paragraphs later they mention someone new in their life.

There are always two questions in these letters, and the two questions are separate from each other. The first question is, should I stay in this marriage? That question has nothing to do with the second question, should I become involved with this new person?

The problem with mixing the two questions is that when we are unhappy, almost anyone else seems desirable. It is a case of "any port in a storm." Even someone unsuitable may seem desirable.

Are you unhappy enough with the lack of genuine love in your marriage that you would end it? That is the first question, and it has nothing to do with your pen pal.

Your pen pal has answered the second question for you. He said no. You don't wish to accept his answer, but that is reality. If you no longer wish to be married to your husband, that is another reality. You can deal with two realities, but you cannot deal with one reality and one unreality.

Wayne & Tamara

Red-handed

A friend of mine and I began having sex a few months ago. This was pretty stupid because he was involved in a serious committed relationship. I socialized with him and his girlfriend many times, and I don't think she suspected a thing.

He told me all the usual lines. When it became clear they were not true, I stopped sleeping with him.

Last night I walked into a buzz saw. I went to their apartment. As soon as I walked in the door, his girlfriend screamed at me. I don't know how she found out. I feel angry and betrayed. I want to apologize to her, but I also feel he owes me an apology. He tricked me, and I can't believe that is right.

Alexis

Alexis, you want him to apologize for what? For being willing to put one over on you, while you were putting one over on his girlfriend?

You knew what you were doing. He knew what he was doing. But you were left out in the cold. That is what you are mad about. Had you acted with character this would never have happened.

Tamara

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