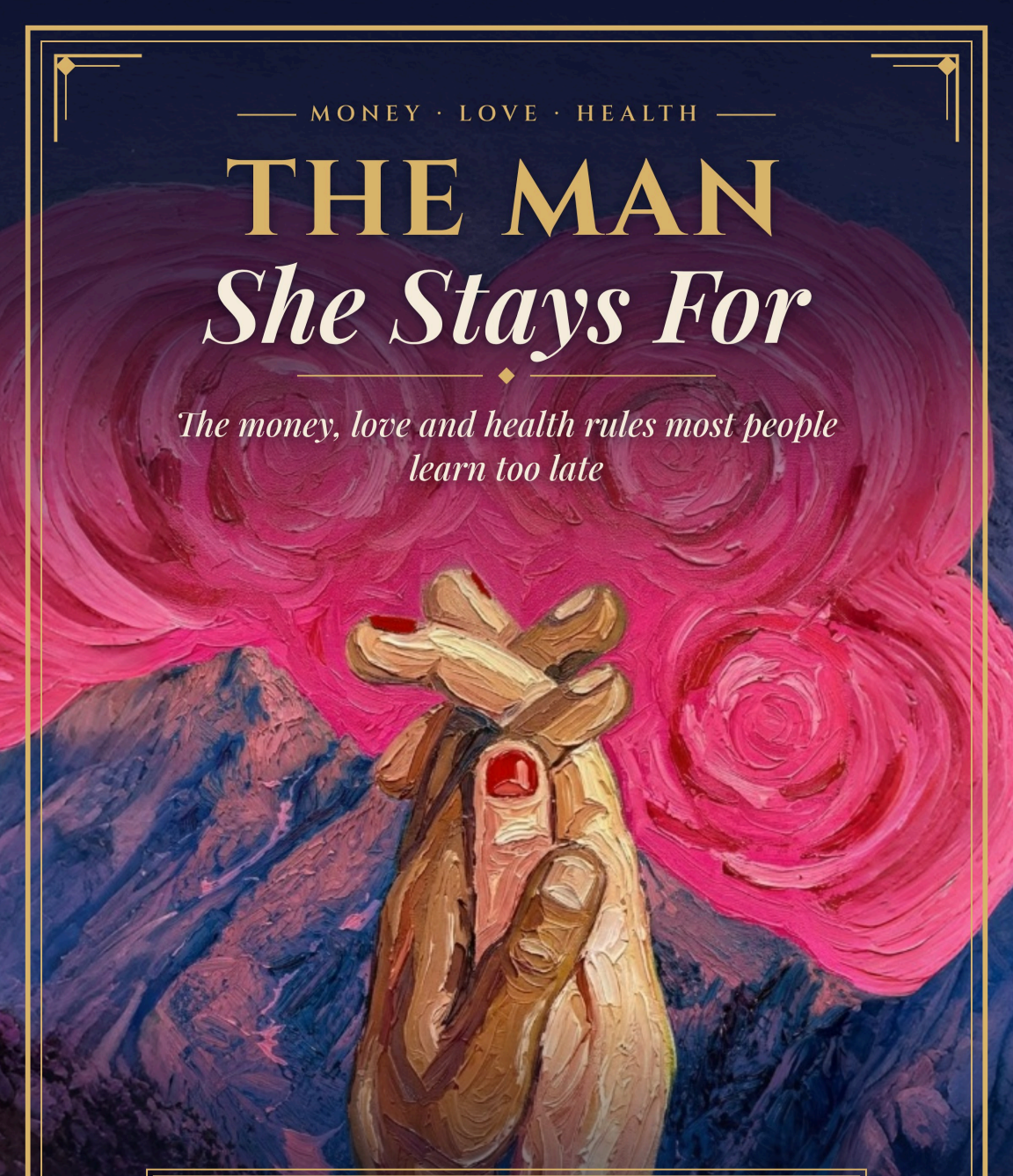
MONEY · LOVE · HEALTH

THE MAN *She Stays For*

The money, love and health rules most people learn too late



A HUSBAND'S GUIDE TO A LASTING MARRIAGE

ADAM ZADE

DIGITAL ZADES

MONEY · LOVE · HEALTH

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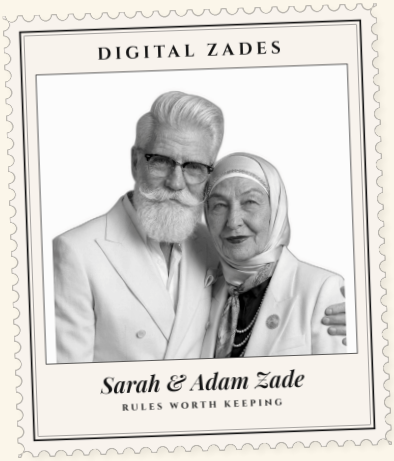
ADAM ZADE

81 years old · married to Sarah, who keeps notes in the margins



DIGITAL ZADES

To the man holding this book



You are probably holding this because something went quiet.

Not loud. Loud is easy to notice. Quiet is the dangerous one. The kiss at the door that got shorter. The dinner where you both looked at your phones. The fight you have every few weeks that never really ends, it just goes back in its box.

I know that quiet. Every husband who has been married longer than a weekend knows it. And here is the first thing I want you to hear: it does not mean you married the wrong woman, and it does not mean you are a bad man. It means you stopped doing small things, one at a time, so slowly that neither of you noticed.

That is the good news, by the way. What was lost in small things comes back in small things.

