**COMMITMENT SPEECH**

**FOR**

**GENE ENARSON**

(**If you haven't told Joni why you're there yet, you can start with**)

Dear Joni.... I bet you're wondering why we're here... I mean... it's always great to be with you... and you know that there's no place I'd rather be than to be by your side. And whether we find ourselves on an interstate highway or the road less traveled, I know... and I certainly hope that you do as well... that you are the only person with whom I want to share all of **this**... (**If you can, acknowledge the scenery and the vista**) ... and everything. Our paths crossed a long time ago and whether we thought anything of it at the time... who knows? 1971 seems like it was a lifetime ago. You were friends with my younger brother... does someone older and "cooler" .... a SENIOR... pay attention to those "little kids?" ... not usually... but those eyes... that killer smile.... **YOURS**, Joni... not my brother's... (**Wait for the laugh**) ... somehow they caught my attention and held a place somewhere within... waiting to be rediscovered.

Years passed and lives were lived. We built our own friendships and led our personal lives separately. After all you were "just" my younger brother's friend.... but oh... that smile. We worked... we had our adventures and made our mistakes... we learned... we grew... we saw the parts of the world we were meant to see.

And then somewhere in some strange yet mystical and meaningful way, someone invented the "Internet." And nothing was the same. We reconnected online and here we are... standing on the edge... literally...

But we're **here**... on the edge... and we're **together**. This place... Bryce Canyon... means so much... to be able to share this incredible miracle of nature.... to be out in the open... to have an unobstructed view of the present and to have a moment to envision what lies ahead... laid out before us... this is the place that I have chosen to pledge my commitment to you.

I think we can both understand, at this point in our lives, as we stand here together before God, that nature and life are both unexplainable magnificent mysteries. Someone once described serendipity like this... "You look for something, find something else, and realize that what you've found is more suited to you than what you thought you were looking for." I can't help but wonder... after all of these years... that it was pure destiny that brought us together. It's also been said, "Sometimes what we believe as coincidence is really getting ourselves caught in an **angel booby trap**." Well... **THAT's** **ONE** way of looking at us... an angel booby trap! Thank goodness those angels were doing their work, because look at us now!

Yes... here we are... \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ years later after reconnecting. You and me... the two of us... oh and Hobie.... always our Hobie... Joni, you know it's true that **life doesn't have to be perfect to be wonderful**... and I know that my life is wonderful with you right by my side. We are all here for a reason and a purpose.... and by here I mean here in life and right here.... right now... and our purpose... **MY** purpose right now, is to let you know... and to declare before God and man and this magnificent creation of nature, that I pledge my commitment to you... I am yours. I may have had my rocky moments.... and by that I mean both my personal issues and my "**ROCKY"** moments... I've faced my Apollo Creed's in this world and I am ready, willing, and eager to be a better person... for me, for you, and for US.

The French have a word for what we have....it's RETROUVAILLE. It means "The joy of meeting or finding someone again after a long separation." That's us!! I just saw something that said, "Life fails to be perfect but it never fails to be beautiful." We're definitely not perfect but you and me.... what potential!! It doesn't matter if we're road tripping or at the theater... whether we're home watching Master Chef or out for a walk with Hobie.... I know I have found my home with you. I love you.