

RELATIONSHIPS

'Irreplaceable' wraps mid-age love into a mystery

Even more intriguing than second time around love is love that two people discover after spending years apart. "Irreplaceable" — with its colorful characters, Rhode Island high spots, and an art heist reminiscent of the Gardner Museum theft — is an unfolding love story by Providence writer Charles Pinning. Through his characters we come to see that in midlife, when we think that love has forgotten us, Cupid remembers and reappears.

Despite the art robbery drama and the curious role of two children who become orphaned, it is the romantic interplay that speaks to us. We can easily see ourselves in situations in which we miss cues and



Rita Watson

lose an opportunity to connect meaningfully because of the unspoken, but subtle, fear of rejection.

And rejection can be so long-lasting that it requires help to regain emotional equilibrium as we learn from psychologist Guy Winch in his newest work, "Emotional First

Aid: Practical Strategies for Treating Failure, Rejection, Guilt, and Other Everyday Psychological Injuries."

Yet such fear often intrudes upon love. Nonetheless, this book helps us to see ourselves in those moments when we should have let the kiss linger, hung onto the embrace a bit longer, spoken tenderly instead of clinging to our silence.

From the opening of the book, we believe in romance through Pinning's words:

"She's nodding her head, smiling, breaks off ... she's coming toward me now, removing an elaborate peacock feather hairpin, shaking loose her famous hair. I remember when she gave me a smoldering

look from my portable black and white TV and told me she used L'Oreal Preference hair coloring — 'Because, I'm worth it.' "

"Our eyes meet, the pace quickens, we are moving toward each other...."

This beginning is a tease. Their romance is tricky and almost a sub-theme as the would-be lovers team up to track down thieves, solve a mystery, and care for children even though neither had ever been a parent.

Pinning, whose "Irreplaceable" is an ebook and paperback by Daubenton Press, Paris, tells me: "The beauty of getting older is that one feels instinctively that there is

time, even when there is less of it than years ago. If one is alert to living on the level that matters, you no longer have to impress each other with money or career accomplishments. For what you discover, even more important than the recovery of a stolen Rembrandt and Vermeer, is the realization that you are right for each other, and you don't have to prove that to anyone."

When it comes to relationships, with all of the inherent drama and mystery, eventually we realize that it is always better to take a chance on love than to look back with regret.

Rita Watson is an All About You relationship columnist.