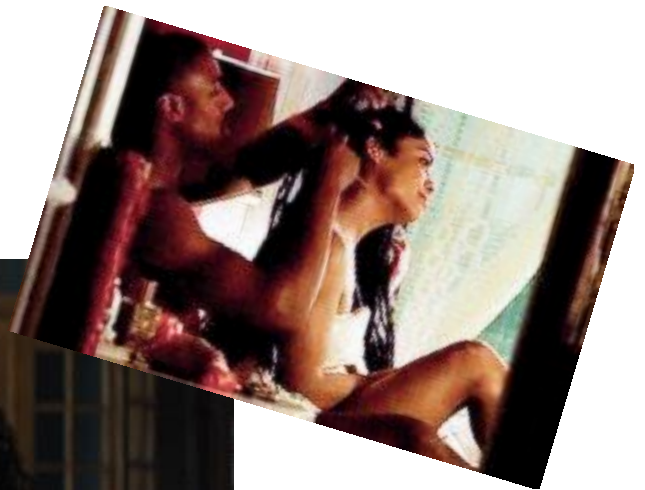


My Turn To Learn

The simple story of Mike and Maria



1. Mike and Maria (A)

It was a Sunday morning at Mike and Maria's house. The clock had just struck eight. Maria had awoken from bed, and was cleaning out the eye boogers from her eyes. Mike was still sound asleep.

It was another beautiful day in the state of California. Maria loved to wake up early in the morning, and cook breakfast. Mike, on the other hand, would much rather sleep in. Maria made sure to wake up Mike by offering him a home cooked breakfast Mike could never refuse. "Wake up, Mike. It's time to rise and shine," she said, shaking him back and fourth. Mike covered his face with a pillow, and let out a long groan. "It's too early Maria. Can't we keep sleeping?" he asks. "It's Sunday for goodness sake!" Maria pulls the pillow from his face, and taps his face with her hand. "Come on! Wake up! I'm going to cook breakfast. I'm making pancakes and eggs, your favorite," she says to Mike, hoping to get him out of bed. Mike reluctantly gets out of bed, and walks to the kitchen. He could not say no to pancakes for breakfast. Maria made the best pancakes in the world. He was indifferent about eggs. Maria did not know about this.

The sun peered through the window and blinded him. He closed the shutters to block the sunlight. Maria began to cook, while Mike served himself a tall glass of orange juice. Mike sat down at the kitchen table, and let out a big yawn. Unlike Maria, he was not an early bird. Maria finished cooking the eggs and pancakes, and served both her and Mike the food. She sat down with Mike, and had a conversation while eating breakfast.

1. Mike and Maria (B)

Mike: How did you sleep last night?

Maria: Okay. I kept tossing and turning.

Mike: Why? Were the cats and dogs keeping you up?

(Mike and Maria lived in a neighborhood with a lot of pets. They always made noise at night.)

Maria: No. I kept hearing this snoring sound next to me. It was too loud for me to go to sleep.

My Turn To Learn

Mike: I don't snore that loud, you are exaggerating.

Maria: You're right, I'm just joking. But I really was having a hard time going to sleep last night. My back is killing me this morning.

Mike: My back has also been hurting me the last couple of nights. Maybe it's time we go buy a new mattress. What do you think?

Maria: I think you might be right. We have had that old mattress for years now. God knows if any springs have broken.

Mike: Let's go to the mattress store next weekend and buy a new one.

Maria: Okay. Good idea.

(Mike took another bite of his pancake and savored it in his mouth.)

Mike: These are really good pancakes. Thank you for making them.

Maria: You're welcome, honey. It was my pleasure. What do you think of the eggs?

Mike: The eggs were fine. I really liked the pancakes.

Maria: Is something the matter with how I make eggs?

Mike: No. Like I said, they're perfectly fine! Eggs are just not really my cup of tea. I thought you knew that.

Maria: You don't like eggs? I had no clue. Why haven't you ever said anything?

Mike: I didn't want to hurt your feelings. You know how much I love your cooking.

Maria: I know that you do. Next time, just be honest and tell me the truth. Okay?

Mike: Okay honey. I'm sorry.

Mike and Maria have been living together for two years. They would often reminisce about how they first

met. Maria loved to tell the story at social gatherings, but Mike would feel embarrassed as Maria talked about their first interactions. It was at a coffee shop in downtown Los Angeles. Mike remembers it like it was just yesterday. Maria recalled it well, too. It was the story they would one day tell their children when they were older. It was the story of Mike and Maria's first encounter.

2. The First Encounter (A)

Mike and Maria were both in their late twenties, and were from a middle class background. Mike had met Maria at a coffee shop when he was twenty-two years old. Maria was working at the coffee shop at the time, and Mike was a regular customer who always stopped by to get his morning coffee before work. Mike had long noticed Maria, and had been planning on asking her out on a date. This was not so easy for Mike to do. He was quite the shy guy, and seeing Maria always made him feel a little nervous. Maria was the most beautiful person Mike had ever seen. Maria had light skin and long brown hair; she also had blue eyes and a petite nose. Mike felt he was not handsome enough for her.

Mike also had light skin; he had short black hair and brown eyes. He was not unattractive, but seeing Maria sure made him feel subpar. One morning, as Mike was waiting in line to get his morning coffee, he decided that today was the day. He was tired of waiting around for something to happen. He knew Maria would never ask him, so he might as well be the one. He was going to ask Maria out on a date. It was now or never, he thought. Mike fidgeted as he waited in line, thinking of what words to say to her. He rehearsed it in his head, and decided on what to say. Thankfully the line for coffee was long. This gave him plenty of time to think it through. He wanted it to be perfect. First impressions after all are long lasting. He made his plan. He would first start by introducing himself, and then have a bit of small talk with her. The line moved forward and soon it was his turn to order. He walked up to the counter.

2. The First Encounter (B)

Maria: Good morning! How are you doing today, sir?

Mike: Fine, thank you. How are you?

(Mike smiled nice and big.)

Maria: A little sleepy, but I'm alright. Thank you for asking. What will it be for you today?

(Mike hesitated a little. He looked behind him to see if there was anyone else waiting in line. Luckily there was no one.)

Mike: Please allow me to introduce myself. My name is Mike Smith. What's your name?

(Mike reached his hand out to her. She looked at his hand, and then shook it cautiously. She was caught off guard.)

Maria: Hi, my name is Maria. Have I seen you before? You look awfully familiar.

Mike: I'm a regular at this coffee shop. I come here every morning before work. You really don't recognize me?

Maria: No, I'm so sorry. I see a lot of faces come and go every day. It's kind of hard to keep track of all of them.

Mike: That's alright. Don't feel bad. I understand.

Maria: Are you going to order anything, Mike? Or is there something else I could help you with?

Mike: I wanted to ask you a few questions, if that's alright?

(Maria smiled. She looked around to see if her boss was around. He was nowhere in sight.)

Maria: Sure.

Mike: How long have you been working here?

Maria: It'll be two years in October.

My Turn To Learn

Mike: How do you like working here?

Maria: I don't mind. It's only part-time while I go to college.

Mike: You're going to school? That's great.

Maria: Why, thank you.

Mike: Listen, would you like to go out on a date so we could get to know each other a little more?

Maria: Um, sure...why not?

Mike: Can I have your phone number?

Maria: It's 867-5309.

(Mike turned around and noticed there had been a line forming behind him.)

Mike: I'll call you soon. Thank you!

3. A Telephone Call (A)

It had been three days since Mike last talked to Maria at the coffee shop. He had finally mustered up the courage to talk to her. Mike had succeeded in not just talking to her, but he had managed to get her phone number as well. Mike felt like the happiest guy in the world. He knew there was something special about Maria. She was not like any other girls he had met before.

Mike knew he had to play his cards right if he wished to impress Maria enough for her to want to stay with him. He had to be the perfect gentlemen. Maria had been waiting for Mike to call her. She thought Mike had made a good first impression at the coffee shop, and wanted to get to know him more. Three days had gone by but she had yet to receive a phone call from him. She wondered what was taking him so long. Mike had butterflies in his stomach. He was feeling nervous about calling her, and kept postponing it for the next day. On the fifth day he forced himself to pick up the phone, and dial her number.

He gathered up his courage again like he did the first time he spoke to her at the coffee shop, and dialed her number. He carefully dialed the phone number she had given him on that faithful day, 867-5309.

My Turn To Learn

The phone rang on the other side. Maria was sitting at home when her cell phone rang. She picked it up to see who was calling, and gasped with excitement when saw the name Mike Smith on the caller ID. She sat up and answered the call. Mike heard a voice answer the call.

3. A Telephone Call (B)

Maria: Hello?

Mike: Hello, is the Maria speaking?

Maria: Yes this is her speaking.

Mike: Hi! This is Mike from the coffee shop. We spoke five days ago.

Maria: Mike! Yes, I remember you. How are you? I thought you had forgotten about me.

Mike: I'm doing well. How are you? How could I ever forget a face like yours?

(Maria blushed over the phone)

Maria: I'm feeling fine, thank you.

Mike: I'm sorry I didn't call sooner. I've been kind of busy these last few days. I hope you can understand.

Maria: That's alright, no worries. I figured you were the busy type by the look of your clothes.

(Mike worked at an office, and had to wear a tie for work every day.)

Mike: It's just on the weekdays that I'm mostly occupied. But this Friday I'm free. Would you like to grab something to drink on that day?

Maria: Sure, but as long as it's not coffee.

(They both laughed over the telephone)

Mike: Sure, not a problem. How about we have dinner instead? How does that sound to you?

Maria: That sounds fine. Can you pick me up at seven from my apartment?

My Turn To Learn

Mike: Yes I can! Alright, dinner at seven, it's a date.

Maria: I'll message you my address. Where would you want to eat?

Mike: Anywhere you like.

Maria: Do you have any suggestions?

Mike: I know this perfect Chinese Restaurant on Atlantic Avenue. They serve the best Kung Pao Chicken in town.

Maria: That sounds appetizing. Let's go there.

Mike: Great! So it settled then, Chinese cuisine at seven o'clock. I will pick you up in my car at seven on the dot. Bring an empty stomach.

Maria: Okay! Will do, Mike. Thank you.

Mike: I'll see you then. Bye.

Maria: Goodbye.

(Mike and Maria were looking forward to seeing each other this Friday night.)

4. The First Date (A)

It was six o'clock on a Friday night. Maria was getting ready for her date at seven. She expected him to be on time, and could not afford to keep him waiting on account of her not being ready. It had been awhile since she had last been on date with a guy. She was feeling a little nervous. She looked at herself in the mirror, and applied her makeup. She put on her favorite red dress and brushed her hair. It was important for her to look her best.

Mike on the other hand, did a little preparing on his part. He showered, combed his hair, put on his shirt and jeans, and sprayed on some cologne. This process had taken him thirty minutes. Maria began

getting ready at five. Mike was on his way to Maria's apartment to pick her up. He drove a fairly new black car. He had started financing it a few months ago. He had hoped the car would impress Maria.

Mike was about fifteen minutes away from Maria's apartment when he started thinking about what to say to her. He was not feeling nervous like Maria was. Mike had complete confidence in himself. Nothing could go wrong. Mike arrived at her address. He calls Maria on his cell phone. Maria tells him she will be out in a minute. Mike says okay, and steps out of his car to smoke a cigarette. Mike looks around the street. He spots a stranger walking towards his direction. The stranger looked like had something on his mind. The stranger approaches Mike.

4. The First Date (B)

Stranger: Excuse me, sir? Can you please lend a hand?

Mike: What can I do for you?

Stranger: Do you know where the nearest payphone is at?

Mike: No, I'm sorry. I'm not so familiar with the area.

Stranger: I need to make an important phone call, but I just lost my cell phone.

Mike: Why don't you use my cell phone to make the call. Here.

(Mike hands the stranger his cell phone)

Stranger: Thank you so much, sir.

(The stranger makes his call and soon hangs up. He hands it back to Mike)

Stranger: Thank you again sir. I really appreciate the favor.

(The stranger walks away, while Maria walks out of her apartment. She notices the stranger thank Mike and walk away)

Maria: What was that all about?

My Turn To Learn

Mike: The man needed to make a phone call so I lent him my cell phone.

Maria: You really trusted a total stranger with your personal cell phone? You're either really naïve or really kind.

Mike: I would say both.

(Mike and Maria share a good laugh of the matter. They both enter the car and drive to the restaurant. They enter the restaurant and are seated by the waitress)

Waitress: What can I get for you guys this evening?

Mike: I'll have the Kung Pao Chicken please

Waitress: Good choice. That's our specialty dish. And for you ma'am?

Maria: I'll have what he's having.

Waitress: Two Kung Pao Chickens coming right up.

(The waitress smiles and walks away)

Mike: I hope you brought an appetite with you.

Maria: I sure did!

Mike: Tell me more about yourself.

Maria: I'm a student at a university. I'm originally from Colorado. My dream is to be a librarian one day.

Mike: Wow, that's interesting.

Maria: How about you? What do you do?

Mike: I work at an office building in downtown. I graduated from UCLA three years ago. My family is from Pasadena, California.

Maria: You went to UCLA? That's impressive. Tell me more.

My Turn To Learn

(Mike and Maria continued to get to know each other over dinner. They had such a great time, and decided to continue seeing each other after. One year later, they both share an apartment together in California where they plan to eventually get engaged and buy a house.)

5. Finding an Apartment (A)

Mike and Maria both lived in a one-bedroom apartment in the city of Pasadena. It had been only a few months that they had been living there. The city of Pasadena was a relatively calm place. Mike had grown up in Pasadena.

He had established a strong bond with the town, and was eager to go back to his childhood residence. Mike had been living in Los Angeles when he was dating Maria. When Mike and Maria decided to move in together, Pasadena was Mike's first choice of location to relocate to. Maria did not have any objections.

She agreed, and they both began looking for apartments. They looked through the newspaper section that listed housings. After a week of searching they came across a nice one bedroom apartment. They called the landlord to set up an appointment to go see the place in person.

5. Finding an Apartment (B)

Maria: Hello, is this the landlord that is renting out the apartment in Pasadena?

Landlord: Which apartment are you talking about?

Maria: The one on Wilson Avenue.

Landlord: Oh, Wilson Avenue! Yes this is the landlord renting out that apartment. How are you today? Can I answer any of your questions?

Maria: I'm fine, thank you. Yes, my boyfriend and I are interested in visiting the apartment this afternoon. Would this be possible?

My Turn To Learn

Landlord: Absolutely! Come on down, and see the place. It's a real nice apartment. It's perfect for a couple.

Maria: Okay, great! Can we come at three o'clock?

Landlord: You guys sure can. I'll be at the apartment waiting for your arrival.

Maria: Thank so much. We look forward to meeting you.

Landlord: Likewise. Goodbye.

Maria: Goodbye.

(Maria hangs up, and puts down the phone on the counter. Mike was sitting next to her. They were at his downtown apartment. Maria tells Mike the good news, and they begin getting ready to visit the apartment. A few hours later, they arrive at Wilson Avenue. Mike parks his car, and they both exit the vehicle. They make their way to the front steps of the apartment where the landlord sits waiting for them.)

Landlord: Howdy! Nice to meet you.

Mike: Hello, nice to meet you.

Maria: Hello.

(Greeting formalities are made, and hands are shaken)

Landlord: How was the drive over here?

Mike: It was good. There was hardly any traffic.

Landlord: That's good to hear. That's some fine weather we're having today.

Maria: It sure is. There is not a cloud in sight.

Landlord: Well, let's get down to business. Let me show you the place.

Mike: Sounds good.

Maria: Alright.

My Turn To Learn

(The landlord unlocks the wooden door and walks inside. Mike and Maria follow behind him.)

Landlord: Feel free to walk around the apartment. I'll be here if you have any questions.

(Mike and Maria enter the living room)

Mike: It's quite spacious, don't you think?

Maria: Yeah, it's roomy.

(Mike and Maria enter the kitchen)

Maria: I like the wood flooring. The sunlight comes in nice too.

Mike: I think the same thing. It's nice.

(Mike and Maria enter the restroom)

Mike: Look at the tile. It's blue, my favorite color.

Maria: That's a nice color for a restroom.

(Mike and Maria enter the bedroom)

Mike: This bedroom looks brand new. This whole apartment seems remodeled.

Maria: You're right about that, Mike. I love the carpet in this bedroom. What do you think?

Mike: Of the apartment or the bedroom?

Maria Of everything!

Mike: It's perfect. I love it.

Maria: Let's live here?

Mike: Sure, I see no reason why we shouldn't!

(Mike and Maria both approach the landlord with big, wide smiles on their faces.)

Mike and **Maria:** We'll take it!

6. Moving Out (A)

Mike wanted to move into his and Maria's new apartment the very next day after seeing it for the first time. He fell in love with it instantly when he saw the inside. He asked Maria if she thought it possible to move in the next day. Maria was not as hasty as Mike was about moving in right away. "What's the rush?" she told Mike. The apartment wasn't going anywhere is what she told him. They had reached an agreement with the landlord, and had signed the proper documents. Mike had also given his first entry of rent.

The apartment was as good as theirs. Mike and Maria settled on moving in one week. They needed time to pack their belongings and rent a u-haul. Mike and Maria were both excited for the move. It was a big step in their relationship. Living with someone comes with challenges. But Mike and Maria were ready to take on any challenges. They loved each other very much. They planned to move on Saturday. The days leading up to Saturday were spent preparing for the move. On the day before Saturday everything was ready.

The moving van was rented. Belongings had all been safely packaged in boxes. The only problem they had was the furniture. Mike and Maria needed help moving the furniture to their apartment. Mike called his best friend Doug to ask if he could help. Doug said yes without hesitation. Mike, Maria, and Doug all met up the following Saturday at six o'clock of the morning to commence the move. Doug arrived wearing a thin shirt and shorts. It was going to be a hot day. They packed everything on the van, and went on their way. They shortly arrived at the apartment, and began to unload their things.

6. Moving Out (B)

Mike: Thanks again for helping us move, Doug.

Maria: We really appreciate the favor.

Doug: No need to thank me, guys. I'm happy to lend a helping hand anytime. After all, what kind of best friend says no to helping his friend move into his and his girlfriend's new apartment?

Mike: Not a very good one.

My Turn To Learn

Doug: Lucky for you, I am.

(Doug and Mike carry in the heavy furniture by hand)

Mike: Let's put the couch over here by the window.

Doug: Alright, easy does it.

Mike: Let's go get the television next.

Doug: You got it.

(Mike and Doug walk back to the van)

Mike: Maria, be a dear and start unloading the boxes.

Maria: Why can't I help with the heavy lifting?

Mike: Because I don't want you to break your back carrying the heavy stuff.

Doug: Let the men do the heavy work.

Maria: That's not funny, Doug.

Doug: I'm not joking.

Mike: Come on, Doug. We have work to do.

(Mike and Doug finish unloading the last of the furniture)

Mike: Alright. I think that was all of it.

Doug: Whew! I'm all worn out. Maybe we should've let Maria help out after all.

Mike: Let's go check up on her. I think I heard her in the kitchen.

(Mike and Doug walk into the kitchen and find Maria unpacking pots and pans.)

Mike: How goes it, honey?

Maria: All the boxes are in the apartment. All that's left to do is unpack them and put them in their rightful

places.

Doug: Maria, do you have a glass of water you can offer me? I'm dying of thirst back here!

Maria: Sure, let me get that for you. Here you go.

Doug: Thank you.

(Doug gulps down the glass of water in seconds)

Doug: Well, I think my work here is done. Was there anything else you needed, Mike?

Mike: No, thank you, we're fine. You're welcome to stay if you like.

Doug: No, that's alright. I'll leave the two of you alone for now.

7. A Television Speaker Problem (A)

Maria was lying down on her couch in her new apartment in Pasadena. Mike was occupied trying to connect his speakers to his television. A few days had passed since the move. Already, Mike and Maria were settling into their new home. They had gone days without watching television.

This marked a new record for Mike who loved watching television. Maria did not watch as much television as Mike did. She preferred reading books. While Mike struggled to get the sound to work for the television, Maria comfortably read her book on the couch. Mike had been at it for over one hour already. He grew frustrated, and resorted to reading the manual.

His frustration grew bigger when he attempted to read it. It made no sense to him. He was missing his favorite sport's game on television. He had no choice but to call the help-line listed on the manual. This was something he did want to do. Mike had run out of choices. He was desperate for help so dialed the number. An operator answered the called.

7. A Television Speaker Problem (B)

Operator: Hello, sir. How are you doing today?

Mike: Fine, thank you.

Operator: And with whom do I have the pleasure to speak to this afternoon?

Mike: Mike Smith.

Operator: What can I do for you today Mr. Smith?

Mike: I'm having trouble setting up my speakers for my television.

Operator: What is the brand name of your speakers?

Mike: They are Super Sound Speakers.

Operator: Can you give me the serial number?

Mike: 314253647586.

Operator: Please give me a minute to search in my system.

Mike: Okay.

(Mike is put on hold and music begins to play on the line.)

Mike: Darn it. They put me on hold. Who knows how long this is going to take.

Maria: Just be patient, Mike. I'm sure they'll get back to you any second now.

(Fifteen minutes later, Mike lies on the floor still waiting for the operator to return.)

Mike: It's been almost one hour! Why is this taking so long?

Maria: Don't ask me! Why don't you hang up and call again?

Mike: And go through the same process? No, thank you!

Operator: Hello sir? Are you still there?

Mike: Yes, unfortunately.

My Turn To Learn

Operator: I apologize for the wait, sir. Thank you for your patience.

Mike: You are welcome.

Operator: Did you connect the speakers correctly?

Mike: Yes.

Operator: Did you try turning on your speakers on and off?

Mike: Yes.

Operator: Did you check to see for any external damages to the speakers?

Mike: Yes.

Operator: Did you consult the owner's manual?

Mike: Yes, I did! This is how I got your dialing number.

Operator: Sir, there is no need to raise your voice at me. I could hear you perfectly.

Mike: I'm sorry. I did not mean to raise my voice. It's just that I've been trying to connect my speakers, and you had me waiting for a long time, and I'm missing my basketball game.

Operator: I understand, sir. You are going to have to bear with me. I am trying the best I can in trying to help your situation. Your impatience is not helping me help you any faster.

