

A Most Embarrassing Date

The end of summer and beginning of the school year was definitely a change of seasons. Long summer days and hot sultry nights gradually and unnoticeably became dusky evenings with cooler breezes. The sounds of a Friday night football game could be heard from miles away as the muffled roar of the crowd and the fight song played by the band was carried by the West Texas wind. Weather could be dramatic. It could be a cold and windy night when the crowd snuggled together under shared blankets of textured woolen plaids and quilts. Followed by the next Friday evening of almost spring like weather of warmth, clear skies and a stillness that made our small town feel even smaller.

It was a night such as this I had a first date with Doug. I had never noticed him before, though I had been at the same church and school with him for years. Why I hadn't paid attention, I don't know. I suppose I was just preoccupied with someone else.

As first dates go there is always a bit of nervous anticipation and feeling of awkwardness. Internal dialogs such as: Will he walk me to the passenger side of the car or will he lead me to get in on his side and slide to the middle? If he leads me to the passenger side, do I polish the door on my side, scoot to the center or somewhere in between?

Each position of body language sends a message. If I am assumptive and scoot to the middle he might think I'm pushy or worse too forward. Polishing the door would be a Pollyanna or indicate we weren't "hitting it off" and that I wasn't having a good time. There was so much for a girl to consider and "read between the lines" so to speak on a first date, not to mention what to wear!

Doug came to my house, went through the quick introduction of the parents and we were out the door headed for the football game. He was so relaxed and natural like we had known each other forever, making me feel so at ease I forgot about those worrying details. We went to the game and who knows if we won or lost, I was in a daze and just followed the crowd standing and screaming at every cue supporting our "Fighting Bulldogs."

The game ended at eight-thirty or nine, too early to return home from a date. Our small town didn't have many options. The drive-in for cola was about it and then we thought of the City Park. He parked the car along the curb and headed for the seesaw while I went for the swings. I was wearing a printed cotton pair of pants that zipped up the front all the way to my waistline. There was no waistband. My shirt was a solid color pullover that ended at the waist and though my clogs were clumsy for running, they could be easily slipped off and dropped below the swing.

Doug started walking the long heavy seesaw from one end to the other, something I never was brave enough, nor coordinated enough to do. Though I had mastered the swings well enough to get really high then shift my weight twisting and turning as I swung to and fro. And then it happened...

As I leaned back, feet straight, and tightened my abdomen, I blew the zipper right out of my pants. What could I do? There I was with my pants gaping open. I quickly bolted from the swing and held each side of the zipper together while embarrassingly telling my date that I must go home.

As he drove, I sat in the middle of the seat next to him holding my pants together, for the longest seven minutes that it must have taken to drive from the park to my house.

Doug, still at ease, parked the car in the driveway, got out and held the door open for me. As I slid towards his door holding my pants together, I slid right out of the car falling onto the driveway. I was so humiliated I wanted to find a crack in the concrete and crawl in.

I stood up and in my agony kept my head down. Doug put his arms around me consoling me in my despair. I confessed my embarrassment as I buried my face in his chest. He walked me to the door to say good night and I entered knowing for sure that this guy whom I had never noticed before, but knew I wish I had, would never ask me out for another date.

He called the next day and asked, “Do you want to go to the movie tonight?” I don’t know for sure what he was expecting for entertainment, the movie or me.

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