

Getting to Know Each Other

Mark wakes up early in the morning. It is still dark outside. He gets out of the bed and goes to the window of his room. The cool morning air filled with the scent of wet earth. The sun is slowly rising from the east causing the golden glow over the horizon of a periwinkle blue sky. Mark can not help the urge to go on a hike when a weather is so enchanting.

He gets freshen up and put on his clothes. A light half sleeve t-shirt and a pair of slightly loose jeans. He does not take any material with him as he only intends to walk a short distance. As he walks out of the inn he is staying at his thoughts wonder toward the girl she met on his previous hike. "Sarah" her name brings a joy to his for reason he does not feel to accept even to himself but it was true that he longed to see her.

He does not think himself fortunate enough to run into her again however it was quite odd how he did run into her in the past few days as if the God in heaven was kind to him. As he walked through the town towards the forest he saw very few people opening their shops which made him think that it will surely be unlikely if he did run into her.

He entered the familiar forest trail up the mountain. The cool morning wind was gently brushing through his hair while the scent of wild flowers filled his nose. He walked further deeper into the woods when he heard a familiar voice and he thought to himself that God was surely kind to him as that voice belonged to none other than miss Sarah.

He moved past a cut in the trail and on turning he saw her sitting on the forest floor feeding carrots to a pair of bunnies. The young man didn't want to startle her so he stood still and watched with awed eyes at the beautiful scene in front of him though the bunnies sense his presence and on doing so they ran away.

"No wait" Sarah called out to them but they were gone "I am sorry for that, it was my fault" said Mark startling her. She stood up and hastily turned around.

"You, what are you doing here this early in the morning?" she asked "I can ask you the same thing." Replied Mark with a smile. "I didn't mean it like that. I just expected someone from the city to be a heavy sleeper." Sara said hastily "and you need not apologise for the bunnies they were already finished with the carrots."

"Is it a hobby of yours to feed the animals of the forest?" Mark asked politely. "Oh no, it's just that this pair lives near my hiking spot and I like to feed them." Sara explained

"Well if you like them so much why not keep them as pets" asked Mark perplexed. "and keep them in cage. I hate to do such a cruel thing to them as I believe that wild animals should be allowed to live freely. After all they are not for our amusement are they" Sarah said earning herself some respect in Mark's eyes.

"You are very kind miss, I haven't meet anyone who thinks like that before" "Well in that case you probably haven't met very good people" gently she said "Maybe I haven't, until now." Mark said thoughtfully causing her to blush slightly.

"Would you like to accompany me on my hike miss?" Mark asked "Yes, I was just going that way myself you see to collect some herbs." She replied happily and they both made their way up the trail. Sarah asked many questions about the city life as she had never been to the city and Mark

questioned her about the village life which he found so pleasing and easy going .

It was obvious that they were completely different and extremely curious about one another's life. Mark only hoped to find some common ground to which they both can relate to. "What kinds of sports do you like?" Mark asks "Well, I don't get to enjoy any particular sports with my hands being full with work. But in my school days. I was very found of hockey. I even played in the school team" replied Sara.

"Really, I love hockey myself. I was the team captain at school and I have my own personal ground and team back at home. I still play on my day offs." "Well I would say you like to gloat." Remarked Sarah causing Mark to snort with laughter.

"I assure you I didn't mean to gloat. It's just that whenever I tell someone something that seems ordinary to me sounds like gloating to other people, when in truth I am only stating the facts." Explained Mark "I understand that, I only meant to tease you but I can imagine it would be easy for people to misunderstand you and think of you as arrogant." Said Sarah understanding causing Mark to feel touched by such thoughts because he hardly ever met a woman who understood him so well.

Most women he met were usually after his money and even if that wasn't the case the rich woman's he was accustomed with only talked about fashion, famous designers, business and brands. Not a single one of them talk about the simple things in life like, family, friends, books or anything remotely simple yet beautiful.

But Sarah was unlike anyone he had ever met she was gentle, kind, hardworking and fun to talk to. He only wished to know her better, to spend some more time with her and what better way to do that then to ask her on a date. But he didn't wanted to look eager. Also he wasn't sure that Sarah would like places like fancy restaurants our parties like most of the girls he dated did.

He was also finding it hard to come up with a way to ask her for a data. He was scared that she would say no and even if she said yes what then what would he do to make her happy he hardly knew anything about her other than that she like himself loved nature, animals and hiking. Just then he came up with an idea.

"May I ask your opinion on something?" he said "Sure, what is it?" replied Sarah "Well can you tell me spot which would be good for camping? I have looked around these woods and until now I haven't found a good spot." "I would be happy to guide you, there is beautiful large field of flowers further up the mountain . I like going there whenever I have the time. You would love it when you see it. It is a beautiful view" Sarah said excitedly.

"Would you kind enough to guide me there and also would you come with me for camping there" Mark asked timidly "I would say that I will be happy to but if I'm not wrong are you asking me for a data?" she asked looking perplexed. "Maybe or maybe I just don't want to get lost in these woods on my own." He said with a charming smile.