Mike: Okay, I'm so sorry. I won't raise my voice anymore. Please, just help me.

Operator: That is better. Please stay on the line.

(Mike is put on hold again and the music begins to play over the phone.)

Mike: She just put me on hold, again.

Maria: Mike, please calm your self down.

Mike: I... I... I am speechless.

My Turn To Learn

(Maria stands up and tries to help Mike. She notices a light switch on the wall. She flips it on. The speakers suddenly turn on.)

Mike: Maria, you're my hero! Thank you. I love you.

(Mike embraces Maria and kisses her on the lips.)

8. Drive-Thru Visit (A)

It was a cool Friday night in the city of Pasadena. Maria was studying for school at home. She needed to get the best grades possible. Maria was a high achiever when it came to school. She had been attending university for two years now. She almost finished getting her Bachelor's degree. Maria had been studying for hours on end. She looked up at the clock on the wall, and noticed it was going to be eight o'clock soon.

Mike was not home. He had called Maria earlier, and told her he was working late tonight. Maria did not like it when Mike stayed late for work. She did not like being alone in the apartment. She tried not to think about it. Maria focused on reading her history textbook. History was the subject she was majoring in at the university. History had fascinated her since she was a teenager. Her favorite part of History was Western civilization.

Thirty minutes passed after Maria looked up at the clock. She stopped reading and looked to see the time again. It was now eight thirty. She let out a yawn and stretched her arms. She got out of her chair and stretched her legs. Her stomach then started to grumble. "When was the last time I ate?" she asked herself in her head. Studying for all those hours had made her forget to eat.

She suddenly felt the urge to eat something. She was starving. She looked inside the fridge and found there was nothing to eat inside. She decided to go out and eat. Maria owned her own car. She drove it to the nearest fast-food location to her apartment. When she saw that there were a lot of people inside the restaurant she went to the drive-thru instead. She pulled up to the window to make her order.

8. Drive-Thru Visit (B)

Employee: Welcome to McDonald's, how can I help you?

Maria: Hi, are you guys serving breakfast right now?

Employee: We stop serving breakfast at eleven a.m.

Maria: That's right, I forgot. I'll just have a...

Employee: We currently have a buy-one-get-one-free special on Big Macs.

Maria: Oh, do you? Does it come with fries and a drink?

Employee: No, it's only the burger.

Maria: Maybe another time. Can I have a minute to look over your menu?

Employee: Let me know when you are ready to place your order.

Maria: Okay, thank you.

(Maria looked over the menu. She saw the different hamburgers that were on the menu wall. Suddenly, her cell phone started to ring. It was Mike.)

Maria: Hello, Mike?

Mike: Maria, I'm sorry I'm not home yet. I just finished filing the documents and I'm on my way home. What are you doing?

Maria: I'm about to order some food at McDonald's.

Mike: Maria, why are you eating there? Don't you know eating fast-food is unhealthy?

Maria: I know. But I haven't eaten here in a long time. Plus, I'm really hungry and it was the closest place that was open.

Mike: Fine, but it better be the last time you eat there. There are better options to choose from other than McDonald's.

Maria: Fine. This will be the last time I eat fast-food.

Mike: Thank you, dear.

Maria: Have you eaten yet? Are you hungry?

Mike: No, I haven't; I sure am.

Maria: Do you want me to get you anything from McDonald's?

Mike: Well, since you're already there... Get me a medium number one with an apple pie. Make sure to tell them no pickles. They always forget to leave out the pickles.

Maria: Okay, dear. See you when you get home.

9. Dinner Reservation (A)

Mike and Maria had been living together in their apartment for one month already. To commemorate this event, they decided to go out and have a special dinner. Since Mike worked during the week and Maria went to school and worked as well, they planned it for the weekend. Mike and Maria had not decided on where to go yet. Maria had suggested a restaurant. Mike asked her which one. She did not have a specific location in mind.

Maria suggested that they look on the internet to search for restaurants. Mike thought it a good idea and opened up his laptop. Mike turned on his laptop and went on Google to make a search. Mike always searched for information on Google. It never failed to provide good results. Mike asked Maria what he should search. Maria told him to search for nearby restaurants. Mike said to be more specific. Mike tried searching fine-dining restaurants. He got hundred of results.

He stumbled upon a steakhouse located a few miles north of where they lived. Mike asked Maria for her opinion. Maria was not a big fan of steak. She told Mike this. Mike was astonished by her statement. What surprised him the most was the fact that he had not known this about her. "Have you even tried it"? Mike asked. She answered only once.

After that, Mike settled on going to the steakhouse. He wanted to attempt to make Maria like steak. Mike had been a big steak lover. Maria was not enthusiastic about eating steak, but Mike insisted that she give it one more chance. She agreed on condition that Mike try a favorite food of hers the next time. Mike agreed to this compromise. He picked up the phone and called to make a reservation.

9. Dinner Reservation (B)

Employee: Hello, how can I help you?

Mike: Hi, I would like to make a dinner reservation for two for this upcoming Saturday.

Employee: Let me see if we have any openings on that evening.

Mike: Alright, then.

Employee: Is seven o'clock okay, sir?

Mike: Can we do eight instead?

Employee: No, I'm sorry. We are all booked after eight o'clock.

Mike: Seven o'clock is fine, then.

Employee: Can I have your name please?

Mike: Mike Smith.

Employee: Alright, Mr. Smith, I have you for dinner for two this Saturday at 7:00

p.m. Is this correct?

Mike: Yes, thank you.

Employee: Okay. Thank you for calling. We look forward to seeing you this Saturday.

Have a good night.

Mike: Likewise.

(Maria walks into the living room where Mike was. She had gone to the restroom while Mike was making the dinner reservation)

Maria: Did you make the reservation?

Mike: No, they were all booked.

(Mike subtly smirks)

Maria: You're lying, aren't you?

Mike: Yes I am. We have a reservation for two at seven o'clock this Saturday.

Maria: Seven at night, right?

Mike: No, we're having breakfast.

Maria: Stop with your lies already! You're not funny.

(Mike and Maria start laughing)

Mike: So, what are you going to wear?

Maria: Maybe a dress.

Mike: Which one?

Maria: The one you like.

Mike: I like all your dresses.

Maria: The one I wore on our second date.

My Turn To Learn

Mike: I remember that one. I love that dress.

Maria: Do you remember what color the dress was?

Mike: Sure, I do. It was black.

Maria: You have a pretty good memory.

Mike: How can I ever forget?

Maria: What are you wearing?

Mike: I'm not sure yet. Do you want to decide on what to wear?

Maria: Sure, let's go to the bedroom closet.

10. Steakhouse Dinner (A)

Mike and Maria had made a dinner reservation at a steakhouse for Saturday at seven o'clock. They both were looking forward to it. It had been a while since Mike had last eaten steak. Maria, on the other hand, was not too excited. She had only had steak once, and it was not too pleasant. Mike was determined to make Maria like steak as much as he did. Maria did not think that Mike would succeed in changing her liking. The day of the steakhouse dinner arrived.

It was the middle of the afternoon when Mike and Maria were both out getting things for the apartment. Mike needed to go fetch some light bulbs, and Maria had to get some toilet paper. Instead of going together, they decided to go separately. It was a game they played where the winner would be the one who came back home first. Mike usually would be the winner. Maria tended to get distracted while at stores.

Mike came back home before Maria did, as usual. Maria had run into a friend at the store. She had not seen her since high school. Maria could not believe that she remembered her when they bumped into each other. Maria asked her if she would want to get together to catch up. Her friend said yes, and they

exchanged cell phone numbers. Maria told Mike all about the occurrence when she returned. Mike felt glad for Maria.

He was concerned more about their plans later on. Maria told Mike she would start getting ready soon. Mike was already calling the steakhouse to confirm their reservation at seven. Soon, they were both out the door, dressed and ready to eat. Maria wore her black dress. Mike wore a collared shirt with dress pants. They entered the restaurant and were quickly seated.

10. Steakhouse Dinner (B)

Mike: You look beautiful tonight.

Maria: Thank you. You don't look bad yourself, either.

Mike: I like the scent of the perfume you're wearing. What is it?

Maria: You really like it? Thank you for noticing it. It's called "Scent of a Woman". I just got it by mail a few days ago. I bought it just for this occasion.

Mike: How did you hear about it?

Maria: My friend suggested it to me. I like the cologne you're wearing. What is it called?

Mike: It's called "Scent of a Man". I wear it every day.

Maria: I've never heard of that cologne. Is it new? How long have you had it?

Mike: I've had it all my life. I'm surprised you're just noticing it. I go to sleep wearing it, and I wake up still smelling like it.

(Mike started to smile. It was one of his jokes. Maria finally realized he was kidding.)

Maria: Mike, you are such a jokester! That is not funny. I was actually trying to compliment you on how you smell. You're really not wearing any cologne tonight?

Mike: Nope. So are you ready to have some steak?

Maria: Do I really have to, Mike?

Mike: You will love it. I guarantee it.

(Maria and Mike look at the menu. The waiter comes and takes their order. Their food is soon brought to them. They both get their steaks well done.)

Mike: This looks delicious. What do you think of your plate?

Maria: It looks presentable. I hope it tastes as good as it looks.

Mike: There's only one way to find out.

(Mike and Maria take their first bites, savoring every moment of the meal.)

Mike: That really hit the spot.

Maria: I think I like eating steak now.

Mike: I was sure you would like it. And I was correct! No need to thank me, Maria.

Maria: I'm so full. I feel like I'm ready to burst.

(The waiter brings the check to their table. Mike takes one look at it and his eyes widen up.)

11. Meeting the Neighbor (A)

It was a bright and sunny day in the city of Pasadena. The wind made the trees sway back and forth outside the happy couple's apartment. The neighborhood where they lived was peaceful. Mike and Maria were enjoying a Sunday afternoon in the comfort of their cozy, one-bedroom apartment. Despite having two months living there, Mike and Maria had yet to meet any of their neighbors.

Maria once brought up the issue to Mike one night. Mike simply brushed the matter aside. He was content being left alone with Maria. He did not feel the need to interact with any strangers. Maria felt

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otherwise. She suggested the idea of going to their neighbor's house one day and knocking on their front door. Mike thought this was a terrible idea. He did not want to intrude on anybody's time. Maria tried convincing him that a friendly greeting is not intrusive.

After much effort, Mike finally budged. He agreed to go meet the neighbors one day. It was that sunny afternoon on a Sunday that Maria remembered Mike's promise. She reminded Mike of the promise he had made. Since they were not doing anything that day, she told him now would be a good time to go meet the neighbors.

Mike had completely forgotten about the conversation and let out a reluctant groan. "Do we have to, Maria? How about we do it next week?" he said. "No, we could do it today, right now," she replied. Maria went to the bedroom to quickly put on her shoes. She came back with Mike's shoes as well and threw them in front of him. He reluctantly put them on. Maria pulled Mike off the couch and dragged him all the way to their neighbor's front door. She rang the doorbell. A man answered the door.

11. Meeting the Neighbor (B)

Man: Hello? Who's there?

Maria: It's your next-door neighbors! We recently just moved in the neighborhood and we just wanted to say hello.

(Maria looked at Mike and gave him the stink eye. Mike got the hint.)

Mike: Yes, hello! How do you do?

Man: Fine, thank you.

(The man had not opened his door entirely. Mike and Maria had not seen what he looked like. By the sound of his voice, he sounded old)

Maria: Is this a bad time?

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Mike: Because if it is, we can simply leave you alone.

Man: No, I'm sorry. I'm just a little surprised. It has been two months since you two moved in the neighborhood and you're barely getting around to saying hello. I thought you two were not the friendly type.

(Maria blushed)

Maria: I'm sorry we did not come by earlier. We had been meaning to, but we've been both really busy. I hope you can understand.

Man: You two do not seem busy on the weekends by the looks of it.

Mike: How do you know that?

Man: I could see into your living room from upstairs room.

(Mike blushed this time)

Mike: Sir, don't you think that's a bit invasive of you to look through our windows from your room?

Man: Relax, sonny, I'm just an old man who gets a little curious from time to time.

(The man steps out his front door to introduce himself.)

Man: Please allow me to introduce myself. My name is Theodore. I'm a retired school teacher and I have ten years living here in my humble dwelling.

Mike: Nice to meet you, Theodore. My name is Mike.

Maria: And my name is Maria.

(Mike, Maria, and Theodore get better acquainted over the next twenty minutes. Maria was glad to finally meet their next-door neighbor.)

12. Hot Cocoa (A)

Mike was having a hard time sleeping one night. He tossed and turned in every direction. No matter how many times he tried, he could not find a comfortable position. Maria lied next to him and had a hard time going to sleep herself due to Mike's constant movement in bed. Mike tried everything to help go to sleep. Nothing seemed to work.

The next day, Mike felt so tired during work. He had a hard time staying awake at his desk. His boss even noticed how tired he was and made a sly remark at him. "Mike, I'm paying you to work, not to sleep," his boss said. Mike felt embarrassed hearing his boss's comment. He could not wait to go home and sleep.

That same night, Mike lied in bed and had the same problem. Although he had taken a nap when he arrived back from work, he still had a hard time falling asleep at night. "What should I do, Maria?" he pleaded to his girlfriend. Maria suggested he make himself some hot cocoa. He asked Maria if she would mind making him some.

Maria at first said no to his request, but after he started moving around again, she got up and went to the kitchen. If Mike could not go to sleep, neither could she. She gasped in horror when she opened the kitchen cabinet to discover there's no more cocoa. She opened her fridge and there was no milk, either. She walked back into the bedroom and told Mike the bad news.

12. Hot Cocoa (B)

Maria: I'm sorry, Mike, but we have no cocoa and no milk to make hot cocoa.

Mike: Say it isn't so, Maria! Hot cocoa was my last hope. I don't know what I'm going to do now.

Maria: Why don't you go and buy the milk and cocoa, and when you come back I'll make it for you.

Mike: That sounds like a great idea! Thank you, Maria. I will be back in a jiffy.

Maria: Do you know what store to go to?

Mike: No, I do not. Where should I go? What store is even open at this hour?

Maria: Go to the Walmart Super Center. It's open twenty-four hours.

Mike: Good idea. Where is it exactly?

(Maria wrote down the directions on a piece of paper.)

Maria: You can't miss it. It's right next to the park. The place is gigantic. Try not to get lost.

Mike: Alright! Thanks, honey. Wish me luck!

(Mike put on his shoes and pants, and hurried off to the store. On arrival he was greeted by a young Walmart employee.)

Walmart Employee: Good evening, sir. Welcome to Walmart.

Mike: Hi, can you tell me in what aisle I can find cocoa?

Walmart Employee: That's going to be on Aisle 5. Go straight that way, and it should be on your right.

Mike: Thanks, kid.

(Mike quickly found the cocoa and grabbed a gallon of milk. He paid for them and drove back home.)

Mike: Maria, I'm back and I have the ingredients. Can you make it for me now?

Maria: You are such a child sometimes. Give me that!

(Maria grabbed the gallon of milk and the cocoa. She went to the kitchen and made the best hot cocoa Mike ever had in his life.)

Mike: Wow, this taste amazing. How did you make this?

Maria: With milk and cocoa. What else?

Mike: Thank you, Maria, you're the best.

Maria: You're welcome. Now go to sleep already.

(Mike drank the drink and it made him feel drowsy. The hot cocoa had calmed him and made him feel comfortable. He fell asleep almost instantly upon laying down on the bed.)

13. Meeting an Actor at the Movie (A)

Before Mike and Maria were living together, they went out on dates every weekend. Mike was still getting to know Maria. Mike and Maria found they had a lot in common. Mike loved going to movies, and so did Maria. Maria loved listening to music from the sixties, and so did Mike. Over time, Mike had become good friends with Maria.

They constantly talked over the phone, and send messages to each other by phone. When the weekend came along, they would go out on the town. Mike and Maria were inseparable when they were together. One of their favorite things to do as a couple was to go to the theaters. The movie theater was a big attraction around town.

The name of the theater in Pasadena was the Arc Light. It was a famous theater where plenty of celebrities would sometimes visit. Mike and Maria once spotted a famous actor at the Arc Light getting popcorn. When Maria asked Mike if they should try approaching him, Mike answered no. Mike changed his mind when he realized it was one of his favorite comedy actors. He told Maria who it was, but Maria already knew. The two of them decided to walk up to him and say a friendly hello.

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14. Police Stop (A)

Mike and Maria finished watching a movie at the theaters. While watching it they ate popcorn and drank soda. The movie lasted about two hours. Mike rather enjoyed it, but Maria did not. They had seen an action film that took place in outer space. Mike loved watching action films that featured big explosions and impressive SGI effects. Maria preferred watching romantic films.

Mike and Maria took turns choosing which movie to watch in theaters. Since Mike had seen the movie he wanted, next time it was Maria's turn to choose. The movie had ended on a cliffhanger. The ending left audience guessing what happened to main character. This usually meant a sequel was in the works. The people in the theater slowly rose from their seats as soon as the credits starting rolling down the big screen.

Mike and Maria also got up. Little by little, they exited the theater. There were a lot of people walking around. Mike held Maria's hand so they wouldn't get separated. They threw their trash in the trashcan, and went to the restroom. Mike waited for Maria outside the theater.

She finally came out after a few minutes, and they both headed towards Mike's car. The car was parked far away from the theater. It was the only parking spot they were able to find. The movie theater

always gets full on the weekend. That day was no exception. Mike and Maria got in the car, and drove away.

14. Police Stop (B)

Mike: What did you think of the movie?

Maria: It was alright.

Mike: You didn't like it?

Maria: I didn't dislike it.

Mike: I thought it was great. What didn't you like about it?

Maria: There was too much action going on. It made me feel dizzy at some points.

Mike: Too much action? Maria, it was an action movie. That's what they should have.

Maria: I know. I'm just not too crazy about action films. I'm glad you enjoyed it.

Mike: I really did. I'm sorry you didn't.

Maria: Don't feel bad. The next time we go to the theaters, we're watching a movie that I like.

Mike: Alright, you got it.

(Mike and Maria are driving down the highway when a police car sounds the siren behind them. Mike pulls up to the right and parks his car. The police officer exits his vehicle and walks up to their window.)

Mike: Hello, officer. What can I do for you this evening?

Police Officer: Sir, do you know why I stopped you?

Mike: No, I'm sorry. Why?

Police Officer: Your taillight is not working. Are you aware of this?

Mike: No, I'm not. I'm sorry, officer, for not noticing this sooner.

Police Officer: That's alright. Please be more aware of your vehicle next time. I'm going to let you off with just a warning.

Mike: Thank you, officer.

Maria: Thank you.

(The police officer notices Maria in the passenger seat.)

Police Officer: Ma'am, your seatbelt is not fastened.

(Maria notices she forgot to put on her seatbelt, and feels embarrassed.)

Maria: I'm sorry, officer.

(She immediately fastens her seatbelt, and smiles at the officer.)

Police Officer: Please be safer when driving out on the weekend. You never know what could happen.

Mike: We will, officer. Thank you.

Police Officer: You folks have a good night, and drive safely.

Mike: Thank you. You too, officer.

Maria: Good night.

(Mike and Maria drive away feeling a little scared.)

15. Buying a Cake (A)

Mike was turning twenty-five next month. Maria wanted to throw a party for him in celebration, but Mike felt he was too old for those kinds of things. Maria insisted that he allowed her. After much resistance,

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Maria agreed not to. Mike believed her. Little did he know, Maria planned to surprise him by throwing a birthday party for him to discover when he came back home from work.

Maria began to make phone calls. She called Mike's best friend Doug, along with other friends from work, to help make the event. Maria even invited the next door neighbor, Theodore. Everyone she invited said yes to attend the party. Maria planned it to take place on a Friday, one day before his birthday. She told everyone to arrive at 1:00 p.m. to help set up the banners and balloons.

Maria was really excited. She asked Doug if he could help buy the balloons and banners for the party, to which he said yes. All Maria had to buy was the birthday cake. She went to a local bakery to order the cake. She had to make sure not to make Mike suspect a thing.

When she went out to the bakery, Mike was in the apartment napping on the couch. She sneaked towards the front door, hoping not to wake Mike up. As soon as Maria opened the door, Mike awoke from his sleep.

15. Buying a Cake (B)

Mike: Where are you going, honey?

Maria: Out for a walk. I'll be back soon.

Mike: Out for a walk? What for?

Maria: I'm trying to start exercising. I want to lose ten pounds.

Mike: You don't need to lose weight. You look perfectly fine to me.

Maria: Thank you. But I really want to fit into these pants I bought at the store the other day.

Mike: Why are you taking your bag with you?

Maria: I... I'm walking to the store. I might as well go and get some things for the apartment while I'm

exercising.

Mike: Okay. Can you get me something from the store?

Maria: Sure. What do you want?

Mike: I want some candy. No wait, I want some potato chips.

Maria: Alright I bring a bag of potato chips.

Mike: Maria, wait just a minute! On second thought, just get me a creme soda.

Maria: Are you sure that's what you want?

Mike: You know what, I changed my mind. I don't want anything anymore. Be careful out there!

Maria: I will, thanks. See you when I get back.

(Maria paced into her car and drove off quietly. She had hoped Mike had not noticed her sly getaway.)

Maria: That was a close one. Note to self; go out the back door the next time I want to sneak out of the apartment.

(Maria arrived at the bakery and ordered Mike's birthday cake.)

Maria: Hello, can I please have chocolate cake made.

Baker: A chocolate cake? Alright then. What size do you want it?

Maria: What sizes do you offer?

Baker: We have small, medium, large, and extra large.

Maria: How big is extra large compared to the large?

(The baker showed Maria a box. The box was huge.)

Maria: Is that large?

Baker: That is extra large.

My Turn To Learn

Maria: I'll go with just the large.

Baker: Anything else for you today?

Maria: No, thank you.

Baker: Your cake will be ready by tomorrow. Is that fine?

Maria: Yes, that's fine. Thank you.

(Maria paid the total amount, and drove back home. Lucky for her, Mike was sound asleep when she went through the front door.)

