For Brothers Only

WHILE at the mall the other day, I heard a scream the likes of which I had only heard in low-budget horror movies and grammar-school talent shows. With tears flowing down her cheeks, the source of the outcry was a little brown girl in the jewelry store. No impetus of what drives male/female relationships, the bare core that is left after you strip away all of the pretense and pretending that cloud the real reason for female actions and male reactions. And her statement may hint at the real reason why so many Brothers and Sisters can’t find true love connections.

When it comes to infatuation with how a woman looks, we can’t really blame women for thinking we’re a bunch of simpletons. After all, they are hit with enough one-liners and groping looks to legitimately conclude that most Brothers are overly curve-conscience. But while those Brothers are undoubtedly out there, I believe that, truth be told, most men are deeper than that. We all appreciate a good-looking woman, but we also want one we can talk to, share our hopes, dreams and fears with. Her smile, the way she tilts her head, the glow in her eyes. Her confidence, her poise, her demeanor, the way she treats her man. These are the things that really turn a Brother on. These are the things that separate a date from a fiancée, a shorty from a wife, a one-night stand from a lifetime commitment.

Does she value his opinion? Does she look at him in a positive light even when nobody else does? Does she give him her undivided attention, even when no one else wants to listen to him? Is she concerned about his well-being, his health, sometimes even more than he is? Can she cheer him up when he is down, bring him back to Earth when he is overconfident?

Many times we are played short. And many times we play along, and in the process, play ourselves short. But in the long run, finding that right mate may come down to both sides making a vow to play relationship chess, not checkers. For too long, mating has been considered a mindless game of superficiality, instead of what it really is—a deep journey into togetherness.

While looking pretty is nice, it can provide a Sister with a false sense of security and a Brother with a false sense of accomplishment. Until both men and women begin to give more attention and more importance to a woman’s inner beauty, both sides will lose. For Sisters, that means working more on simply being a good woman. For Brothers, that means letting it be known that we are smart enough to realize that looks don’t last forever, and patient enough to fall for a Sister’s ravishing character and compassion—aspects that she can’t pick up one day at the mall.

—Kevin Chappell