Sealing the Deal

7 Months of Engagement

2015

<pic of Lock>

Preface

Preface for next journal

Laura and I were prepared for each other

Table of Contents

[1/20/15 Tuesday 5](#_Toc418282792)

[1/22/15 Thursday 6](#_Toc418282793)

[01/25/15 Sunday 7](#_Toc418282794)

[01/26/15 Monday 8](#_Toc418282795)

[To Laura's parents: 8](#_Toc418282796)

[02/01/15 Sunday 8](#_Toc418282797)

[02/13/15 Friday 8](#_Toc418282798)

[Preparing to Pop the Question 8](#_Toc418282799)

[03/03/15 Tuesday 8](#_Toc418282800)

[03/04/15 Wednesday 9](#_Toc418282801)

[03/09/15 Monday 10](#_Toc418282802)

[03/10/15 Tuesday 11](#_Toc418282803)

[04/01/15 Wednesday 12](#_Toc418282804)

[04/09/15 13](#_Toc418282805)

[5/01/15 Friday 14](#_Toc418282806)

[Testimony and short letters of appreciation I wrote to the Bishopric 16](#_Toc418282807)

Table of Photos

[Photo 1: Bus broke down at the Airport one morning. I got to steer it up on top the trailer of this semi. 9](file:///C:\Users\Jason%20Porter\Google%20Drive\Journals\Sealing%20the%20Deal.docx#_Toc418282782)

[Photo 2: Me on the side of the highway with the broken-down bus named MT 18. 9](file:///C:\Users\Jason%20Porter\Google%20Drive\Journals\Sealing%20the%20Deal.docx#_Toc418282783)

[Photo 3: Laura and I with our orange peel boats. They both were carried gracefully by the Beautiful Provo River current into a pile of debris on the bank. 10](file:///C:\Users\Jason%20Porter\Google%20Drive\Journals\Sealing%20the%20Deal.docx#_Toc418282784)

[Photo 4: Laura feeding the ducks our stale bagels as she gets swarmed by three of them. 10](file:///C:\Users\Jason%20Porter\Google%20Drive\Journals\Sealing%20the%20Deal.docx#_Toc418282785)

[Photo 5: The amazing orange peel galleon. 10](file:///C:\Users\Jason%20Porter\Google%20Drive\Journals\Sealing%20the%20Deal.docx#_Toc418282786)

[Photo 6: My nose getting crushed as Laura and I enjoy the nature. 10](file:///C:\Users\Jason%20Porter\Google%20Drive\Journals\Sealing%20the%20Deal.docx#_Toc418282787)

# 1/15/15 Thursday

So things with Laura have been progressing smoothly. Just this past eek, Laura posted to facebook that we are officially in a relationship. Now the whole world knows if they haven’t already. On Sunday, Sis. Oldroyd, the bishop’s wife, came up to us to say what a “cute” couple we are and how she enjoyed seeing us together during her family history lesson.

As if that wasn’t enough, Laura even shoed me the ring she wants. As an inside joke, I told hr I’d get her a “shiny” for her finger. Yeah, we’re pretty serious now. We both want it.

Last night we watched the hobbit, the animated version. She had never seen it before, so it was a must. We’ve made goals together. We even have a google.doc with all the things we personally want to achieve and the things we want to do together.

We spend all our time together. We made a puzzle this past week. It was missiong one piece out of the 500. I told her that though we can’t always have all the pieces in our hand, we can see the bigger picture. Life is the same way. We may not know at first how it will all pan out, but we can trust that the missing pieces exist and that we just need to focus on what is important.

Well, my sister Stacey brought me food as a surprise. I had recently told her that I was wiped out of money because of tuition and rent. She got me a ton of food. I was really appreciative. She really is a great sister.

Well, I finally got paid, so now I can afford some things on my own. Fortunately, now that I eat with Laura all the time, we plan out our meals and have found that the cost of groceries split between us has made our food expenses much less than while we were single.

Anyway, I love Laura a lot and I can only see the bigger picture: an eternal marriage with my best friend.

# 1/20/15 Tuesday

“Jason, how much do you love me?” came the pleading voice accompanied by Laura’s frantic look as if something horrible had just happened.

“uh, why? What happened?” I searched her eyes for meaning to her quizzical yet preoccupied glance.

With a little embarrassment, Laura explained the mysteries of the woman’s body in as few words as possible. “I just bled on the couch and I think I got it all over you.”

Yesterday was the most interesting adventure I had yet with Laura related to mutual growth. We spent the entire day together talking about the future, responding to many important questions in preparation to spend our lives together forever.

Anyway, we talked a lot about things we wanted to know about each other. Many were opinion related such as how to rear children in certain aspects of their lives and how we planned on managing finances and such. We ended up going over some important questions regarding intimacy and our goals in protecting our morality throughout the rest of our time being single. I’m glad that we both have the same standards. It makes it really easy to talk about these things and not feel like either of us are requiring special demands. Everything seems mutual between us.

Laura wrote to her missionary. He was starting to make it obvious that he wanted to date her. She told him that she was getting married in August. Guess what. Now the word is spreading and I haven’t even proposed yet! Crap! I still haven’t even talked to her parents yet for permission to marry her yet, a feat that Laura expects me to accomplish by the end of this month. We’ll see. I’m a bit nervous, but I don’t think I have any reason to be. Her parents both seem to like me. They might ask me some questions regarding how I will behave as a husband toward her. I think I’ll prepare a little how I might respond prior to asking.

On Saturday, Laura and I went to Zales. Ring shopping wasn’t really on the items of our agenda list for the weekend, but it ended up taking a lot of our time. Laura says, after four days of constantly admiring and comparing the wedding rings found online, that she thinks she has finally narrowed it down to one. We went to the BYU bookstore and found some guy’s rings for $20. I think I might go ahead and get one of those. They look like they are good. My friend got one and had it appraised locally for $300. Tungsten Carbide. I’m not as picky. I just like the material and the feel of it.

Laura on the other hand is all about how hers looks. She likes the swirly shape for her band. I admit that I think she is right. Her ring that she has selected is a beauty.

I love Laura. On top of all of our discussions and interactions, she finds a way to ask the things that are on my mind that I haven’t shared. She asked about my step mother and about the day that I knocked her down for beating my brother. I told her. Laura got visibly upset over it. I’m glad that she loves me and that she will never be anything like my step mother.