16. Mike's Birthday Party (A)

Mike's surprise birthday party was tomorrow. Maria had made all the arrangements. The cake was being held at the bakery ready for pick-up. She had invited a dozen people to the party. Doug, Mike's best friend, had bought the balloons and the banners. All that was left to do was wait for Friday evening. Maria was at home cleaning the house when Mike arrived home from work.

Mike walked in through the door with a good mood. He walked up to Maria who was cleaning the kitchen and gave her a peck on the cheek. "You're in good mood tonight," Maria said in response to his action. Mike smiled and picked her off her feet. "Mike, put me down! I'm trying to clean," she cheerfully protested. Mike put her down and walked away humming a happy tune. Maria wondered why Mike was in high spirits.

She asked him and Mike said, "No particular reason." Maria hoped he had not found out about his surprise party tomorrow. Mike wandered off to his room and took off his work clothes. He slipped into his pajamas, which consisted of shorts, socks, and a white t-shirt. Mike sat down on the couch in the living room. Maria finished cleaning the kitchen for tomorrow, and joined Mike in the living room watching television.

The night ended pleasantly. The next morning Maria said goodbye to Mike when he went to work, and immediately began getting things for the party. She called Doug over so he could bring the decorations. She went to the bakery and picked up the cake. At three o'clock the guest began to arrive. When Mike walked in through the door, everybody was hiding in the dark. As soon as Mike turned on the light, everybody shouted "surprise!"

16. Mike's Birthday Party (B)

Mike: Oh, my god!

Everybody: Happy birthday, Mike!

(Mike looked around and saw all his friends wearing birthday hats)

Mike: Whose idea was this? I'm looking at you, Maria.

Maria: I'm guilty. It was all my idea.

Mike: I told you not to, Maria. This was unnecessary. You guys did not have to go through all this trouble.

Doug: Are you kidding, Mike? You're our friend and a great guy. If anybody deserves a birthday party, it's you, buddy.

Mike: Thank you, Doug. And thank you everybody for being here. It really means a lot to me. Thank you, Maria, for arranging all this. You are everything a guy could ask for, and much more.

(Mike hugs Maria, and then everybody swoons at them)

Mike: Let's eat some cake!

Maria: I bought your favorite, chocolate cake.

Mike: You know me so well, Maria. Thank you.

Maria: Before we eat it, we have to light the candle and sing happy birthday.

My Turn To Learn

Mike: That's alright, I'm sure everybody just wants to eat some cake already.

Maria: Mike, it's a tradition! You have to blow out the candles.

Doug: Come on, Mike, don't you want to make a wish?

(Mike agrees and Maria lights twenty-five candles on the cake.)

Maria: On the count of three, everybody starts singing happy birthday. One, two, happy birthday to you!

(Everybody joyously sings along and Mike blows out the candles)

Maria: Did you make a wish?

Mike: Yes. But I can't tell you or else it won't come true.

Doug: You'd better have wished for a million dollars, Mike.

Mike: I wished for something better.

Doug: What could be better than a million dollars? Did you wish for two million dollars?

Mike: Better than that!

(Mike wished for him and Maria to stay together for the rest of their lives.)

17. Left out in the Rain (A)

It was a cloudy day in the city of Pasadena. Mike was feeling under the weather. He was coughing and sneezing at work. When his boss noticed his condition, he sent him home. Mike coughed and sneezed all the way home. When he parked his car in the driveway, the rain began to fall. He ran to his front door and struggled to find his keys.

He searched through all his pockets, but the keys were nowhere to be found. Mike ran back inside his car to escape the rain. He was soaked in rain. Mike called Maria on his cell phone. The phone dialed for a

few seconds and then Maria picked up. "Maria, I'm locked out the apartment. I think I lost my keys," Mike said, sounding sick. Maria was coming home from school, and said she would be home in thirty minutes.

"Hold on tight," she said to Mike over the phone. Mike was feeling terrible, and wanted to get out of his wet clothes. He was afraid he would get sicker if he didn't. He looked out his car window, and saw his neighbor in his house through his window. He made the decision to go and knock on his door. He waited for the rain to settle, but it kept falling at a high rate.

After a few minutes he quickly ran out his car door and raced towards Theodore's front porch. Mike was unable to avoid the rain and got even more soaked. He reached the door in fifteen seconds and immediately pounded on the door. Theodore walked up the front door and peeked through his peephole. What he saw gave him quite a shock. It was a drenched Mike who was coughing and sneezing. He opened the door right away and let him inside.

17. Left out in the Rain (B)

Theodore: Mike, you're soaked in rain. What happened to you?

Mike: I'm locked out of my apartment. Achoo!

(Mike sneezes)

Theodore: You're also sick? You chose a bad time to get caught in the rain. Where did you lose your keys?

Mike: I have no clue. I had them with me when I left to work in the morning.

Theodore: You most likely left them at your job. That seems to be the only explanation.

Mike: You're probably right. How could I forget the keys to my own apartment?

Theodore: There is no point in feeling bad about it now. There's nothing you can do about it.

Mike: You're right, Theodore.

Theodore: You can call me Theo if you want. That's what my friends call me.

My Turn To Learn

(Mike gives a grin.)

Mike: Theo, do you have some dry clothes I can change into?

Theodore: Let me go look in my closet. I'll be back in a second.

(Theodore soon came back with some clothes and a towel.)

Theodore: I found some of the clothes I used to wear when I was younger man. I hope it fits you. Let me show you where the restroom is. You can change in there.

(Mike dries himself and puts on the dry clothes.)

Mike: Thanks, Theo. I appreciate it.

(Mike sneezes again.)

Theodore: You must have a cold. Let me fix you something hot to drink. You can take a seat in the living room in the meantime.

Mike: Thank you, Theo. You are too kind.

(Mike sits down on a chair and waits for Theodore.)

Theodore: Here you go, Mike. I made some hot chocolate for you.

Mike: Thank you.

Theodore: Where's Maria?

Mike: She's on her way home from school. She should be arriving in a minute.

(Mike and Theodore continue to talk until Maria came back home.)

18. Power Outage (A)

Maria was on her way home from school. Mike had called her telling her he was locked out of the house. She was about twenty minutes away from the apartment. It was raining like there was no tomorrow, and Maria had to drive a little slower because of it. Maria did not like this kind of weather. As Maria was driving home, she had the radio on. She was listening to talk radio.

There was not a lot of traffic on the road, so Maria was able to arrive sooner than she had expected. Maria pulled up to the driveway and saw Mike's car parked. She noticed that he was not in the car. She parked her car on the curb and called Mike on her cell phone. "Where are you?" she asked over the phone. Mike told her of what had happened, and that he was at the neighbor's house. Maria said she was unlocking the door, and that it was safe to come home now.

The rain had stopped falling. The clouds in the sky had not cleared. Maria turned off her car and got out of it. She walked towards her apartment, avoiding puddles along the way. She made her way into the apartment. Mike arrived shortly after, wearing the clothes the neighbor had given him. "You look nice," Maria said to Mike when he came in through the door.

He laughed and told Maria about what had happened. The two of them went into the kitchen and sat down at the table. A few minutes later the rain came back. Mike and Maria looked out the window. Lightning struck the sky and the sound of thunder followed after. All of a sudden, the lights throughout the apartment went out. Mike and Maria were looking at each other with eyes wide open. It was going to be dark soon.

18. Power Outage (B)

Maria: Could you believe what just happened?

Mike: Are you scared?

Maria: No, I'm just a little worried.

Mike: We should get some candles and light them before night time comes.

Maria: That's a good idea.

My Turn To Learn

Mike: Where are the candles at?

Maria: I think they are in the basement.

Mike: Do you want to get them?

Maria: I think you should get them instead.

Mike: I thought you said you weren't scared?

Maria: I'm not!

Mike: Why do you not want to go down to the basement if you're not scared?

Maria: Because I just don't want to.

(Mike looks at Maria with a smirk. She looks back at him with a similar expression.)

Mike: Alright, I'll go and get the candles.

Maria: Thank you. Be careful down there.

Mike: I'll be back before you know it. Don't worry.

(Mike goes down to the basement. He walks carefully down the steps. Thanks to some light from a small window, he is able to find the candles. He walks back upstairs with the candles.)

Mike: I have the candles, Maria.

Maria: Let me get the matches.

(Mike and Maria light candles and put them throughout the apartment.)

Mike: That's better.

Maria: I wonder when the lights are coming back.

Mike: I'm sure that by tomorrow everything will be back to normal.

Maria: Are you hungry?

My Turn To Learn

Mike: I completely forgot about dinner time.

Maria: You want to order a large pizza?

Mike: Good idea.

Maria: Good thing we have cell phones.

Mike: You can say that again.

(Mike and Maria ordered a pizza and told each other ghost stories by candle light.)

19. Tiger the Cat (A)

There were always stray cats roaming about in the streets of Pasadena. Maria always noticed at least one of them whenever she stepped outside her apartment. Sometimes, she would call after them wanting to pet them. Mike once saw Maria petting a cat outside their apartment and told her to stop right away. "Maria, don't pet those things. You don't know where they have been," he scolded Maria.

Maria stopped petting the cat. Mike came closer and scared the animal away. Mike warned Maria of the dangers of ticks and fleas petting a stray cat might result in. "I'm sorry, Mike. I love cats," she said. Mike suggested to Maria that they should buy one at the pet store. Maria jumped at the idea and asked Mike if he was kidding around. Mike said he wasn't, and that he had wanted a pet, too. Maria asked if they could go to the pet shop today. Mike said okay, and they were off to the pet shop.

Maria was excited about getting a pet. She had always wanted to own a cat ever since she was a little girl. Her parents never allowed her to due to her brother being allergic to cats. She had a dog growing up instead, but it was not the same. There was something about cats that attracted Maria to them more than dogs. Cats are peaceful and clean. Maria could relate to them more than dogs. Mike, on the other hand, did not mind cats. He just wanted to make Maria happy. He knew getting a cat for Maria would make her happy. Mike and Maria were driving to the pet shop.

19. Tiger the Cat (B)

Maria: Thank you, Mike, for agreeing to get a cat. I'm so excited. I hope they have different kinds of cats.

Mike: What kind of cat would you like to get? I could only think of white and black cats.

Maria: There are different cat breeds just like there are dogs. You didn't know that?

Mike: Oh, really? That's interesting. I did not know that. How many breeds do you know?

Maria: Not too many. I could probably name ten.

Mike: Let's hear them.

Maria: Alright, let me think for a second. There's Bombay, Siamese, Snowshoe, Persian, and Ragdoll.

Mike: I counted only five. I thought you could name ten.

Maria: I could, but I just can't remember.

Mike: Which one would you like?

Maria: I would be happy with any kind.

Mike: Me too. We're almost there.

(Mike and Maria shortly arrive at the pet shop. They park in the parking lot and enter the pet shop.)

Maria: Wow, look at all different kinds of animals

Mike: It smells pretty strange in here. Where are the cats?

Maria: Let's ask the pet shop worker.

(Maria and Mike ask where the cats are and are directed to a room where kittens are held.)

Maria: Look, Mike, baby kittens. They are so cute. Can we take them all home with us?

Mike: I don't think we would have enough space for all of them. The apartment is barely able to fit us two.

Maria: How about two?

Mike: Let's just get one, Maria. I think it would be best.

Maria: Which one do you like?

Mike: I'll let you choose.

(Maria took her time deciding which cat to take home. After fifteen minutes of deliberation, she went to a small orange kitten.)

Maria: What do you think of this one, Mike? Isn't he cute?

Mike: Yeah, I like him. Are you sure that's the one you want?

Maria: If you like him, then I'm sure.

Mike: Alright. What's going to be the little guy's name?

Maria: How about Steven?

Mike: Steven? Isn't that a human name?

Maria: Why don't you name him?

Mike: Let's call him Tiger since he kind of looks like one.

Maria: Tiger, I like that.

(Mike and Maria took Tiger back to their apartment.)

20. A Flat Tire (A)

Maria and Mike were driving home from the pet shop. They had just purchased their very first pet. It was a white and orange cat, which they named Tiger. Tiger was barely a kitten. Maria played with Tiger with her finger. She was happy Mike had agreed to get a cat. Maria had wanted to own a cat for as long as she could remember.

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She was constantly reminded of this wish in the city of Pasadena. There were always cats lying about on Wilson Avenue. Tiger was a playful kitten. Mike could tell just by looking at Maria's interaction with it. "Thank you so much, Mike," Maria said. Mike told her not to thank him. He had wanted a pet too after all. "Why not a dog instead?" he asked Maria. Maria explained to him how cats were the better pet. She said cats were cleaner, nicer, quieter, and cuter.

Mike did not agree that cats were the better pet, but he chose not to argue with Maria. He did not want to ruin her happy mood. Mike asked her if they should go buy some cat food. Maria said they should. Mike turned around and drove towards the direction of the super market. After five minutes of driving the car made a loud popping sound. Mike and Maria were surprised when they realized that one of their tires had popped. Mike parked his car on the side of the road, and got out to see the damage.

20. A Flat Tire (B)

Mike: Are you alright?

Maria: Yes, I'm fine. I'm just a little scared. Are you okay?

Mike: Yes, I'm fine, too.

Maria: Did the tire pop, Mike?

Mike: I think it did. Stay in the car, Maria. I'm going to take a look at the tire.

Maria: I want to go with you, Mike.

Mike: Stay with Tiger. I'm not going anywhere far.

Maria: Alright, Mike. Be careful, please.

(Mike inspected all of the car's tires. One of the back tires was completely flat. He went back inside the car to talk to Maria.)

Mike: It's just as I expected. We have a flat tire, but don't worry.

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Maria: A flat tire? How did that happen? What are we going to do, Mike? I hope we're not stranded on the road.

Mike: Maria, I told you. Don't worry about a thing. Everything is going to be alright. I have a spare tire in the back.

Maria: You could change the tire? Why don't we call for help?

Mike: That won't be necessary. We don't need any help. I could handle this. Trust me.

Maria: If you say so, Mike.

Mike: I'll have us out on the road in less than thirty minutes. Before you know it, we will be at home with our new little pet. Everything is going to be alright.

Maria: Are you sure you don't need any help?

Mike: I'm sure.

(Mike kisses Maria on the cheek, and proceeds to change the tire. After twenty minutes he successfully switches the tire with the new one. He goes back inside the car and turns it on.)

Mike: See, what did I tell you?

Maria: That was pretty scary. Is this the first time that happened to you?

Mike: No. There's been at least three other times that I could remember.

(Mike and Maria safely drive to the market to buy the cat food, and then safely arrive home.)

21. Buying a New Television (A)

Mike and Maria were sitting at home one Sunday afternoon. They were watching a movie together when all of a sudden the television turned off. Mike did not know what to make of what just had

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happened. He looked at Maria and asked her if she had turned it off. Maria said she did not even have the remote control.

Mike checked to see if he was sitting on the remote control. Perhaps he had sat on it and accidentally pressed the off button. He checked under him and there was nothing there. "Maybe the television got disconnected from the power outlet," Maria said. Mike stood up to check the back of the television. He inspected the cord that connected to the power outlet. The television was still connected.

"That's strange," Mike said. Maria told him to turn on the television. Mike turned on the television. The screen lit up and the movie they were watching came back on. Mike sat back down next to Maria on the couch. Maria told Mike that maybe the television was breaking. Mike refused to believe that possibility. He had owned that television for years, and it had always worked. In fact, it was the first and only television he had ever purchased. It was quite expensive also.

"This television is indestructible," he told Maria. As soon as he finished his sentence, the television turned off, and made a crackling sound. Mike jumped to his feet when he noticed smoke coming out of the television. "My television!" Mike wailed. The old television had broken. Maria panicked a little when she saw the smoke. Mike immediately pulled the plug before anything else happened.

Mike threw out the broken television in trash, but he could not live without television. He told Maria if she wanted to go with him and buy a new one. Maria said yes, and the two were off to the electronic store.

21. Buying a New Television (B)

(Mike and Maria enter the electronic store where they are greeted by sales person.)

Sales Clerk: Good afternoon! How are you two doing today?

Mike: We're fine, thank you.

Maria: Good, how are you?

Sales Clerk: I'm doing great. Are you two married?

Mike: No, not yet.

(Maria blushed)

Sales Clerk: How can I help you today?

Mike: Our television broke down today, and we are looking to buy a new one. Is your store having any specials for televisions today?

Sales Clerk: Yes! We actually have a great deal for our best television. Let me show you. Follow me this way, please.

(Mike and Maria followed the man to the television section.)

Maria: Wow, look at all these televisions.

Mike: We don't want to buy an expensive television.

Sales Clerk: Let me just show you our best television.

(Mike and Maria are shown the television. Mike is impressed by the size and sound of it.)

Sales Clerk: For only a minimum down payment you can take this beauty home today. What do you two say?

Mike: I really like it. But I think it's too much for our budget.

Maria: I agree with Mike. We're just looking for something more affordable.

Sales Clerk: I hear what you two are saying. Let me show you our more reasonably priced televisions.

(The sales clerk shows Mike and Maria an aisle of affordable televisions.)

Mike: This is more like it. Thank you.

Sales Clerk: You are welcome. Please don't hesitate to ask me any questions. When you two are ready to

buy a television, please let me know.

Mike: I think I want this one. What do you think, Maria?

Maria: It's inexpensive. I like it.

Mike: We'll take it.

(Mike and Maria purchased the affordable television.)

22. Maria Goes to the Supermarket (A)

It was a Friday morning. Mike had gone to work at the office. Maria didn't have school today. Since she didn't have anything planned, Maria decided to stay in the apartment to get a head start on her homework for the weekend. She had an essay to complete and a math assignment as well. After an hour into her homework assignment, Maria realized she hadn't had breakfast. Her stomach began to grumble.

She walked over to the fridge and opened it. She wanted to make herself an omelet with hash browns but realized she didn't have any eggs. She also realized she was missing a few ingredients for the dinner she had planned to make. Mike and Maria were going to have steak and shrimp, but Maria forgot she needed their meal to be accompanied with a side of mashed potatoes. By noticing this, Maria had a bowl of cereal instead to satisfy her hunger, and then decided to make a trip to the nearest supermarket.

Before heading to the supermarket, Maria grabbed a pen and a notepad starting to write down a list of things she needed to buy. She then took a shower, put on some clothes, grabbed her purse, and headed towards the door. As Maria opened the door, she noticed it's raining outside and quickly grabbed an umbrella.

She walked down a few blocks and then turned left into her local supermarket. When inside, Maria began to walk down the aisles in search of things she needed to buy. She reached the last thing on her list, which was potatoes. While looking for the potatoes, Maria accidentally bumped into an employee working at the supermarket.

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22. Maria Goes to the Supermarket (B)

Maria: I am so sorry! I didn't mean to! I was trying to find potatoes.

Employee: Don't worry about it! They're in the first aisle next to the onions. If you need any more help, feel free to ask.

(The employee then walks away. For some reason, the employee looks very familiar to Maria. After a few seconds, Maria recognizes who the employee is. Maria walks up to the employee, and taps her on the shoulder.)

Maria: Elizabeth? It's Maria. Remember me?

(The employee takes a quick look at Maria.)

Elizabeth: Yes, hi! I thought I recognized you! How are you? It has been such a long time!

Maria: Yes, it has! I haven't seen you since high school! I have been fine. How about you? I didn't know you worked here. Do you still live in the area?

Elizabeth: Yeah, I still do. I have been working here for about eight months now. I needed the job to help pay for my college loans.

Maria: Oh, I see. Are you still studying for a career in animation like you planned back in high school?

Elizabeth: I still am, but I decided I also want to be an illustrator as well.

Maria: That sounds great! Are you excited?

Elizabeth: Yes I am! It can be very competitive, though.

Maria: Are you worried about being successful?

Elizabeth: Don't get me wrong, I wouldn't mind not becoming a famous artist. Just as long as I can make

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people happy with my art and live off it at the same time. Even if I still have to work a part-time job, I will still be satisfied.

Maria: That sounds lovely, Elizabeth. I'm sure you will make lots of people happy.

Elizabeth: Well, I have to get back to work. It was nice seeing you again, Maria. I wish you luck in everything.

Maria: It was great seeing you, too. Have a nice day.

(After that, Maria found the potatoes she needed, bought her groceries, and headed home.)

23. Mike and Maria Have a Picnic (A)

On a Saturday morning, Mike and Maria woke up and decided to clean their apartment. Maria worked on cleaning the kitchen, their clothes, and their bedroom. Mike worked on cleaning the living room, the bathroom, and sweeping and mopping the floors. While cleaning the bedroom, Maria found their old photo album hidden behind their dresser. It has old photos of them at their early stage of being together as a couple. There are pictures of them laughing, at the coffee shop Maria worked at, having fun in an arcade, and a picture of them out on a picnic.

The day began to grow hotter in the city of Pasadena. Mike and Maria were trying their best to stay cool. Mike was trying to fix their broken air conditioner, and Maria was in the kitchen making a cold pitcher of lemonade. Then, Mike gave up on fixing the air conditioner, and turned on two fans instead. Once they finished cleaning their apartment, they sat down to rest for a while.

Then, Maria decided to pull out the album she found to show to Mike. They both looked through the album together. "We look so happy," said Mike. Maria suddenly had an idea. "Hey, Mike. Why don't we go to the park and have a picnic? It'll be fun and maybe more refreshing than it is in here." Mike agreed. Maria made another pitcher of lemonade and Mike helped put a few sandwiches together. Once they had their picnic lunch ready, they put it into a basket, grabbed a blanket to sit on, and headed out the door.

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On their way to the park, Mike and Maria decided to stop by the supermarket to buy strawberries, grapes, and chips to have for their picnic as well. When arriving at the park, Mike and Maria walked around and looked for a nice spot to sit at. Then they found a spot next to a tree under the shade. Mike grabbed their blanket and unfolded it onto their spot, and Maria set their basket on top.

23. Mike and Maria Have a Picnic (B)

Maria: It's nice out today, isn't it?

Mike: Yes, and it's definitely fresher here than it is at the apartment!

Maria: Remember the last time we had a picnic?

Mike: Yes, I do. It was one of the first few dates we had together.

Maria: I believe it was also the same day you tripped into the pond trying to feed the ducks. I couldn't help laughing. You looked so embarrassed.

Mike: I was embarrassed! I was afraid you'd think I was ridiculous.

(Maria laughs.)

