

# Letter To and From Las Vegas

by Steven Dee Kish

She was a gambler, she never betted money, but she gambled with his life.  
The boy remembers as a kid growing up in the Midwest, life was simple.  
When he became an adult, his father reluctantly told him her secret.  
Motherhood was never in the cards for her.  
His father wore her down and eventually she gave in, but she hedged her bet and tied her tubes.  
The boy is sorry, didn't know he wasn't going to be enough, and she longed for something more.  
Family reunions on Lake Michigan didn't suit her; she wanted to live life in the fast lane.  
She kept thinking about her honeymoon in Las Vegas.  
She wished for a fat bankroll and life under the neon signs.  
So, she gambled and rolled the dice. She traded Lake Michigan for Lake Mead.  
She signed on the dotted line and was divorced from any attachments from the Midwest.  
She left her bank manager job to push out quarters from a belt from around her waist.  
They used to eat steak and potatoes in the Midwest.  
Thanks to her gamble, the boy was lucky to eat a 99cent breakfast special with a shrimp cocktail.  
He used to play in the woods with the neighbors behind Grandma's house.  
In Las Vegas, he found himself scared, sad, and isolated.  
He was filled with fear and loathing in Las Vegas, playing in the desert with the rattlesnakes.  
But her gamble started to pay off, and she got a raise fixing slot machines.  
Yet, she failed to see that his heart was breaking.  
She looked for someone to shoulder the load, but her heart fell for a Vegas con-man.  
Any money went into his pocket, while the boy's was filled with lint for lunch money.  
She could have shown him the beautiful things in Las Vegas.  
Instead, she taught him how to pack his things in garbage bags.  
Moving from apartment to apartment, each school name taught him about people in Nevada.  
Andrew J Mitchell, Ira Earl, Lois Craig, Elton Garrett, Helen Cannon, and Kenny Guinn.  
It took five years, but her eyes were finally opened to the con.  
While the boy's eyes were blinded by the Vegas sun.  
She found another gambler in life; he crapped out with his previous family, a perfect match.  
Elvis tied the knot for them, and another promotion put her behind a casino cage.  
With her new beau and a little hard work, she made it to the top, but she forgot about the boy.  
She could always get drinks comped but never find the time for him.  
He was left roaming the strip sneaking in casino pools, looking for Sassy Sally.  
She rewarded herself; she got a boat to cruise Lake Mead while the boy had holes in his shoes.  
Her lake buddies became her priority while he floundered in a flash flood of emotions.  
She wanted him to call her new husband father; the only father he identifies with was Vegas Vic.  
True to her gambling nature, she knew when it was time to cash in.  
Cha-Ching, the boy turned eighteen, and she turned into a snowbird.  
Leaving Las Vegas in a motorhome became routine while she left him in Sin City.  
Winters in Nevada and summers in Utah, the I 15 became her new home.  
Meanwhile, he was left picking up the broken pieces of his childhood.  
He was left nurturing his inner child and trying to find his place in the neon jungle.  
She hit her jackpot in life. Her dream turned into his nightmare.  
She hoped and wished that what happened in Vegas stayed in Vegas...but it didn't.