My brother seems to be doing fine on his mission. Sounds like he got sick this past week. But he said that he’s been teaching a lot of lessons.

Clayton and I built rockets while Laura was away on her slumber party with her freshman gang called “The Tank.” The Tank has made it a personal objective to get up in the face of any new boyfriend of a

group member. I got a special interview by them prying at my brain for any proof that I did not disserve to date Laura. I guess I passed because they left me be. But they got it out of Laura that we’re getting married.

Well, next step in the process is the engagement. I’m still trying to think of a good way to propose. I have no clue what I’ll end up doing. I have a few ideas. Maybe one of them will stick. Not sure when I’ll propose either. I guess when the time comes, the time comes. This is an exciting time tobe alive.

# 1/22/15 Thursday

Yesterday Laura told me that she spent the night prior talking to her mother over the phone. I immediately knew that she had told her. Laura said that her mother pried it out of her. Kind of funny the way things work out. Anyway, I knew that her whole family would know that we are getting engaged now. Her mom called us up last night and we talked over the speaker phone. Her mom said, hi Jason, or should I say, son!

Laura's dad even started sending memes saying congratulations to her with wedding pictures. I knew it was going to happen. I guess this will make it easier to talk to her parents for permission. In fact, it might even be more of a planning meeting than an interview.

Well, things are looking good. Laura's mom is really on top of things. She started planning the whole thing already. Things that I didn't even know needed to be done, like choosing the color theme, calling up wedding cake places to book them, schedule six months in advance the wedding day at the temple, etc. And I still don't even have the ring! I'm not even engaged!

Everyone in her family was talking about how they knew sooner than the other about us getting married. Laura's mom went down stairs after hanging up with Laura the night before to tell Laura's dad. Her dad said "Who told you! I knew several hours ago!" Sara learned from Laura, and told her dad. Then Laura's mom said, "Well, I knew several weeks ago!" Then I pointed out the fact to Laura that Sara had started calling me brother inlaw several months ago. Then I said, well, I knew when I first saw you. In other words, I win. Read my journal and weep ya'll!

My side of the family has no clue yet. In fact, I better tell my dad soon because I'll need to coordinate a few things with him. he deserves to know. Maybe I'll even talk with my sisters this week. I'll write my brother too. he should know.

Well, Laura and I made mugs yesterday. We bought white ones and decorated them with colored sharpies. we have yet to heat them in the oven. apparently that makes it permanent. We drew a mickey mouse on mine and a minnie mouse on hers and when we put them up together they appear to be kissing. Turned out a lot better than I thought it would. Hopefully they last a while.

Well, that's my update. Everybody found out somehow prior to the engagement. Our marriage must have been written in the stars.

# 01/25/15 Sunday

Laura and i have been using online sources for marriage questions to get to know eachother better. We have come across many deep discussions on our opinions about how out married life should be. I have been really happy with our unified viewpoints.

Today we came across a personal topic that led to us discussing Laura's eating disorder. I learned something new about her situation that made me want to cry. I held it in and hugged her tight. I told her many things. Many of which i cannot remember. I know that what I said had an impact on Laura because she started to sob over my shoulder. I told her that the only thing that was true about her feelings about herself was that it was a lie from satan. I told her that i want so badly to convince her that she is a wonderful person, but i needed her to convince herself that she was wonderful and beautiful.

She told me that she needed me and they i was the only one outside of counseling that she had confided they information with. I told her they i appreciated her trust in me. I asked her to include me in her trials so that I could help. Not to control or regulate her actions, but to support her in her righteous goals. I told her about the imprisoned soldiers where half worked hard on surviving the first month expecting to be saved by then. The other half decided to just maintain a positive attitude until they were saved possible months down the road. The first group got discouraged after the first month and started to lose faith and ultimately died. The second group waited patiently knowing that they just needed to keep pushing forward to that day in which they would be saved and they were.

I told her she would have episodes and reruns and feel like she failed. But i told her not to get discouraged. One day she would be completely liberated by those emotions.

I love her so much. Right now i had a spiritual experience. I prayed to god and broke down in tears about Laura. I prayed for her and told him that i love his daughter but i didn't feel worthy to take care of her. I told him that she deserved better than me. Feeling this way and not knowing what to say, i felt an impression "i love her too, this is why i prepared you."

I felt the spirit enter my heart. I know it is true. I know god knows how much i love her. I began to change my prayer and asked him to prepare me even more to be the man that she needed. To be the man that could take care of her.

It makes sense in my mind now. God cannot convince her of her worth and potential. Only she can. But through me and my experiences, maybe I can be an instrument in god's hands.  I have a mission: love Laura. Convince her that she does deserve me. She is worth more than everything to me. I would die inside without her, yet she cannot love herself. I told her it was a commandment of god to love thy neighbor as thyself. Not to just love thy neighbor, but love you as well. I told her it would require faith and courage a little trust.  But to lean on me as a support. I want to support her. It takes convincing to love yourself. But, i think this is my role. This is what god has prepared me for. He wants me to help her love herself.  I will do my best. I will.  I will. I can't live happily if i don't succeed.

# 01/26/15 Monday

## To Laura's parents:

I don't need to tell you that you have raised a wonderful daughter because you know that. But i want you to know that i want to make her happy. I will love her every day of my life. I am a worthy priesthood holder.  My future plans are to finish up college in the next 4 years with my masters in bio mechanical engineering. I intend to be debt free within the next 5-6 years.

# 02/01/15 Sunday



Photo 1: After church, Laura and I built a snowman right outside the building.

## Spilling the Beans

Yesterday was the big day of spilling the beans to Laura's parents.  It was a nervous day for me. By the evening, Laura confronted me and asked me what was wrong. She guessed it; i was flat out nervous.  Finally Laura convinced me to just go meet her parents in the moment with her. She and i walked up to her parents and she said We have a big announcement t to make, we're getting married!  Her parents swooped in and embraced us both.  Then we sat down and as her parents asked us both questions

# 02/13/15 Friday

## Preparing to Pop the Question

I'm just waiting in a gazebo by the river for two ladies to leave. Well, i think they left. I'm setting up for later today when i propose to Laura. This is the same spot we ate cafe rio together last May on our first date with just me and her. It's calm and i am really excited.  I have it all planned out.