Maria: You were!

Mike: I knew it!

(They both laugh. Then Mike pulls out two sandwiches from the basket.)

Mike: Here. There is another in the basket if you want it.

Maria: This sandwich tastes pretty good, Mike.

Mike: Thanks. I tried my best.

(They share the silence for a moment while they eat and watch a group of kids playing in the distance.)

Maria: I miss being a kid. Those kids over there look like they're having a lot of fun.

Mike: Same here.

(In the distance, a little boy accidentally kicks a ball towards Mike and Maria. The little boy runs over to get it. Mike grabs the ball and gives it to the boy.)

Boy: Thanks! Are you guys a couple?

Mike: You're welcome, and yes, we are.

Boy: That's great! You guys are funny looking together.

(Mike and Maria laugh.)

Maria: Thank you.

Boy: Bye now!

(The boy runs off and Maria and Mike continue with their picnic.)

24. Going to the Amusement Park (A)

It was Friday morning. Mike and Maria were getting ready for the day. Maria did not have school, and Mike got the day off from work. They had wanted to go to the amusement park for a while now, and were finally going to go today. While Maria made breakfast, Mike was taking a shower.

Maria made French toast with bacon and strawberries on the side. When Mike finished showering, he got dressed and joined Maria for breakfast. "This tastes delicious!" said Mike. "Thanks!" Maria replied. Mike knew how expensive things can be at an amusement park, and thought it would be a good idea to make lunch to have while there. Mike loved going to amusement parks, and sometimes told Maria about them and his experiences.

Maria had never been to an amusement park. From hearing about Mike's stories, Maria was both excited and nervous about all the big rides. They made several sandwiches, a fruit salad, and fruit punch. They also planned to take cookies, and extra money in case for any emergencies or expenses.

Once they were ready, they headed out the door, and drove off towards the amusement park. When arriving, they paid for a parking spot and headed towards the entrance of the amusement park. At the entrance, Mike and Maria paid for their admission tickets, and entered the amusement park.

24. Going to the Amusement Park (B)

Maria: This is so exciting! What should we do first?

Mike: Let's grab a map and take a look.

(Mike and Maria head over towards an employee working at the amusement park.)

Mike: Hi, do you have any maps we can have?

Employee: We sure do! Here you go!

(Employee hands Mike and Maria a map.)

Employee: Have fun, and enjoy your stay! While you are here, don't forget to ride The Rapid Dragon roller coaster. It is our newest attraction. Also, if you have any more questions, feel free to ask.

Mike: Alright, sure thing. Thank you.

(Employee walks away.)

Mike: We should visit that ride the employee suggested.

Maria: I don't know. It sounds kind of scary. Maybe not right away.

Mike: Alright, Maria. I understand.

(Mike and Maria take a few minutes to read the maps. Suddenly, Mike has an idea.)

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Mike: Why don't we try riding the rides that seem less intimidating first, and then work our way to the bigger and scarier rides?

Maria: Alright. That sounds like a good idea.

(Mike and Maria begin walking around the amusement park until they come across a small roller coaster ride.)

Mike: How about this one?

Maria: Just as long as you're with me.

Mike: Don't worry. It should be fine. You'll love it!

(Mike and Maria wait in line for the ride.)

Maria: I'm nervous.

Mike: It is natural to be nervous. Don't worry and don't think about it too much. Just try and enjoy yourself.

(Maria smiles and kisses Mike on his cheek. Their turn eventually arrive. They sit in the roller coaster cart, buckle their seat belts, and roll off.)

Maria: Hey. This isn't as bad as I thought.

Mike: I told you.

(Maria laughs. When the ride comes to an end, they get off their seats, and look at their maps.)

Maria: What should we do next?

Mike: There is a ride where you sit on a raft and ride down a high and steep slope. Want to try that?

Maria: Sure!

(Mike and Maria head over to the ride, wait in line, get onto the rafts, and slide down.)

Mike: Wasn't that fun?

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Maria: Yes! Let's ride that one again!

Mike: Alright, but first let's eat our sandwiches. I'm getting hungry.

Maria: Alright. Maybe after this, we can ride the newest attraction!

Mike: Are you sure?

Maria: Definitely!

25. Monday Morning (A)

It was a cool Monday morning. Mike was getting ready to go to work. Maria was still asleep. She had classes to go to later on. It was six forty-five in the morning. Mike's usual routine involved showering, dressing, and eating a balanced breakfast. Mike was in step two of his process. His clothes were laid before the bed. Maria sometimes would iron his clothes the night before. Last night she was too tired to do this.

As soon as Mike got out of the shower, he had to iron his clothes himself. It was usually an easy task for Mike. Mike looked for the iron in the closet, the place where it was usually at. He searched carefully for it, but it was nowhere to be found. He figured Maria had misplaced it. He went over to the bed and called Maria. "Maria, honey, are you awake?" he said in a low voice. "Where did you put the iron?" he asked.

Maria did not move an inch. She seemed to be fully immersed in dreams. Mike noticed he was not getting through to her. He tried looking for the iron in the closet one more time, just to make sure it wasn't there. It still was not. He went to the bed and gently rocked Maria with his hand. "Maria, please wake up," he said a little louder than before. Maria responded this time. "You'd better have a good reason for waking me up, Mike," Maria said in a menacing voice. She was grumpy whenever someone woke her up in the early morning.

Mike had known this, but he needed to know where the iron was at. "Where is the iron, Maria?" he quickly asked. "It's in the closet," she answered. "No, it's not," he replied. Maria then remembered where the location of the iron was. "Check under the bed," she said and turned to her side. Mike poked his head

under their bed, and found what he was looking for. He hurried and ironed his clothes for work. After, he went to the kitchen and had a small bowl of cereal. Maria entered the kitchen and sat down with Mike.

25. Monday Morning (B)

Maria: Why did you wake me up, Mike? Now I can't fall back to sleep.

Mike: I'm sorry, Maria. I needed to know where you put the iron. I had no choice.

Maria: What time is it?

Mike: It's seven o'clock. What time do you have to be in class?

Maria: At ten o'clock. It's still pretty early for me.

Mike: Look at the bright side. Now you could say good bye to me before I go to work.

Maria: I wish I was still asleep.

Mike: Do you want some cereal?

Maria: What kind of cereal do we have?

Mike: Granola.

Maria: Do we have anymore oatmeal? I know I bought some last week.

Mike: Let me check for you. Yes, we do.

Maria: Do you mind making me a hot bowl of oatmeal?

Mike: No, I don't mind at all.

(Mike pours half a cup of oatmeal into a microwavable bowl. He grabs the milk from the fridge and pours a cup of it in the bowl of oatmeal. He finishes it off by sprinkling a teaspoon of cinnamon. He then places the bowl inside the microwave and puts it in for three minutes. When it finishes heating, Mike serves the bowl of

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oatmeal to Maria.)

Maria: Thank you, honey. You're so sweet.

Mike: Not as sweet as this oatmeal will taste.

(Maria puts a spoonful of oatmeal into her mouth.)

Maria: Nope, you're sweeter.

26. A Day at the Office (A)

Mike finished his cereal, kissed Maria goodbye, and walked out the door of the apartment. The morning was fresh and cool. The birds were singing in the trees. Mike took a look at what was around him. His front lawn was littered with leaves that had fallen from the nearby trees. Neighbors who lived in front were exiting their driveways in their flashy cars on their way to work.

Some of them wave hello to each other, and others did not bother to. Next door Mike saw Theodore getting his morning newspaper. Theodore spotted Mike from his front porch. "Good morning, Mike!" he yelled with a smile. "Morning, Theo," Mike said. Theodore read Mike's lips and waved goodbye. Mike looked for the newspaper on his lawn. There was not any. He heard a bell ring and looked up to see the paper boy riding his bike. The boy tossed the newspaper at Mike and it landed right in front of his feet. It was a good throw.

Mike picked it up and opened it to see the front cover. It read, "President Promises Free Education for Those Who Can't Afford It". Mike put the newspaper under his arm, got into his car and drove off to work. The trip to work for Mike lasted about forty minutes. He rode on the freeway to arrive faster. There was usually traffic on the freeway. Sometimes the traffic would get really congested. Luckily, Mike had the radio to listen to while stuck in traffic.

His favorite station was Classic Jams 101. Sometimes when he felt like it, he would sing along to his favorite tunes. Mike eventually arrived at the place where he worked. His office building had many floors.

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He worked on the fifth floor. Mike parked his car in his reserved parking spot, and walked into the office building. He entered the elevator, and ran into one of his co-workers named Eric.

26. A Day at the Office (B)

Eric: Top of the morning, Mikey!

Mike: Hello, Eric. Good morning. How goes it?

Eric: Alright, alright. How was the drive this morning?

Mike: It was good. Not too much traffic.

Eric: That's good to hear. Hey, did you hear about what happened to Bob?

Mike: No, what happened to him?

Eric: I heard he got fired last week. That's why no ones seen him around the office anymore.

Mike: Are you sure about this? You shouldn't always believe what you hear.

Eric: What other explanation could there be? He's been absent since last Wednesday.

Mike: Maybe he's on vacation.

Eric: I hope you're right. Bob's a nice guy.

(The elevator stops and its door opens. Suzan, another one of Mike's coworker enters the elevator)

Suzan: Good morning, fellows.

Mike: Good morning, Suzan.

Eric: Good morning, Suzy.

Suzan: It's just another day. Am I right, guys?

Mike: Yes, you are.

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Eric: I hear that.

Suzan: Have you guys seen Bob?

Mike: I think he's on vocation.

Eric: That's not what I heard.

Suzan: I hope he comes back soon. He's such a nice guy.

(The elevator reaches the fifth floor, and the door opens. Mike, Eric, and Suzan say "See you around," to each other, and go to their respective work areas. Mike sits at his desk and turns on his computer. His office phone suddenly rings. It's Maria.)

Mike: Hello?

Maria: Mike, it's me, Maria.

Mike: Is something wrong? Why are you calling me at work?

Maria: I just wanted to tell you something.

Mike: Make it quick. I have work to do at the office.

Maria: I love you, Mike. I hope you have a nice day.

Mike: I love you too, Maria. Thank you. Have a nice day too.

27. Another Day in the Life of Mike (A)

The Saturday morning was very warm. Once again, Mike was getting ready for work. The earliness of the morning had kept Maria in bed. Mike headed to the bathroom to take a shower while Maria continued to sleep. Fortunately for him, Maria had ironed his clothes the night before she went to bed. Maria was able to sleep a little longer since she had no classes to attend today. Mike came out of the shower and began to get dressed. He grabbed his shoes from the closet and began to tie his shoes. As the clock struck seven

o'clock, Mike opened the blinds in his bedroom and allowed the warm but surprisingly welcoming sunlight into the cool room.

The rays of light shone on Maria as she lay in bed sleeping. Mike still had time to make a trip to the grocery store to purchase milk and eggs for breakfast with Maria. Mike searched his drawers for his car keys to head out. Once he found them, he headed back to the bedroom to awaken Maria. By this time, she was somewhat awake.

As he sat by her side of the bed, Mike said in a soft voice "Maria, I have enough time to get some groceries. Would you like me to make us some breakfast?". "That would be great, honey," Maria replied in a sleepy voice. "What would you like for breakfast?" he asked curiously. "Toast with scrambled eggs and a cup of coffee would be nice," she said, more awakened. "I'll be sure to pick some eggs, milk, and bread for us. I'll return in a few minutes, dear," Mike said. "Thank you, love," Maria said, as she leaned forward to give him a kiss on the cheek. With the three items to buy in mind, Mike made his way to the car outside in the driveway.

Driving around beautiful, sunny Pasadena, Mike headed to his local grocery store. Mike parked his car under a shady tree. He got off the car and locked it. As Mike walked into the store, he felt a blast of air from the air conditioner above his head. He first picked up a shopping basket from the entrance, and walked to the cold food aisle to grab a dozen white eggs. Next, Mike grabbed a loaf of sliced bread for toast. Finally, he grabbed a gallon of cold milk. With all the items in his basket, he stood in line to pay. As he approached the cashier, Mike gently placed the carton of eggs and bread down as well as placing down the gallon of milk on the counter. He took out his wallet to get ready to pay. The cashier was a young lady who looked like a high school student. She finished helping the last customer.

27. Another Day in the Life of Mike (B)

Cashier: Good morning sir, how are you doing today?

Mike: Good, thank you very much.

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Cashier: Will this be all for you today, sir?

Mike: Yes. How much will it be?

Cashier: Your total is \$7.57.

(Mike hands her eight dollars.)

Cashier: Forty-three cents is your change, have a wonderful day! Thank you!

Mike: Thanks, you too.

(Mike begins to place his groceries into a shopping bag. As he heads back to the car, Mike checks the time.

It is already 7:20. Mike quickly goes to his car and starts it. Once he arrives home, Mike sees that Maria has gotten up and begins preparing coffee. After breakfast, Mike is ready to leave.)

Maria: Have a wonderful day, dear!

Mike: You too, love.

28. A Visit to the Vet (A)

Mike and Maria loved their pet Tiger, the cat. He was starting to grow and so was his personality. Tiger was a playful and curious cat. He always found something to entertain him, whether it was a ball or a piece of string. One day Maria found him down in the basement tearing at old boxes of clothes. Tiger had torn through the clothes.

Maria had to throw away all the tatter remains of what used to be shirts. She tried reprimanding the cat for his mischief, but she loved the cat so much that she couldn't stay mad at him. She simply ran him out of the basement and told him not to do it again, hoping he would understand. Mike also came home to discover Tiger's mischief. He walked into the bedroom to find the cat tearing the bed sheets with his claws.

Mike was much less sympathetic towards punishing Tiger. "No Tiger! That's a bad cat!" he yelled at the animal, and chased him out of the room. He decided to have a serious talk with Maria regarding the cat and how troublesome he had become. When he approached Maria about the issue, Maria immediately changed the topic.

"Mike, we have to take the cat to the vet," she said. When Mike asked why, Maria said it was time to give him shots. Mike saw how concerned Maria was and forgot all about punishing Tiger. "Alright, you're right. When do you want to go?" he asked Maria. Maria said she would make an appointment right away. She grabbed her cell phone, and called the vet to make an appointment.

28. A Visit to the Vet (B)

Veterinarian: Hello, thank you for calling Pasadena Pets, your local vet. What can I do for you today?

Maria: I would like to make an appointment for this Saturday.

Veterinarian: Alright. What time would you like to set the appointment at?

Maria: Is three o'clock in the afternoon fine?

Veterinarian: Yes, that's fine. Can you please tell me the reason for your visit?

Maria: I want to give my kitten his shots.

Veterinarian: Alright. What is the name of the feline and how old is he?

Maria: His name is Tiger. He is five months old.

Veterinarian: Alright. I have you in my system. You are all set to come in at three p.m. this upcoming Saturday.

Maria: Thank you very much.

(Four days later, Mike and Maria take Tiger to the vet at three o'clock. They go inside the examination room

with a Veterinarian.)

Veterinarian: Hello, how are you two today?

Mike: We're fine, thank you.

Maria: Just great.

Veterinarian: How is the little guy doing today?

(The Veterinarian pets Tiger.)

Maria: He's a little afraid.

Mike: He's a friendly cat. He hasn't scratched anyone yet.

Veterinarian: That's good to hear. Before I give him his shots I'm quickly just going to examine him.

Maria: Go ahead. Here you can take him.

(The Veterinarian takes the cat from Maria's arms and puts him on the examining table. He checks his heart beat and massages his limbs. He checks for any injury.)

Veterinarian: Everything seems to be where it belongs. His heart rate is normal.

Maria: That's a relief.

Veterinarian: Alright, now I will give him the shots. Hopefully he won't struggle.

(The Veterinarian injects the shots without any resistance from the cat.)

Veterinarian: That's a good boy. He didn't even feel the shots. You two have one brave and healthy cat.

29. Mother-in-Law (A)

"Mike, Mike. Wake up!" Maria was in a panic. Today was the day when Maria's mother was coming.

Maria's mother's name was Janet. Mike and Maria had overslept and the apartment was a mess. "Mike, my

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mother is going to be here any minute now, and look at the house!" Maria slapped Mike on the stomach to wake him up. Mike suddenly awoke and remembered what day it was.

Maria got out of bed and started to clean up the room. Mike also got out of bed and headed towards the restroom to shower. "Good idea. You shower while I get started on cleaning the apartment," Maria said out loud. Maria folded the blankets and organized the bedroom. Mike took a quick ten-minute shower, and by the time he got out, the bedroom was nice and tidy. "You take over the cleaning now; I'm going to shower," Maria said to Mike as she ran into the restroom. Mike went into the living room, and was shocked to discover how dirty it was.

There were plates on the coffee table, clothes on the floor, and the carpet was littered with crumbs. Mike picked up the plates, and took them to the kitchen sink. The kitchen was also messy. He went back into the living room and picked up all the clothes from the floor. He quickly tossed the clothes into the dirty hamper that was in the basement. Mike went into the bedroom to get the vacuum. Maria was already changing into her clothes. "Maria, have you seen the vacuum around?" he asked her. "Yes, it's in the closet," she answered while putting on her pants.

Mike grabbed the vacuum and took it to the living room. He connected the vacuum to a power outlet, and began vacuuming the living room carpet. Meanwhile, Maria went into the kitchen to wash the dishes and sweep the floor. There were a lot of dishes in the sink. Fortunately, Maria was a fast dish washer. Mike finished cleaning the living room, and went inside the kitchen to help. The two finished in less than ten minutes. All that was left to clean was the bathroom. Suddenly there was a knock on the door. It was Janet. Mike told Maria to go clean the restroom while he answered the door. Mike opened the front door and cracked a wide smile.

29. Mother-in-Law (B)

Mike: Why, hello there, Janet. How have you been?

Janet: Mike ... where is your shirt?

My Turn To Learn

(Mike looks down at himself and remembers he had not fully changed after he has showered.)

Mike: It's ... It was really hot so I decided to take it off.

Janet: But it's ten o'clock in the morning. The sun isn't even fully out yet.

Mike: Good point. Please come inside while I go put a shirt on.

(Mike lets Janet inside the living room, and go into the bedroom to put on a shirt. He comes back to the living room, where Janet is seating.)

Mike: That's better. I hope I didn't offend you.

Janet: Where's Maria? Is she home?

Mike: Yes she is. She's just ... in the restroom. She'll be out in a minute. Can I get you anything to drink?

Some juice, maybe?

Janet: Water will do.

Mike: One glass of water coming right up.

(Mike gives Janet a glass of water from the kitchen. Maria comes out of the restroom and into the living room.)

Maria: Mother! How have you been? It's so good to see you.

Janet: I've been good, dear. How are you?

(Maria and Janet hug each other.)

Maria: How long are you staying?

Janet: For the whole weekend.

Mike: Oh, goody.

30. A Trip to the Pharmacy (A)

Maria's Mother was visiting from a city about 150 miles away. She was staying for the whole weekend. Her extended stay came as a surprise to Mike and Maria. They thought she was only visiting for one day like she had originally said over the telephone. When asked why she suddenly changed her plans, Maria's mother answered, "It was supposed to be a pleasant surprise." Mike and Maria were not at all pleased by her surprise.

They had made plans to spend the weekend together. Maria's mother, Janet, ruined their plans to be alone. It was two o'clock in the afternoon, and Janet was already getting on Mike's nerves. She had arrived a few hours ago, bringing plenty of luggage with her. "Mike, be a dear and take my luggage to your room. It's far too heavy for me to carry," Janet said to Mike. Mike could never say no to his mother-in-law's requests.

He felt obligated to do as he was told by her. "Of course, Janet, I'll be happy to help," Mike replied to Janet. Janet knew deep inside that Mike did not mean what he said. She still bossed him around. "After you take away my luggage, can you serve me a nice glass of water?" she asked Mike. "Yes," Mike simply replied this time. Mike and Janet had sort of an odd relationship.

On the one hand, Mike despised Janet's constant nagging and demands. On the other hand, Janet was Maria's mother. Maria loved her mother, and Mike knew he had to be nice towards her. Mike had to take Janet to the pharmacy to pick up her prescription shortly after she arrived. Maria could not take her because she was preparing for dinner. Mike agreed to take her for Maria.

30. A Trip to the Pharmacy (B)

Mike: Are you ready to go to the pharmacy, Janet?

Janet: Let me just say a few words to Maria before we leave. You can go wait in the car.

Mike: Alright then.

(Mike sighs and goes to wait in the car for Janet. Janet goes to the kitchen to speak to Maria.)

Janet: Maria, I need to ask you something important.

Maria: Yes, mother, what is it?

Janet: How has Mike been treating you? Are you happy living with him?

Maria: Yes, mother, I truly am. Believe me when I say that Mike is the sweetest, most thoughtful man that I have ever met. Why do you even ask such questions?

Janet: It's nothing personal towards Mike. He seems like a fine responsible gentleman. A mother just has her worries.

Maria: I love you, mom. You have nothing to worry about. I'm in good hands. Please trust me.

Janet: I do, Maria. I love you too. I'll be back within an hour.

Maria: Okay, mom.

Janet: Is that husband of yours a good driver? I don't want to get into a collision.

Maria: He is a fine driver, and I thought I told you already, mom. We are not married.

Janet: Not yet? The man'd better ask you soon. You are not getting any younger.

Maria: Mother!

(Janet gets in the car with Mike, and they both drive away.)

Mike: It's really nice to see you again, Janet. You look great.

Janet: Thank you, Mike. You don't have to flatter me. It's not necessary.

Mike: I was just trying to give you a compliment.

Janet: Well, save them for my daughter.

My Turn To Learn

Mike: So how's your husband?

Janet: Bill is doing alright. He had to stay home.

Mike: Tell him hello for me when you return.

Janet: Sure thing, Mike.

(Mike and Janet arrive at the pharmacy. Janet tells Mike to stay in the car. Mike does as he is told and stays in the car.)

31. Dinner with Maria's Mother (A)

Maria was cooking roast beef with mashed potatoes. Mike arrived home with Maria's mother Janet, and immediately recognized what was being cooked in the kitchen. Mike walked in through the door in high spirits. "Maria, we're home!" he yelled merrily. Janet walked in behind him and took a seat in the couch. All of a sudden, the house cat hopped on the couch next to Janet.

