

Sunshine Girl

A dream received on February 15, 2010 and written by the hand of His Holy Spirit

“Sometimes the greatest gift is a smile!”

Prophet Shirley Ujimori

Chapter One: Good Bye Dad

Life sometime feels unfair to some, but to others it's a love affair! Benson Pruitt was a man of many talents, but the one thing that he had a problem with was love. He felt that love was a waste of time, money and effort and that everyone should learn that there was less suffering in life if one would just stay alone. Benson grew up in New York City, an only child of Jethro and Margret Pruitt. When he was eighteen he packed his bags and moved away to California to make his mark in the entertainment business as a writer of movies. Life was not easy for Benson as he found that his way of writing was not appreciated by producers, but he continued to try and lived his life as a service manager of a local appliance company. Time after time Benson would stay up for hours writing and rewriting stories in the hopes that someone would see the genius behind the work, but time and rejections took its toll and Benson gave up his dream.

Benson is now sixty two years old and has found himself back where his life first began, New York City. He got a call one day from his mother saying that his father was in the hospital dying of cancer and that he should make an effort to see him before he passed away. So without hesitation He packed his bags and moved back to the city that he once longed to run from. When he returned to his childhood home, he saw his mother for the first time in over thirty years as he was always too busy to make the time to see his parents. Time, he thought, had not been good to his mother for she looked as if she was wasted away, he could only imagine what his father looked like. His mother walked slowly down the stairs and with arms opened she started to cry. Benson dropped his bags walked toward her and in a loving embrace and a small soft voice his mother said, “Welcome home son, I have missed you so much!” “I have missed you to mom; sorry I didn't make more time to visit.” “Oh forget that, you are just like your father, always working, but never mind that, come, I have your room ready for you.” Benson turns to pick up his bags and follows his mother into the home. “Go put your bags down and I will put on some tea” speaks his mother as he continues his walk up the stairs and into his childhood room. Stopping at the door he looks in to find that nothing had changed, it was just as he left it so many years ago and even on those few occasions that he did visit everything stayed the same. Benson drops his bags and sits on the bed for a moment and starts to think of those times when he used to dream about going to other cities and visiting foreign lands, but time waits for no man and his time of dreams were now gone. Benson makes his way to the kitchen where he finds his mother just about to pour the tea. He notices the shake in her hands so quickly takes the pot from her and offers to pour. “So mom, how have you and dad been caring for yourselves all these years?” asks Benson as he puts the pot down and takes a seat. “Oh, we have been getting along fine, dad still does the driving at his age, but we mostly have been keeping to ourselves” she replies. “I notice that you have a shake, are you alright?” asks Benson. “That's just old age son, everyone gets this way sooner or later” she replies with a smile. “Enough about me; tell me about you and your life? Have you found a lovely lady yet?” Benson rolls his eyes, “no mom, not yet.” The room becomes quite and that familiar feeling of awkwardness rises. “So tell me mom, how long has dad been sick?” Margret looks up over her tea cup and replies, “Benson, it has been over five years now. I wrote and told you about it, remember?” Benson searches his memory and remembers that letter he received quite a few years ago, but also remembers how he tossed it aside to read it later but completely forgot about it. “Yes I remember the letter, but to be honest I forgot to read it.” With shame he looks away from his mother's eyes and changes the conversation.

“So when can we go to see dad?” he asks. “We can go tomorrow, tonight is too late for him to receive guest.” “Well then, I think I will turn in for the night.” He kisses his mother on her forehead, “Why don’t you go to bed, I will clean up this and lock up the house.” Margret smiles, “okay son.” Then gets up and starts to walk up the stairs. Benson starts to wash the dishes; he stares out the window into the night darkness and starts to remember the days when late at night he would be washing the dishes and dad would be walking up the stairs from a hard double shift for the subway company. Yet he knew that it would never happen again.

It was four in the morning when the phone rang. Benson jumped out of bed to hear a strange voice on the other side; “Hello?” he answer. “Hello, may I speak to Margret Pruitt please?” answers the voice. “I am sorry she is asleep, but this is her son Benson, can I help you?” “Oh yes, Benson, this is Doctor Charles Kramer calling from Mercy Hospital. I am calling to inform you that you father, Jethro Pruitt, passed away at three thirty this morning. We will need you and your mother to come as soon as you can.” Benson stood there in shock as to what he just heard, “Hello, Benson? Are you alright?” asks Doctor Kramer. “Yes, yes I am fine, I will tell my mother, and thank you Doctor Kramer for calling.” Benson hangs up the phone and starts to walk to his mother’s room; he stops at the door and starts to knock. “Mom, are you awake?” he calls out in a loud voice. He hears no answers and calls out again, but this time she replies; “Yes son I am awake, come in.” When he enters the room his mother is sitting in her rocking chair staring out the window. “Your dad passed away Benson, your dad has passed away” she speaks with a shaky voice. “Yes mom, he has. They want us to go to the hospital as soon as we can.” “Alright son, I’ll be right down” she replies. Benson turns and walks out the door and into his own room. He sits on the bed in disbelief, when the tears he could never shed for a man he hardly saw, starts to flow. He takes the pillow from his bed presses it against his face and starts to weep.

