

CONCERNING LOVE AND CHEESE

(Trần Nghi Âu Cơ)

Is it bad that now whenever I read stories about long lost loves reunited and about all those *I never stopped loving you even after all these years*, I just can't buy it anymore? Don't get me wrong, I'm still that mushy, cheesy romantic from years ago. I still believe in true love and all that stuff. But now I'm more realistic about it.

I know *forever* is a myth. I know people change; it's inevitable. I know most of the time distance does not make the heart grow fonder; it makes the heart's memory hazy; it forces the heart to fill in the blanks, usually with more beautiful, untrue images.

Now I'm very aware that my idea of a person and the person himself are usually not the same, or even similar at all. I know to prepare myself for reality's disappointments in comparison to what I've created in my imagination. I know that life isn't a book and that we don't have the comfort of knowing that there is a writer somewhere who wrote good endings for us.

So I know that if I and Fictional Friend don't talk to each other for a long time, our lives will inevitably untangle themselves from one another and continue in two parallel lines, each a separate entity. Because life moves on. No matter how close we were, life and time will do that douche-y thing they do so well to help people move on and forget.

That used to depress me to no end. But now I don't worry about it as much as I used to. I still worry, but I'm better because I think of the memories, the sad memories, the happy memories. Whatever happens, there will always be an *us*. A me and a you. A togetherness. Something that neither one of us can erase.

So when I read about couples who were separated and hadn't seen each other for a billion years say things like, "After all these years, you're the only one for me" whilst standing next to their respective spouses and five children from another marriage and, like, twelve grandkids, I can't help but think, *chyea*, *OK...*

That's not only messed up to your current spouse, but to your kids as well. They meant nothing to you? I bet they did and you're only saying all this corny bullsnot because you think it'll make for a better story, because you think it'll make you seem loyal and romantic and devoted, when in actuality, it only makes you look like a total and complete douche.

Romance isn't forced or scripted, it comes naturally. The two of you had a great love; then you were separated; then you moved on. That's OK. You have the memories of each other to treasure forever. But don't forget that you also made memories with your current family, probably loads more. So don't shit all over the latter just because the former fits better into the world of lame Hollywood movies and cheap romance novels.

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