The cat noticed the new guest and rubbed himself on Janet's lap. "Who is this little guy?" Janet asked as she petted the cat across its back. The cat purred and enjoyed the attention Janet gave him. "His name is Tiger. I think he likes you," responded Mike. Tiger sat on Janet's lap and continued to purr as Janet scratched his ear. Mike smiled at their interaction. He then left Janet and the cat alone in the living-room, and walked into the kitchen where Maria was cooking dinner.

The food smelled even more delicious as soon as Mike stepped inside the room. "Hey Mike, the food will be ready in a few hours," she said. Mike sat down at the kitchen table and let out a loud sigh. "Your mother is exhausting to be around," he said to Maria. Maria stopped what she was doing and walked over to where Mike was sitting. She kneeled herself down a little, and gave Mike a kiss on the forehead.

She reminded him that she was only staying for a few days, and that they soon will be alone again. Mike found comfort in Maria's words. Dinner was served a few hours later. Mike, Maria, and Janet sat down

to eat an American meal. Maria even had some left-over apple pie from a few days ago. Conversation soon began.

31. Dinner with Maria's Mother (B)

Janet: Maria, these mashed potatoes are to die for.

Maria: Thank you, mom. I think yours are better though.

Mike: Please pass the mashed potatoes over here.

(Maria passes the mashed potatoes to Mike. Mike serves himself.)

Mike: These are good! Maria is the best cook.

Janet: She learned from the best. Remember how I taught you how to make your first dishes, Maria?

Maria: I sure do. I was in my late teens when you first started teaching me how to cook.

Mike: I wish my mother would've taught me how to cook.

Janet: You should ask Maria to give you cooking lessons one of these days. Then you could cook for her for a change.

Mike: That sounds like a fun idea. What do you think of that, Maria?

Maria: Sure, why not? I'll teach you how to cook a few dishes.

Janet: We should do something as a group together tomorrow.

Maria: Like what?

Mike: Do you have any ideas, Janet?

Janet: Why don't we go to an antique shop?

Mike: That sounds interesting.

My Turn To Learn

Maria: My mom loves antique shopping. Back home she has so many relics laying around the house.

Mike: I've always wanted to go to an antique shop.

Janet: There are several antique shops around Pasadena. Let's go tomorrow in the afternoon.

Mike: Alright, that sounds like a plan. What do you think, honey?

Maria: That does sound fun.

Janet: Are you two sure? I hope you had not made any plans previously.

Mike: No, we hadn't. It's fine.

Maria: Don't worry, mom. We were planning on staying home.

(Mike and Maria look at each other. They both know that they have lied. Their plan to spend the weekend alone has changed.)

32. The Next Morning (A)

The sun rose that Sunday morning brightly over the city of Pasadena. Mike and Maria slept soundly in their bedroom while Maria's mother slept in the living room. Mike had purchased an inflatable bed for her to sleep in. Maria's mother, Janet, at first wanted Mike to sleep in the living room so she could sleep with Maria in the bedroom. Mike had agreed, but Maria had objected to her mother's request. Mike was grateful for Maria's intervention. He did not want to sleep on the couch overnight.

He had slept on the couch once by accident and had awoken the next day with back pains. Janet also refused to sleep on the couch. She insisted that Mike and Maria make accommodations for her. It was Maria who thought of the idea of buying an inflatable bed for Janet to sleep on. "We don't have one of those, Maria," Mike told Maria when she told him of the idea. "That's why you are going to have to go and buy one, Mike," Maria retorted. Maria had also become annoyed by her mother's constant demands. But Mike and Maria had no choice but to listen to Janet.

Janet awoke that Sunday early in the morning. She began to clean around the house to spend the time until Mike and Maria woke up. Maria woke up before Mike as usual. As usual, she woke up Mike and told him about the plans they had made last night. "Mike, wake up. We're supposed to go antique shopping today with my mother," Maria said, shaking Mike awake from his slumber. "Can't we go tomorrow," Mike said. "My mother will be gone by tomorrow," Maria replied.

Mike and Maria both got out of bed and got ready to go out. Within the hour, Mike and Maria were ready to leave. Maria walked into the living room and was surprised to find the apartment perfectly tidy and clean.

32. The Next Morning (B)

Maria: Mom, did you clean the apartment?

Janet: Yes I did. I figured it was the least I could do for the trouble you and Mike have gone through in accommodating my stay.

Maria: You didn't have to do that, mom. But thank you.

Janet: Are you two ready to leave?

Maria: We're ready. Mike is just using the restroom. We just have to eat.

Janet: I could make you two some eggs and hash browns before we go.

Maria: No, mom. That won't be necessary. We'll just eat something later.

Janet: I insist, Maria. You can't stop me.

Maria: Can I at least help you so we could leave sooner?

Janet: Alright. I don't see why not.

(Maria and Janet whip up a few eggs and hash browns in under fifteen minutes. Mike walks into the kitchen

after smelling the food from the living room.)

Mike: You two made breakfast? That was fast.

Janet: Sit down and eat you two. I already ate, so don't you worry about me.

Maria: Are you sure, mom?

Janet: Yes. Now eat so we could leave already.

Mike: Alright, if you say so. I'm starving.

(Mike and Maria sit down and eat the eggs and hash browns.)

Janet: Let me serve the two of you something to drink.

Maria: Thank you, mom. There's orange juice in the fridge and cups are in top drawer above the sink.

(Janet serves Mike and Maria two cups of one hundred percent orange juice.)

Mike: Thank you, Janet, for the food, and for the drink. You too, Maria, thank you, honey.

Janet: You are very welcome, Mike. I hope this makes up for the trouble I have been causing you two.

Mike: Trouble? No trouble at all, Janet.

33. Antique Shopping (A)

Mike was driving Maria and her mother to an antique shop. It was a Sunday afternoon and the sky was clear that day. There were many antique shops in the city of Pasadena. They had not made up their mind on which antique shop to visit. "Which antique shop would you guys like to go to?" Mike asked as he stopped at a red light.

Maria looked at her mother who was sitting in the back seat. "Did you hear what Mike asked, mom?" she asked her mom who was looking out the car window. Janet simply shrugged her shoulders and said, "I don't know. Which ever antique shop the two of you want to drive to is fine with me." Maria looked at Mike

My Turn To Learn

who was focusing on the road. "It looks like it's your call, Mike," she said to Mike. Mike did not say anything, sighed, and continued to drive. In his head, Mike thought of the nearest antique shop to drive to. "I know exactly which one to drive to," he finally said.

It was warm day in Pasadena. Maria began to sweat a little in her seat. "Mike, can you lower my window please?" Maria asked Mike. Mike looked in the interior rear view mirror and looked at Janet. "How are you doing back there, Janet? Are you also feeling warm?" Mike asked Janet, who answered, "I'm feeling a little warm." Mike lowered the windows in the car to let air in. "That's better, thanks," Maria said to Mike.

They soon arrived at the antique shop and parked in the parking lot. They exited the car and went inside the antique shop. When Mike stepped inside the shop, he was greeted with musk of old furniture. Maria stepped inside and noticed all the different things that were being sold. Janet right away began to look around the antique shop.

33. Antique Shopping (B)

Maria: Wow, this place is huge. Look at all these antiques. There's so much to look at.

Mike: You can say that again. It sure smells funny in here.

Janet: I love the smell of antique furniture. I'm going to go browse on my own if that's okay with you two.

Maria: Go ahead, mom. Me and Mike will be around looking. Just don't get lost in the store.

Janet: Hey, that used to be my line.

(Maria laughs at her mom's remark. Mike and Maria walk towards another direction.)

Mike: How long has your mother liked antique shops?

Maria: For as long as I can remember.

Mike: Does she ever actually buy any of these old things?

My Turn To Learn

Maria: She buys antiques all the time. You should see her house. The place is littered with antiques.

Mike: What does your dad think about it?

Janet: He thinks it's a waste of money. But he is supportive of her hobby.

Mike: I don't understand how antiques can cost more than actual new things. Look at this sofa, for example.

(Mike shows Maria the price tag.)

Mike: You can get a new and better couch for a lesser price at a furniture store.

Maria: Mike, I don't think you understand antique shopping. It's just a hobby you acquire.

Mike: An expensive hobby.

Maria: That's for sure.

(One hour passes by and Janet decides to buy an antique lamp. She finds Mike and Maria.)

Janet: I'm ready to leave if you two are.

Mike: That's a nice lamp you got there. Do you mind if I take a look at it.

(Janet hands Mike the lamp.)

Mike: I hope you don't mind, but I'm going to buy this lamp for you, Janet as a parting gift.

34. Eating at a Pizzeria (A)

Maria's mother was leaving. Mike had bought an antique lamp for Maria's mother. Maria thought it was the sweetest thing Mike had ever done for her mother. Maria hugged her mom goodbye and wished her a safe trip home. "Take care of yourself, Maria," Janet said to her daughter. Janet looked at Mike and said, "Thank you for buying the lamp for me, Mike," she said with a smile. Mike told her you're welcome. Mike and Maria smiled and waved to Janet as she drove away.

My Turn To Learn

The sun was still out. Mike asked Maria if she wanted to do anything. Maria said she was feeling kind of hungry. She had not eaten since the morning. Maria asked Mike if he would like to eat somewhere. Mike had not eaten since the morning also, but he was not so hungry for some reason. "What would you like to eat?" Mike asked Maria. "I feel like eating some pizza," Maria replied.

Mike agreed to take Maria out for some pizza. Pizza was one of Mike's favorite foods. He was always in the mood for pizza. Mike quickly rode away to the nearest pizzeria. It took him almost thirty minutes to do so. By the time Mike reached the pizzeria, Maria was starving. Mike had also gotten hungry. There was valet parking at the pizzeria. Mike pulled up to the front of the pizzeria and handed his key to the Valet.

34. Eating at a Pizzeria (B)

Valet: Hello sir. How are you doing tonight?

Mike: Fine, thank you. Here are the keys.

Valet: Thank you, sir.

Mike: Please don't slam the door too hard.

Valet: I'll be as gently as a lamb. You need not to worry, sir.

Mike: Thank you.

(The Valet drives off to park the car. Mike and Maria go inside the Pizzeria.)

Waiter: Hello, how are you?

Mike: Good, thank you.

Waiter: How many in your party? Just two?

Mike: Yes, just the two of us.

Waiter: Right this was. Please follow me.

(Mike and Maria are sat at a table for two.)

Waiter: What would you two like to drink this evening?

Mike: I'll have Root Beer.

Maria: Water for me, please.

Waiter: I'll be back in just a minute. Here are the menus.

(Mike and Maria are handed a menu each.)

Mike: What kind of pizza do you want to eat?

Maria: I'm in the mood for pineapple on my pizza. How about you?

Mike: Pineapple? That's disgusting.

Maria: Have you ever tried it?

Mike: I can't say that I have.

Maria: Then you should finally try it to see for yourself if you like it or not.

Mike: I don't know, Maria.

Maria: Come on. You made me try steak one time. Do you remember?

Mike: Alright. You make a good point. I'll guess I'll try it.

(Mike and Maria order a median pineapple pizza. They get served it fifteen minutes later. Mike tastes it for the first time.)

Mike: Hey! This isn't so bad. I think I like it.

Maria: You see! I knew you would. Doesn't it taste sweet?

Mike: Thank you for making me try this, Maria. I never knew what I was missing.

Maria: You're welcome.

My Turn To Learn

35. Going to the Santa Monica Pier (A)

It was a hot windy day in the city of Pasadena. Mike and Maria just began their summer break. They are out on a walk trying to cool off from the humidity. After a few blocks, Mike and Maria come across an ice cream parlor and decided to go in and buy a few scoops. Mike bought two scoops of coconut ice cream. Maria bought two scoops of mint chocolate chip ice cream.

After their walk, Mike and Maria headed back to their apartment. While inside, Maria was in the kitchen writing a list of things she wanted to do during their break. Mike sat down on their couch in the living room and began to watch television.

While Maria wrote down ideas, Mike gave her a few suggestions. Suddenly, Mike had the idea that it would be a nice day to make a trip to the beach. Maria agreed and thought it was a great way to start the summer as well.

35. Going to the Santa Monica Pier (B)

Maria: Which beach should we go to?

Mike: How about Santa Monica?

Maria: Alright, sounds good to me.

(Mike and Maria then prepare to go to the Santa Monica beach. After arriving at Santa Monica, Mike and Maria first look for a place to park, and then decide to walk along the shore barefoot. After walking along the shore, Maria takes notice of the pier.)

Maria: Hey, Mike. Want to go and take a walk on the pier?

Mike: Sure. It's been a while since I've last visited Santa Monica.

Maria: Same here.

(Mike and Maria head over to where the pier is located. On the pier, Mike and Maria look at the little shops and restaurants located along the pier.)

Maria: I have never eaten at Bubba Gump Shrimp.

Mike: Me neither. What to go in and try it out now?

Maria: Sure. Looks good!

(Mike and Maria enter the restaurant, sit at a table, and are given the restaurant's menu; they begin to look through it.)

Mike: Everything looks so good. I'm a bit undecided.

Maria: Same here!

(Mike and Maria take a moment to look through the menu. Then, their waiter arrives.)

Waiter: Hi, welcome to the Bubba Gump Shrimp! Are you two ready to take your order?

Mike: Yes. I'll have the shrimp cocktail.

Waiter: And what about you?

Maria: I think I'll settle for the seafood pasta.

Waiter: Any drinks?

Mike: I'll have Coca-Cola.

Maria: I'll just have some water.

Waiter: Is that all?

(Mike and Maria glance at each other and both respond with a yes.)

Waiter: Alright, your meal will arrive shortly.

My Turn To Learn

(After Mike and Maria have their meal, they exit the restaurant, and continue to walk along the pier. As they walk, Maria notices an artist painting the portrait of an elderly couple. Mike and Maria walk over and take a closer look at the artist's work.)

Maria: Wow. He is very talented.

Mike: Yeah, he definitely is. The painting looks just like them.

(Mike and Maria look at the artist at work for a few more minutes. Then they continue to walk along the pier.

Mike notices a few fishermen fishing along the edge of the pier.)

Mike: Hey, Maria. How about we try fishing sometime this week here on the pier?

Maria: Sounds like a great idea! Another thing to add on my list!

Mike: It'll be great.

Maria: I have never fished before.

Mike: I have. Don't worry. Leave it to me. I'll show you what to do.

Maria: Alright. I can't wait.

Mike: Me neither.

36. Going to the Arcade (A)

It was a Saturday afternoon. Maria was putting in a load of dirty clothes into the washing machine, and Mike was upstairs cleaning out his belongings. Mike has his belongings stored away in cardboard boxes.

As Mike was looking through his belongings, he came across his Nintendo 64 video game console, and his video games that came along with it. Suddenly, Mike began to feel nostalgic, and suddenly had the urge to play his Nintendo 64. He went down stairs, and asked Maria if she wanted to play.

36. Going to the Arcade (B)

Maria: I have never played with the Nintendo 64 before.

Mike: Don't worry. I'll show you. I have Super Mario. It's a classic.

Maria: Alright. How do you play?

(Mike gives Maria the controller and begins to show her what each button does.)

Mike: This is the control stick. You use it to move. You jump with the A button, then press the B button three times to kick, and the Z button to crouch. Give it a try and press start! I'll show you some other moves along the way.

(Maria begins to play.)

Maria: When did you first start playing video games?

Mike: A few of my friends influenced me in middle school. I would also like to say my dad influenced me as well. His favorite arcade game is Galaga. He is also the best at playing it compared to anyone else I know.

Maria: Oh, I see. That's neat.

Mike: Hey, Maria? I just realized. It has been a while since I've gone to the arcade.

Maria: Same here.

Mike: Want to go right now?

Maria: Yeah. Let's go.

(Mike and Maria begin to get ready. Then they go out on their way to the arcade. When arriving, Mike buys several tokens for him and Maria to play the arcade games.)

Maria: I'm going to play Pac-Man! I haven't played that game in a while.

Mike: I'll be over here playing Galaga!

(After a few rounds, Maria loses and heads over to where Mike is playing.)

Maria: I lost. How are you doing? What level are you in?

Mike: Level thirty-two! I'm trying to beat my own score of one hundred and three! Still have yet to beat my dad's score.

Maria: What's his highest score?

Mike: One hundred and ninety seven.

Maria: That's impressive!

(After a few more levels, Mike loses.)

Mike: No! Only level seventy eight! It's been a while since I have played.

(Maria laughs.)

Maria: Well, it was fun watching you play. You had the most intense facial expression.

(Maria imitates Mike's face and then they both laugh.)

Maria: Hey! Want to play a round of Mortal Combat with me?

Mike: Sure!

(After a round, Maria wins.)

Mike: No! How did you beat me?

Maria: I am the best player at Mortal Combat.

Mike: I let you win. I'll be hard on you next time.

Maria: Sure you did, Mike.

(Maria laughs and Mike smiles. They split up and continue to play at the arcade on their own for another

My Turn To Learn

hour. After playing, Mike and Maria met up.)

Mike: I'm getting hungry. Want to grab something to eat before we head home?

Maria: I'm hungry too. I'm in the mood for some pizza

Mike: That sounds good. Let's go!

(Mike and Maria leave the arcade and head over to their favorite pizza place.)

Mike: What do you want on our pizza?

Maria: Pepperoni, mushrooms, and black olives.

Mike: Mind if I add green peppers?

Maria: No, go ahead! I like green peppers.

Mike: Alright.

(Mike and Maria place their order and wait at their table.)

37. Going to a Pancake House (A)

It was a Friday morning in the city of Pasadena. Today was Maria's birthday. Mike wanted to celebrate by taking Maria out to eat. Maria's favorite place to eat breakfast was at the pancake house. Mike knew that Maria had not been to the pancake house in a long time.

He therefore wanted to surprise her by taking her there. While Maria was still asleep, Mike was in the living room wrapping her gift. After Mike wrapped her gift, he grabbed the balloons he bought and quietly entered the bedroom where Maria was sleeping. He set down her gift besides her, and quietly woke her up.

37. Going to a Pancake House (B)

Mike: Hey, Maria. Wake up. It's your birthday.

(Maria removes the cover from her face.)

Maria: What did you say?

Mike: Wake up! It's your birthday!

(Mike begins to sing the happy birthday song. After he sings, Mike gives Maria a hug and kisses her on the cheek.)

Maria: You are so sweet. Thank you, Mike.

Mike: Here, I bought you a gift.

(Mike grabs the gift and hands it over to Maria.)

Mike: Open it!

(Maria smiles and opens the gift. Then she pulls out a necklace, a dress, and a photo of the two of them in a frame.)

Maria: I love it so much! Thank you, Mike. I love you.

Mike: I love you, too. Now get up and get dressed. I am taking you out for breakfast.

Maria: Where are we going?

Mike: It is a surprise.

(Maria smiles and gets out of bed.)

Maria: Alright. Let me take a shower first.

Mike: Hurry up!

(As soon as Mike and Maria are ready to go, they head out the door and drive away.)

Maria: I don't like surprises. Please tell me where you're taking me?

Mike: Don't worry. You'll love it.

(Mike and Maria arrive at the pancake house.)

Maria: It's the pancake house! I haven't been here in a while!

Mike: I knew you'd be excited. Let's go inside.

(Mike and Maria enter the pancake house. A waiter assigns them a table for two.)

Waiter: Here are the menus. I'll leave you two alone for a bit and be back in a few minutes.

(The waiter leaves, and Mike and Maria look through the menu. After a few minutes, the waiter returns.)

Waiter: Are you two ready to order?

Maria: Yes. Blueberry pancakes with a side of hash browns and bacon.

Waiter: And what about you, sir?

Mike: I think I'll have the chocolate chip pancakes with scrambled eggs and bacon on the side.

Waiter: Any drinks?

Maria: I'll have coffee.

Mike: Same here.

Waiter: Alright. Your meal will be ready in about 15 minutes.

(The waiter walks away.)

Maria: It smells so good in here. The smell reminds me of my grandmother's house. It always smells nice at my grandmother's house. She makes great pancakes, too. Thank you for bringing me here, Mike. This is a good idea.

Mike: You're welcome, Maria. It's been a while since I have been here myself.

(Mike and Maria share the silence for a few seconds.)

My Turn To Learn

Mike: What would you like to do after this, Maria? This is your day.

Maria: Let me think about it.

(After a few minutes, the waiter arrives with their meal.)

Waiter: Here you go. Enjoy and feel free to ask me any questions.

Mike: Thank you.

Maria: This looks so good. I hope I can finish it all.

Mike: If you don't, I'll finish it for you.

(Maria laughs. Then they begin to eat.)

Maria: This tastes so good.

Mike: Have you decided on what we should do after?

Maria: Let's go to the arcade.

Mike: Sounds good to me.

38. Celebrating Halloween (A)

It was the thirty-first of October in the city of Pasadena. Mike and Maria were excited to be celebrating Halloween. Halloween is Mike's favorite holiday. Mike and Maria spent all day yesterday preparing to give out candy and decorating their apartment for their trick-or-treaters. Before doing so, Mike and Maria asked their landlord for permission.

They decorated their apartment exterior with fake spider webs, scary looking stuffed mannequins, and fake tomb stones on their small front yard. They also used jack-o'-lanterns and got a fog machine. Mike tried his best to make their apartment exterior look scary. All that was left for them to do was to buy last minute costumes themselves, and candy for their trick-or-treaters.

38. Celebrating Halloween (B)

Mike: Maria, let's go out and buy candy and costumes.

Maria: Okay, but first, we need to have breakfast.

Mike: Alright. What should we have?

Maria: I feel like having French toast with bacon and scrambled eggs.

Mike: That sounds good. Let's have that.

Maria: Alright. I'll start cooking.

Mike: In the meantime, I'll work on cutting out another jack-o'-lantern. I would like to put another beside our front door.

Maria: Good idea.

(After a few minutes, Mike finishes the jack-o'-lantern, and Maria has breakfast ready to eat.)

Mike: Smells good!

Maria: Thank you.

(Mike and Maria begin to eat. After finishing, Mike picks up their plates and washes their dishes.)

Maria: Mike, do you know what you want to dress up as for this year's costume?