# 03/03/15 Tuesday

I’ve been a little lazy in writing in my journal lately. things with Laura and I are going well. We just love each other more and more everyday. It’s great! Having a ring on her finger has made things even more exciting. I think I feel a little more distant from my dad now. I used to call him every other day just to talk. I really need to start calling him more frequently.

I got really depressed lately about being an RM. I feel like I’ve failed my investigators. It’s so hard to keep in contact with them. But I realized that it’s not my fault for their choices. I served my mission well. I hate going on facebook just because I’ll see another post by Fernanda. She has fallen in the deep end of things and she definitely isn’t surfacing anytime soon. I’m sad about it. But Laura has been great about talking me through it. It really isn’t my fault. I know I can be better and maybe I’ll be able to help her some day. But right now she’s lost the light that she once had.

I’m behind in all of my classes due to getting sick. My programming class is the worst. It feels like 12 hours of out-of-class work and none of my grades reflect my programming skills. Rather the teacher thinks it is more important to grade me on essays about my code. Dumb. The TAs are so far behind in grading that I only have a couple grades in and they are aweful because I didn’t realize that my code wasn’t graded but my essays about my code was. So I put a lot of effort into coding when I should have been more concerned with writing the flipping labs!! I might drop the class.

Laura and I have been making marriage goals which has brought us even closer. We are going to have a great marriage ☺

Laura and I both agree that we are basically married already except for the fact that we don’t live in the same apartment. I just love Laura so much that I really can’t explan it. I can’t wait to hold her in my arms each and every day; tell her she’s my world and that I love her.

# 03/04/15 Wednesday

I’m still working the early shift at work. Recently I broke down a bus in the airport and had to bring it to the shop.



Photo 2: Bus broke down at the Airport one morning. I got to steer it up on top the trailer of this semi.



Photo 3: Me on the side of the highway with the broken-down bus named MT 18.

I’m still behind in my classes, but seeing the light at the end of the tunnel. this weekend I’m heading up to Laura’s home in Salt Lake to visit her parents. She has a cousin getting home from a mission so she wants to go to the homecoming. I expect her mother is going to go over a lot of wedding plans with us over the weekend. We still need to find a place to stay for next year.

I made Laura a lunch today because she won’t be eating with me today. I put a love note in it. Laura is starting some block classes that will interfere with our lunch time and Mon-Tues nights. I’m not really excited. In fact, I think I’m gonna hace a hard time not eating without her today. But, I guess I’ll be busy anyway. I have a lot of catching up to do.

# 03/09/15 Monday

Laura and I spent the weekend at her house in SL. It was great spending time up there away from school. Laura spent an hour finding her wedding dress. After 5 dresses she found the one! Very impressive. Between you and me, she looked Gorgeous!



Photo 4: Laura and I with our orange peel boats. They both were carried gracefully by the Beautiful Provo River current into a pile of debris on the bank.

Her family has been praying and fasting lately a lot for Laura’s sister Sara who has been making unwise decisions. We had a family reunion gathering for Laura’s cousin’s homecoming. Fun experience. Laura and I came home after church and reunion and went on a bike ride to the lake. Very nice day. Mid 60s. We had a picnic, sailed some orang-peel rigged boats, and read “Life’s Lessons” from Dallin H. Oaks and a book about making a celestial marriage.



Photo 5: Laura feeding the ducks our stale bagels as she gets swarmed by three of them.



Photo 6: The amazing orange peel galleon.



Photo 7: My nose getting crushed as Laura and I enjoy the nature.

I don’t think that the terms “make” or “build” are the best for describing a marriage. I’m not married yet but it seems to me that it really isn’t a finished product that you can just jot down some blueprints and schematics and then make. I think it’s more of a growth developed by following correct principles together. For instance, if we read the scriptures everyday together, we are spiritually feeding our marriage. Once we reach the point in which we feel spiritually “fit” we can’t give up nurturing our relationship or it will wither and die. Unlike a building that can stand for years without crumbling to the ground, I feel that a marriage is much more delicate and requires a lot of constant attention. Also, where you can leave your building blocks for a long time and come back and continue working on your project, in a marriage, you can’t leave and expect to find it in the same state. It just doesn’t work that way.

I came to learn by degrees that Laura’s roommates are less than nice to her. I’ve known that they are immature, but I had no idea how bad the gossip had gotten to the point that shw wants to move out. I want to speak with them. I know I can make them cry. I know I have the ability to shame them. But it’s not my place.

I just need to love Laura. Help her be happy. She only has a little longer to stay in that apartment.

I’m considering dropping my computer programming class. too much work. Not good enough grade. too much stress. Plus being engaged has distracted me a lot. Just too much to thingk about. Plus, I just want to be with Laura.

I’m scared how lonely I’ll feel while she is gone for the spring. That’s gonna be hard.

I’ve been thinking about some things lately. Laura and I shared out patriarchal blessings Friday. it was a very good experience. We both felt happy about our life together. She read mine and told me she felt that I would be called to be a Bishop. If so, I’d like to be better prepared. Maybe I ought to start studying some good books. How to rescue, how to council, how to teach. I have a lot to learn. I hope I can reach that point the right way if I do.

# 03/10/15 Tuesday

Laura and I came up with a Marriage Motto. We actually made two. Just small phrases that we can remember for important moments in our marriage:

Oneness in mind and heart and spirit.

Top priority: us.

Having worked hard on our relationship already, we realized that we would have to work hard on those three aspects of our life together. We need to be physically healthy as well as grow in the other parts of our character. We decided that we must also become prayer masters. We made it a goal to pray together everyday invisioning that we are both entering the lord’s presence as a united couple. We also started a scripture journal in which we read the Book of Mormon together and discuss what we learned together and record it. I think we are on the right path. Almost all of the things we read that a good couple should be doing together for a successful celestrial marriage, we already do. We even have weekly inventory. We rock!!

# 04/01/15 Wednesday

This semester has been really hard. I can’t believe how difficult keeping up with classes has been. I’m super stressed. I also have been sick a total of three and a half weeks which has put me behind quite a bit in my studies and homework. I have to finish a project this week which I have ill started; I need to build a pipsqueak engine and write a report on it. The report is only 7 pages so that should be simple. I finished a simple outline for the report yesterday. Not worried about that. I am worried that my Math test tomorrow is gonna rock me. Guess I should have studied a bit more. Cramming has been stressful. I need to work on my school work more than I’ve been giving it attention lately.