Benson and his mother enters into the hospital wing that she had left Jethro in when Doctor Kramer meets them at his room door. “Mrs. Pruitt, I am sorry” he speaks as his lays a hand of comfort upon her shoulder. “I need you both to follow me.” He starts to walk away from them as they both follow into an elevator that takes them to the basement of the hospital. “We need to go to the coroners office that you may identify your husbands body.” Margret nods as the elevator comes to a stop. Doctor Kramer exits and they both follow. This area of the hospital is very cold and gives you feeling of sadness as you walk through. “Here we are, Margret and Benson Pruitt, this is Doctor Paul Hunt, the coroner for Mercy Hospital. I will leave you in his hands for now and will be in contact in a few days” speaks Doctor Kramer as he shakes Margret and Benson hands then turns to leave. Benson reaches out to shake Doctor Hunt’s hand when he starts to speak, “First I would like to extend my condolences to the both of you, but I must take you to see your husband for identification reasons.” Doctor Hunt turns and leads them into a room that is completely empty except for the iron table in the middle of the room where there lays Mr. Jethro Pruitt covered by a sheet. “Mrs. Pruitt, is this your husband?” questions Doctor Hunt as he lifts the sheet from the face of the man on the table. And with a small gasp Mrs. Pruitt nods her head in agreement as the tears starts to flow. Benson stands still staring at the face that is now covered by the sheet as he wraps his arms around his mother’s shoulders to comfort her in her grief. “Well then, we will be making arrangements with the mortuary that you assigned and they will be contacting you with further details. Margret nods then turns to walk away. Benson reaches out his hand to Doctor Hunt and thanks him for his kindness and help then turns and follows his mother.

All the arrangements had been made by Jethro before his passing which left nothing for Margret and Benson to do. The service was all that the father wanted, many old friends from the subway stopped in to give their condolences’, neighbors of many years came to support Margret in this hour, and the minister did a wonderful sermon for all who attended. But Benson was feeling out of place. Many people did not know that Jethro had a son while he worked for the subway and some of the neighbors could hardly remember his name, but he knew that it was his fault and no one else’s. Benson made himself scarce when his parents had

guest and never really did anything like sports and stuff that made him stand out with his father. Benson was feeling as if he wasn't really apart of this family, that maybe he just belonged to someone else but didn't know it. "Foolish thinking" he thought as it crossed his mind, "of course they are my parents!" he thought as he stared at his mother from across the room.

The service was over and the guest had left and the only two people sitting before the coffin of Jethro Pruitt was Margret and Benson. It was that awkward quite that he would feel when he was alone in the room with his parent, like there was nothing to say to one another. All of a sudden Margret reaches over and grabs Benson hand, "Son, this is your last chance to say something before they take him away from us for good." Benson nods then gets up to stand before his father on last time. He stood there yet nothing was coming to mind, he stared at his fathers face but had nothing to say. Then he thought to himself, 'why is it so hard to talk to you? Why can I not express myself knowing that this is my last chance to speak?' Benson continued to stare when all of a sudden he felt his mothers touch on his back, "Benson, your father loved you very much. And I know that he didn't show it in your later years like he did in your younger, but he told me. And in the last few days of his life he continually asked for you. I always told him that you were on your way because I knew you were, but he kept forgetting that he asked and would ask again and again; she chuckles. You two were so much alike. I remember the day that you came and told us that you were leaving for California, boy your father almost had a heart attack at those words, but he let you go in the hopes of finding your own dreams. Did you know that your father did the same thing when he was eighteen? That's right! His parents had a farm in Nebraska but your father had a dream of making it big in New York City, no different then yours, well, his dreams didn't quite pan out the way that he hoped that's why he hoped for you! He didn't want you to go because he didn't want your dreams to be crushed by life, but at the same time he wanted you to live your life to the fullest, that meant he had to let you go. Now son, why don't you say one last good bye to your father" and with that Margret sat back down and left Benson in his own thoughts. What could he say after hearing all that? Suddenly he spoke; "Dad, I'm sorry I was gone for so long, I didn't mean to be, but you know how things worked out. I should have kept in contact but I didn't want you to worry or to be disappointed in my failures in life, but dad I am having a hard time saying good bye to you! We never had time together, to share a drink at you favorite pub, or even to take in an old fashioned baseball game. I don't blame you for any of that because it was me!" And as Benson starts to cry he continues to speak; "It was me dad, I failed you! I never once said I loved you, I never made an effort to call; I never came sooner knowing that you were sick. I'm sorry dad; in my search for my own happiness I forsake the one man and woman who was the source of my happiness; you and mom. So dad, I am not leaving here again, I will take care of mom, I promise, and I will do you proud! Dad, be happy in heaven, I love you!" And with that Benson touches his fathers face on last time then turns and takes his mother by the hand and walks out of the sanctuary in tears.