This book is not about grand gestures. I have nothing against roses. But no woman ever left a man because he forgot roses, and no woman ever stayed with a man because he remembered them. Women leave, in their hearts first and with their suitcases later, for three reasons. They stopped feeling **safe**. They stopped feeling **seen**. Or they stopped feeling **sure** you would be there tomorrow.

So the book has three parts. Safe is about money, because nothing makes a woman feel unsafe faster than money she doesn't understand. Seen is about love, the daily kind, and the nightly kind too, because I am eighty-one, not dead. Sure is about your health, because the most romantic thing a man can do after fifty is still be alive at sixty.

Every chapter is one rule. Read one a day, or one a week. Do the rule before you read the next. A rule you read and don't do is just a nice paragraph.

You will also find some very old teachings in these pages. Fourteen hundred years old, most of them. I put them in because they are the best marriage advice I know of, and because they are far more honest, about money, about kindness, and about the bedroom, than most people expect. You don't have to share anyone's faith to recognize good advice. A wise rule is a wise rule.

Sarah has read every page. She has left notes in the margins. I have been told I am not allowed to remove them.

Rules are rules, dear. She taught me that one.

ADAM

PART ONE

SAFE

◆

She stays where she feels safe.

Money is never just money in a marriage. It is the roof. A woman can forgive a small house. She cannot relax under a roof she thinks might fall. These seven rules are about making the roof solid, and making sure she can see it is.

CHAPTER 1

The No-Surprises Rule

A woman can live with a small bank balance. She cannot live with a surprise.

Sarah once found a receipt in my coat pocket. A fishing rod. Forty dollars.

She put it on the kitchen table between us, next to the sugar bowl, and waited. I explained that it was a very good rod. That it was on sale. That fish, as a rule, do not catch themselves.

"It's not the rod, dear," she said. "It's the coat."

I didn't understand that sentence for about a week. I understand it now. She didn't care about forty dollars. She cared that she found out from a pocket. Because if there was a rod in the coat, what was in the other coat? What was in the drawer, the glove box, the email I closed a little too fast when she walked in?

SARAH'S NOTE

I'd have bought him the rod myself. I'd have wrapped it.

WHAT SHE WON'T TELL YOU

Most money fights are not about money. The number is just the thing you shout about. Underneath, the question is always the same one: *is there anything else I don't know?* Every surprise, even a small one, makes her ask it again. And a wife who has to keep asking that question is a wife who never fully relaxes in her own home.

Surveys of couples keep turning up the same uncomfortable pattern. A surprising number of people admit they have hidden a purchase, a debt, or even a whole account from their partner. And when it comes out, the hiding does far more damage than the money ever could. Trust does not break on big numbers. It breaks on small secrets.

THE NO-SURPRISES RULE

Every account, card, debt and monthly payment is known to both of you. Any purchase over your agreed number (ours is $100) is mentioned *before*, not after. If you would feel uneasy about her finding it, tell her first. Today.

HOW A MAN DOES THIS

He goes first. He sits at the kitchen table, not the sofa, with everything written on one page: every account, every card, every loan, every monthly payment, roughly what is in each and roughly what is owed. He starts with the line he least wants to say. It is always easier after the first line.

Then he agrees a number with her. A hundred dollars, two hundred, fifty, whatever fits your life. Anything above it gets a sentence before the money moves: "I'm thinking of buying a new drill." Not permission. Just no surprises.

And if she is the one with a hidden card or a quiet debt? He still goes first. Somebody has to open the drawer. Let it be you.

THE OLD TEACHING

There is a teaching fourteen hundred years old that says when a man spends on his family, hoping for good, it counts as charity. Not the money he gives to strangers. The money he spends on his own wife and children, on groceries

and school shoes and the electric bill.

Think about what that means. It means providing is not a chore you resent. It is a good deed you get to do every single month. But a good deed done in secret, in a coat pocket, turns into its opposite. What you spend on your family is charity. What you hide from your family costs you her trust.

◆

NEVER *let your wife learn about your money from a letter, a screen or a stranger. If she has to find it, you have already lost it, whatever it cost.*

TONIGHT

Write the page. Every account, every card, every debt. Then pick a quiet moment this week, put it on the table, and say: "I want you to know everything. No surprises from now on."

That's it. No speech. The page does the talking.

I still have one fishing rod I never mentioned. It is in the shed, behind the lawnmower. Sarah knows. She has always known. She's just waiting to see if I'll tell her.

I'm telling her now, dear.

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Most women don't leave with a suitcase. They leave quietly, years before.

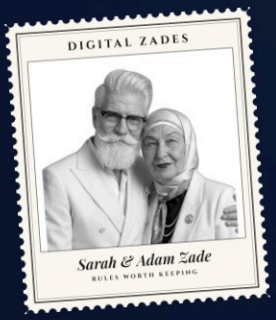
The kiss at the door gets shorter. The phones come out at dinner. The same fight comes back every few weeks and never really ends. Nobody notices the quiet until it's too late.

Twenty-six small rules, told man to man and sometimes bluntly, that keep a woman *staying*, not just staying put. Ten minutes a night. Start tonight, and she will feel the difference by Sunday.

SAFE	Money with no secrets, no debt for wants, and a plan if you're gone.
SEEN	Listening, apologizing, flirting, and the bedroom, honestly. One for one.
SURE	The walk, the sleep and the check-up that keep you here at eighty.

THREE RULES FROM INSIDE

- *Never let your wife learn about your money from a letter, a screen or a stranger.*
- *Never answer "what's wrong?" with "nothing" when it's something.*
- *Never let your pleasure be the end of hers.*



"I've left notes in the margins. He is not allowed to remove them."

SARAH ZADE

DIGITAL ZADES

Sarah and Adam Zade are characters created by Digital Zades. The rules and the old teachings are real.