

NO REGRETS



Focused on the future, we did not surrender to the feelings of the moment.

I met Mark when I came home from college for a visit. He was a young officer in the United States military, tall and handsome, just starting an exciting career. We liked each other immediately and spent as much time together as possible. It seemed we were made for each other. He visited me at college, and by the time I returned home for the summer vacation I knew I had to make a decision about my future.

After a few dates Mark had asked me to seriously consider not returning to college in the fall so that we could spend more time together. I had worked and saved through high school so that I could have a college education, and I just couldn't give up my dreams of college so soon.

No matter how fervently I prayed about marriage and a future with Mark, I never

felt peaceful with that decision. I thought it through many times and came up with many reasons why we could have a wonderful a life together. I had always wanted to travel and knew I would love living abroad in interesting foreign lands with him in the military.

One special evening, after a romantic dinner, we decided to drive around a lovely little lake. We drove slowly as if we might save the magic of the moment. We stopped not far from my home and spoke quietly and seriously about our future and how much we cared for each other.

At that moment it would have been easy to go too far with my affections, and he with his.

I was caught off guard by the strength of temptation masquerading as young love. Who would know if I gave in?

There, in the Lord's house, I felt no remorse or regrets. Instead, I smiled and nodded.

Who would know? I had always been morally clean and thought I would never be vulnerable in that way. I was caught off guard by how easily physical desire became so strong.

Then pictures flooded my mind. I could clearly see my Beehive teacher, my grandmothers, and my parents. My thoughts were filled with their words and what they had taught me about being chaste. I could feel their love as strongly as if they were there with me. Time seemed to stop. I was facing temptation in its most deceiving disguise—temptation masquerading as young love. Clearly it was a choice between right and wrong, and I knew I wanted to be clean and pure. I was surprised at how easily that moment passed once the decision was made. I realized that real love respects purity.

Temptation respects nothing.

The rest of the evening turned from romance to a clear-headed discussion of what our futures were to be. I was more certain than before that Heavenly Father had different plans for us. I don't remember exactly what we said, only that we probably weren't really meant for each other after all. I went home, told my parents it was over, but was at peace with the decision. We saw each other only a few times after that evening, and our paths soon went separate directions.

I returned to college, and he went on with his life. We had no contact after that summer.

Returning to school, I moved back into regular college life, dating a few great guys, eventually meeting a fine man. He had a sense of humor and a strong testimony, and we had common goals. It was then that I received strong, positive confirmation he was the right person for me to marry. What had seemed so important the summer before faded. Mark just became just one of the guys I had known.

Years passed, and with a husband and several children, I was a busy mother trying to build an eternal family, working in the Church. One day I found some free time and slipped away to attend the temple. In that holy place, I noticed a temple worker who looked vaguely familiar. Only as I passed did I realize it was my old boyfriend Mark. There, in the Lord's house, I felt no remorse or regrets. I didn't have to turn away in shame because of things we had done. Instead I smiled and nodded.

In the celestial room I gave quiet thanks for guidance from Church leaders, parents, and Mutual teachers who had taught the principle of chastity. In the most sacred place on earth, the holy temple, I was filled with gratitude for sure and true commandments, which kept me safe and clean. Once I was young and inexperienced, but I had the best guides in all eternity, our Savior's teachings and the Holy Ghost, to direct me to the right path. He knew what was right for me.

In the years since then, I have had a good, happy life, and I am sure Mark has had the same. I heard that he left the military, served a mission, and was later called to be a bishop. Ours are separate lives, free and clear, with only good memories. I am just one girl he dated; he is one guy I dated—and that is all. **NE**