

The Sketch *in the* Diner



LOVE
IS A
SKETCH



ROBERT H. FLORES



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Scripture is from the King James Version

Printed in the United States of America

8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 • 17 18 19 20 21



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“Would you like something to drink, Sir?”

As I looked away from the window, I saw a pretty face looking down on me.

“Sure. I’ll take a pink lemonade, please.”

“Coming right up.”

I glanced at the street and wondered if Gus was stuck in traffic. Didn’t we both say Tuesday for lunch? Didn’t we say Ted’s Diner? The waitress came back with my lemonade.

“Here you go, Sir. I can take your order now if you’re ready.”

“Actually, um, I’m waiting for my friend to meet me here. . .”

“OK, No problem. I’ll check on you from time to time and see how you’re doing. If you need anything just holler.”

“Thank you.”

She turned to walk away, but before she turned, she shot a quick smile back at me.

During the next ten minutes, I noticed the waitress helping other customers, bringing food back and forth from the kitchen. She talked with a few customers in between orders. She seemed genuinely friendly to people. Occasionally, she would look my way and I’d smile to let her know I was still OK. I thought about calling Gus on my cell phone, but I figured I would just let him call me. I hope nothing bad happened or that he forgot about our lunch meeting today.

Well, not one to waste time, I took my sketchbook out of my bag and decided to start sketching people in the diner. I always needed sketches of people and public places were always great to get “free faces.” The waitress noticed I was no longer just sitting here, but was now drawing. She started taking more of an interest in me. She would pass by me with plates of food and try to see what I was drawing, though she wouldn’t say anything. I could tell, though, that she was interested, because she didn’t try to hide the fact that she was looking at me. As the lunch crowd thinned out, she finally did walk over to my table and asked, “Are you an artist?”

“Yeah,” I paused. “I saw you looking at me.”

She turned red and looked down. Cute smile.

“I wish I could draw. I can’t even draw a stickman.”

“Well, you know, there’s good stickmen and then there’s bad ones. I’m sure you don’t draw bad ones.”

I finally got a glimpse of her name badge.

I slid my sketchbook across the table and offered her a look, “Here, you can take a look if you want. Sally.”

“Really?”

“Yeah. Of course.”

She began slowly flipping through my sketchbook, handling the pages as if they were ancient papyrii manuscripts. I laughed to myself and just watched her flip the pages.

Just then my cell phone rang. "Excuse me," I said. She nodded and continued flipping.

"This is William."

"Hey, Will. It's Gus. Unfortunately I'm not going to make it to lunch today. Can you believe it—I had a flat tire on the way over there and it's going to take at least 20 minutes for the tow truck to get here."

"Oh, that's terrible."

"I'm sorry, man, but, let's try and do lunch another time—maybe next week."

"Sure, next week sounds good. OK. Talk to you soon. Bye. *Sigh*. Well, it looks like my friend isn't going to make it today."

"I'm sorry to hear that. Your friend. . . um, is she alright?"

"Oh, it's my friend *Gus*. Yeah, *he's* fine. He just had a flat tire is all."

"Oh, for some reason I thought you were waiting for your girlfriend."

"No. . . I don't have a girlfriend." Our eyes locked.

She glanced back down at the sketchbook. She stopped at one page. It was the face of a middle-aged woman.

"Funny, this one looks just like my mom."

"Really?" I turned my head to get a better look at it.

"Her hair has these little curls on the end. . ."

"Oh, yeah. . ." I pointed to her hair, "Kind of like your hair, *hub?*"

She chuckled, "Yeah. . . *kind of*."

She just stared and smiled at me for what seemed like a long time. Finally she said, "Um. . . where did you draw this face?"

"*Hmm*. . . I think I drew that one at church. It was after one of the services and I was just sketching people on the patio area."

"Well, my mom definitely goes to church every Sunday. What church do you go to?"

"South Main Baptist."

"That's my mom's church!"

"Really? *Hub*. Then this drawing might really *be* her."

She just stared at it.

So, I continued, "It's a really good church: solid Bible teaching, small groups, lots of ministries. . ."

