Diminishing Returns

No matter how hard you try, the more you give, the more it takes.

Each additional unit of effort yields less and less. Dinners, painstakingly cooked after watching hours of Emeril and Barefoot Contessa do not bring him home earlier, nor convince him to stop working late. Hours of kettle ball reps, spin classes and Pilates have produced a firm, flexible and defined body that does not draw him closer at night. There is less of an aggregate demand for you. In fact, there is no demand at all for the services you supply.

It used to take only a look, a word, a spritz of perfume, a strap off the shoulder, a hook come undone. You keep making the effort, but there is no return on your investment.

Close your eyes. See his love mapped out on a pie chart? No, not a pie chart. A linear trend graph. See how that thick black line inches lower and lower? Each notch on the X-axis is a year of your marriage. See how the line angles down, sliding like an avalanche until it runs off the bottom of the page? That’s this year.

Foolishly you speculated, believing you had invested wisely, believing love could grow and mature risk-free.

You should have known better. After Enron. After Martha went to jail. After levees in Louisiana. After the collapses of banks. After checked baggage fees. After oil spills in the Gulf Coast. After earthquakes in Haiti. After floods in Tennessee.

Fool to believe that the world as you know it could change right before your eyes and love—somehow—maintain its solvency. The market is a vehicle of risk.