In other news, General Conference is coming up this weekend. Laura and I’ll be heading up to her parents’ to watch it. Should be fun. I’ve been hearing lately about a change that might happen with temple marriages. Supposedly the first presidency has considered requiring civil marriage prior to entering the temple in the hopes of eliminating all potential threat of gay marriages within the temple. It essentially would remove the power of church officers to perform marriages. You basically would go get married and then go get sealed in the temple (something that is done in most countries already). If it is announced this conference that this change will take place, I hope it will have no effect on our wedding. It won’t make too much of a difference in my opinion, but I would prefer to say that I got married in the temple.

Laura has gotten down a little bit lately over her major as a 2D Studio Artist. Her field is very subjective. Though her creative talents exceed that of others in her field, her professors don’t seem to give her the time of day. I wish I could go talk with them and figure out what is what. Sounds like they have “favorites.” To me that seems really unprofessional. It reminds me of high school. It’s a bogus system. I hope that I can help Laura maintain her drive to create her art and not conform to the professor’s idiocy. Laura is one of the most talented people I have met. This semester she took a slab of rock and with much diligence, turned it into a heart! It looked legitimate. I was totally impressed. I got to see most of it made.

I’ve been super busy and haven’t gotten much time to do what I need to. This week I need to put a down payment on our honeymoon hotel. I’ve started financing a lot of things lately: Laura’s ring, tuition loan, and considering pulling money out of my credit account for the honeymoon. I also plan on getting a new car this summer. I need one. Laura can’t drive my car yet and I want her to be comfortable driving without me so I feel the need to get an automatic transmission.

My sister Stacey took our engagement photos this past weekend. We’re both excited to see them. They were taken in Alpine. We had a blast taking them. In exchange, we offered to babysit her kids. I was really grateful to Stacey for doing that for us. Especially with the fact that she is almost 9 months pregnant! She offered, so we took her up on that.

My brother still seems to be doing well on his mission. I haven’t written him lately and should do that. I’ve been a lazy butt of a brother. I’ll get on that this weekend.

Work has been the same. Just getting up at 1:30AM and supervising the departure of the missionaries. I applied to an internship with BD Medical in Sandy over the summer. It’s a year long internship, but I hope I get it anyway. Otherwise, I guess I’ll just stick around in Provo working for the MTC.



Photo 8: I made an easter egg for Laura.

Mikaela, Laura’s friend from freshman year is looking into getting us in contact with some resident assistants at the Branbury Apartments who are moving in the summer. We might be able to take their place which would be a dream come true for us. Laura would have a job as an RA. If we work 10 hr each per week, we could pull down our rent substantially. Plus it’s already furnished and seems decent. We’ll see.

We really need to get on top of apartment searching. It’s hard. BYU doesn’t have many married housing units. A lot of the ones around town are rather mediocre. Hopefully we can find something that suits us soon. If the Branbury gig works out, that would be amazing.

Well, Laura leaves for Europe this month. I’m not excited about that. Seems to be coming so quickly. Next week is the last week before finals. Then finals. Then a week till she’s gone.



Photo 9: I was the Easter Bunny. We did a surprise easter egg hunt for Stacey's kids right after General Conference.

I don’t know what I’ll do while she is gone other than work. Maybe I’ll get ahead in my classes for next year. Maybe make rockets with Clayton. Maybe learn a hobby. I might end up going up to Fargo for a week to help my dad out during his jaw surgery. He needs someone to watch over him for a couple days to make sure the procedure goes well.

I love Laura limitlessly. I can’t express how grateful that she is in my life. She makes me the happiest man on my down days. The only thought that comes to me when I wake up in the morning is “When will I see Laura?” I can’t wait for the day when I can just roll over and there she is. I imagine marriage as living with my best friend but never getting sick of being around her. I never want to be distant from her. Love is such a crazy feeling. Never in my life have I felt so complete as I have with her. Though I have some time yet to prepare, our marriage is my top priority because I know it is what will make me the happiest. It’s hard to wait so long for such a great blessing. Seven months of waiting is hard. But I will be patient. Jacob waited 14 years for Rachel. I can wait another four months.

I love her, so I’ll wait.

# 04/09/15

Last week of school before finals start.  I'm exhausted.  I finished manifacting a small pipsqueak engine that i designed with a partner for a class.  We finished building it ten minutes after class started.  We were so happy when it worked.  I put together the ten page report trying to persuade an audience that our design could be mass produced.

The study abroad is coming too fast.  I hope it goes just as fast.  Laura and i finally found housing at Wymount.  I move in on June 26th.  Seems like a good deal with lots of space.

Laura came to me today and told her that she has been feeling spiritual neglect and has asked how i was doing as far as personal studies.  I think she recognized that I've been really consumed in my frustration lately.  She told me that maybe if we were a little more diligent in our relationship with god he would be quicker to respond to our prayers.

I've been so distracted lately with internship applications and school that all my free time is spent on relaxation.  This past weekend was conference and one speaker stated that we shouldn't deceive ourselves with the lie that we don't have enough time in the day for scripture study.  Sometimes i regret the many days that i have neglected such study.  I could be so much more if i had been more diligent in my studies.  I read a scripture right now in alma 5:27 <lots to do.  Goals to serve.

# 4/28/15 Tuesday

Yesterday marked Laura and my first anniversary of meeting each other. It was a really great day. It was also our last day together before she leaves to Europe for her study abroad. I picked her up from the train station at 10 am. She had started walking she was so eager to get the day started so I actually found her a little ways down the road. She told me that she prayed that the day would seem very long to us and not pass by too quickly. We went on a bike ride along the provo river and fed ducks some of our old bagels. It was a really nice day considering the last few have been pretty rainy and cold. It must have been 65 degrees yesterday and sunny. Once we got back to my place, we jumped in the car and headed off to the Wild Ginger, a sushi buffet. We had so much sushi we wanted to explode. We had been talking about going there for months. We finally did. No regret. Though I must have had some kind of allergy because my nose plugged up and I couldn’t breathe straight until we got home again.



Photo 10: Laura and I celebrating our one year mark of knowing each other at Wild Ginger sushi buffet.

We decided to lounge around for an hour before doing anything else. Then we chose to go out to the theater. We watched Cinderella. There were only a handful of other people in the theater so we sat in the back with an entire row to ourselves. We ended up taking turns lying on each other’s laps while the other stroked the other’s hair.

