

Bob's Younger Wife

I was 26 and Bob was 40 when we met. Being a younger woman didn't bother me at all. Bob was young at heart and perhaps I was an old soul. I never felt the 14-year age difference made much of a difference for us. We were the perfect age for us! We married when I was 28 and Bob was 42. We had our "late in life" son when I was 38 and Bob was 52. Bob was my daily reminder that I was young. At least younger than him! I loved being Bob's younger wife!

People would ask about our age difference, and it would only confirm that I was the younger wife. Being with an older guy was a reminder that I was younger. I was never the old person in the room. Bob was!

When our son Kyle was born, Bob had a daily prayer. He wanted to live long enough for his son to remember him. Not sure why Bob thought that might not happen, but Bob was grateful as the years passed. Once Kyle was old enough to have many memories of his dad, Bob's prayer turned to living long enough to see Kyle graduate from High School. When High School came and went, Bob prayers became living to see Kyle graduate from college. When that happened, Bob would pray to see Kyle be happily married. That beautiful milestone was met over 6 years ago. I know Bob LOVED celebrating his 80th birthday with family in Maui and commented over and over how he never thought he'd live that long. He was thrilled he had lived longer than his dad did and would mention that frequently.

Did Bob have hopes of living to experience other milestones with Kyle? I'm not sure. Bob's ability to project into the future or think about things to come disappeared with his dementia. Or if he had those thoughts, he couldn't verbalize them. I think he was content with all the wonderful things that had happened in his life with Kyle and with all his other children and family. And with me. His younger wife.

What I find interesting thinking about all of this is that I never once thought about my own possibility of dying. I felt young and healthy and perhaps invincible. It was Bob's thing to worry about his death and when that might come. I was young. Or at least that's how I felt! His younger wife.

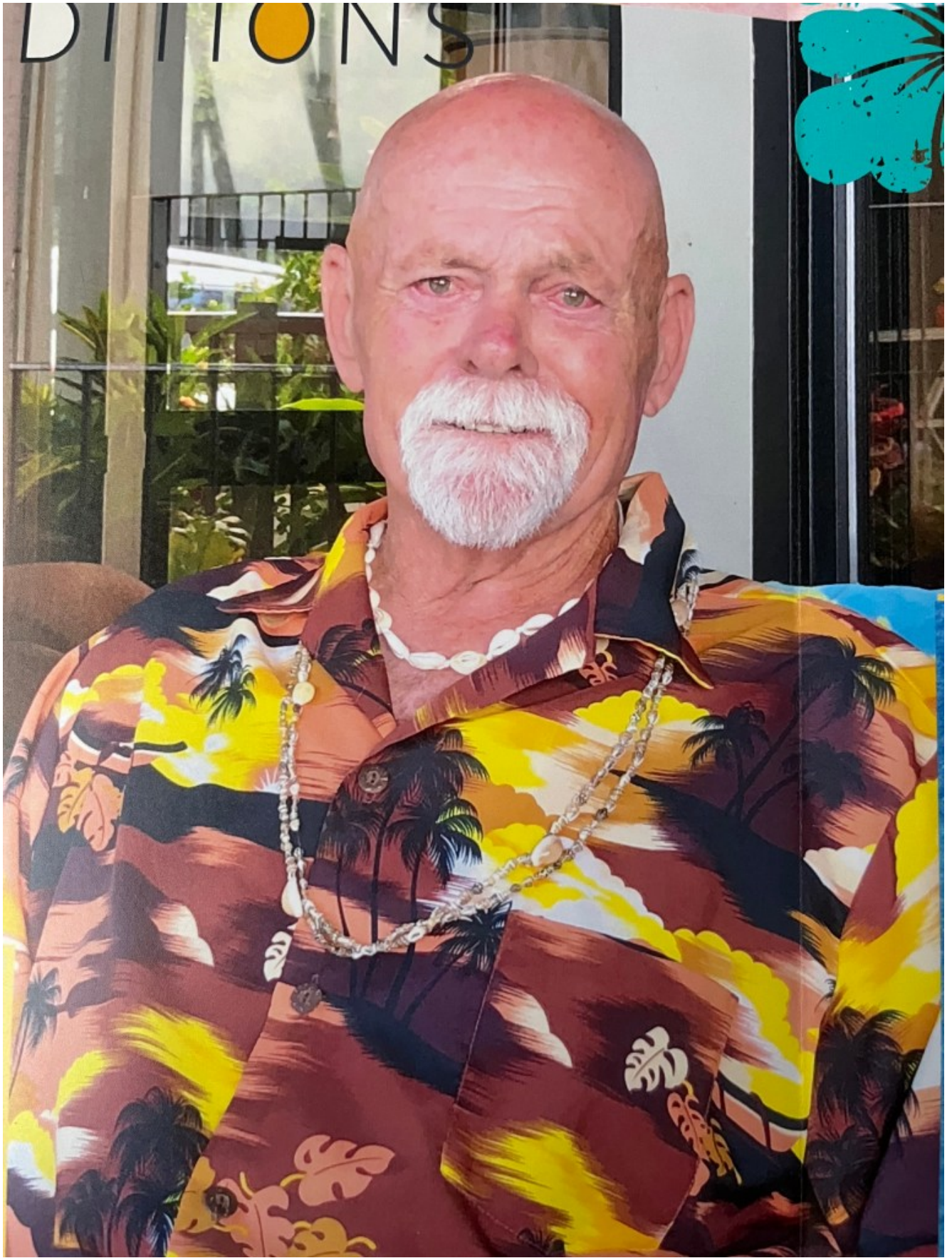
I thought Bob's initial memory loss or confusion was just a sign of his aging. I attributed it to him being older than I was. It never occurred to me that he had a cognitive issue until he started really mixing up words and mumbling. I thought he had a stroke and off to the neurologist we went. Mild Cognitive Disorder was the diagnosis at that time. What a shocker! My older husband wasn't just older, he was having cognitive issues that would only worsen with time. I think I began to age in reverse. I felt younger as Bob declined. Or maybe it was that Bob just seemed older and older as the disease progressed, and I felt the same. I thanked God repeatedly for His wisdom and plan in bringing Bob and me together all those years ago. God's provision allowed for Bob to have a wife that could and would be able to take care of him. Had I been Bob's age, perhaps I would have needed care myself or not been able to handle the rigors of taking care of him. So, Bob aged, and I stayed the same. His younger wife.

When Bob died, I was 69 and he was 83.

Now here I am. A nearly 70-year-old widow who feels very old for the first time ever in her life. I don't have that older husband to make me feel younger and healthier by comparison. I don't have a daily reminder that I'm not all that old. Now I just feel old, and I am thinking about my life in a totally different light. I'm the one praying to have more time with my son and my family. I'm the one praying to make more milestone memories. I'm the old person in my household of 1.

Dang. What wouldn't I give to still be Bob's younger wife?

I miss you in so very many ways Bob. This is just one.





**IT SHOULD
BE AGAINST
THE LAW
TO LOOK
THIS GOOD AT
EIGHTY**

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Bob turning 80 in Maui and turning 82 in Alpine. Milestone Memories!