Mike: I can't decide between being a scary pirate or a scary werewolf.

Maria: Be a scary werewolf.

Mike: Alright. I will be a werewolf. What about you? Have you decided?

Maria: It's between being a witch or a vampire.

Mike: Be a witch.

Maria: Alright. I will.

My Turn To Learn

Mike: Let's get ready to go to the Halloween Club store.

Maria: Alright.

(As soon as Mike and Maria are ready, they head out the door and drive to the Halloween Club store. Once they arrive, Mike and Maria enter the store.)

Maria: Look at all these things.

Mike: Yeah. I love Halloween so much.

Maria: What is your favorite part about Halloween?

Mike: All the costumes and the fun decorations.

Maria: What about that candy? I thought that was your favorite?

(Mike laughs.)

Mike: I love candy. Having it on Halloween is something you must do.

(Maria laughs.)

Maria: Alright. Let's find the costume section.

Mike: All I need to do is find a werewolf mask.

Maria: I need green face paint and a witch hat. I have a black dress I can use back at the apartment.

(Mike and Maria look around and find the costume section. Then, they split up and begin looking through the costumes.)

Mike: Hey, Maria! I found a witch hat you can use.

Maria: Perfect. I found my face paint. Have you found your mask yet?

Mike: Nope. Not yet.

Maria: Maybe we should ask at the front counter.

My Turn To Learn

Mike: Good idea.

(Mike and Maria walk up to an employee working at the front counter of the store.)

Mike: Hello. I am looking for a werewolf mask. Do you have any available?

Employee: Let me check the back room for you. Give me a few minutes.

(After a few minutes, the employee returns with the mask.)

Employee: Here you go. You're in luck. That was the last one.

Mike: Thank you very much.

Employee: No problem. If you need anything else, just ask.

Mike: Sure thing.

Maria: Now all we need to do is to buy candy.

Mike: What kind of candy should we get?

Maria: A variety of candy. We should get chocolate candy, sour candy, and chewy gummy candy.

Mike: Okay. Let's go.

(Mike and Maria spent all day decorating their apartment for their trick-or-treaters.)

39. Going to the Gym (A)

Maria was a fairly skinny girl. Mike was of average weight as well. Lately, Maria had begun to notice her weight. It all started when Maria went to the restroom and looked at herself in the mirror. She looked down at her stomach and felt a little self-conscious on how it looked. She rubbed her belly with her hands and thought that it had grown a bit bigger. She needed a second opinion. "Mike! Can you please come to the restroom?" she called. Mike walked in after a few minutes with a can of soda in his hand. "What is it, Maria?" he asked.

Maria turned her body towards him and lifted her shirt to reveal her stomach. "Be honest. Do you think I've gained weight?" she asked sincerely. Mike widened his eyes and hesitated to respond right away. Maria did like that he did. "Maria, you look perfectly fine to me," he said after a few seconds. Maria was not satisfied with his answer. "Why did you take so long to answer the question," Maria asked. Mike told her that the question had caught him off guard. Maria then told Mike of her concern about her weight.

"Mike, I think we need to start going to gym to exercise," Maria said. Mike looked down at his body and realized that going to gym was perhaps not such a bad idea. "Alright, maybe we're not in the best shape of our lives. But at least we're happy," Mike said to Maria.

Maria then lectured Mike on the importance of health and longevity. Mike agreed to start going to the gym after Maria's lecture. The next day, Mike and Maria left bright and early to the gym to buy a membership. They entered the gym and were greeted by a personal trainer.

39. Going to the Gym (B)

Trainer: Good morning. What can I do for you two today?

Maria: We would like to buy a membership.

Trainer: Alright. A gym membership just for two people?

Maria: Yes, please and thank you.

Trainer: Would you like to get a trainer to help you reach your personal health goals as well?

Mike: No thank you. We'll just get the membership for right now.

Maria: Maybe later on.

Trainer: Alright, not a problem. Please fill out these forms and we'll get you two started in no time.

(Mike and Maria filled out the proper forms and paid for one-year membership.)

Mike: Are you sure you're ready to make this commitment, Maria? We're signing a contract for one year.

My Turn To Learn

Maria: Yes Mike. I want to start exercising.

Mike: I hope you don't change your mind.

(Mike and Maria turned in the forms and received their membership.)

Trainer: Thank you very much. You two are now welcome to use the equipment any time.

Maria: Let's go run on treadmills.

Mike: Alright, let's do this.

Maria: We'll run for fifteen minutes as a warm-up.

Mike: I'll follow your lead.

(Mike and Maria run for fifteen minutes. They step off the machine both sweating and gasping for air.)

Mike: I can't breathe, Maria!

Maria: Don't be a wimp. Hang in there, we're just getting started.

Mike: Can we just take a break for ten minutes. I can't remember the last time I ran for that long.

Maria: Alright, we'll take a break. But just for ten minutes. After, we'll start working out our upper bodies.

Mike: How many days are we going to do this for?

Maria: At least three times a week.

Mike: I hope I don't collapse.

40. Cooking Healthy at Home (A)

Maria and Mike had started exercising a week ago. As part of their plan to lose weight, they decided to start eating at home more often. That meant no more eating out more than once a week. Maria came up

with this idea and was fully committed to see it through. Mike was not as motivated as Maria was, but he went along for the ride anyways.

Mike and Maria usually ate out on the weekend. This weekend was going to be different. Maria had gone to the super market and bought food to cook at home. Tonight she was making grilled chicken with vegetables. Mike was in mood for eating something else, but was hesitant to tell Maria. He did not want to ruin Maria's dinner plans to cook at home. He decided to secretly step out of the apartment for fifteen minutes to go out and buy the food he was craving.

He peeked into the kitchen and noticed Maria preparing the vegetables. Maria somehow felt his eyes on her and turned around at Mike who was hiding behind the wall. "Mike, are you spying on me? What are you up to?" she asked. "Nothing! I just wanted to see if you were still in the kitchen," he answered. Maria soon suspected what he was up to.

"You were trying to sneak off, weren't you? You want to go eat out, don't you?" she asked. Mike could not tell a lie to Maria. He confessed his intentions and apologized. "Mike, I need you to do this with me," Maria said to him. Mike agreed to change his diet, and sat down to wait for the home cooked meal.

40. Cooking Healthy at Home (B)

Maria: It's almost ready. Just give it fifteen more minutes. What did you want to eat instead?

Mike: I was craving a cheeseburger and fries. I'm sorry, Maria. It was nothing personal. It's just hard to get adjusted to eating healthy.

Maria: I understand, Mike. You don't have to be sorry. If you want, you can go have your cheeseburger. I won't stop you.

Mike: No, Maria. You already said you need someone to help you do this. I'm your boyfriend, and I should support you no matter what.

My Turn To Learn

Maria: Thank you, Mike. That really means a lot. I promise you this meal I'm preparing will be better than any cheeseburger you have ever had.

Mike: It sure smells good. I hope you're right about that.

Maria: You know, if you want, you can help me cook.

Mike: Are you sure?

Maria: Yeah! I'll tell you what you need to do.

(Mike rises from his seat and goes next to Maria.)

Maria: Here. Cut these vegetables in halves. Use this knife and cutting board to do it. It's easy; just watch me.

(Maria cuts a few carrots to demonstrate how. Then she hands it over to Mike who gives it a try.)

Mike: Like this, Maria?

(Mike carefully cuts carrots.)

Maria: Yeah, just like that, honey. While you do that, I'll put some water to boil.

Mike: Is the grilled chicken ready?

Maria: Yes, I just need to boil the vegetables.

(Mike finishes cutting the carrots and Maria starts to boil them. Ten minutes later, the vegetables finish boiling and Maria serves the food.)

Maria: Alright, dig in, and tell me what you think.

(Mike takes a bite of the grilled chicken and vegetables.)

Mike: It's...not that bad. I like it, honey. Thank you.

Maria: I hope you really mean that. Because this is the kind of food we should be eating more often.

Mike: I think I just need to adjust to eating like this every day in order for me to truly enjoy it. It might take some time though.

41. Stranded at School (A)

Maria was at her university attending her class. She was studying history. Maria usually drove her car to school. The car she owned was pretty old. It had been her first car. Mike constantly would advise her to get a new one like his. Maria refused to replace her car. The car had sentimental value. It was a gift from her parents when she graduated from high school. Maria's class had just ended and she was now on her way back home.

To get to her car Maria had to walk to the parking structure of her college. Maria paid for parking every semester. It was not the most inexpensive parking there was. Maria stayed a little bit after class to talk to her classmates about an assignment. She then approached the professor to ask him a question. "Professor, when is the next assignment due?" she asked. "It is due next week on Monday," he answered. Maria thanked her professor, wished him well, and went on her way.

Maria's school was quite large. She had grown accustomed to walking up and down stairs and hills. She needed one more year to finish. Maria planned to take a short break after graduation and work before she went back to finish her next degree. Maria was walking along the pathway of her school. The sun was blaring above her making her start to sweat. Maria couldn't wait to get home and jump into her tub to take a nice cool bath.

After ten minutes of walking she reached the parking structure and found her car. She entered her car and tried to turn it on. The car did not start. She tried turning it on again. The car still didn't start. Maria's worst fear had come to life. She was stranded at school because her car had stopped working. Her only choice was to call Mike and ask him to pick her up. She grabbed her cell phone from her backpack and dialed Mike's number. The phone dialed and Mike answered.

41. Stranded at School (B)

Mike: Maria?

Maria: Hey Mike. You are never going to believe what just happen to me.

Mike: You won the lottery?

Maria: No, not that. It's something bad.

Mike: Oh no, Maria. Are you alright?

Maria: Yes, I'm fine. It's my car, Mike. It finally broke down on me. I'm stranded here at school.

Mike: Are you serious? Did you try turning it on?

Maria: Of course, I did! How else do you think I found out it was broken. Listen, can you pick me up right now?

Mike: Alright, I'll leave work early. Let me just tell my boss.

Maria: Mike, what about the car? I can't just leave it here. It'll get towed.

Mike: I have an idea! I'll bring Doug along with me to pick you up.

Maria: How is bringing Doug going to help the situation?

Mike: He's knowledgeable about cars. He'll know what to do.

Maria: Alright, I hope you're right. I'll be here waiting. Try not to take so long.

Mike: Alright, honey. Just sit tight. We'll be there before you know it.

(Thirty minutes later, Mike and Doug arrive at Maria's location. Doug takes a look at the car and fixes it.)

Mike: You see, Maria. I told you Doug would help.

Maria: Wow, you were right. Thank you, Doug. I didn't know you knew how to fix cars.

My Turn To Learn

Doug: Don't mention it, Maria. Ever since I was a teenager, I've fixed cars.

Mike: Thanks, Doug. You're a life saver. Why don't the three of us go bowling to celebrate?

Maria: Alright.

Doug: Sure.

42. Going Bowling (A)

Mike, Doug, and Maria were on their way to go bowling. There was a good bowling alley Mike had read about in Pasadena. It was called Lucky Strikes. Mike mentioned it to Maria and Doug. They both had no objections to the idea and agreed to go.

Doug asked if the bowling alley also served food. "I'm not sure if they do, Doug," Mike answered. Doug was feeling kind of hungry. "I guess we're just going to have to find out when we get there," Doug said. The bowling alley wasn't too far away from home. Mike, Doug, and Maria arrived shortly. Since it was a weekday, not too many people were at the bowling alley. Mike could tell by the parking lot that this was true. It was vacant of any cars. "I think we came at a good time, guys," Mike said to Maria and Doug.

They parked near the bowling alley and exited the car. The bowling alley seemed like it was not a big place judging from the outside. Doug noticed this and made a comment. "Are you sure this is bowling alley? It looks more like a small market to me," Doug said. "Wait until we get inside," Mike responded.

They walked in through the doors. Doug and Maria were surprised at how much bigger the inside of the building was compared to the outside. Doug especially was in disbelief. "Wow! You were not kidding, Mike," he said, looking around. Maria told Mike that she had to use the restroom. Mike pointed her to the direction of the restroom and Maria went. Doug was still hungry. Mike told Doug of the vending machine that was around the corner. Doug went to the vending machine and bought some peanuts. As soon as everybody returned, they went up the counter to buy their rounds of bowling.

42. Going Bowling (B)

Employee: Hi! Welcome to Lucky Strikes. How are you doing today?

Mike: Fine, thank you. Can we please get two rounds of bowling.

Employee: Alright. How many lanes do you guys want?

Mike: Just one is fine.

Employee: Alright, one lane. Can you please give me your shoe sizes.

Mike: I'm ten and a half.

Maria: I'm size nine.

Doug: I'm a size twelve.

Employee: Thank you very much. Here are your bowling shoes. Your lane is lane number nine. Just over there. Have fun and play safe.

(Mike, Doug, and Maria walk to their lane and put on their bowling shoes.)

Mike: Are you guys ready to bowl?

Maria: Don't we have to put our names on the computer first?

Mike: You're right, Maria. How can I forget? I'll just put my regular name.

Maria: You can just put my regular name as well.

Mike: What about you, Doug? Do you want me to put just Doug?

Doug: No, I want a funny name for mine. Type Big Doug.

Mike: I don't think it fits that many letter.

Doug: Fine, just put my regular name.

(Mike, Doug, and Maria play their first round and Mike wins the game.)

Maria: Wow, I didn't know you were such a good bowler, Mike.

Doug: Yea, me neither. When did you become such a good bowler, Mike?

Mike: I don't know. I've always just played casually. I think it might just be good luck.

Doug: We have one more round to play. Let's find out if that's true or not.

Maria: These bowling balls are kind of heavy.

Mike: There are smaller ones over here, Maria.

Maria: Oh, I didn't see then.

(Mike, Doug, and Maria play their last round. Mike wins again. The night ends in laughter.)

43. Going to a Baseball Game (A)

Mike was sitting at home with Maria one Saturday afternoon. The two of them were feeling bored. The television was on in front of them, but there wasn't anything interesting to watch. Suddenly a commercial began to play. "Come this Saturday evening to watch the Los Angeles Dodgers play against their rivals," the voice in the commercial said. "Are you thinking what I'm thinking," Mike asked Maria. "Let's go to the baseball game tonight?" Maria asked. Mike smiled and nodded his head.

Mike had never gone to a baseball game and neither had Maria. Baseball is known as America's favorite pastime. Mike liked watching baseball on television from time to time. He had always wanted to go to a stadium to witness a game firsthand. He had heard from his co-workers that it was a lot fun going to a baseball game. Although Maria did not like watching sports as much as Mike did, she was still excited about going to a stadium to watch a baseball game. She was curious about how much tickets were, so she asked Mike the question.

"Are baseball tickets expensive, Mike?" she asked. "They're not cheap unfortunately," Mike answered. Mike then told her not to worry because he had been saving money for an occasion such as this one. As the day progressed, Mike and Maria did some chores around the house, and changed into their clothes for the night. The baseball game would start in a few hours. Mike and Maria had to leave early to buy the tickets.

They soon took off to the stadium. The line was long when they got to the stands where they sold tickets. Mike and Maria got in line and waited for nearly one hour before they bought their tickets. After they bought their tickets, they went inside the stadium and went to their seats. Their seats were rather close to the baseball field. Mike thought they had the best seats in the stadium. The game didn't start for another thirty minutes.

43. Going to a Baseball Game (B)

Maria: Are you hungry, Mike? Because I could sure go for some food right now.

Mike: Now that you mention it, I am kind of hungry. Do you want me to go and get some food from the stands?

Maria: I was actually going to ask you the very same thing. Can I go instead, Mike?

Mike: Are you sure, Maria? I think I should go. What if you get lost?

Maria: If I get lost, I'll just ask for directions. You worry too much about me, Mike. I'm not a child.

Mike: I know you're not. Can you blame me for worrying about you?

Maria: No, I guess I can't. But I really want to go. I'll be back soon.

Mike: Alright, I can't stop you. Just be careful.

Maria: Tell me what you want before I go.

Mike: Get me a hot dog and a pretzel.

My Turn To Learn

Maria: Do you want something to drink, too?

Mike: Oh that's right. Get me a bottle of water, please.

Maria: Alright. I'll see you in a tiny bit.

(Maria slowly makes her way to the food stands, where there is a long line. After waiting for twenty minutes, she gets the food and walks back to her seat.)

Mike: You made it just in time, Maria. What took you so long?

Maria: Sorry, there was a long line at the food stand. Here's your food.

Mike: Thanks, honey. Let's watch this baseball game now.

Maria: I'm so excited to be here, Mike! This was a great idea.

(Mike and Maria have a blast watching the baseball game.)

44. Maria's Childhood Friend (A)

A few weeks ago, Maria had met up with a childhood friend. Maria ran into her at the store. Her name was Mary. Mary and Maria had attended high school together. The two were inseparable back in those days. After high school, Maria and Mary went their own separate ways. Maria worked for a couple of years, and then decided to go to college. Mary pursued a career in writing.

Maria regretted not keeping touch with her best friend after high school. She was thrilled to see her when she ran into her at the store. Mary recognized Maria as soon as she saw her waiting in line for the register. The two shared a bit of small talk, and decided to get together soon. They exchanged cell phone numbers and said goodbye. Weeks had passed by and Maria had not found the time to call Mary. Maria one day decided to call Mary. She had finally found the time to do so. Maria dialed her number. Mary answered the phone.

"Hello," Mary answered. "Mary, it's Maria calling. Want to have lunch together this afternoon?" Maria said, "Sure! I don't see why not?" Mary replied. Maria and Mary agreed to meet up at a sandwich shop at two o'clock. Maria looked forward to talking to her old friend once more. Mike was lounging in the living room watching the local news. Mike noticed Maria getting ready to leave soon. "Where are you going?" he casually asked. "I'm going out with a friend," she replied. "This better not be a guy," he jokingly said.

Maria told him not to worry, that it was an old girlfriend from high school. Maria grabbed her bag and said goodbye to Mike. "I'll be back in a couple of hours," she said to Mike and kissed him good-bye. She drove her car a few miles away to the sandwich shop. She sat down at a table and waited for Mary to arrive. A few minutes later, Mary walked in through the door and spotted Maria sitting down. She walked over to her.

44. Maria's Childhood Friend (B)

Mary: Maria, is that you?

Maria: Yes, the one and only! How have you been?

Mary: I've been good. How are you?

Maria: I'm great. Thank you for saying yes to lunch. We have so much to catch up on.

Mary: Yes, we definitely do.

Maria: Please take a seat.

(Mary sits down with Maria at the table)

Mary: I remembered you told me about Mike the last time we spoke. You two are married?

Maria: No we're not married.

Mary: Not yet at least.

Maria: I don't know about that.

My Turn To Learn

Mary: Why do you say that? Are you not sure you would want to marry him?

Maria: It's not that I don't want to marry him. Believe me, I love Mike with all my heart, and I would love nothing more than to be his wife.

Mary: Then what is the matter? Is it him? Doesn't he love you, too?

Maria: I have no doubt that Mike loves me. What I do have doubts about is whether he is ready to settle down with me. Marriage is a big commitment and I'm just not sure if that's something Mike is ready to do.

Mary: I understand what you are saying, Maria. But believe me, when you know someone who truly loves you, you know he's ready to share the rest of his life with you.

Maria: I hear you, Mary. I'll just have to wait and see what happens.

Mary: I'm sure Mike will propose to you.

Maria: I'm in no hurry.

(Maria and Mary share a nice lunch and reminisce about high school days.)

45. Mike and Doug's Meet-up (A)

Mike was home alone for a few hours. Maria had gone out to see a friend from high school. He was sitting down on the couch watching the news. It was a lazy Sunday afternoon. Mike decided to give his best friend a call. He grabbed his cell phone and dialed Doug's number. The phone rang for a few seconds. "Hello," Doug answered. "Hey, Doug, it's Mike. What are you up to?" Mike asked.

Doug told Mike that he was at the video store returning some movies. Mike invited Doug to come over and hang out for a bit. "Sure, Mike. I'll head over in few," Doug responded. Mike said thanks and hung up the phone. Doug arrived shortly and knocked on the door. Mike answered the door and let Doug inside. "Hey, Doug. Come on in," Mike said to Doug. Doug patted Mike on the back and asked him how he was.

My Turn To Learn

Mike said he was feeling pensive. Doug sat down on the living room couch. Mike offered Doug a drink. Doug asked him if he had any beers. Mike was not allowed to have any drink in the apartment. "Sorry, Doug, it's Maria's rule," Mike explained.

Doug then asked Mike for some Coca-Cola. "That I'm allowed to have in the house," Mike said to Doug. Mike went to the kitchen and grabbed a few soda cans for him and Doug. He came into the living room and sat with Doug. He opened the coke can and took a drink from the cold can.

45. Mike and Doug's Meet-up (B)

Doug: Thanks, Mike. This is really going to hit the spot. I'm so thirsty.

Mike: Don't mention it, buddy.

Doug: So how are things going with Maria? You two have been living together for nearly a year now, right?

Mike: Yeah, that's right. Things are great between me and Maria. She is such a special girl.

Doug: Have you thought of asking her the big question.

Mike: What question? If I love her?

Doug: No, not that. I know that you love her. I'm talking about the big question. You know the one I'm talking about.

Mike: What are you talking about, Doug?

Doug: Are you going to ask her to marry you?

Mike: I don't know. I haven't really given it much thought, to be honest.

Doug: Why not?

Mike: No particular reason. I've been so content with how life has been with Maria. Do you think I should?

Doug: That's a question you should ask yourself. If you love Maria enough to want to spend the rest of your life with her, than I think you should ask her to marry you.

Mike: Do you think that's something Maria wants to do?

Doug: If Maria loves you as much as you do, than I think so. You do love Maria?

Mike: I do, with all my heart and soul.

Doug: Do you love her enough to want to marry her?

Mike: I think I do, Doug.

Doug: Then you should ask her to marry you.

Mike: I think I will. I just have to find the right moment to do it.

Doug: That's a good idea. You want the moment to be perfect.

Mike: Thanks, Doug. I really appreciate you talking to me.

Doug: That's what best friends are for, Mike.

Mike: How would you like to be my best man at my Wedding?

Doug: Are you serious? Of course! It would be an honor, Mike.

Mike: Then consider it be official.

(Mike and Doug shake hands and then hug.)