We wanted to enjoy some kind of dessert so we went to Pop ‘n Sweet a local sweets shop that sells candy and soda from different countries. We got some Australian chocolates and cowtails to go along with a mandarin orange soda from NY. We ate outside the shop. It was really nice out still and we had a couple hours till she would be gone. We started talking about the trip. I’ll admit, it finally sunk in that she was leaving. I hug her and we both began to cry. I told her Happy Anniversary! We laughed a little in the tears. We talked about how much we loved each other. I told her that she was the miracle of my life. Once we were done wiping away our tears, we headed to the car. I let her in first and then I goofily got in on my side. I looked at her and she was crying again. She told me that she was going to miss me and my goofiness. Then we began talking about all of our fun adventures we had over the last year that we had known eachother. She mentioned how happy she was that we had met. I told her that I had never believed in soulmates until I met her. We both admitted that we were perfect for each other. We have never been in an argument and we have always been able to help the other in times of need. She is the love of my life.

With an hour left we went back to my apartment and we ended up making a paper chain with enough links to count down the days till she gets back. I hung it up on the wall next to my bed. It was finally time for me to take her back to the frontrunner. We got there with 17 minutes to spare so I sat with her in the train holding her face in my hands until a departure announcement was made. I kissed her goodbye.

I walked back to my car and watched the train take off.

I’m doing fine. I’m a little sad. I still get to see her tomorrow before she takes off for Las vegas to catch her flight. We talked about having lunch together one last time. I would very much like that.

I pray for her safety every day. I will fast every week that she will return unharmed. I am trying to be more worthy of God’s love and blessings each day by reading an hour of scriptures. I have been doing so for the past two weeks and I have come to love the scriptures as much as I had on my mission. I pray that my righteous desires will translate to protection for Laura.

I need her. I don’t know what I would do without her. If something happened to her I don’t know if I’d be able to bear it down. I need the Lord to take care of her while I cannot.

And when we meet again in seven weeks, I will be the happiest man on the planet. To marry my best friend for all eternity!

# 5/01/15 Friday

So, Laura’s gone. It’s still sinking in. She landed in Paris today around 8 am. She had quite the adventure on the way there. She went with two other girls going to the study abroad. A girl named Riley seemed to be the one making a lot of the executive decisions. If I could describe Riley based on what I’ve heard about this trip, I’d say that she is a person who wants to be independent and show her maturity but doesn’t have the common sense required to be in charge. I’ve been a little frustrated over the whole situation but I’ve relied on the Lord and prayed much for the protection of my Laura.

I remember Laura struggling to get the whole trip figured out back in February with no urgency from the other two girls. Riley seemed to be the one to call the shots and I guess we learn from our mistakes.

So I dropped Laura off at Riley’s place at 1:30 pm Wednesday. We packed things up in her car. They found a cheap flight in Las Vegas to Toronto. They would then fly to Dublin and later Paris to start off the Study abroad. …

I get a text from Laura at 5 am the following day telling me that she has a 12 hour layover in Toronto. To which I asked how they would get to their hotel. She responded that there was no hotel and that Riley and the the other girl planned on touring the city. That didn’t sit too well with me. It was 5 AM and here’s my fiancé telling me that she is going to be wandering around for 12 hours with two other girls who I don’t really know well (and personally don’t trust) and she had gotten no sleep on the flight. I knew that there was no way on earth that Riley could possibly have enough stamina to take on a full day wandering around after driving to Las Vegas (taking into account that 12 hours is roughly the amount of time that a person is actively awake in a day). Laura couldn’t comvince them to split a cheep hotel for the day (probably at max $40/person with breakfast). I understand the need to be frugal, but they already sved hundreds on the cheep flights. Why not spend a little bit more just for comfort’s sake.

I felt really bad for Laura the whole time. I texted and called her regularly for the last two days to check up on her status. She slept on the floor of the airport all day because the other two girls realized that Toronto isn’t the most touristy location in the world and just stayed by the terminal (for 12 hours!).

I think that Laura will laugh at this some day. But probably not yet. She made it to Paris and I called her this morning. She looked exhausted. But happy to finally have a bed. Riley wanted to have everyone stay up to get over the jet lag. Some people’s kids.

On a side note, I want to say that I don’t think that Riley is an idiot. I think she probably has lots of great skills and such. Being a continuing student at BYU means that she’s smart. Her experience is lacking and that is what frightens me. She was making rash decisions that affected my future wife. Not exactly the most brilliant display of that college brain. The real concern is if she doesn’t learn her lesson.

Well, I saw the latest Avengers movie. Let me just say it was AWESOME! I didn’t like some of the characters. But it was definitely worth seeing. I’ll have to go with Laura when she gets back.

I’m getting used to living back in my old apartment. I moved back to apartment 42. Still at glenwood. It’s been exciting. One of my roommates is Brazilian and his roommate is one of the members of my MTC group, so that was cool. Jacob Nielsen still rooms with me. I don’t see him that much since he has class and work. I have another roommate Eric who is taking calculus and asks me for help frequently. It feels good to know that my math has stuck with me over the years and I’ve been able to make use of it.

I’ve been working on a short movie for Laura. I found the old Movie Maker 2.6 online and started making a vide out of all of our photos to The Temptations song, My Girl. The new movie maker is horrendous. I can’t believe that it’s technology backtracked so far. But the movie is turning out great. Can’t wait to send it to her.

Anyway, not much new other than that. I’ve been praying for Laura’s safety like a broken record. I’ve been keeping up in my scripture reading which I think has been nice. I decided to read the Old Testament even though I never cared for it. I’ve learned quite a bit by reading it though. I’ll tell you something, Joseph Smith Translations clears up a bunch of confusing material that I’ve never understood. He was truly inspired by God.

I got my grades back, I got a C- average for my 10 credits. It was the hardest semester I’ve taken yet! And it was supposed to be the easiest! Being engaged definitely was a disctraction. But more over, I got sick at least 4 different times, a total of three and a half weeks of the semester! It was really difficult trying to catch up and I guess I did fine getting caught up in electrical engineering course, but my manufacturing and math classes killed me. Not too happy about that. I have decided that work played a role in stressing me out too so I’m going to quit working next fall to avoid any more GPA declination. I really want to get into grad school but now I’m scared that I ruined the chances for me unless I retake my math class. I guess I’ll just have to see.

