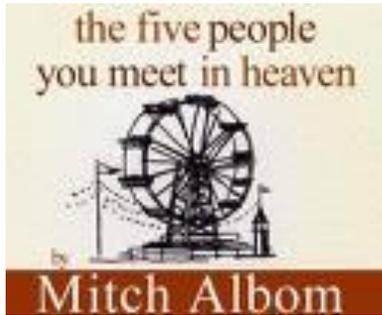

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Responses to Mitch Albom's book

The Five People You Meet in Heaven

1. The Blue Man

"...The human spirit knows, deep down, that all lives intersect. That death doesn't just take someone, it misses someone else, and in the small distance between being taken and being missed, lives are changed."

*"..there are no random acts.. we are all connected."
"Strangers...are just family you have yet to come to know."*

This concept of connectedness is woven throughout the book--and our lives. We often are isolated and lonely, and forget how important these connections are. We live the way we do because of those who came before us, and we set the stage for those who come after. These are important connections, as well. Are we doing a good job?
-Elizabeth

2. The Captain

"Sometimes when you sacrifice something precious, you're not really losing it. You're just passing it on to someone else."

"Sacrifice is a part of life. It's supposed to be. It's not something to regret, It's something to aspire to."

'Sometimes when you sacrifice something precious, you're not really losing it.' When I was a boy, my mother got remarried. I thought I was losing my mother. It sounds silly, but I thought she didn't love me anymore and I was mad. My mother said, I always love my 'little Monster'. New love is strong, and love can be passed on for everybody. It don't stop.

-Reginald

The captain was someone who loved what he did. A lot of people trusted him with their lives, and he put his life on the line for others. He showed you sometimes you have to sacrifice some things to get better things.

-Raymond

3. Ruby

"No one is born with anger. And when we die, the soul is freed of it. But now, here, in order to move on, you must understand why you felt what you did, and why you no longer need to feel it. You need to forgive your father."

"Holding anger is a poison. It eats you from inside. We think that hating is a weapon that attacks the

person who harmed us. But hatred is a curved blade. And the harm we do, we do to ourselves."

I've learned that being angry is on some parallels like not being able to love--thinking of yourself so much to the point we blind ourselves to other people's needs. Thinking that the world revolves around us. If we get angry, sometimes we think someone deliberately did something on purpose to offend or hurt us. If we stop and think of the best motive, it may be it was an accident or they

(3. Ruby, continued)

meant well, or that sure, maybe he meant to hurt you but you have a chance to forgive, to offer a better standard on how to act towards one another. Isn't this love, to sacrifice for others' mistakes? If we don't, we are blind to our own past because we are all hypocrites. The Lord has given us a perfect example on how to forgive. The ability to forgive is a gift that God gives us, a privilege to give back and love.

-J. K.

4. Marguerite

"Lost love is still love, Eddie. It takes on a different form, that's all. You can't see their smile or bring them food...but when those senses weaken, another heightens. Memory. Memory becomes your partner. You nurture it. You hold it. You dance with it. Life has to end...Love doesn't."

It meant that love goes on forever. Just because someone is gone forever, the love for that person don't have to stop. Love is a powerful emotion that could hurt people's feelings.

-Rodolfo

I personally like this one because it's like me in so many ways. You know, I have lost loved ones in my life a lot and I love them so much. It's like I smile at them in heaven because I understand that God is

watching over them and they are my angels that keep me alive with him. I remember everything that we have shared together and what we have been through. I nurture it, I hold it, and I dance with it. We know and I know that the world has to end someday but my love for them and God will never end. Even for my own family that is still alive I will always have love, but I know that it is hard for them seeing me incarcerated.

-Jeriko

5. Tala

Eddie: "I was sad because I didn't do anything with my life. I was nothing. I accomplished nothing. I was lost...Fixing rides? That was my existence? Why?"

Tala: "Children...You keep them safe. You make good for me."

I found this quote especially ironic. The fact that Tala has to inform Eddie the real reason why he chose to work at Ruby Pier. He knew, deep inside, that there was someone in the hut he burned down. He chose to work maintenance at Ruby Pier so he could save lives--to make up for those he took during the war.

- L Z

To go through life thinking you killed a kid--then you find out from that kid you think that you killed that she is dead; she is the one telling you this! However, this kid also lets you know you have made up for her debt... To me, forgiveness is something very important.

-Scott

6. EDDIE/Epilogue

...the secret of heaven: that each affects the other and the other affects the next, and the world is full of stories, but the stories are all one.

It's amazing how truthful this is, from helping others less fortunate than you are --it repays you tenfold in self-respect and self-esteem.

-T.W.

Book doesn't mean nothing to me. I don't know any of the people.

- J.D.A.