"I haven't been to church in years", she said, still looking down at the sketchbook.

"Oh, really?"

"Yeah. . . I guess I just kind of got burned out on it. I grew up in church, Sunday School, youth group, summer camp—the whole thing."

"I see. During college I went through a whole phase like that. Between work

and school, I just didn't have much time for Bible studies or church. But eventually, God convicted me to reprioritize my life. He got me back on track, and I've been happier ever since."

She nodded.

Just then one of the other customers was calling her over.

"I've gotta go, um, are you OK right now?"

"Yeah, go take care of him. I'm not going anywhere."

She smiled and went away.

I went back to sketching customers. There was a man by himself, sipping coffee and reading the newspaper. At the counter was a pair of teenage girls eating salads. In the corner booth was an elderly couple drinking milkshakes together.

Looking at them I thought, "Man, I would love to have that someday."

I turned to a fresh sketchbook page. The way that she looked at his face and how she admired every wrinkle fascinated me. She would look at his moustache and nose while she talked with him. He, also, would return her glances with so much love in his eyes. They would both smile at each other occasionally, but honestly, not much conversation took place. I suppose there wasn't much to be said, when they were already saying it. The scene was very romantic without it being pretentious. She felt at home in his eyes and he felt confident next to her.

Sally came back about 12 minutes later and looked down at my drawing.

"Wow, did you just draw that couple over there?"

"Yeah."

"That is so amazing. It looks so real! You've captured the moment perfectly—like her hair and the way they're sitting. It's so romantic—I mean, I don't mean to be critiquing your work. . ."

"No, no, that's fine. I'm glad you like it."

"I see couples like that all the time in here. They go on their once-a-week date nights and they are all smiles. Personally, I think older couples like that could teach this generation what it takes to make a lifelong relationship work."

"I agree. It's altogether rare these days. It takes commitment to God and to each other to make a marriage like that work."

"You know, my mom has said things like that to me on more than one occasion."

We both studied each others' faces.

"Well," she said, catching her breath, "I guess I should take your order now if you're ready."

I glanced at my watch, "Uh, actually, I should probably get going. I've got to get back to work. So, can I just pay for my lemonade up at the front?"

"It's on the house."

"You sure?"

“Yeah. Today is, um, Free Lemonade Day, or something.”

“Well, thank you. I appreciate that.”

I started gathering all my stuff together, and stepped out of the booth.

She looked right into my eyes and said, “Thank you for letting me look at your sketchbook, and, um. . . for the talk. It was really nice.”

“Oh, um. . . my pleasure.”

I started to turn to leave, but I turned back around and did something I usually never do.

“Here”, I said.

She looked up at me.

I took out my sketchbook and carefully tore out the drawing of her “mother” and handed it to her.

“Really?” she asked surprisingly.

“Well, yeah, I need to give you a tip, don’t I?”

“Well, uh... thank you.”

“You’re welcome.”

I turned to walk away and then I heard her say, “You know, maybe I’ll go to church this Sunday with my mom. I don’t live too far from her.”

“That wouldn’t be a bad decision. I think you’d like it, Sally.”

“I’m sure I would, too, William.”