## Testimony and short letters of appreciation I wrote to the Bishopric

Testimony:

This past week I’ve been going through my journal recalling all of the things that had happened over the course of this last year. I think about my testimony then and how it is now and I know that it has been used often and wisely in all of my important decisions. I know that my faith and relationship with my Heavenly Father have grown as I have practiced the principles of the gospel. As I have prepared myself for the blessing of an eternal marriage, I have learned that relationships are not something that is simply “built” or “completed.” We cannot simply neglect the building blocks to our faith and expect them to remain in the same condition. I have learned for myself that my testimony and my relationship with God is dependent on my continuous attention and nurture. As I have worked on my personal relationship with my Father in Heaven, I have received answers to prayer and fasting. I know the atonement to be true; I know its power and have seen it work miracles in my life. Jesus Christ is my Savior. A personal witness has revealed that to me. He lives!

I know this to be true in His sacred name, Jesus Christ. Amen.

To the Oldroyds:

This past year has been a true blessing for me as I’ve come to know you. Life can be unpredictable at times, but I think the key things in life are the experiences that we have and who we share them with. The 79th ward has been my home for the past two years and I have really noticed a change when the new Bishopric was called. I know that many lives have been enriched by your service. I only have a short time till I “graduate” from the ward, but I’d like you to know my appreciation for you. Life is great. But it’s even better when you get to spend it with amazing people. Being blessed with you in the ward has definitely been a privilege that I will cherish. I have a list of people that I aspire to be like. Just know that your examples have been influential to me. Thanks for the great year! You Rock, I hope you never get released :)

-Jason Porter

To the Adamsons:

This past year has been truly amazing for me as I’ve had the chance to get to know you. I have a lot of reasons to be grateful. The 79th ward has been my home for the past two years and I definitely noticed a change when the new Bishopric was called. I know that many people have been blessed by your service. I appreciate all that you do. Thanks for the great year and I hope you never get released :)

-Jason Porter

To the Duffys:

This past year has been an amazing year for me as I’ve had the chance to get to know you. I’ve had the priveledge of living in the 79th ward for the past 2 years and have seen a great change when the new Bishopric was called. I know that your service has enriched the lives of many individuals. I appreciate all that you do. Thanks for the great year and I hope that you never get released :)

-Jason Porter

# 05/03/15 Sunday

So, I fasted yesterday that Laura would be protected and that she would have an enjoyable time on her trip. It sounded like her day today was much better. She was excited to tell me all of the things that she explored and all of the amazing sites. She really liked the Notre Dame building which she described as being 10 times the size of the Salt Lake Temple and even more detailed on the exterior. She also went to the catacombs. I bet that was interesting. Sounds kind of freaky to be honest. They even let her touch a skeleton!

She mentioned a little bit about the culture differences. Her group got harassed by some local twerps. I told her to be careful and that I’ve been praying for her safety.

Bishop gave me a book today as a present. It looks like a faith building book. The title is Drawing on the Powers of Heaven. He left a note within. I think I’ll read this book this week in order to keep myself busy.

I was just thinking about some of the good times I had with Laura and I realized that I have never mentioned some things in my journal. So, I hope to put these items in so that I never forget them.

## Texting Games

So, I met Laura in Church on April 27, 2014, and I briefly introduced myself to her at the end of the day at a ward prayer activity. I started finding reasons to run into her here and there. I got my roommates to start a game of volleyball just so that I could invite her. Then I would swing by her everyday over the summer with any excuse I could to chat. One time I went over knowing that she was a counselor in the Relief society so I came over to ask if she had the number to girl in the ward who was over my calling. I didn’t tell Laura that I already have the number. I just wanted to hang out with her. Later I made cookies with her and I decided that I would try to get her number. I had to run and get ingredients back in my apartment. I came back to hers and said, I would have texted you if you wanted chocolate chips to add as well but I didn’t have your number. So she gave it to me. Our texting was fun. One day she got a hold of my phone and changed her name to “God” in my phonebook. I didn’t find out till later that night. She left her bag at in my apartment before she had left so I decided to bring it over to her, but first I found a rock outside and wrote “U Rok!” on it. Later that night I got a text from “God” saying, You rock too. but remember that I am your rock. I laughed really hard over that one. Dating seemed complicated for a long time before we actually dated, but I enjoyed her so much during that time. She would sneak a new name into my phone every once in a while. She once was Frozen Grape because she always ate frozen grapes. Then I put my name as Micky Mouse in her phone as an inside joke. Everyone likes my Mickey Mouse voice and she found out about it. She then put her name as Minnie Mouse in my phone. It’s been that way ever since.

Anyway, recently I lost my credit card, license, debit card, BYU ID card. I noticed after running errands all day with Laura and couldn’t pay for my groceries. I got really uptight and Laura noticed my frustration. As we got into the car, she told me that I needed to pray to find it. She prayed. We decided to see if it was at the UPS building since I had it there last. We got there and lo and behold, one of the employees had found all of my cards on the counter. They must have fallen out while I was paying. Luckily they were all there. I sheepishly walked back to the car. Laura grinned and then said, Alright, now you need to thank God. So I said another prayer and thanked God that I was able to find them.

I love Laura! She is the most amazing woman in the world! I can’t believe how lucky I am! I hope that I can always be worthy to have her by my side. I pray daily for her and beg God that she be protected. My life would lack meaning without her.

05/05/15

Today has been the hardest day yet. I miss Laura so much. For whatever reason she wasn’t able to skype me yesterday but told me that she would skype today. I was really looking forward to it all day. I got really down today and have been in a sour attitude since I got off work at 10 AM I had one hour of sleep last night. Insomnia. Laura just got back to her hotel and it’s 1 AM there in Paris. I’m a little less than happy. She wanted to skype but she was going to be home by 9 PM like she said she would be everyday as a curfew. I get so worked up about her being safe that that made me freak out a little in my head.

I celebrated Cinco De Mayo today with Steven, Laura’s ex-boyfriend. Yay. That made everything better.

I’m just about to got to workout with Clayton. I’m pretty down right now. I’ve been replaying my mission in my mind over and over all day. Then I think about other things from the past that I can’t change but want to. It hurts a little. I kind of wanted someone to talk to earlier but now I’m not in the mood to see anyone really. I watched the office almost all day long since I’ve been back from work just to distract myself. I just want to hide under a rock.

