

Love through the Ages
by Glynis Astie

Did you hear that? It was the sound of the cobwebs being swept off my blogging abilities. Seriously, I think a bat just flew out of my brain. ;) And why would I do such a thing, when clearly, my brain has been thrilled to be occupied with so many other tasks? Why else? I have something to celebrate.

Today my husband and I are celebrating our fourteenth wedding anniversary. Wow! Fourteen years of love, laughter and memories. Fourteen years of supporting each other, of celebrating each other's victories and of leaning on each other through our hardest moments. Not to mention fourteen years of desperately trying not to kill each other...

Who could have imagined when I came across this dashing Frenchman, I would be his wife six months later? It's truly the stuff of legends, which is why I chose to immortalize our story in my debut novel, *French Twist*.

My husband is such an amazing man! He's kind, intelligent, gorgeous and he can make me laugh like no one else ever has. He's also extremely defensive, has little tolerance for individuals less intelligent than he is (which is most of the world), and is also, um, a total slob. I, of course, come with my own list of faults, which I choose to ignore at this moment in time because a) I can and b) if your curiosity gets the better of you, you can read all about them in my French Twist series. (How's that for a shameless plug? Ha!)

Marriage is one of the greatest adventures you'll ever take. You'll experience the highest of highs, the lowest of lows and everything in-between. Let's break it down, shall we? For the first year of marriage, we were on our best behavior—especially since our dating window was so freakin' short! We did our best to hide our faults from one another, which was downright comical. Before we knew it, shit got real, and we had to admit to ourselves (and each other) that things were not, and never would be, perfect. But they were pretty damn good!

So, we adjusted our expectations just in time to have our first child. Guess what? Children change *everything*. If you're lucky, you have an easy pregnancy, and the hard part begins after the baby is born. This was soooo not the case for me. I remember monitoring my pregnancy closely, working my way through the discomfort and choosing to marvel at my ability to create life. Our bubble continued for the first couple of days following the birth of my son, since we were in awe of our little miracle. And then...I started missing sleep. When my husband went to work and I stayed home on my "paid vacation," I began to resent the man I previously thought of as my knight in shining armor. Suddenly, he became the enemy, the man who was more interested in his own needs than those of his newly formed family. (There *may* have been some hormones at work here...)

Somehow, I pushed through the pain, balanced those hormones and found a routine. Life eventually settled down and we found our bliss for a few years. Then we had another baby. Woohoo! Our new bundle of joy didn't feel the need for sleep, which meant I didn't feel the need to make sense. At all. Thank God I decided to stay home with my sons or I would have been committed to an insane asylum. As it was, I came really, *really* close.

Life is now all about the kids. We still don't get much sleep, but my husband and I make it work. During those few moments when we don't want to rip every last hair out of our heads, we appreciate our little

miracles and what we went through to bring them into this world. In fact, it's almost like we're war buddies. We remember the explosive diapers, the sleepless nights, the health scares and feeling like total morons because we couldn't figure out why our babies were crying. This kind of experience bonds you like nothing else can.

Being married is hard enough, but adding children to the mix kicks everything up a notch. There were definitely days when I thought one of us wouldn't make it out alive. My husband and I went after each other's weak points, purposely upsetting the other by saying the pettiest things. This practice would be scary if it weren't completely normal.

These days, I gaze at my darling husband over our morning coffee and often find myself overwhelmed by the depth of my love for him. Despite his inability to clean up after himself and his propensity for being an intellectual snob, I *love* this man. Truly, madly, deeply. I love him from the top of my head to the tips of my toes. He may drive me out of my mind, but he gets me like no one else does. He puts up with my craziness and loves me with everything he's got. And honestly, what else do we live for?