

NOTHING LESS THAN LOVE EXCERPT I

Naturally Beautiful

Finding both beauty and balance leads us to knowing “when” or “when not” to take ourselves too seriously. Those who do not take themselves too seriously are usually beautiful. Usually, there is an understanding and contentment present internally, and there is no need to point one’s own beauty out in a mirror. People who surround them will just feel the beauty. Just ask anyone, especially a woman who is looking for a mate or a date. Most would agree that sense of humor is one of the highest priorities in the search. It is so hard to have a sense of humor when we take ourselves too seriously and equally hard to be at our best. However, this does not mean we should not take what is outside of us seriously. I look back to many of the people who have achieved some amazing tasks. Often, these people seem to be at their best when they did not necessarily take themselves too seriously but rather took in all that was involved in the task.

I used to witness a guy occasionally come to my place of work, and each time he arrived, all eyes were on him and his every move. I would also watch him over the years through his ups and downs, but mostly ups. There were times when he would step foot in my workplace and he was a team player, and other times, he was a leader. As time passed, he became a boss. As I observed him more extensively, I began to feel he was at his very best when he took himself less seriously. But what he did take seriously was the people he worked alongside, the task at hand, and all the details surrounding these two. As a result, when he was at his best, he was “the best.”

A day came when I was on the job and directing a camera that was to shoot all the “big names” in the room. (The room is known as Madison Square Garden.) So after retiring, this guy came back to visit, and it was my job to expose him to the sell-out crowd who hoped to watch him on the jumbo screen in the middle of the arena. I walked up to him and introduced myself and said, “If it is okay, I’d like to get a shot of you. I feel everyone here would love to see you.” Graciously, he chuckled and said, “I think you have the wrong guy. You want that one over there,” and he pointed four or five seats down from him. I played along, as I now approached the guy he pointed out. It was the actor Samuel L. Jackson, and I said to him, “The guy down there tells me that you are the one everyone wants to see here.” He quickly looked at

who pointed him out and responded, “No, there is only one, and it is that guy they all want to see,” as he pointed back down the row. I walked over and said, “I think you’re the only Michael Jordan.” Within moments, he was on the big jumbo screen, and the place roared as it rose to its feet, as did Michael Jordan as he laughed and waved in appreciation. As the game resumed, I told him, “I knew I had the right guy.” He chuckled as I headed over to another fan.

I reflected on this moment, realizing that yet again Michael Jordan, as many “greats,” was at his best when he took his game, his fellow players, his audience, his coach, and others “seriously.” They just don’t take themselves too seriously.

EXCERPT 2

With Peace

The choice of happiness or unhappiness is like a choice between ease or disease or lastly one of peace or _____. I do not know the answer to that one, as I search for a word that resembles the opposite of peace. Anyone out there want to take a shot at it? _____. It could possibly be “havoc,” “mayhem,” or “war.” I am not sure there is a word, because all the words that even come close seem to be words of action. Action is not a feeling. Peace is a natural feeling. If one opposes peace, their behaviors go against nature with unmerciful actions that are beneath the feeling of love. Being below love is being in an environment where suffering grows wild. This is why all of our actions and feelings should be ones of nothing less than love.

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