I want to be with Laura so badly though. She understands me more than any other person. She would have been able to make me happy.

I’m not mad at her. I do wish she had gotten home before it got too dark out. Having lived in Brazil and hearing about all of the murders in the neighborhood the night before and having almost gotten knifed myself, I get really worried for Laura. I know that she is being protected, but I think she needs to keep some rules in order to keep that protection.

I got really frustrated today because I searched all of my boxes and suitcases for a printer cord and didn’t find it. I feel my blood pressure is high right now. I’m super stressed out. I better go ahead and work out and go to bed.

I feel lonely.

# 5/10/15 Sunday

## Mother’s Day

So, I got some cards at the dollar store for about 50 cents each. I bought one for my mom, Grandma Peck, Laura’s mom, Grandma Hart, and Stacey. I sent Tricia a funny Youtube video of the muppets singing Bohemian Rhaphsody. I thought it was funny and somewhat relevant and wished her a mother’s day with her arriving son. I had Bishopric meeting at 10AM and church started at noon. I hate noon church but it is what it is. I knew that I would be needed at the end of the third hour block in order to count tithing, so I drove down to Payson right after sacrament. I visited Grandma Peck. She seems to be doing fine. I don’t go down to see her that much. I gave her her card and found out that she would be in Ireland during my wedding. Oh well. I’ll have to bring Laura down to visit with her before she leaves.

It was a great visit with Grandma. Aunt Julie and Uncle David with their son Chad were there. We chatted for a while talking about life and school. When it was time to leave Grandma gave me a hug and asked how my dad was doing. She told me that she was sad about the divorce and wondered if they might get back together. I said no. She then said, that’s a shame because she seems so nice to you kids. She was nice to you right?

I didn’t realize that Grandma didn’t know about Ami’s abuse. I decided it best not to tell her, so I just agreed. What harm would it do? It’s over right? It doesn’t matter much anymore.

I then headed over to mom’s grave and I placed a snow globe that dad had bought for us to remember her. The water somehow evaporated out of it over the years, but it still had it’s gold colored angel in the middle. The angel represented mom as our guardian angel. I thanked mom for being there for me over the past years and I left her a mother’s day card. It basically told her how I wanted to make her proud and how excited I was to get married. I know that she would approve of Laura. And I know that she will make it to my wedding.

I got back to church in time to count tithing. Then I headed out to Laura’s uncle and aunt’s place to visit her family and hear her brother Matt’s mission call opening. He got called to London South mission. Exactly where Laura was when hi opened it. That was cool. I guess laura can give him the adapter she bought to charge her phone.

I gave Laura’s mom and grandma a mother’s day card with stuff from both Laura and me. They both appreciated it.

I had to leave and visit Stacey before going home so I did. I got there right as they were leaving for a walk so I tagged along. It was a nice day and it was fun to be with them. I got to see Chance again. Chase had some kind of obsession with computer programming. I guess his school is teaching him some basics using a game to teach little children. I didn’t start computer programming until I was 16. I guess that is kind of cool that they do that now adays.

Anyway, I found out today that Laura’s family might be taking off for Michigan to visit her relatives out there and they’re taking her with them. I’m bummed. I can’t imaging another 3 weeks without seeing her. Especially with the wedding on it’s way a week after they would get back. I’m a little frustrated with it. In fact, I don’t know exactly where I stand with this. But I think it was ill timing. It really wipes out the time we have left for planning the wedding. Well, what happens happens. In fact, all I care about is that we get married. If she goes, I’ll live and we’ll be happy when she get’s back.

I love Laura so much. If I need to wait for her, I will wait.

# 5/15/15 Friday

## I Got the Job!!

I finally had the interview with Dr. Bowden for the research assistant position and he offered me the job! He told me that there were 70 some applicants and that he only interviewed 8 of them. He told me that my resume and cover letter truly show that I have the qualifications necessary to be a research assistant. However, he was concerned about my GPA. It’s low. He asked me to tell him what my plan was for that. I was so glad that I had already prepared a plan a week ago. I told him how my plan would bump my GPA up to a 3.5 by the time I graduate. He said that if he hired me he would be putting a lot of trust in me. He wants to hire students that will go into grad school. In order to get into grad school you typically need about a 3.5 and a decent score on the GRE. I told him that I understood his concern and would honor his conditions. He is worried that working for him might hinder my grades further and defeat the purpose of the research which is to prepare me for grad school.

Anyway, he sent me an email about an hour later offering me the job. I was so excited I started telling all my family and Laura. Now I just need to tell my boss…

I think I’ll keep my old job and work 10 hours a week and then 30 doing research. I know that it’s a pay cut, but I think the research is much more valuable.

I met with Dr. Bowden today to complete the hiring process. He seemed excited to have me on board. I pray that I can live up to his expectations of me.

Well, I still love Laura and can’t wait to see her again. Skype is kind of pointless because she doesn’t get good internet. I feel like the majority of our conversations are mostly us trying to call each other up after a disconnect. Well, it’s only five more weeks till she’s back in my arms.

So, her mom decided against the trip to Michigan. I guess everyone thought it was too short notice and kind of hectic to plan right before the wedding. I think it might be a good decision. However, I am the last person to hold it against someone to want to visit their mother if it might be the last time.

Laura’s in Scotland now. I guess there are a lot of drunks living in the pub beneath where she is staying. Reminds me of the mission down in Brazil. Lot’s of commotion oustside at night and often some drunk people laughing histerically. Good times.

I switched my back to Utah Community Credit Union. Mostly because I’m sick of the $40 dollar overdraft fee I get each time they use my credit line for overdraft. UCCU acthally has a real overdraft protection set up. I have a feeling that I’m gonna like them a little more.

I kept my credit at Wells Fargo because I only opened it two years ago. That would look bad if I closed it before 5 years. I also haven’t opened up a new credit account at UCCU because I plan on waiting to get married so they will only pull my credit score once when Laura joins.

Anyway, I’m also scheduling Laura and my Fall semester so that we go in with a plan. I want to set it up so that we can help each other in our studies by knowing when we can have lunch together when we can call and when we should let the other study.

I talked with Laura yesterday. She was very frustrated. The night before I had been kind of jerk. I was telling her all the reasons she shouldn’t go to Michigan. It really doesn’t make sense to me. Actually, what I was telling her was all the things we would have to get done in less than a week. Pretty crammed. I told her that she wouldn’t have to worry though because I’d pick out a nice mattress while she’s gone in Michigan. I sent her a picture of a inflatable toast mattress. Looked horable. But I thought it was funny.

