

92 DAYS

by Shawn Deal

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ISBN: 978-1-64479-300-8

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92 DAYS

A Dramatic Monologue

by **Shawn Deal**

SYNOPSIS: A man reflects on the 92 days he was married to his high school sweetheart before cancer took her life. A moving, honest monologue about first love, grief, and the long road to healing.

TIME: Present.

SET: Bare Stage.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(1 male)

NARRATOR (m)..... 30 plus. The character should be at least ten years removed from the events taking place.

DIRECTOR'S NOTES: This play can be performed very simply: bare stage, no costuming and no props. If you want to use a prop, to give the actor something to work with, have them hold a copy of a Shakespearean play. This is a play about profound and lingering grief. It regards a decision that seemed to be the best at the time but has gone on to have ever-lasting effects in the character's life. The heavy psychological burden taxes the rest of his life. This is a man trying to still come to terms even after so many years, knowing that not one girl will ever compare to the memory of Courtney. There is grief, there is struggle and frustration with how life has gone, regret in not being able to get past this event and at the very end, a touch of hope. A lot plays into this mindset.

DEDICATION

To all the cancer brides and grooms.

NARRATOR: I'm a mess. And I've been a mess for pretty much my entire adult life, all because I loved a girl with all my heart when I was sixteen.

I know... look at me I'm clearly not sixteen. I'm much older than that. It's been a long time since I was sixteen. I should have gotten over that relationship by now.

I know. I get it. That's a fair argument. It should have been a growing experience, one of those events you learn from, promise never to repeat, and to not make the same mistake again. Maybe you come out with a slightly more guarded heart or possibly the opposite and you open it even wider for the next person. Hopefully, you come out of it as a better person, maybe only slightly better, but better, wiser, able to make more healthy decisions in the future.

Yeah, that should have been the way it went. But that's not what really happened.

I haven't had a meaningful relationship since I was sixteen... until just recently... and I can't begin to tell you the layers of guilt I feel currently because of it.

I feel like I'm 20,000 leagues under the sea and all the water that is over me and surrounds me, is my guilt.

I can barely breathe. I can barely move, but I'm finally with the only person who understands me and my situation.

So for her, I do my best to move forward, no matter how difficult it is. I now think I have a chance to forge ahead. It may be a small chance, but a first real chance I've had since I was sixteen.

When I was sixteen, I felt like a brick, dropped from a two story building, for Courtney Cynthia Labree.

It was the best and worst thing that ever happened to me.

I knew, no matter what, that I would love her forever. That's how hard I fell for her. I just didn't understand what that was to truly mean. It sounds romantic and something out of a Hallmark movie, yet the reality is not as gleamy, shiny and innocent as all that.

I was devoted to Courtney. From our first date, which really wasn't a first date, to this day, I've been devoted to Courtney. I always will be. No matter what.

Our first date really wasn't one. We knew each other tangentially through school. We had taken some classes together and I certainly had what you would call a crush on her. I don't know of anyone in the school who didn't, as she was one of the cutest and nicest girls there. But I was the lucky one. I was kind of in the right place at the right time. I just happened to be there when she fell out of a tree in the park and sprained her ankle.

I was an incredible nerd in high school. I was walking the trails in the park reading Shakespeare out loud when she suddenly fell onto the trail about a hundred feet in front of me. Of course, I rushed to her to see if she needed help. She told me she had been doing her best impression of a tree trout when she stepped on a branch that broke.

She had turned her ankle in her fall back to Earth and so I let her lean on me and we hobbled for the next hour and a half back to her house.

I can't express accurately how enchanting that ninety minutes was for me. Being that close to a girl for that long, actual body to body contact, and the conversation was nonstop. It was magical, at least, I thought it was.

Those ninety minutes changed my entire life.

Her mom pulled up in the driveway just as we were limping up the front porch. Her mom was so appreciative and thanked me profusely... she still mentions that incident to this day, and she took

over for me as she helped Courtney into their house. Being polite, I of course said it was no problem whatsoever, had been happy to help. I made a great first impression.

From there, I rushed home and called Courtney immediately to see how she was. We talked until 1 AM the next morning, when I heard Courtney's mom in the background tell her to get off the phone and go to sleep.

We were nearly inseparable from then on. We met in the hallways of school, between each class, had every lunch together. I would watch her from the bleachers while she did cheer practice. She would come and watch rehearsals for the school play I was in.

I'll admit, we had it bad, both of us.

I know why I had it bad for her. Courtney was everything. She was good looking, she was funny, she was caring and honest with her feelings. She loved to talk and I loved to listen to her. She adored theater and was thrilled that I was in it. The entire time we were together, her only disappointment in me was when I gave up the lead in *Grease* to spend more time with her.

I was never disappointed by that decision. In fact, it's one of the greatest decisions I ever made. It still remains a proud moment. One of those decisions you make that you can stand by over the years and point to, to say you are a good man.

We were one of those couples that everyone made fun of, was envious of, or gagged over. We were always kissing in the hallways, saying 'I love you' out loud to each other, and constantly held hands anytime we were together. We talked on the phone almost every night until the wee hours of the morning.

I will admit it, right now, out loud, we were nauseating to everyone around us. But I knew we were going to be together forever...so it was alright, I just didn't realize how long forever would be.

We had been together a little more than four months, pretty much all school year, having had our faithful run in the second weekend after school started. We had had a glorious time at the winter formal. Courtney had looked like a moving, dancing, floating snowflake in her gorgeous white dress. I had spent Christmas morning at her parents' house, and she had come to my house for Christmas dinner. Both of our families loved us as a couple.

Courtney was still having trouble with her ankle that she had hurt falling out of the tree. It was a little strange. At first, doctors thought it was just slow to heal, later a torn tendon, even later a possible hairline fracture. She walked in a boot for a couple of weeks even though the doctors couldn't quite identify what was truly wrong with it. And then suddenly they did.

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