**Copyright Story - You Stole My Heart and Song**

It was one of those kinds of songs that after you first hear it, you can’t get it out of your head. You will find yourself humming the melody and walking to the tempo of the beat. We call that a hit record.

Sarah Connelly was enjoying one of those kinds of songs after hearing it on the radio while driving to work. At work, the song refused to leave her brain and she would occasionally breath out, “Your love makes me alive; alive, alive” under her breath. It was about 4:30 in the afternoon when she began to realize that the song was very familiar to her… really familiar. She stopped motionless at the thunderous thought, “I wrote that song.” She gave herself a slight correction: “Well… really, I wrote the words to that song.” Sarah was sure she had written those words…somewhere, sometime ago when she was in her poetry-writing phase in high school, she was sure she had written those words.

Out of curiosity, Sarah pulled into the music store on her way home and looked at the CD that featured the song “Love Alive.” The song CD cover credited the song to a Brian Wells. She stared at the CD cover as if to make sure of what she was seeing. She and Brian had dated in high school, and she had shared several of her poems with him.

Sarah bought the CD and hurried home. She quickly drug an old storage box out of the attic and dug through the carefully packed memorabilia until she found a flowery notebook. She flipped through the pages of the notebook like wind and stopped suddenly at one page. There it was… her poem… “Love Alive.” *And*… she had sent a copy to Brian to express her love to him.

All that evening, Sarah had two emotions. She was proud that one of her poems was good enough to make a hit record, and she was furious that Brian stole her poem for the song.

The next day, Sarah spent a good part of the day finding contact information for Brian through the record label. She finally sent him an e-mail explaining who she was and reminding him that she had written the words to “Love Alive” and that she should at least be paid royalties.

Later that day, Brian responded, “Sarah, how good to hear from you after all these years. You should be very proud that your words are featured in this hit song… it’s doing very well. But you don’t have any claims to royalties because

1. You never registered the poem for a copyright.
2. You gave me the poem as a gift, so it belongs to me.
3. You wrote the poem more than 10 years ago, so any copyright would have expired.

However, if you have any other poems or songs, I would be glad to consider them for future projects.”

**Answer the following questions:**

*What do you think?*

1. Is Brian, right?
2. What should Sarah do?