

**Letter - April 14, 2003**

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My Lady,

14 Apr 2003

Some mornings I feel the years, most every one of them has given me some little ache, pain, or scar to remind me of it's passage. This morning as these little gifts from life vie for my attention, I have to smile, I just can't help it. Now I am not smiling at the throb in my elbow, the ache in my back, or the pain in my knee - no, those by themselves would erase most any smile - but they are not by themselves, each had a cause. Each little discomfort hints back to it's origination, together those originating situations make up a large part of life - and I just have to smile at that.

The elbow came from that year of playing tennis over in Florida and the back from falling off the mast while sailing across the Gulf. But the knee has a longer history, falling on the hoe as a kid, walking on stilts as a construction worker, being knocked off a bunker in Vietnam, bicycling a thousand miles through Europe, diving in the Bahamas, and tumbling down that mountain - even with the surgery it's a wonder that thing still works at all. This morning these little reminders and more are telling me that everything in life has a price, however, I know that its still a great deal.

Of course it helps that you were there for a lot of it. You listened sympathetically about the elbow, you took command of the boat and sailed us to port, your bicycle was right beside mine the whole way, you helped me hobble off the mountain, and when I awoke from the surgery - there you were. Though parts of me may be slightly worn and a bit battered, I am one lucky and happy guy - I have you - and that could make me smile at most anything.

One of the things I like about "you and I" is that we don't just watch - we participate - we do things - sometimes painful things, but we thrive on the experience. Yes, I know that I'm not very good at many of the things I do and sometimes people laugh at me - that's okay. Remember that mountain race I ran out in California - the one that I finished a distant and dead last? At the end I remember some of the spectators laughing at me, but I don't recall even a chuckle from anyone who finished ahead of me. Everyone who crossed that finish line shared an experience that spectators can only dream about - at that moment I felt like I could do anything. Of course my experience was even better because the best looking, most vivacious, most popular woman around was there to drive me back to the hotel - and I know that you were disappointed that the "anything" that I

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wanted to do was sleep - I'll have to make that up to you - again.

I do have one scar that upsets me - I don't smile about it. It's on my left thumb, about an inch long, thin, straight, much lighter than my skin, and like Jimmy Buffet's Margaritaville tattoo - how it got there I haven't a clue. I feel robbed. I have the mark but no memory of what made it - in a way the day that I got it now seems wasted. I don't want anymore of those.

You know looking back over this I appear to be a battered looser - not so - I may be a little scuffed but I am one of the biggest winners on the planet - I have you. In a few minutes I'll head out the door, by lunch all of the aches and pains will be pushed back in their places, and by the drive home I'll be daydreaming about the next things we can do. Most definitely thinking about you girl.

Love,

Wayne