

## Summer Love

By Terri White

It wasn't love at first sight. In fact, I didn't particularly like him. So I avoided him. Then several months later, our church threw us together to organize an event for the youth group. Between grilling the hotdogs and chatting about the event, we began spending more and more time together. One thing led to another, and here we are 44 years later.

I'm a curious person, so naturally, I ask a lot of questions. Steve, with a mind like a sponge, absorbs information effortlessly. As a pair, we have no trouble finding topics to discuss. We even wrote a book together in the 90s.

But I digress. Back to 44 years ago. We conversed seamlessly. I mean, really. With a whole world to explore, Steve and I made complementary companions. We dove in.

In the beginning, conversation mostly ranged from Genesis to Revelation. Questions, questions. What about this? What about that? What does that REALLY mean? We dug – deep.

Soon the romance kicked in, and sometimes there wasn't much talking, if you get my drift.

That summer of 1977, we sailed high on the euphoria of new love and decided to tie the knot. With my parents a thousand miles away, I enlisted help from my sister and friends to plan a simple wedding.

Since I'm not much for traditions, my sister reminded me of wedding protocols that I, quite frankly, never cared about. Friends lined up to make my dress, bake the cake, create table décor, arrange a meal, take pictures, and serve at the reception.

I forgot to throw the bouquet, nor did I remember to wear the traditional garter. No something borrowed or blue. No new shoes. My sandals would do. Traditions? What?

Nevertheless, I loved every moment of our wedding. Walking down the aisle in my dad's arms - unforgettable. My soon-to-be-husband grinning from ear-to-ear in his baby blue suit. (Remember, it was the 70s!) Friends and family there to celebrate with us.

Then a slight hiccup occurred before taking our vows. Steve wanted to sing a song that he wrote for us. Grabbing his guitar, he perched on a chair ready to croon about our love story. Instead, though, he choked up, stumbling over his words, too emotional to express himself.

True to his iconic, dry humor, he simply announced his love and returned to my side. Chuckles aside, no embarrassment needed. In fact, it infused a little pizzazz into the affair.

We sealed our vows with an amazingly long kiss that drew oohs and aaahs, nearly skipped down the aisle, and readied for our reception. Clueless about how to build a relationship, we, nonetheless, leaped into it with all the gusto of young love.