TIDES OF REMEMBRANCE
By Carl D. Lord

Synopsis

Mourning forty years of a fiercely loyal marriage cut short by death, sixty-five-year-old widow Eleanor Sinclair Hughes boards a Caribbean cruise, not for the destination, but to remember. Joining her is her daughter, Kate, who is reeling from a failed marriage after chasing a glamorous life in New York. At sunrise, Eleanor prepares to fulfill a promise she made to herself if her beloved husband ever died before she did.

Eleanor's journey begins more than four decades earlier.

In 1968, eighteen-year-old Eleanor leaves her family's Kentucky farm to attend Mount Nebo College, where she meets Richard Hughes, a humble but gifted basketball player who quickly captures her heart. As their friendship grows into love, Eleanor and Richard begin dreaming of a future together. But when cancer strikes Eleanor's father, she must choose between the independence she discovered at college and the people who need her at home. Eleanor returns home to care for her father, and Richard stands beside her, proving his devotion.

Meanwhile, Eleanor's pregnant college roommate, Ann Harmon, finds herself rejected by her own family and alone. Eleanor invites her to Sinclair Farm, where an unexpected collection of people learns that family is sometimes defined not only by blood but also by acceptance, forgiveness, and faith.

As the years pass, Eleanor and Richard build a marriage and family while Sinclair Farm becomes home to new generations. Their daughter, Kate, however, longs for something beyond the farm. Ambitious and independent, Kate moves to New York City to pursue the life she has always imagined, creating a quiet distance between mother and daughter. When Kate's marriage collapses and Richard passes away, both women are left adrift in their separate grief.

In June 2012, Eleanor stands aboard the ship wearing the cashmere sweater Richard once gave her and prepares to fulfill her promise. When Kate sees her mother climbing onto the ship's railing, she fears Eleanor intends to jump and screams for her to stop. Instead, Eleanor removes a single rose, the symbol of Richard's enduring love, and casts it into the sea.

As the rose disappears into the waves, Eleanor says goodbye to Richard, understanding that death has separated them only temporarily. She steps safely down from the railing, ready to continue living while carrying Richard's memory and the life they shared together.