

Title: Long Strange Trip

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Tagline:

Kenneth Hailey believes he can deal with everything logically - even love. Until he meets Rose Red, a free-spirit flower child who believes in loving the one you're with. And, while love plays its part, for Kenneth, 1967 is the year he wakes up.

Excerpt:

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“Love hits a person without warning, doesn’t it?” Rose sighed. “Wouldn’t it be great to invent an equation to see if a person’s compatible for you? A way to take all the guesswork out of love.”

“Nah, it’s too elusive, and does love exist? It’s an emotion that defies probability.”

“Love exists. We humans have spent centuries trying to define it. Of course it does. How can you ask such a thing?”

Kenneth rose up on his elbows and squinted at her. “Why all this sudden talk of love? I’m not sure what quantifier you’d use for compatibility.”

“Not a bad idea to formulate love into an equation, then we’d never have to make a mistake.” She smiled at his scowl. “Thinking out loud, is all.”

Kenneth sat up and slipped on his shirt, buttoning it up to his collar. Disappointed at his need to cover himself up, Rose suddenly felt exposed.

He picked up her sweater. “Here, put this on. You’re shivering.” He crossed his arms. “Let me ask you a question. If you had such a formula, and the formula told you Mark was bad news, not your type at all, would you have walked away?”

Even without him being here, Mark haunted her life. Of course she would have mocked such a formula, denying what her heart desired.

Kenneth didn't wait for an answer. "So, what's the point of a formula if you're not going to follow it? Most people are like you. They'd deny the results if it wasn't what they wanted to hear. Human emotions win every time over rational thought."

Rose tugged the sweater over her head. "I see, but you would be different. You'd have the discipline, I suppose."

"Sure I would. What's the point of using it if you don't take its advice? Look at the Indian and Chinese cultures...they use horoscopes to check out compatibility. It's no different from what you're talking about."

"You don't believe in astrology. Anyway, I had Mark's chart compared with mine, and we were a good fit, at least sexually. He's an Aquarius, that's his need to be free. He belongs to the new generation."

"It's all nonsense." He looked towards the path that led down to the beach. "We should go."

Rose decided to drop the thread of their conversation. Arguing with Kenneth was nearly impossible, judging by the stubborn look on his face. Mouth pressed tight, his eyes narrowed and crinkled, but handsome despite his sour expression. Handsome! When did she suddenly see him as handsome? Without glasses, the planes of his cheekbones and his intelligent eyes, stood out. An appealing broad mouth complemented his face. His height commanded a solid presence, and she liked standing near him. A flush of embarrassment reddened her skin, and she was thankful for the darkness.