BECOMING THE WOMAN OF HIS DREAMS

Sharon Jaynes
This book is dedicated to Bruce and Mary Ellen Jaynes, whose marriage is and will be a legacy for generations to come.
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“And they lived happily ever after.”

Wait a minute. That is supposed to be the end of the story, not the beginning. Well, my friend, I think that has been our problem in marriage all along. To have a great marriage, we must begin with the hoped-for end in mind. Every word we speak, every decision we make, and every action we take will either move us closer to or take us further away from that end.

From the time a little girl first hears fairy tales of the damsel in distress being rescued by the handsome prince, captivated by his pledge of never-ending love, and whisked away on a white steed into the sunset, a dream begins to take shape on the stage of her mind. She hopes and prays that one day her prince will come. And then…one day he does! Oh, he may not look like the prince in the storybooks, or even like the one from her childhood imaginings, but he is her prince nonetheless. Will the words “and they lived happily ever after” appear before the final curtain falls? My dear sister, this is not just something we hope for. It is something we work toward. It is the goal, and you, fair lady, have been invited to play the starring role.

Have you ever considered that your husband had similar notions
of what his dream wife would be like? As a little boy he probably didn’t sit around reading fairy tales about becoming a prince—a warrior, maybe—but not the neat-and-tidy young man who placed his lips upon Snow White’s to wake her from a cursed sleep. He most likely skipped the Barbie aisle where Malibu Ken stood with every hair in place on his plastic head and went straight for the G.I. JOEs. Our spouses probably didn’t give much thought to what they wanted in a wife until their teen years. However, your husband’s vision of a future mate most assuredly began to unfurl when he laid eyes on you.

Remember the courting days? That’s when we ladies put our best foot forward—in hopes that the glass slipper will fit. With a smile on our lips and a sparkle in our eyes, we somehow convinced this man that we are what he’s been looking for his entire life! The woman of his dreams!

So we buy the beautiful dress, gather with family and friends, and walk down the aisle to say, “I do.” Then the organ blasts, and we walk out the door into reality. This is where the glass slipper meets the road. Can we do it? Can we be the woman of our man’s dreams? Do we really even want to?

When I married my wonderful husband, Steve, I had no idea what it would take to truly become the woman of his dreams. Oh, he told me that I already was, but I had an inkling there would be more to having a happy marriage than the fact that I loved Steve and Steve loved me. Even on our wedding day, the most beautiful day of my life, I had a suspicion there was more to discovering what it meant to truly become one. It didn’t take me very long to learn that I was right.

In the Bible, Proverbs 31 describes the wife of noble character. “An excellent wife, who can find? Her worth is far above jewels (Proverbs 31:10 NASB). This gal was smart, skillful, thrifty, industrious, and strong. She had a reverence for God and was a blessed mother, keeper of her home, savvy money manager, faithful friend and mentor, and compassionate servant in the community. She was a powerful force long before Helen Reddy sang “I am woman, hear me roar.” And what did her husband think about all her admirable qualities? He praised
her saying, “Many women do noble things, but you surpass them all” (Proverbs 31:29).

What would it take for a man to praise his wife at the beginning and end of their lives together and all the days in between? In order to find the answer to that question, I surveyed hundreds of men and had countless interviews. I asked men the following questions:

- How would you describe the woman of your dreams?
- What do you wish your wife understood about you and your longings?
- What does your wife do well that other women could learn from?
- What has been the greatest struggle in your marriage?
- How could your wife help alleviate that problem?
- What is one thing you wish women understood about what a man wants in the woman of his dreams?

As I compiled the interviews and surveys, I noticed seven qualities of the dream wife that kept coming up time and time again, and I have arranged them to fit the acrostic PRAISES. The woman of your man’s dreams prays for him, respects him, adores him, initiates intimate friendship with him, safeguards her marriage, encourages him, and sexually fulfills him. While each man is as different as the prints on his fingertips, these seven qualities were universal.

I want you to know that I am not coming to you as an expert who knows all there is to know about becoming the woman of my man’s dreams. Rather, I am learning right along with you. I discovered so much from the men I talked to throughout this journey. What touched me more than anything was that these men truly love their wives and want to have strong marriages built on a thousand sharings. They were very honest with me, and they felt safe to share what was really on their hearts and minds. However, most did not feel safe enough for me to use their real names. That is a commentary in itself. Because of their
honesty, you may see some things you don’t like, the hair may bristle on the back of your neck, and you may throw the book down in a huff. But I would encourage you to keep reading if you really want to become the woman of your man’s dreams.

