



Gina Aleem
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Kariem Aleem was bald-headed, beer-bellied, and old. He was thirteen years her senior. On a scale of one to ten, he was a four. In fact, he was the second ugliest guy she ever dated.

Regina, on the other hand, was a natural beauty. She was blessed with copper skin, large dark eyes, and a crown of hair fit for a princess. She exuded elegance and class. But on the inside, she was stubborn, self-willed, and spoiled rotten.

They became a couple on June 11, 1994 and the magic began.

"Kariem loved me beyond all reason," said Regina. "He told me he that he loved me every day and kissed me goodbye every time he left . . . even if he was only going out to the mailbox."

Equally important, he let Regina be who she was. He never asked her to change, even when she acting ugly. "I hated to lose," said Regina, "When we played cards and he won, I threw the deck of cards at him and stomped off like a little child. He didn't get mad. He just picked up the cards and waited. About 20 minutes later I'd come back and apologize and we'd play again."

It wasn't long before his gentle and patient nature seeped into her very soul. Regina, who formerly cooked out of a sense of duty, found herself poring over recipes for hours. For the first time, she wanted to cook for a man. She wanted to please him.

He too looked for ways to please her. He brought her breakfast in bed, drew bubble baths, and occasionally made dinner.

"One time," said Regina, "I walked in the door and the living room was filled with flowers and balloons. The table was set with white linen and silver. He had lobster, asparagus with butter sauce, baked potatoes, champagne in a silver ice bucket and a cake that said 'To the Love of my Life.' We ate, drank, and danced. We acted like little kids."

As Regina continued to grow and mature on the inside, Kariem changed on the outside. He trimmed his waistline, threw out his horn rimmed glasses, and started dressing with style.

Under the transforming power of true love, each of them became beautiful through and through. They were a beautiful couple. Once, in the lobby of a hotel, a bystander commented that they looked like royalty.

Then, on their wedding anniversary, June 11, 2003, Kariem died suddenly and unexpectedly. He was gone and she is still alone. Now, however, she knows what is possible. She knows what to look for. When the time comes, Regina won't accept anything less.