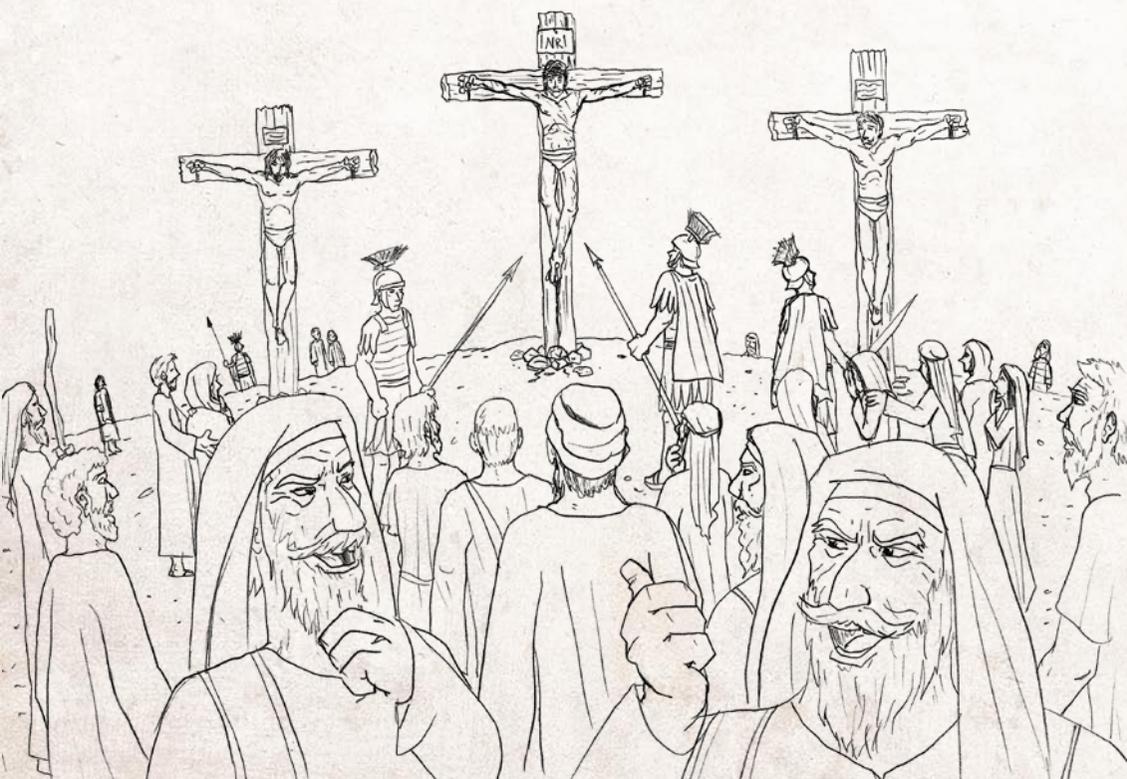
We both smiled.

The next Sunday was another beautiful day. The sun shone brightly as I stepped out of Second Service. Walking around outside, I decided to sit down and sketch some people. Just then, across the patio, I saw Sally and her mother walking out of the sanctuary! Sally saw me sitting down and waved at me. And I waved back.

The end

“Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place. For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish: to the one we are the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life.” — 2 Corinthians 2:14-16

THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST



What is the Gospel?

The gospel is the undeserved salvation of all mankind from sin and eternal death, accomplished only by the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ of which is made real to an individual's heart by the power of the Holy Spirit. In other words, the gospel is God's plan to rescue us, sustain us and grow us up in Him for all eternity. The famous passage John 3:16 explains the gospel:

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST

The gospel's foundation is only based upon what Jesus has done; not what we have done. It is God's free gift to us. Heaven is for those who have trusted in Jesus Christ as their Savior. People think that getting to heaven is some long, drawn-out process in which you have to try and follow the Ten Commandments or be a do-gooder or go to church or something. But it's really not complicated at all. See, salvation isn't about getting to God on our own terms or pulling ourselves up by our own bootstraps, it's about God reaching down to us and offering us salvation free of charge.

Paul says in Ephesians, *"But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)"* —Ephesians 2:4-5

Our sins won't allow us to get to heaven on our own terms; it is only God's rich mercy that He has made a way for us. God demands no less than perfection, and only perfect people get to go to heaven. Based on works, none of us would make it; only Jesus would. But, God has provided a way to give perfection to us through Jesus. Jesus is the exclusive, one-way to the Father. He says this in John 14:6:

"I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."

Either that statement is true or it is not. Every Christian knows that it is absolutely and irrevocably true. Ask Christ to reveal himself to you today. It's your choice.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Robert H. Flores has been telling stories since early childhood. He is a graduate of Riverside Community College and has worked as a graphic designer for almost 20 years. He enjoys writing stories and sharing the gospel in creative ways. He is the author several books, booklets and tracts. He lives in Southern California with his wife, Jennifer, and three children.



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