"really?" she asked "In that case I have to say no since I am not a tour guide" she said teasingly "really but If I were to ask for a data would you go with me then?" Mark asked hopefully "I think I will." Replied Sarah with a smile "I will take that as a yes."

They walked a little further still discussing their love for hockey. Sarah was continuously asking questions like an excited child about his favourite games, which player he likes beat, about his team, who taught him and so many other things without catching a breath. Mark was not bothered by this at all in fact he found all this very pleasing. He was extremely fascinated by Sarah's energy and

enthusiasm.

It was also unlike for someone to talk this frankly with him. Mark was also asking her about her school's hockey team and that if she still played hockey. "No, I don't play anymore all I do these days is help my father with farm work and even if I had time there aren't any places or people for me to play with" she said sadly "What about town's sports ground, you can play there with your friends" suggested Mark.

"The town's sports ground is reserved for the school students for the whole year. It is hardly ever empty and as for my friends they all left town to graduate from universities and to look for better opportunities. I wanted to go to but I can't leave my family behind also I like being close to nature."

Said Sarah "I can understand you choose responsibility over your desires but if you don't mind me asking if you would be giving the opportunity will you take it and leave this town?" asked Mark "I'm not sure, I can't think about being away from my father but maybe I will like to see the world. Still I doubt I will be happy there as for me there is no place like home." Replied Sarah causing Mark's respect for Sarah to grow.

They both reach close to Sarah house while talking. Sarah invited him in but he refused saying that he needed to head back. He bit her goodbye and made his way back while his mind was filled with the thoughts of their coming date tomorrow. Mark didn't ever remembered being so excited for a date before.

The First Date

The next morning could not be earlier than Mark had anticipated. He spent the entire night pacing back and forth inside his room. He didn't remember ever being so nervous about a date. This is not like him. He wanted to make himself look capable in front of her.

He didn't want her to think that he was a spoiled rich child who couldn't do even ordinary things like setting up a camp or starting a fire. He kept checking his appliances for tomorrow's picnic. As if rechecking them after every thirty minutes would somehow solve his problems or make him feel satisfied.

Meanwhile, at Sarah's home she had prepared everything she needed and had decided to bring food with her for the picnic. She had even asked her father's permission, though she hadn't told him whom she was going with, she had merely said that she was going to spend the night with a friend.

She was lying in bed wide awake. She could hardly sleep with her mind filled with exciting thoughts of her coming date. She was tossing and tearing in her bed trying hard to sleep. Every time she thought about the moment when Mark had asked her about the date, she blushed and her heart skipped a beat. She couldn't wait for tomorrow evening to come and didn't know how she would get through the day when such wild thoughts were running through her mind that she felt like her head would explode.

How the two of them went through the next day was a miracle because the excitement in both their hearts was barely contained. They did the usual things they do throughout the day. Then they took their camping supplies and went to their meeting spot. Sarah was early to arrive there. She stood there waiting for Mark. The sun was high up in the sky, causing the sun shine to peek through the canopy of leaves while soft white clouds drifted through the sky..

The birds were chirping loudly and the pleasant sounds of wild animals filled the forest air. A little while later, Mark showed up. He was dressed in a maroon shirt and sandy jeans. He was carrying a backpack with his supplies. "I see you are fully prepared." said Sarah. "So did you," Mark replied. She was wearing white jeans with a lemon yellow top. She was also carrying a backpack and in one hand there was a walking stick and in the other there was a picnic basket. "I made us dinner." she said, "It smells delicious, do you like to cook?" asked Mark, "Very much so." replied Sarah happily "Let's go then. ""After you, my guide." said mockingly.

They both walked up the path leading towards the picnic spot. Sarah kept hitting her stick on the rocks in her path, causing loud noises. "Might I ask why are you beating the rocks? I thought that stick was used for walking?" asked Mark, confused at seeing this strange behaviour.

"There are other things this stick is used for, such as making loud noises so that snakes and other animals would run out of our way," she said simply, as if the prospect of snakes being in the area wasn't frightening at all. "Snakes, you are not trying to scare me are you?" asked Mark. "No, I'm not.

Don't tell me you didn't think of them when you came here for hiking?" asked Sarah, and then she turned around to look at Mark's embarrassed face and started laughing.

They talked their way through the journey without even realising how much time had passed. When they reached the field, Mark let out a sound of awe, "Wow" he said. The field was large and filled with many flowers; lavender, lilies, daisies and dandelions. The flowers danced in the gentle evening breeze which was slightly cold, strong and filled with the scent of grass and flowers. The view from here was beautiful. You could see the whole town and the surrounding mountains bathed in the sunlight as cotton-shaped clouds floated over a bright blue sky.

They found a soft patch of grass and began to set up camps. Afterwards, Sarah spread the picnic rug on the ground and placed the picnic basket on top of it. Once Mark was done setting up his camp, he joined her and they began to eat their dinner. "Your cooking is great, you know, and so is this site. I can see why you like this place so much," complimented Mark while finishing his sandwich. "Thank you, but I must say I expected you to be more of a flirt. Most men would have said that I look more beautiful than the view" remarked Sara mockingly.

