

**Sibling rivalry:
Adam's sister Caila and why she moved
. . . to Primrose**

Women are complicated. Even after only two wives and fewer girlfriends than I'd ever admit even to my closest buddies—even after a bottle of eighteen-year-old Macallan at a bachelor party during a serious game of *Truth or Dare*—I am convinced that women and men operate on different celestial planes, forget just different planets.

I first came to understand that from my older sister, Caila. We were two years apart, but age was the least of the things that made us different. My parents thought she was the best. And she was. First born, cute as a button, started walking when most kids were just figuring out what their knees were for, excelled at this, was the best at that, was voted the most popular everything, straight-A student, never met a test she didn't like, got early admission to Stanford (Stanford, the bastards, they wouldn't even read my application!), got into Harvard Medical, did her residency at Johns Hopkins, a post-doc fellowship back at Stanford Medical, and became one of the youngest-ever Board Certified Pediatricians in the United States.

And you know what?

She was miserable!

After all that, after kicking my ass in everything six ways from Sunday our whole lives, she would call me up every weekend to tell me how lousy her life was. She makes a jillion dollars a year and saves the lives of little babies, but *she* has a bad life!

I went from failed marriage to failed marriage, made a ton of money but then lost it all in alimony, the wrong friends, and bad ideas, never managed to pull off that David Hemmings thing in Antonioni's *Blow Up* where he shags every model he photographs, and actually believed in that whole soul-mate business but never found a woman deep enough to understand it nor confident enough to accept it.

We've become the world of the mutual-use. Everything is predicated on what you get out of it, not what you put into it. If it's good for me, great; if it's also good for you, well, that's just a fortunate byproduct.

Caila was miserable because even though she had everything you would think you'd ever want, the one thing she wanted more than anything she ever had was love.

Simple as that.

CARLETON PRINCE

Sure, she'd been *in* love. She'd gotten married—also a doc, of course. Lasted ten years. Two kids. Ugly divorce. But that wasn't love. It was a mutual-use. She was a victim of her own expectations. She'd reached a point in her life where she *expected* herself to get married. Notice, it wasn't someone else who expected her to get married—she expected it of herself.

So she found a guy whom she figured had good genes—always thinking like a doctor, you know—and he did. But the one gene he lacked was the gene for being a decent guy. He was a prick. You could see it from the way he drove his Porsche to the way he coached his kids in soccer to the way he ungraciously left my sister to run off with his lab technician. His lab technician! Not even a stupid nurse! What kind of doctor runs off with his lab technician?!

She didn't need Superman. She didn't even need Clark Kent. She just needed Joe Regular, a guy who would love her and their kids and excuse the wrinkles and the sags and failing eyesight and just wanted to grow old with her because, at the end of the day, he loved her.

Simple as that.