46. Buying the Ring (A)

Mike had been thinking about asking Maria to marry him for some time now. Maria coincidentally had been thinking about marriage also. Mike had recently spoken with his best friend about the matter. Maria

had also talked to her friend about it. It seemed Maria was ready for Mike to ask her, and Mike was ready to ask her the question. Mike just needed to wait for the right opportunity.

After waiting for a couple of weeks and not finding the right moment to ask, Mike decided to take the matter into his own hands. But before he could this, Mike needed to buy a ring. One day after work, Mike drove to a jewelry store to buy the ring. Mike told Maria he was going home a little late, and that not to worry.

When Maria asked him why, Mike replied by saying there was traffic on the freeway. Maria told Mike to be careful. Mike reached the jewelry store and parked his car on the side of the street. He got out of his car and stepped inside the place. Right away a jeweler spotted Mike and came over to him.

46. Buying the Ring (B)

Jeweler: Sir, good evening. Please allow me to help you.

Mike: Hello.

Jeweler: May I ask who I have the pleasure to speak to?

Mike: My name is Mike.

Jeweler: Mike, how are you doing tonight and what brings you by?

Mike: I'm doing just fine, thank you. I'm looking to buy a ring for my soon-to-be fiancé.

Jeweler: Did you say a wedding ring? That's great news to hear, Mike, congratulations! Please let me show you what we can offer you.

Mike: Alright, lead the way.

(The jeweler shows Mike many different kinds of wedding rings they have. Mike is amazed at the variety of rings that he is shown. There are so many to pick from and they all look impressive.)

Mike: Do these all cost the same?

Jeweler: These on the right are slightly more expensive than the ones on the left.

Mike: Why is that?

Jeweler: The diamonds are a little bigger.

Mike: Really? I could hardly tell the difference.

Jeweler: She will, I could promise you that.

Mike: Can you give me a minute to think about this.

Jeweler: This is a big decision. Take as much time as you want. I'll be here when you are ready.

(Mike looks at the rings for a good while. After much deliberation, Mike makes up his mind and knows which ring is the right one.)

Mike: I think I know which ring to get now.

Jeweler: I'm glad to hear that. Which one will it be?

Mike: My heart is telling me to go with that one right there.

Jeweler: Are you sure, Mike?

Mike: What do you think of it?

Jeweler: Do you want my honest opinion?

Mike: Yes, please.

Jeweler: I think it's perfect. She is going to love it and cherish it for the rest of her life.

Mike: Thank you for your words. I'll take it.

Jeweler: I'll ring you up over here.

(Mike goes around the counter to pay with credit card.)

My Turn To Learn

Jeweler: Alright you are all set. Thank you and I wish you the best of luck.

Mike: Thank you. You have been so helpful tonight.

(Mike takes the ring and drives back home. He is going to ask Maria to marry him tonight.)

47. The Big Question 1 (A)

Mike was ready to ask Maria to take his hand in marriage. He had purchased the ring a few days ago at a jeweler store, and was now waiting for the right moment to ask Maria the big question. The moment had to be perfect for Mike to ask. He thought about it for days on where it should be. Mike considered taking Maria to a park and asking her there. Mike also thought about taking Maria out on a romantic dinner, and asking her there. There were so many possibilities but Mike could not make up his mind.

One morning as Mike was getting up from bed, he thought of just asking her right there and then. Maria was sleeping beside him when he got the idea. Mike quietly rose from bed and went to open his drawers. He reached under his clothes and grabbed the ring he had bought. He walked next to Maria on the bed, and whispered her name. Maria slightly opened her eyes and saw Mike standing over her. Before she could see what Mike was holding in his hands, Mike was overcome with cold feet, and right away hid the ring behind his back to cover it.

"Mike, what are you doing?" Maria asked drowsily. Maria rubbed her eyes so she could see clearer. "Nothing, honey. I was just...looking at how beautiful you look while sleeping," Mike cleverly answered. Maria did not believe what he said and became suspicious. "Why do you have your hands behind your back?" she asked when she noticed Mike's stance.

Mike became nervous and suddenly changed the topic. "Let's go out somewhere special tonight! What do you say, dear?" Mike asked enthusiastically. "Umm, sure," Maria replied. Later that night, Mike and Maria are out driving around town. Mike isn't sure where to take Maria. As Mike ponders as to where to go,

Maria sits in the passenger seat asking Mike where they were going. It's a beautiful night in Pasadena, and all the stars were out. The moon was full too.

47. The Big Question 1 (B)

Mike: Isn't tonight a beautiful night, Maria? Look at those stars. Look at that moon. It's as full as I've ever seen it.

Maria: Mike, where are you taking me? We've been out driving for the past half hour.

Mike: I'm still thinking. I said somewhere special. What's a special place for you, Maria?

Maria: I don't know. Maybe the beach?

Mike: The beach sounds great!

Maria: But I think it's too cold to go to the beach right now.

Mike: Darn, you're probably right. Think of another place.

Maria: How about the arcade?

Mike: I don't think that place is special enough.

Maria: Why does it have to be so special, Mike? Can't we just go out to a regular place, like the movie theaters?

Mike: No, I'm sorry, Maria. I have my mind made up. We have to go somewhere really special tonight.

Maria: I don't understand, Mike. Why do we have to go somewhere special?

Mike: It's...a surprise for you.

Maria: A surprise? What sort of surprise?

Mike: A good one! One that you'll never forget for the rest of your life.

My Turn To Learn

Maria: Mike. I think I now know why you're doing this.

Mike: No, you don't! It's a surprise.

Maria: Stop the car.

Mike: No, please Maria. Let me take you somewhere special.

Maria: I said stop the car!

(Mike comes to a complete stop.)

Maria: It doesn't matter where you take me.

Mike: But Maria...

Maria: Ask me. Ask me right now...

(Mike looks Maria in the eye and gulps.)

Mike: Will you marry me?

Maria: Yes. Yes, I will.

48. The Big Question 2 (A)

Mike sat next to Maria in his car. He had finally asked Maria the question that had been on his mind for the past few weeks. Mike had asked Maria to marry him. Maria had answered yes. Mike had planned to ask the question to Maria somewhere special, but his plan was changed when Maria figured out his intention. The two of them were now inside of Mike's car which was parked in the street next to a liquor store.

That evening had been a perfect one. The night was cool and calm. The stars were all visible due to low cloud coverage. And to finally top it all off, the moon was radiant and full. Out on the streets it was nice and quiet. There were not too many people walking around, and even less cars driving on the roads. The stillness of the night added to the effect of the moment Mike and Maria were sharing in the car.

Maria was overwhelmed with emotion. The love of her life had proposed to her, and she had agreed to it. Mike, although not as emotional, was absolutely thrilled. His heart had been racing prior to asking Maria the question. It still raced but not out of nervousness, but out of excitement. Maria had said yes to spending the rest of her life with him.

Mike was bursting with joy. He could not believe it. "Are...are you sure, Maria?" he earnestly asked his wide-eyed fiancée. Maria reached for Mike's hands, looked him straight in the eye, and told him, "I've never been more sure about anything else in my life," she answered, tears swelling up in her eyes. Mike's eyes began to tear up as soon as he notices Maria's crying eyes. It was a touching moment for both of them.

48. The Big Question 2 (B)

Mike: Maria, I want you to know that you will not regret this decision.

Maria: Don't worry, Mike. I know for a fact that I won't.

(Mike pulls out the wedding ring from his jacket and slips it into Maria's ring finger. Maria is astonished by its beauty.)

Maria: Oh, Mike. It's...it's perfect! It's everything a girl could ask for in a diamond ring. I love it! I love you!

(Maria hugs Mike from the passenger seat and is overflowed with emotions.)

Maria: You are the greatest thing that has ever happened to me, Mike.

Mike: And you are the greatest thing that has ever happened to me, Maria.

Maria: Oh, Mike.

Mike: I wanted to ask you this big question somewhere special. I'm sorry I wasn't able to, Maria.

Maria: Mike, you have nothing to be sorry about.

Mike: I just wanted the moment to be perfect for you.

Maria: Don't you see, Mike? This is a perfect moment. Being here with you is what makes it so perfect. We could've been anywhere and it would have been perfect.

Mike: That's the sweetest thing you can say, Maria. Thank you. I see what you mean.

Maria: Mike, I want you to know that I will always be by your side.

Mike: Maria, I shall cherish you for all eternity. You have made me the happiest man on earth.

Maria: Let's celebrate!

Mike: Want to go back home and celebrate?

Maria: That sounds like the perfect idea.

Mike: Tomorrow in the morning, we'll start making reservations for the actual wedding. What do you think?

Maria: Mike...I think we should wait before we have the wedding. I want to enjoy being your fiancée for a while.

Mike: If that's what my love wants, that's what she'll get.

Maria: Thank you, Mike. Now let's go home and celebrate.

49. A Day Out on the Beach (A)

Maria was now engaged to Mike. The days following the night Mike asked Maria to marry him were filled with happiness. The very next day Mike and Maria were so overjoyed that they decided to take a trip to the beach. They came to the decision when they woke up in the morning to find a beautiful day waiting for them outside.

Maria told Mike to look up the forecast on the computer to find out what the weather would be like for the rest of the day. "Good idea," Mike replied, and opened up his laptop to search for that day's forecast. It was going to be a typical perfect California day. "The weather will be perfect for a day out on the beach," Mike

contently said with a smile. Maria was glad to hear this and asked Mike if they should bring any food to the beach.

Mike told Maria that it would be a good idea to bring some snacks. Mike and Maria started to get ready for a day out on the beach. After they were ready, Mike and Maria got in the car and drove to the market to get some snacks. "What kind of snack should we get?" Mike asked Maria. "Leave it to me. I know just the right kind of snacks to buy," replied Maria as she got out of the car, telling Mike to stay in the car.

Minutes later, Maria comes back with a variety of different fruits. Mike opens the door for her and they drive away to the beach. Mike and Maria arrive and find a spot near the ocean to lay out chairs and an umbrella. They sit under the shade and Maria begins to cut the fruit. When Maria finishes cutting the different fruits into little pieces, a friendly surfer approaches her and Mike.

49. A Day Out on the Beach (B)

Surfer: Hey, you two. What brings you guys to the beach today?

Maria: Hi there! We decided to come to the beach to celebrate.

Mike: We also found out it was going to be a sunny day. So that helped.

Surfer: Far out! What are you two celebrating if I may be so bold to ask?

Maria: We just got engaged yesterday.

Surfer: That's great to hear. Congratulations to two of you.

Mike: Thank you.

Surfer: So when is the wedding?

Maria: Not any time soon.

Mike: We decided to hold off the wedding until a later date.

Surfer: Alright, that's totally alright. I know some friends who decided to also wait for their wedding.

Mike: That's a neat surfboard you got there.

Surfer: Thanks, man.

Maria: How long have you been surfing?

Surfer: All my life. Ever since I was little boy I wanted to surf the waves.

Mike: Are you any good at it?

Surfer: I'm the best in the west coast.

Mike: Maybe you can give me a few lessons. Surfing has always seemed like fun.

Surfer: For sure! How about right now?

Mike: Now?

Surfer: Why not?

Mike: What do you think, Maria?

Maria: I think you should.

Mike: Alright, let's give it a try.

Surfer: Alright, just follow me to the waters and we'll surf the waves.

(Mike and the Surfer surf a couple of waves. Mike falls a few times, but eventually gets the hang of it.)

Mike: Hey, this isn't so hard once you get the hang of it.

Surfer: You're pretty good for a beginner.

Mike: Thanks for the lesson.

Surfer: Not a problem. Invite me to your wedding when it finally happens.

Mike: Alright.

My Turn To Learn

50. Going to the Mall (A)

Maria was at home one afternoon sitting on the couch watching television. As she was watching her favorite reality show, a commercial suddenly came on. A woman's voice started talking about a clothing store located at Pasadena mall. The commercial featured young people wearing trendy clothing and looking happy. Maria suddenly felt the urge to go shopping. The commercial had convinced her to go to the mall.

Maria called Mike who had gone to the store to pick up some toothpaste, and told him that she wanted to go to the mall. "Mike, can we go to the mall?" she asked him. Mike was in the restroom aisle at the store. He wondered why Maria had suddenly called him to ask if they could go to the mall. "Maria, did you see that popular commercial that's been airing on television?" he asked curiously. Maria did not want to admit that she had indeed seen the television ad so she denied it.

"No, I have not," she lied. Mike then asked why she suddenly wanted to go to the mall. "No particular reason. I think I need some new clothes," she lied again. "But you have more than enough clothes, Maria," Mike said to her. Maria begged Mike to go with her to the mall.

After much pleading, Mike finally conceded. "Alright, we'll go this weekend," he tiredly said. Maria was thrilled. "Thank you, Mike! You're the best, you know that?" she said. Mike agreed and said goodbye. The following Saturday, Mike took Maria to the mall where they went inside the clothing store from the commercial Maria had seen.

50. Going to the Mall (B)

Maria: Look at how much clothes there is!

Mike: Look at how much they cost.

Maria: I want to buy everything in this store.

Mike: We'd be broke by the end.

Maria: Mike, which shirt do you think complements my figure? This one or this one?

(Maria lifted up two different shirts to her neck to show Mike.)

Mike: Umm, I think they both look good.

Maria: You have to pick one!

Mike: Alright. I like the blue one.

Maria: Really? I like the red one instead.

Mike: That one looks nice as well.

Maria: You don't want to look at any clothes?

Mike: No, I don't think I need any new clothes at the moment.

Maria: Are you sure? They have some nice jeans.

Mike: On second thought. I think I do need some new blue jeans.

Maria: There you go! That's the shopping spirit. I'll go with you to the men's pants section.

(Mike and Maria looked at different brands of jeans. After some thought, Mike got two pairs of blue jeans.)

Mike: Alright, I think this is all that I will buy today.

Maria: I'm going to browse a little more if that's okay with you.

Mike: Alright. I guess I'll just trail you until you decide to buy something.

Maria: Great! Here, you could hold my bag. This could take a while.

51. Going to a Rock Concert (A)

Mike always listened to the radio on his way to work. His favorite radio station often gave away free concert tickets to their listeners. In order to win callers had to call at a certain time whenever they played a certain song. Mike always tried to win tickets to go see a concert but he unfortunately never called at the right time. Although he didn't win, Mike never stopped trying to call in to win. One morning, his luck was about to change.

The radio station was giving away free concert tickets to go see Mike's favorite rock group, Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers. All Mike had to do to win the tickets was being the third caller when the radio station played a certain song by the rock group. Mike had heard the announcement that morning on his way to work, and had his hands-free cell phone ready to make the call when the right song played.

Mike listened intently to the radio, waiting for the song "American Girl" to play. Suddenly, as he was waiting for a red light, the song American Girl started to play over the radio. He knew he had to be the third caller so he did not call the station right away. After thirty seconds he made the call and hoped to be the winner.

"Congratulations, you have won free concert tickets to go see Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers this Friday night," a voice said to Mike over the phone. Mike could not believe that he had finally won. The concert tickets arrived to the apartment by mail in a week. Mike was so excited when he opened the envelope the tickets came in. He decided to surprise Maria that same day he received the tickets.

51. Going to a Rock Concert (B)

Mike: Maria! You will never guess what I won a week ago today.

Maria: What did you win?

Mike: I won two tickets to go see Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers in concert tonight!

Maria: Are you serious? That's great news! Who are you taking as your guest?

Mike: Who else? You silly!

My Turn To Learn

Maria: Thank you, Mike! That's great to hear. I'm excited!

Mike: We should start getting ready to leave to the concert.

Maria: Good idea.

(Mike and Maria get ready and leave to the concert. They witness a great performance by Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers. The concert ends and a roadie invites audience members backstage to meet Tom Petty. Mike and Maria are two of the lucky people who the roadie chooses to let in. Mike and Maria beaming with excitement come face to face with the legendary Tom Petty.)

Tom: Good evening, you two. I hope you enjoyed the concert.

Mike: Oh, my god. It's such an honor to meet you, Mr. Petty.

Tom: Please call me Tom. Mr. Petty is my father.

Maria: Mr ... I mean Tom, me and my fiancée, especially my fiancée, are your biggest admirers.

Mike: It's true! I own all your original records. You've been my musical idol ever since I was teenager.

Tom: Thank you folks. It's always nice to hear from longtime fans. It's people like you that have kept me playing music for all these years.

Maria: Can we get your autograph?

Mike: And possibly a picture?

Tom: Of course!

(Mike, Maria, and Tom share the time together, and create a memorable moment that will not soon be forgotten.)

52. At the Mall (A)

Mike and Maria were taking a stroll at the town mall. Mike was carrying a shopping bag for Maria, who had purchased a few items at the store. Maria had bought a few things for the kitchen. Mike, as usual, was stuck with the task of being the carrier. A few hours had passed since they had first arrived. Mike wondered if they were going to be there much longer.

There was a football game he wanted to watch at home. He looked at his clock and noticed that it was going to be five o'clock. The football game started at six. Mike and Maria had arrived at the mall at around two in the afternoon. Their time had been spent window shopping and actual shopping. There were a lot of people at the mall that day. It made sense seeing as how it was the weekend.

The mall usually had the most visitors during the weekend, especially families. Mike and Maria passed by a family with a crying child. The child was crying because he wanted a toy and he did not get it. The child's wailing was so loud it made Mike's ear ring.

Mike looked at Maria and said, "I hope our future children aren't cry babies". Maria laughed and agreed. "Let's just agree not to have any," she said. "I hope you are kidding," Mike replied. Maria looked straight ahead as they continued walking. They were nearing the exit and Mike saw the opportunity to bring up leaving.

52. At the Mall (B)

Mike: Maria. Are you getting tired at all?

Maria: Tired? Tired of what?

Mike: Tired of walking around the mall.

Maria: No, not really. Are you tired?

Mike: No, I'm fine. I was just wondering... Are you getting hungry?

Maria: Maybe a little. But I'm not hungry. Are you hungry?

Mike: Not at all. There sure are a lot of people at the mall today. Don't you think?

Maria: It's pretty typical for a Saturday.

Mike: All these people kind of make you want to leave. Doesn't it?

Maria: Mike. Why are you asking me all the questions?

Mike: Questions? What questions? I was just making conversation.

Maria: I get the feeling that's not true. Do you want to leave Mike?

Mike: Not if you don't. I just wanted to make sure you were fine. I mean, it's not like I have anything to do today.

Maria: Are you sure about that? Something tells me you want to go home.

Mike: What makes you say that?

Maria: You've been giving me reasons for wanting to leave. Mike, you can be honest with me. Do you want to leave? I promise I will understand whatever the reason may be.

Mike: Alright, you saw right through me. I do want to go home.

Maria: I knew it! Why do you want to go back home?

Mike: I want to catch a football game on television.

Maria: A football game! Mike, are you kidding me?

Mike: Hey, you said you would understand!

Maria: I'd understand if you were tired or even hungry, but a football game. That I cannot understand.

Mike: It's a big game Maria. Look, I promise I'll make it up to you if we leave right now.

Maria: Alright, but I am holding you to that promise. Don't think for a second that I won't remember.

Mike: Alright, alright. Let's just get going already. The game is going to start in thirty minutes.

My Turn To Learn

Maria: I cannot believe you Mike. A football game, really?

Mike: Yes, really. Now come on, there's the exit.

53. Stuck in Traffic (A)

It was a Saturday afternoon. Tonight was a big night for Mike and Maria who were at home getting ready to go out. They had been invited on a double date with another couple. Mike and Maria had never been on a double date but were excited to do it. The date was to take place at a restaurant somewhere in downtown. Just a half hour drive, the restaurant wasn't located too far from home.

Mike put on his nicest shirt and pants. Maria dressed in a navy blue dress. "How do I look? She eagerly asked Mike. "You look like a million dollars," Mike replied with a smile. It had been three years since Mike first fell in love with Maria. His love for her was still as apparent as ever. Maria's love for Mike was also unchanged. The two left within the hour and met with the other couple at the restaurant.

It was a pleasant affair filled with laughter and joy. Each couple took turns telling their funny relationship stories to each other. Mike told of the time Maria got locked out of the apartment and had to jump in through the window to get inside, breaking a vase in the process. Maria then shared the time when Mike fell out of bed while sleeping.

After an hour or so, the date ended. Mike and Maria said goodbye to their friends and went on their way back home. Mike entered the freeway and was surprised when he ran into traffic. Fifteen minutes later Mike had hardly moved at all from where he was in his car. The traffic ahead seemed like it stretched for miles. Mike and Maria were stuck in traffic.

53. Stuck in Traffic (B)

Mike: I wonder what happened up ahead. You think there was an accident?

Maria: I was just about to ask you that very same question. I'm sure that's what it is.

Mike: Well, it looks like we're going to be here for a while.

Maria: That's a shame. I kind of need to use the restroom.

Mike: You think you could hold it until we get home?

Maria: Looks like I don't have any other choice. But I'll be alright. Don't worry about me.

Mike: I hate traffic. Why did I get on the freeway Maria?

Maria: Because it was the quickest way to get back home.

Mike: Not anymore. I guess we can just talk for the meanwhile. How did you like the double date?

Maria: I liked it. I thought it was a fun experience. We should do it more often.

Mike: I didn't like it so much.

Maria: Are you serious? You seemed like you were having such a great time.

Mike: I was pretending to have a great time. I felt like the other couple was too annoying.

Maria: I never would have guessed that. So much for doing that again.

Mike: I'm sorry Maria. If you really want to go out with them again we'll do it.

Maria: No, that's alright. I wouldn't want to put your through something you don't like.

Mike: Thank you for understanding Maria. You're the best.

(Mike reaches over to kiss Maria on the cheek)

Maria: I love you Mike.

Mike: I love you too honey.

Maria: At least the food was good.

Mike: I'm with you with that. Let's go back to that restaurant just the two of us one of these days.

Maria: Alright, you got it.

Mike: I hope this traffic starts moving soon.

Maria: Hey look! The traffic is moving.

Mike: Finally! It's about time. Let get on home.

54. Car Troubles (A)

Mike's car had been his pride and joy for the last ten years that he had owned it. It took him everywhere he needed to be, and never failed to do so. It was a nice black car of four doors, leather seats, and a stick shift for changing gears. Mike was cautious about who he allowed to drive his car. In fact, he hardly let his own fiancée, Maria, drive it.