Let's just say, unlike other men, I don't like to lie," replied Mark, earning himself a punch on the arm from Sarah and they both laughed. "I used to come here with my mom when I was younger. This was our favourite spot. I usually come here when I am sad or when I feel lonely, though I still have my dad with me but he doesn't like to come here, not anymore." Said Sarah sadly. Then she put up a smile and asked "What about your family? Are you close to them?"

"I don't like to talk about it, unlike you, my family isn't very close," replied Mark with a look of seriousness on his face. "So that's why you came to this place, to find the peace and love you can't find at your home." She said understandably. "I guess that's true, most people who try to be close to me don't realise that money can't buy you happiness. That's why I like you. You value things that are truly important in life. There are not many people who would give up their dreams for their family. I really respect that about you", Mark said with a fondness for her in his eyes.

It made Sarah blush. "I like that about you too, how you treat me normally, like there is no difference between our stages. You treat me like a friend and, if I am being honest with myself, a friend is truly what I need at this time in life." she said, and they both looked into each other's eyes, reaching a certain understanding and became completely lost.

Then they both lay down on the rug and watched the clouds drift by while making shapes out of the cloud as the sun set. After a little while, they started a fire and sat around it. When it finally became dark enough, the fireflies came out in the field and the whole town lit up with small lights. The moon above was looking like a lantern while the stars twinkled in its wake. If this place was beautiful at day, then you had better believe it looked like heaven at night.

They both silently enjoyed the view while roasting marshmallows on the fire. "Thank you for today. I really enjoyed it," said Mark "I'm the one who should be thanking you since you asked me on a date." said Sarah gladly. "You know I am a little scared." She continued.

"Scared of what, Snakes?" he asked, laughing slightly because she looked serious. "I'm scared of getting attached to you because, like all my other friends, you will also leave and then once again I will be lonely." She said softly, "That is true. I am scared of losing the peace I have found here too, but I think that there is no point in worrying about what will happen tomorrow. Instead, we should focus on today and live in this moment as much as we can." He said gently.

"I agree, that is why I hope you don't mind me doing this," she said and drew even closer to him. They looked each other in the eyes and kissed their mouths, locked in a lavishing kiss. Their tongues were stroking each other so gently and passionately. They didn't know how much time passed, all they knew was that they didn't want to be intercepted at that moment.

At last, Mark drew gently back and they kept staring into each other's eyes until Mark said, "We should get some rest." They both went into their tents and tried to sleep in silence. While Sarah was sleeping, Mark cursed himself for kissing her. He didn't want to give her any weird ideas about their relationship. What was their relationship? Mark didn't know himself she was his friend and he liked her, but he would be gone in a matter of days and would move on with his life.

He had no right to toy with her heart like this when he only thought of her as a friend whom he had made for a short while to rid himself of his worries. He kept thinking about all this till three in the morning. Then he finally became so tired that sleep washed over him.

Sarah, on the other hand, was really happy though she didn't understand Mark's reaction. She only hoped he didn't think her too easily. She knew that it was not meant to be, but she couldn't help but think about the time they had spent together and every time she closed her eyes she remembered the kiss they had shared. She wished to go outside of the tent and continue to spend the night talking to him, but she decided otherwise and fell asleep.

Sarah woke him up, they packed their things and walked back in silence. After reaching their usual spot, Mark thanked her again for this beautiful date. They bid each other goodbye and walked home thinking about all the beautiful moments they shared yesterday.

h became steady as I wiped my tears away.

"Do you think that I will be a good mother?" "I'm too young and inexperienced when it comes to children." I ask, wanting to hear his opinion: "My dear, I know how good you are with children, and I think you will make an excellent mother." "I am sure there are a lot of things you need to learn, and I need to learn a lot too, but I am sure as long as I am with you, we will be fine." He says while gently stroking my cheek, "And you should know that you are a good daughter who has made his father proud throughout his life." "I know that because I know how much he loves you, and I don't think that he will think any less of you just because you fell in love." He says it reassuringly.

Hearing these words makes me smile a little, and I ask, "Do you love me?" Or are you just with me because of our baby? "Are you sure you won't get tired of me and leave me?"

"Michelle, I love you with all my heart. Even if you weren't the mother of your child, I would still love you, and I promise that I will never leave your side no matter what happens." He said lovingly, "I love you too, and I will do everything I can to be a good wife and mother to you and our child." "I promise to never leave you till death separates us." I say looking into his eyes just then the sound of loud clapping and cheering erupts all around us, and we remember that we are surrounded by people.

The whole cafe was listening to our conversation with such attention, and we haven't even noticed because we were so lost talking to each other that we didn't even realize that there was a world around us apart from the place where we are sitting. We both are a little shocked, then, at first, looking around at all these cheering faces, we look at each other and laugh.

When we leave the cafe, walking arm in arm, smiling and laughing at each other's jokes, the rain has stopped, the sun is shining brightly in the sky, and the wind has also become gentle and cool, causing the weather to become pleasant. Seeing this beautiful weather, I feel assured that no matter how bad things get, the sun will shine once again in the end, and we will be together.

