

The Poetry Reading

By : Sultry Alice

G-Rated. Chance meeting or fate, one never knows which. Coincidences are sometime eerie and hard to explain.



Published on
Booksie

booksie.com/Sultry Alice

Copyright © Sultry Alice, 2015
Publish your writing on Booksie.com.

The Poetry Reading

My name is Debra but my friends and family have always called me Deb. I was browsing the library one night hoping some book would just jump out at me. The small town library was busier than usual and I wondered what was going on so I asked the librarian.

â There is a poetry reading tonight. Poets come once a month on the third Fridays to read their poems. The readings will start soon in the room at the end of the hall.â

I saw people migrating that way and as I had nothing to do, I decided to follow them. At the front of the room there was a long table set up with four chairs behind it. The room contained numerous round tables with five chairs each. The two ladies in front of me sat together at an empty table and I joined them. An older man with gorgeous grey hair joined us. Finally a teenage boy with blonde hair in a ponytail took the last chair. All in all about twenty-five people showed up for the poetry reading. I was a bit surprised that so many people would come on a Friday evening. I looked around the room at the people. The audience contained mostly middle aged and older women. There were two other women in their twenties like me. There were only four men, and that was including the teenage boy.

â Thank you all for joining us tonight for our monthly poetry readings. I see some new faces here. I would like to let you know that we meet here on the third Friday of the month at 7 pm. We have three poets scheduled to read tonight and of course anyone from the audience that wants to share a poem can do so after the readings. I will let the poets introduce themselves as they read.â

One by one the poets got up and read three or four poems each. If they had a published book they showed it and talked about their collection of poems. The poems were about a variety of subjects including nature, romance, children, religion and relationships. All three poets were excellent speakers and read their poems clearly and with feeling.

â This concludes the scheduled readings. I would like to thank these poets for sharing their poems with us. I think you will all agree they did a great job. Letâ s give them a hand to show our appreciation.â The librarian said as she started clapping. We all joined in and applauded.

â Are there any poets in the audience that have something to share with us tonight?â

About six people raised a hand including the gentleman with the grey hair next to me. The librarian called on them one at a time and the man at our table was last. He stood up and took a folded sheet of paper from his breast pocket. He introduced himself as he nervously unfolded it.

â My name is Al. Some of you have probably seen me here before. I used to come with my wife Deb who passed away two months ago. Deb liked poetry and I wrote my first poem today to bring and share.â

Al read the poem, his hands shaking all the time.

.

.

My life was complete, with just my Deb for forty years

The Poetry Reading

Now that youâ€™re gone, my pillow is damp from tears

I hoped and prayed that you would survive the cancer

No one heard or listened, your death my only answer

.

Most days I find empty bleakness, I am so depressed

I stay in bed and weep, thereâ€™s no reason to get dressed

If I told you I held the slightest hope of joy, it would be a lie

For I only take solace in the fact that eventually I will die

.

Debra and I used to come here, just for this poetry reading

Today I got an urge, it was almost as if she were pleading

For me to write my feelings down and come share this poem

And somehow, though I canâ€™t imagine how, Iâ€™d feel less alone

,

.

Al had tears in his eyes and his voice was cracking when he said, â€œ I want to thank all you people for listening to my poem, I am sorry to burden you with my problems.â€

Al sat back down and hung his head staring at the table.

I placed my hand on top of his and gave his hand a gentle squeeze. The room was very quiet. My mind was reeling in thought. His wifeâ€™s name the same as mine and he sat next to me. I didnâ€™t even know I was going to attend the poetry reading. I was lonely for different reasons. I was fat and plain looking. I exiled myself because I feared rejection. We were two lonely people sitting together at a poetry reading in a small local library. Complete strangers with nothing in common but loneliness and the fact that I shared his wifeâ€™s name.

I looked up as people came by and said things like, good poem or I am sorry to hear about your wife. Some people patted him on the back or put a hand on his shoulder. I heard Al saying thank you to some of them. Then I felt Al put his other hand on top of mine. He probably did it out of habit, it felt good.

â€œ Al, you might be uncomfortable with this idea, and I would totally understand. But I would like to talk with you once in a while when youâ€™re in the mood for some company. I will write my name and phone number down. Give me a call, I am always home alone too. My name is Debra but my friends call me Deb.â€

The Poetry Reading

Al got a small smile on his face and said, "I think my beloved sent me here for a reason." He took the paper from me and put it in his pocket.

"Come, I know a little coffee shop that serves the best pie." Al said standing up.

The Poetry Reading

The Poetry Reading

Created from Booksie.com

Generated: 2015-01-25 08:19:27