One day, as Mike was lounging in the living room, Maria asked to borrow the car. "Mike, I need to use your car because mine is out of gas," she thoughtfully asked. Mike, cautious as he was, was reluctant to lend out his car. He questioned Maria in hopes that she would take back her request. "Your car had absolutely no gas?" he said, sounding mildly irritated. Maria assured him that her car had completely run out of gas, and that she needed to go get a tank of gas from the gas station.

Mike thought for a few seconds, and proposed an alternative solution to his soon-to-be wife. "Why don't I just go to the gas station to buy gas, saving you the trouble of going yourself?" he said. Maria did not mind this solution, and allowed her soon-to-be husband to go to the gas station for her. She thanked and kissed him goodbye before he stepped out of the door. "Drive safely, Mike" she said from the door as he got inside his car. "You know I always do, honey", he cheerfully replied with a smirk showing his confidence.

Mike pulled out of the drive way, and made his way to the gas station. He returned within the hour with the gas tank in hand. On the drive back, Mike had noticed a noise he'd never heard his car make before. Out of concern, he decided to take the car to his mechanic that afternoon. "Maria, I'll be back. I'm going to the mechanic to see what's wrong with my car.", he said to her after handing her the tank of gas. Maria, well aware of how much Mike loved his car, tried to console him.

54. Car Troubles (B)

Maria: I'm sure it's nothing to be worried about. I'm sure it just needs a simple tune up.

Mike: Yeah, you're probably right.

Maria: What made you think that there might be something wrong with your car?

Mike: I heard an odd noise coming from the engine that I had never heard before.

Maria: It's best to have that looked at now. Come back soon. Alright honey?

Mike: Alright, honey. See you when I get back.

(Mike drove to the mechanic. The mechanic had a look at his car for half an hour.)

Mechanic: You have a nice car.

Mike: Why, thank you. I hope there's nothing wrong with it.

Mechanic: Actually, there is a minor problem. But it's nothing I can't fix.

Mike: What's the problem, and what caused it?

Mechanic: It's an engine problem. These kinds of cars are bound to run into engine troubles one way or the other. It had nothing to do with your driving.

Mike: I see. How much is this going to cost me?

Mechanic: About five hundred. You're also going to have to leave it here for a couple of days. Is that fine with you?

Mike: If it means fixing my car, then by all means yes.

Mechanic: Mike, you have nothing to worry about. I assure you your car is in the best of hands, and will come out of here even better than before.

Mike: Thank you for that.

55. Maria's New Hobby (A)

Mike had many hobbies. He enjoyed exercising, reading, driving, and watching sports. Maria on the other hand, often would get bored at home when she was not at college. One day, as she was thinking of what to do at home she decided to acquire a hobby. Maria thought long and hard about different hobbies, wondering which one she should take up.

She pictured herself playing tennis on a sunny afternoon. Then she pictured herself getting hit by the ball. She imagined herself jet skiing by the shore. Then she pictured herself getting eaten by a shark. After much contemplation she decided on a hobby, one that didn't put her in harm's way. She walked into the living room where Mike was reading a magazine. Happy and excited she shared with her soon-to-be-husband news of her new aspiration.

"Mike, guess what?" she asked with a smile. Mike looked up at Maria, and saw how excited she was to share something. He smiled back and asked, "You're pregnant?" Maria's smile left her face immediately, and was replaced with a look of displeased surprise on hearing his reply. "No, you dummy!" Maria said out loud. Mike felt embarrass and quickly apologized. He asked her what the real news was. "I'm going to learn how to play the piano," she said with glee. "That's great dear," Mike said sincerely.

Maria decided to go to buy a piano soon after. She hopped into her car and drove to the nearest music shop in town, looking forward to making the purchase. She arrived and entered the music shop that was filled with musicians testing out instruments. Maria looked for the piano section. The music shop was quite large, and so Maria had a difficult time finding the right section. An employee by the name of Gus spotted Maria wandering around looking lost. He approached her and tried to help.

55. Maria's New Hobby (B)

Gus: Can I help you ma'am?

Maria: Yes, that would be great.

Gus: How are you doing today by the way?

Maria: I'm doing good, thank you.

Gus: I'm glad to hear it. You can call me Gus. It's nice to meet you.

Maria: Nice to make your acquaintance Gus.

Gus: Were you looking to make any purchases today?

Maria: Yes, I was looking to buy a piano.

Gus: What kind of piano were you thinking of getting?

Maria: There are different kinds? I actually just decided to take up the piano today.

Gus: That's great. The piano is beautiful instrument to learn how to play. I could lead you to the piano section.

Maria: That would be great. Thank you.

(Maria followed Gus to the section where all the different piano were.)

Gus: I would recommend buying a keyboard as a beginner. There're lighter and don't require as much care as regular pianos do.

Maria: That sounds like a good idea. Can you show me the keyboards that you carry?

Gus: Of course. We have all the well known brands with different pricings.

Maria: I think I'll take this one. It's not too expansive and it looks nice.

Gus: That's actually our most popular keyboard due to it being so affordable and proficient. I strongly recommend it.

Maria: I'm sold. Do you also carry any piano books for learning?

Gus: But of course. I'll give you one in complementary of your purchase.

Maria: Thank you so much. You have been so helpful.

My Turn To Learn

Gus: You're welcome. Let's go ring you up that the front.

(Maria followed Gus to the register and purchased her new keyboard.)

Gus: Thanks again. Enjoy your new hobby Maria.

56. Days before Graduation Day (A)

It had been a year since Mike had asked Maria to be his fiancée. Maria was graduating from her university soon and Mike was due for a promotion at work. It had been a good year for Mike and Maria who had enjoyed every minute of being engaged. Mike knew the time to tie the knot was fast approaching, and Maria anticipated the day where she would adopt a different last name.

Mike felt the need to wait until after Maria's graduation. Maria had been studying history at the university, and was graduating at the top of her class. For two years she toiled away in her studies, determined to get the best grades she could possibly get. All her hard work had finally paid off. Looking back at it all, Maria felt like her time at school was brief. She couldn't help but to feel a little sad at the fact she would no longer be a student of History.

Mike was real proud of Maria. He bought her an expensive purse as a graduation gift. Maria soon would have to repay the favor the day Mike receives his promotion. He had been with the company for nearly five years. During that time Mike was always the go-to-guy around the office. Known to always go that extra mile, even if it meant staying past five, Mike was a hard worker.

After finally being noticed for his efforts, word had gone around the office that he would soon be promoted to general manager. Just like Maria, Mike's hard work had finally paid off. Maria's graduation was a couple of days away. Mike and Maria were lying down in bed reminiscing about the past.

56. Days before Graduation Day (B)

Maria: Could you believe I'm graduating already?

Mike: Of course I believe it. I knew you had it in you. Did have any doubts?

Maria: All the time. I guess I underestimated myself. This has been a great year.

Mike: It sure has been. I'm so happy for you honey.

Maria: I'm happy for you. You're finally getting that promotion that you so rightly deserve. You have been working like slave for that company for years.

Mike: Thank you, honey. I'm just glad that I have some one like you to share my life with.

Maria: Mike! That's so sweet of you to say. I love you.

Mike: I love you too. Let's go to sleep before we ruin our sleeping schedule.

Maria: Alright. Goodnight dear.

Mike: Goodnight my love. See you in the morning.

(The following morning comes. Mike decides to perform a romantic gesture by cooking and bringing breakfast to Maria in bed.)

Mike: Rise and shine my love. I made you breakfast. I hope you don't mind eating it in bed.

Maria: You did what? Oh Mike, you didn't have to. Thank you so much.

Mike: Look, I cooked you some eggs, pancakes, and hash browns.

Maria: This smells delicious.

Mike: Wait a minute! I forgot one more thing. I'll be right back.

(Mike returned with a tall glass of orange juice.)

Maria: You are the best Mike. Come here, let me give you a kiss.

Mike: After you eat your food. And brush your teeth too.

My Turn To Learn

Maria: Mike, you jerk!

(Mike and Maria laughed and talked about the Maria's graduation details. It was two days away.)

57. Graduation Day (A)

The big day had finally come. At last Maria was to receive her degree up on a stage at her University. She was excited as she was nervous. Mike tried helping her stage fright by telling her to picture everybody in the audience wearing underwear. "This is no time for jokes Mike. I'm graduating in seven hours," she said sounding scared. "I have to get ready," she said and walked upstairs to change. Mike followed behind to change as well.

Mike got ready within the hour. Maria had only managed to shower within that same hour. "Maria, how much longer are you going to be?" he asked earnestly. "You should know by now that that I require at least three hours to fully get ready," she said back to Mike. Mike told Maria he was stepping out to buy a few things from the store, and that he would return in one hour. Maria had no objection and Mike left to the store. Mike got into his recently repaired car and drove to the flower shop.

He planned on surprising Maria with dozens of flowers on their return to the apartment from the graduation. He paid for the order and delivery, giving specific directions on where and when to leave the flowers. He handed the flower shop owner a copy of the apartment key so that he may enter. Mike took a little longer than he had said. To his surprise Maria was dressed and ready by the time of his return back home.

"How do I look?" Maria asked, sporting a blue elegant gradation robe. "You look like a million dollars," Mike replied and urgently kissed her on the lips. All things were set so Mike and Maria drove off to the university where they arrived a few hours early. For Maria, they had arrived just in time. Maria told her soon-to-be husband to wait in front in the aisle seating. The graduation was taking place inside a spacious auditorium. Mike shared some comforting words to Maria before they parted.

57. Graduation Day (B)

Mike: Wow. You're finally here. You must feel so thrilled. I'm so happy for you.

Maria: I wouldn't have been here if wasn't for you.

Mike: What did I do? It was all you Maria.

Maria: No, you don't understand. You supported me with your love and care.

Mike: Save your tears dear. You're going to ruin your make up.

Maria: I'm sorry. I'm just so emotional right now.

Mike: It's a very special day for you. Come and hug me.

(Mike and Maria hug and held on to each other for a few minutes. Maria then leaves to her meeting area but not before kissing Mike goodbye. Two hours later the ceremony commences.)

Maria's Peer: Could you believe we're about to graduate?

Maria: I know, it's unbelievable! Congratulations by the way.

Maria's Peer: Thank you. Same to you.

Maria: I wonder how long the ceremony is going to be.

Maria's Peer: According to the pamphlet, about four hours.

Maria: I'm going to cherish every minute of this event.

Maria's Peer: That's the spirit. So what are your plans after this?

Maria: I think I might take a short vacation. After, I plan on going to Library school.

Maria's Peer: You want to be a Librarian? That is so awesome. Best of luck to you.

Maria: How about you?

Maria's Peer: I'm going to apply to Medical School.

Maria: Wow, that's impressive. I'm sure you'll get in.

Maria's Peer: They're calling out our names. Listen!

Maria: It was nice talking to you by the way.

Maria's Peer: Same here! I'll see you up on stage.

(A man over the speaker phone begins to call out everybody's names one at a time. Maria soon hears her name over the speaker and rises to the brightly lit stage to receive her degree. She spots Mike in the audience smiling and waving at her. She smiles and waves back.)

58. Celebration (A)

The clock struck nine o'clock when Maria's graduation ceremony ended. For four hours Mike had sat and watched dozens of college students receive their degrees. Seeing Maria receive hers had left a memory forever ingrained in his head. He was so happy for Maria that it made him start to cry. It was a joyous day for the both of them, and celebration was soon to be had. Mike stood from his seat and walked to the entrance outside the building to meet Maria.

There were so many people who had showed up to see their friends and family members graduate. Mike walked through the throng of people, getting lost on one point. He soon found his way back and stood outside waiting for his beloved to exit the building. After nearly twenty minutes of waiting, she finally came into sight. Mike saw her as she slowly made her way through the crowds of attendees. She fell into Mike's arms immediately after reaching him. She looked up at her lover and saw that Mike had been crying. When questioned about his swelled and teary eyes Mike simply denied it.

He looked into his lover's eyes and softly said, "Let's go back home". Mike and Maria made their way to the car and drove home. Mike pulled up into the drive way, turned off the vehicle and turned to Maria.

"We should celebrate tonight," he said. "Are you sure? Aren't you tired?" she asked him. "No. Why, are you?" he asked back. Maria's facial expression spoke volumes that she was indeed worn out.

"Let's go inside. I have surprise for you," Mike said, remembering the flowers he had ordered to be delivered inside the apartment. "I'm sorry Mike. I'm just tired from standing for four hours," Maria said as they walked to the front door of the apartment. "There is no need to explain, honey. I totally understand," he said, feeling excited for the surprise that awaited Maria on the other side of the door he was opening. With his key he unlocked the door letting Maria enter first. Her surprise was worth the deed.

58. Celebration (B)

Maria: Oh my god! Look at all these flowers!

Mike: Who in the right mind breaks into somebody's home just to leaves dozens of flowers all around?

Maria: You are such a kidder you know that.

Mike: I didn't do this.

Maria: Then why does this letter contain a love poem signed with your name?

Mike: Read it! I wrote it myself. It took me a good while to come up with the right rhymes.

Maria: My love is like a red, red rose, that's newly sprung in June. My love is like a melody, that's sweetly played in tune. My love for you will never die, just like the stars above, it will stay alive. I am forever yours and you are forever mines, and so it'll be until the ends of times.

Mike: What do you think? Did you like it?

Maria: I can't believe you wrote this for me.

Mike: I swear it's my original poem.

Maria: No, I mean the act of writing a poem. You're so romantic.

My Turn To Learn

Mike: I hope this wasn't all too much.

Maria: No, it's perfect. I'm absolutely speechless.

Mike: There's one more thing I want to surprise you with.

Maria: Another one? I don't know if my heart could take it.

Mike: In that case, I'll save it for another day.

Maria: No, now I have to hear it!

Mike: Alright. Maria, my love, my one and only, let's get married.

Maria: Are you serious?

Mike: What do you say?

Maria: I say yes! Yes a thousands times!

59. Fishing with Dad (A)

The sun was beaming high overhead, and Mike was mildly anxious. He had already met Maria's mother not too long ago, and although their relationship had started off rocky, it had evolved into a mutual and loving friendship. Maria nudged over at Mike and asked, "You're not nervous, are you honey? This is the first time you're really meeting my dad. I'll understand if you're nervous, but he is a nice guy."

Mike, snapping out of a daydream where he had met Henry, Maria's father, and made a fool out of himself, replied, "I'm sure it'll be fine. Your mother gave me a hard time at first, but she came around. After all, who can deny some one as handsome as me?" Maria rolled her eyes and gave a look of disbelief. She knew deep down that her dad would like Mike. Finally arriving at San Diego, Mike and Maria roll into Henry's driveway. Mike stepped outside his car and right away noted the extreme weather differences from Pasadena.

"It's like twenty degrees hotter here. I hope you brought sunscreen," said Mike to Maria. "I sure did," replied Maria. Henry stepped out of the house and threw his arms up at the first sight of his daughter. "Maria, come here!" he said. Maria ran into father's arms, and with tears in her eyes, replied, "I've missed you so much dad." Henry stole a glance at Mike, and saw a friendly look on his face. He seemed a nice enough fellow to approach.

"So you're my son-in-law. How are you Mike? Good I hope. Long drive down here, eh? It's not so cold like in Pasadena." Mike remained quiet for a second, unsure of what to say. "It sure is hotter here," Mike finally answered back. "We're supposed to go fishing, right? I got the material needed, I say the sooner the better so our wives can cook up some dinner before sunset," Mike said after.

"That's smart thinking! I already like him better than your last boyfriend," said Henry with a laugh. Maria chuckled and rolled her eyes. She kissed Henry and Mike goodbye. Mike and Henry were going fishing without Maria. Maria told Mike not to worry and watched them drive away to the quarry. They reach the quarry and set up the equipment. They rented out a boat and embarked on the fishing trip.

59. Fishing with Dad (B)

Henry: I'm so glad Maria's finally found some one to settle down with.

Mike: I'm honored that she chose me, out of all people.

Henry: Now, don't say that. From what Maria has told me you seem to be doing pretty well for yourself.

Mike: I try my best to support her. We're actually thinking of buying a house after the wedding.

Henry: Is that so? That sounds like a good idea. Are you two planning on staying in Pasadena?

Mike: We haven't really discussed where yet. Our options are open though.

Henry: Why don't the two of you come live in San Diego?

Mike: That's something to consider. I'll bring it up to Maria the next time I get the chance.

My Turn To Learn

Henry: Mike, I just want to thank you from the bottom of my heart for taking good care of my little girl.

Mike: That means a lot coming from you.

Henry: I wish the two of you nothing but the best.

Mike: Thank you. Is there any advice you can lend a future husband?

Henry: Yes. Don't have any children!

(Mike and Henry shared a good laugh as they fished away for the rest of the day.)

60. Planning a Wedding (A)

It was a day like no other. Mike and Maria had to make the preparations for the wedding. Although they were tired after coming back from a trip to San Diego they had no time to waste. Their wedding was to take place next month, and Mike and Maria aimed to make it the best wedding to take place on earth. The soon to be husband and wife sat down themselves down on the kitchen table, and began to plan.

Maria was the first to speak. "First of all, I think we should set a budget," she said to Mike. Mike, about to say something, coughed a couple of times before getting up to serve himself a glass of water. Looking pensive, he looked back at Maria who was waiting for a response. "Yes, we should set a reasonable budget," he finally replied. After an hour of deliberation, Mike and Maria had set the date, settled on a location, and now were working on the guest list. Based on the budget they had set for themselves, the number of guest was determined, almost one hundred.

Next they decided on wedding invitations. Maria grabbed her laptop and searched for printing services for their letter invitations. She soon found the right place and made an appointment to go down there with the wedding invitation letter in mind. Mike and Maria had settled on getting married at their local church. The building was ample enough to accommodate their guest and pristine enough to ensure the wedding's remembrance.

It was a lovely little Christian church in the heart of Pasadena. Mike had made the arrangements with the church prior and had to call and schedule a date for the wedding. A few hours passed. "What's next on the list?" asked Maria, who by now was beginning to feel weary. "Let see. The food, then the flowers, then photography, and then..." Maria interrupted Mike before he could say anything else.

60. Planning a Wedding (B)

Maria: Mike! Why don't we do ourselves a favor and just hire a wedding planner to help us?

Mike: A wedding planner? Honey, we got this.

Maria: I think a wedding planner will not only make this process a whole lot easier but will make the actual wedding a much nicer occasion. Don't you think?

Mike: But we were doing so well. Are you sure this is what you want?

Maria: I'm sure that if an experienced wedding planner was here helping us, we'd be doing far better.

Mike: Well, if that's what you really think, than let's hire one.

Maria: Thank you Mike! You won't regret it.

Mike: Do you have one in mind already?

Maria: Actually, yes. My friend from university got married last year and she said she had the best wedding planner in California that helped her.

Mike: Will this wedding planner fit in our budget?

Maria: I think we can make some arrangements so that he will.

Mike: It's your wedding.

Maria: Don't say that! It's your wedding too silly. Just trust me on this Mike.

Mike: You know I always do.

(Later in the night, Mike and Maria lie in bed exhausted from everything.)

Mike: Have you decided on where you want to spend our honeymoon at? Or do you want to hire a honeymoon planner to help us?

Maria: That's not funny. And yes, I have a few places in mind.

Mike: Me too. What are they?

Maria: My first choice is Paris.

Mike: Let's have it here in America, for our budget's sake.

Maria: You're no fun. I have to think about that one.

Mike: I was thinking Maui.

Maria: That sounds like it would fun.

Mike: I guess we're settled then.

61. Wedding Day (A)

The day started out like any other. The sun rose to the east, shining its light over the city of Pasadena where Mike and Maria where to get married later that same day. Mike and Maria awoke from their slumber, looking at each other with love and joy. They knew what today was, and were expecting it to be the best in their lives."

Are you ready for today?" Maria asked Mike who was still gazing into her eyes. Mike smiled and reached out with his hand to caress his lover's face. "I was born to be ready for this day," he kindly said. He got out of bed, told Maria of his plans before he went to the church, and jumped in the shower. Maria knew what she had to do. But before she could leave the apartment she also had to shower and eat breakfast.

Mike finished showering shortly and went to the kitchen to fix something to eat, but not before kissing Maria on the cheek as she stepped inside the restroom.

"I love you," he said to her. Maria mouthed the same words back to him and smiled. Mike decided to make breakfast for two. Maria soon joined Mike in the kitchen to eat. They enjoyed a casual conversation about ordinary things, well aware of the unordinary day it was for them. Maria and Mike finished their breakfast and said their goodbyes to each other. They weren't to see each other until the wedding. "I'll see you later," Maria said to Mike as she headed out the door. "Do you promise?" Mike asked her before she could walk out the door.

Maria turned herself around and nodded ever so nicely. The next time Mike would see Maria would be walking down the church's aisle in a wedding dress escorted by her father. The time eventually came when every one Mike and Maria knew, family and friends, gather together to witness their holy matrimony. Mike stood beside his best man and friend, Doug, in front of the seated guest. "Cannon in D" began to play as Maria walked down the aisle, looking as beautiful as ever in her snow white dress. With tears in her she walked up to Mike who was beginning to tear up. They both looked at each other's eyes with love as the priest began to make his speech.

61. Wedding Day(B)

Priest: Dearly beloved, we are gathered together here in the sight of God, and in the face of this company, to join together this man and this woman in holy Matrimony.

(Soon it came time for Mike and Maria to make their wedding vows to each other.)

Maria: I vow to forever hold you in my heart. To remain faithful, loving, and caring until the end of days.

Mike: I vow to do the same. To forever love you and you alone, for as long I may live.

Priest: Do you take Maria as your lawful wife, to have and to hold, from this day forward, for better or for worse, for richer or for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and cherish until death do you part?

Mike: I do.

Priest: And do you Maria?

Maria: Yes, I do.

Priest: Do you have the ring?

Mike: Yes, I do! How can I forget?

(Mike grabs the ring from his pocket and places it gently on Maria's finger. Maria does the same to Mike.)

Priest: You may now kiss the bride.

(Mike leans forward and kisses Maria who kisses him back. Happiness is had all around.)