But yesterday we talked it out and we resolved the conflict. We both appologixed for making it so hard and stressful on each other. That’s that. I think we both needed that experience. We got through it. Now we know a little bit about how to deal with it for next time.

I talked with Laura about a job opportuinity doing Graphic Design. She seems really interested and possibly excited. I don’t want to push it on her. It really is up to her. But I really want her to aim for something that she thinks she can do that will stretch her a little and make her feel accomplished. It would also provide her with great skills that she could translate to other areas in her life. I bet she would be good at it.

Ed Rickers talked with me over the Christmas break in Hawaii and asked if Laura would be interested. I want her to meet with the guy that is in charge of Graphic Design for the Studies Weekly newspaper and see if she could get going on that. Maybe she wouldn’t be doing that this year, but maybe starting next summer she could land a job as a graphics designer or illustrator. I personally think that would be awesome. It would be hard and require a lot of dedication from her. But I think she could pull it off. I’ve been looking up some different courses she could sign up for just to get the basics. She wouldn’t be able to do the major, but frankly, half the credits for the major are generals, so I think taking the intro course and some one hour tutoirals on different software would be enough to get started. I happen to have the adobe suite, so she could practice on my computer already.

I just want her to be happy. If this turns out to be something that she likes and she takes off on it, more power to her. She deserves it. She’s really struggling wondering what kind of career she will have with her art major. I think all of her skills that she has learned would help her with graphic design. I mean, it’st basically the same thing but not on paper. You still need to know how to do art. And she’s such a great artist. I admire her talent. One of the traits that I always wanted in a spouse was creativity. Boy is she creative. Such a great mind. I sometimes can’t believe how lucky I am to have such a wonderful woman in my life. I just hope that I can help her reach her dreams and goals in life. I’m not perfect, but I feel complete with her.

Anyway, now that I have a research job, I think that Netflix is coming to an end. It was fun while it lasted, but reality sometimes needs to sink in. Time to be serious.

# 6/6/15 Saturday

Well, I’ve been having a hard time keeping up with updating my journal while Laura’s been away. I kind of hope that she has been keeping a good journal, but I think she has been struggling just as much as I have. Many things have happened in the last month: I got a new job as a research assistant for the BYU Applied Biomechanics Engineering Laboratory (BABEL), and… actually that’s about it. I also got a groin infection for the past two weeks. Feels like someone’s kicked me repeatedly in the groin everyday. The doctor gave me some meds and I think they are helping. It hurts a lot less anyhow.

I miss Laura a lot. We’ve felt the tension of being apart throughout the weeks. One time she texted me and told me she didn’t want to marry me anymore! Actually, what really happened is that she felt nervous and was scared that we were moving to quickly. She got a negative vibe about the whole thing and then she got a blessing from one of her professors and the feeling went away. My sister most likely won’t be able to make it to the wedding. Tricia’s baby is coming in last week of June or first week of July. Traveling with a newborn sounds like a nightmare. Instead of just deciding that I wanted to not move the wedding, I talked with Laura so it would be a joint decision. I think she would have been fine postponing the wedding a week. But I don’t want to and ultimately we both feel good about the 23rd of July as our wedding day.

My dad got a jaw surgery two weeks ago. He seems to be doing fine. the surgery left him we a gap between his two front teeth so he has been sending weird videos of him dubbing movie scenes over his videos. I shared some with Laura and told her “He’s my dad, but remember, he’s your father inlaw now.” She seems to like my dad. I hope that they create a strong bond of friendship. My dad has such great counsel. I think it would be positive for both of them.

I went down and visited my mother’s grave three times last month. I went down for mother’s day, then my mom’s birthday, and then on Memorial day. I gave her a mother’s day card and a birthday card. I put flowers on her grave for Memorial day. I love her. I wrote to her and told her that I am trying to make her proud. I invited her to the wedding. I expect her to be there.

Skyping and texting Laura has been a very patient-focused game. It is so hard to communicate with someone across the world who has barely any internet access and often times no service. We’ve managed to pull it off. I’m just glad we’re down to 8 days. We started off with 49. Then about two weeks ago she told me that she was getting home 3 days early. I got so excited that I couldn’t contain myself.

So, I think the hardest thing about the wedding so far is the invitations. We had a dispute amongst Laura, her mom, and me about them yesterday. I was kind of placed in charge of making them. I made several mockups and finally sent out the final draft. Laura finally moved to an area with internet so I was excited to skype her. I didn’t want to talk about the invitations at all but somehow it turned into a three-way argument via text message and skype. Then Laura felt like she was in the middle of a tug-of-war competition between me and her mom. I didn’t realize this until it was too late and Laura threw up her theoretical arms and didn’t want to talk anymore because she was so frustrated.

Long story short, I told Laura that I wanted to chat with her today and communicate our emotions and stresses. We both realized that we had misunderstood one another’s actions the previous day. Because we misunderstood each other we got frustrated. We ended up theoretically kissing and making up.

I can’t wait to kiss Laura when she gets home. She told me that she was going to tackle me as soon as she sees me. I want to hold her tight again and feel her warmth and love. I think our love for eachother has grown tremendously while she’s been on her study abroad. It’s been a real blessing no matter how hard it’s been to be apart. We’ve gotten really used to referring to pet names now. Honey, my Love, darling, dear, babe…yeah, we do them all. We really do love each other a lot! I’m starting to get scared of that tackle now.

I think that Laura is the most beautiful woman in the world. I’ve looked through our engagement photos over and over and I just love her smile and everything about her. She makes me happy to be me. I feel like the luckiest guy on the planet knowing that a wonderful woman like her loves me and cherishes her time with me. I never want to lose her. She is literally the best thing that has ever happened to me. I am so excited to embrace her next Sunday. I pray every day for her protection and for her happiness. I need her. Not like a drug or an antidote or some vice. I need her because she completes who I am. She is apart of me now. I know we aren’t married yet, but I’m learning what it means to be of “one flesh.” Though we have different oppinions and ideas, we love each other’s as equals and support each other in our trials. I fell in love with the woman who makes me feel perfect when I’m around her.

Well, only 8 days to go! Yay!!!!!!