



## The Inheritance: A Story of Love, Legacy, and Lost Opportunities

**Michael K. Parson**

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*Parson weaves a plot that offers a surprising twist, refreshing for a romance.*

Happily ever after doesn't always mean a storybook ending. In *The Inheritance*, Michael K. Parson crafts a love story in which selfish mistakes and pride derail even the strongest relationship. Though regrets aren't always easy to resolve, the path trod may lead to an unexpected, yet satisfying, end.

When Jason Morgan and Angela Capanna meet at the library while in college, their souls collide in a picture-perfect romance. They marry, and things look promising, but the pressures and realities of life, especially financial ones, soon bear down. Their relationship grows increasingly rocky until one Christmas Eve when an argument flairs out of control. Both are unwilling to let go of their pride, especially Jason.

Seeking to prove himself, Jason leaves, but his stubbornness and unfortunate presumptions prevent him from returning to the woman he passionately loves. Jason must find healing, learn the hardest truths of life, and swallow his wounded pride if the pair is ever to get back together. By the time he does, it may be too late to restore things with Angela—or the son he never knew he had.

Parson's solid plot is comfortably paced and offers a surprising twist, refreshing for a romance. His writing, which shows more often than tells, keeps things intriguing: "It was dark, and I was all alone.' And he feared that phrase had become a metaphor of his life." Social and political events and trends are woven smoothly into the narrative to provide context. Time designations are also helpful, although they disappear toward the end.

The characters' realistic flaws and regrets make them human. Jason makes rash decisions he later regrets, but he can't bring himself to effectively resolve them: "Remembering and reliving those moments only caused him to harden his heart all the more, and he vowed, 'I'm not going back until I can prove her wrong!'" Angela also responds in ways she later concludes are overreactions, something infinitely relatable. As many people have regretfully experienced, the words spoken in the heat of battle are sometimes deliberately destructive.

The novel imparts a heartfelt message, primarily that communication, understanding one another, conflict resolution, fixing one's mistakes, and abandoning pride are all important pieces of a relationship. These elements are written naturally into the book, and the tone avoids preachiness.

That said, Jason's choice to leave Angela seems too strong of a response to the events, almost unbelievably so. This is also true of his decision to disappear, and to stay away as long as he does. However, in life, people sometimes do things that don't make sense to others, or even to themselves.

Overall, *The Inheritance* is an enjoyable read for fans of romance, and it comes with a lesson on love, relationships, and marriage. With an ending that finds a happily ever after that is far from syrupy, the book can satisfy the most romantic of hearts, albeit in an unexpected way.

DIANE GARDNER (April 14, 2014)

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