Sprinkled throughout the pages are glimpses of various men’s hearts as they shared their responses. Who knows? You may even see yourself mirrored in a response or two.

So join me now on a fantastic journey where you are the leading lady with the starring role in the grand drama called marriage, and discover with me the joys of *Becoming the Woman of His Dreams*. 
SECTION ONE

Prays for Him
Okay, ladies, I have a confession to make right from the beginning. Of all the men I surveyed and interviewed, prayer was not at the top of their wish list. However, I know beyond a shadow of a doubt that we cannot become the woman of our man’s dreams without it. Prayer must be the foundation for everything we do. And I can promise you this: We can read all the marriage books in print, and even write a few, but without God’s empowerment we will fail.

I don’t know where you are in your spiritual journey. Perhaps prayer is part of your everyday life and you speak to God as one speaks to a friend. Perhaps prayer is something you do before mealtimes or before you lay your head on the pillow at night. Perhaps you are more comfortable repeating prayers penned by saints who have gone before us. No matter where you are on the continuum between never praying and constant communication with God, this is the place we have to start. If talking to God is a new concept for you, I encourage you to join me in considering how to tap into the only power source that can give you the will, wit, and wisdom to becoming the woman of your man’s dreams.

If you’ve been married for longer than a week, you’ve probably
already noticed that marriage is difficult. We nod and agree when the pastor says, “And the two shall become one,” but then we waltz down the aisle and out the door to determine which one. Many of us snuff out the candles representing our separate lives and light the unity candle only to begin the process of snuffing each other out.

I remember sitting in front of a mirror on my wedding day, brushing my hair and staring at the reflection of a woman so full of hope and promise. I was overflowing with love for this man of my dreams, who in just a few moments was going to be my husband…forever. Then my musing took a twist. Doesn’t every bride feel this way about her groom on her wedding day? What causes 50 percent of marriages to end in divorce? What could possibly mar this beautiful union? Staring at myself in the mirror, I made a commitment that when I said the words, “I do,” then “I would.” I made a promise to God, to my husband, and to myself that I would do everything within my power to make our marriage a success. I quickly learned that “in my power” was not enough; I had to depend on God’s power working in and through me to be the wife my husband needs.

Several years ago, when we built our home, I was so anxious to move in that I didn’t even wait for the power company to turn the electricity on. The builder told me I needed to wait at least two more weeks, but I had already waited four months longer than he had promised when the project was begun.

“Ma’am,” the builder said, “you can’t move in this house. The power’s not even turned on!”

“Well, how do your men run the construction equipment?” I asked.

“See that little box on the telephone pole?” he pointed out. “The power company puts what’s called a saw box on the pole there. It gives us just enough electricity to run our equipment, but certainly not enough to run a house.”

“If it’s enough for you, then it’s enough for me,” I countered.

Sensing he was going to lose the battle, he continued. “Okay, here’s the deal. You can move in, but you can only turn on a few lights at a time. If you want to take a shower, you have to turn off all the lights
and let the water heater warm up for about 30 minutes. Then you have to flip the switch back off when you’re done.”

Victory was in the air! We moved in. At first it was very exciting, like camping out in a really nice tent. But after a while I grew tired of take-out food and cold showers, and candlelight dinners were no longer romantic. We were thrilled when the power company came a few weeks later and connected our house to the power source. I turned on the lights, took a hot shower, and preheated the oven—all at the same time.

As I sat and watched the men remove the saw box from the telephone pole, I was struck with the similarities of how I live my life at times. God gave me the power of the Holy Spirit the moment I accepted Jesus Christ as my Savior, and He invites me to tap into that power every day. Some days I live on just enough of God’s power to get by, and some days I feel as though I’m powered up with all circuits open. The difference comes when I decide to plug into the power source Himself—through prayer.

I never want to live off the saw box again. And I never want to have just enough of God in my life to get by—my marriage depends on it.

Woman of his dreams? Why, some days I’ve been the woman of his dreams, all right. A nightmare in which I was the star. Then again, some days I have been the woman of his deepest longings and Steve’s had a hard time wiping that silly grin off his face. Whether you’ve spent more time being Cinderella or Cruella De Vil, here’s where we start from this day forward—prayer.

