

## One like Tomás

One day in 2010 my mother called me, very excited. “Lulú, now I know who we have to pray to for a boyfriend for you: Tomás Alvira and Paquita Dominguez!”

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She told me that they are a couple in the process of canonization and they had loved each other very much. She gave me the prayer card and I started to pray every day for “one like Tomás”. My mother cautioned: “He will come when he’s meant to”.

The following year I went to the party of one of my brother's friends. I spent almost the whole night talking to another friend of his whom I found quite entertaining, although he was a good bit younger than I. After the party I was told that I had made a hit with him, but I didn't care for him that much.

Time passed, and last year Santi – that's the boy's name- sent me a *tweet*. We had talked several times about meeting, and he had promised to take me for a cup of Colombian coffee a long time before, but I had cancelled the appointment. Now I was the one interested.

We agreed to meet and I looked at a photo of his in advance and thought I had been very silly. We went to the café, we talked and laughed a lot, and he brought me home. I thought he was very handsome, with great

future plans and I didn't feel he was younger than me. But now what?

I prayed to Tomás and to Paquita and said I gave them nine days for something to happen with this boy or with someone else. I no longer liked the idea of going out with different fellows and getting nowhere. I had been praying the prayer card all that time and my friends were going to stop believing me. Many of them think that it is impossible to live a Christian courtship. They said: "Go on thinking the way you do and you'll end up a spinster."

I was also beginning to doubt whether I would ever find anyone worthwhile. So I prayed to them urgently for those nine days. I also said that if nothing happened I was going to change my saint.

To my surprise on the ninth day we started dating. Everything I had thought of him in that café was more

and more confirmed. He was a first-class boy. Seriously, I'm not saying it because he's my boyfriend. He surpassed everything I had imagined that "one like Tomás" could be.

We went out together for two months and I began to worry because we were not moving on. We had great fun together, and I enjoyed being with him, but I didn't want to turn into "his little friend." Then I again asked the Alviras for something specific: that he would ask me before the end of the week if I wanted to get engaged.

That Sunday at Mass a priest mentioned that people were needed for the missions in Angola. I had always liked the idea of working in the missions, so I told Santi jokingly that I wanted to go. "You can't go," he said. "Why not?" I asked. "I'm not engaged to anyone..."

Later he confessed to me that at that moment he almost went crazy thinking that I was going away without him. The Friday of that week, 2<sup>nd</sup> May, we went to Luján on a pilgrimage to our Lady. I asked her for Santi to be my fiancé.

And there in Luján I told him for the first time about Tomás and Paquita. He was very impressed and a bit concerned. He said: “You are asking for a saint.” I explained that I wanted someone who would pull upward from me and me from him, and we could struggle together.

The following day we went out for supper together. Then in Purti Madero he popped the question. He had memorized the dialogue under the rain in *Pride and Prejudice*, when Mr. Darcy declares himself to Miss Elizabeth, and I replied the same way she did. Like a film, isn’t it? Moreover, my favourite.

When I said yes, he took out the prayer card of the Alviras and said: “now that we’re engaged, let’s say it together.” After reading it, he added: “let’s pray that we may be faithful, that every day we may love each other more, that God may always be in the midst of us and that if He wills we may form a family and have a bright and cheerful home like the one of the Alviras.” I was so impressed that I could only say “Amen.”

I am very grateful to Tomás and Paquita, who are now part and parcel of our relationship. We also want to pass on to our friends the joy of living a Christian courtship.

Recently I started another novena for Santi to ask me to marry him. He did it on Friday, feast day of Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal. We are very happy! We already have a date. The religious ceremony will be on 16<sup>th</sup>

July 2016 in El Salvador, and the civil ceremony – because here it has to be done separately – will be one month before in Buenos Aires. Thus the date will probably be 16<sup>th</sup> June, the wedding anniversary of Tomas and Paquita!

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