Describe the woman of my dreams? I’m married to her. She is a very godly woman who loves the Lord. She is patient, forgiving, tender, loving, and puts up with me, warts and all. —Dan

My wife has a wonderful ability to connect with others and their suffering. What an amazing gift God has given her. —Don

Describe the woman of my dreams? The one I have. She loves
“Christ, she loves me, and she has been a wonderful mother to our children.” — Josh

“The woman of my dreams is actually the wife of my prayers. As a teenager who never really dated, I prayed that God would introduce me to a girl to love. He did just that and we’ve now been married for more than 14 years. She’s beautiful both inside and out. She is a loving mother, dedicated worker, and faithful servant in our church. Best of all, I know she loves me and respects me. Looking back, she exceeds everything I ever dreamed of, but she is exactly what I prayed for.” — Jim

“A good marriage is not a contract between two persons but a sacred covenant between three.”

Our Only Hope

Bonita and her husband were on their way to their honeymoon destination, sitting in first class with two couples who were celebrating their thirty-fifth and fiftieth anniversaries. The flight attendant, a veteran of 25 years of marriage, decided it would be fun for those couples to give the newlyweds marital advice. They basically told them two things: Don’t fight over money, and never go to bed angry at one another. As they sat there dreamy-eyed, Bonita remembers thinking, Piece of cake! Why on earth would I ever fight with this dashing, charming, utterly irresistible man?

Some of you are smiling already. Why indeed? Fast-forward a few months.

“I distinctly remember the evening I threw that advice to the wind,” Bonita explained. “I was sitting at our quaint little kitchen table competently paying the bills. My husband walked in and announced, ‘I’ve been praying about this, and I believe it’s time for me to take over the family finances.’ I let out a hearty laugh, but upon seeing the seriousness on his face, fear gripped me. Our financial ruin flashed before my eyes, and I blurted out, ‘No way!’ and proceeded to remind him which
one of us was most capable of handling finances. After all, I was the one who entered the marriage debt free and with a savings account.”

That night Bonita and her husband broke both rules. They went to bed angry after arguing about money! Over the next few years there were many nights they went to bed angry. But somewhere around the twelfth year of marriage they came to the realization that a lifetime is an awfully long time to feud and, since they were stuck with one another, they might want to work on their communication skills.

“When I finally got around to praying and seeking God’s Word on the issue (yes, it finally came to that!), I saw that the Lord has a few things to say about conflict in marriage.”

“When I finally got around to praying about it…” That’s why I’m beginning with prayer. Prayer is not our last resort; it is our only hope—the starting point where we must begin if we even have a chance at becoming the woman of his dreams.

The First Miracle

Shortly after Jesus was baptized, He attended a wedding reception in the town of Cana, in Galilee. Apparently Jesus felt very comfortable at such a party, and I imagine Him laughing, mingling, and having a good time with His friends. Near the end of the festivities, the servants let Mary in on a disaster—they were out of wine. To run out of wine at a Jewish wedding celebration was an embarrassment and disgrace to the hosting family. Mary turned to her Son and said, “They have no more wine” (John 2:3), as if she expected Him to do something about it. I can almost see her raised eyebrow and the mischievous twinkle in her eye.

Jesus said, “Dear woman, why do you involve me? My time has not yet come” (John 2:4).

Mary turned to the servants and said, “Do whatever he tells you” (verse 5). Mary seemed to understand Jesus’ power before anyone else.

Jesus told the servants to fill six large 30-gallon stone jars with water. So they filled them “to the brim” (verse 7). Then He told them to draw some out and take it to the master of the banquet.
When they had done so, the master tasted the water that had been turned into wine. He then called the bridegroom aside and said, “Everyone brings out the choice wine first and then the cheaper wine after the guests have had too much to drink; but you have saved the best till now” (verse 10).

I often wonder what would have happened if the servants had filled the pots half full or three-fourths full. I imagine Jesus would have transformed exactly what they put in. Likewise, God will transform just as much of our marriages as we give Him. As for me, I want to “fill it to the brim” and give Him all of my marriage—every bit of it, so that in our winter years, Steve and I will agree…we have saved the best till now.

I truly have the wife of my desires. Once you have met Wendy, you have met the wife of my dreams. —Brad

The woman of my dreams knows who she is and doesn’t need anyone to define her but God. —Michael

I would rather my wife spend 15 minutes daily in prayer and Bible study than dusting bookshelves no one sees. —Bill