

Love in the trenches:  
Dates you'll be glad you never had  
Hearts and flowers, candlelight dinners and chocolates:  
Love is a many-plundered thing. February is consecrated to  
St. Valentine's Day. Just Out acknowledges the sometimes  
foolish and often reckless lengths we go, all for love. But in the  
headlong search for romance, not every encounter reads like a  
Hallmark card. Some people have dates; others commit them.  
What follows are stories from Date Victims.

COMPILED BY W. C. McRAE

### What did he forget, and when did he forget it?

**I**t was a night not unlike other nights, except it was Valentine's Day. After leaving work, I had drinks with fellow workers, and, as usual in those giddy days, went on for one last gin in Slaughters.

My nightcap in hand, I suddenly focused on what seemed to me a Greek god. I approached him, made clear my intentions, and after a requisite sojourn in Flossie's to test the vigor of our ardor, we left for my apartment.

I awoke about noon the next day, with the gently snoring Adonis beside me. My mind was not functioning: Who was he, and how had he got there? I could not remember anything of what must have been a night of passion.

An Adonis, yes. But what was his real name? I wracked my brain for a clue, but with no response.

I got up, made coffee, and avoided any reference to him by first name. I trusted somehow that his identity would be revealed to me in a flash.

We were lounging in the living room when my roommate emerged, and I parried any immediate necessity to identify my semi-clad companion by refusing to acknowledge my roommate's existence.

When my new friend went to shower, I quickly ran to the bedroom and began to rifle through his pockets in search of ID. At last I found his driver's license, and with his name, I remembered the rest of the evening.

He came back from the shower to find me especially ardent and anxious to whisper his name lovingly in his ear. If only he realized how contrived it was, I doubt that he would still be living with me, these two years later.

### Hearts and flowers/ farts per hour

**T**his happened to me when I was in college, with a person who happened to be a man, though the experience crosses all lines of gender. I really enjoyed this person and we related well and I trusted him.

The issue was nonetheless one of control. We had a pleasant evening before going to bed at his place. My first night with him. I was really looking forward to it. We had a wonderful time. (But something we'd had at dinner, or a flu bug, who knows . . .) He was up fixing us breakfast and I was really queasy. As I went to make up the bed, I noticed those farts I thought I had so effectively silenced had more substance than sound. Oh, my God, I had made a number of obvious statements all over the sheets. I pulled up the covers and sneaked out. Never to see him again. I am still embarrassed; only now can I laugh, with a mixture of loss and the realization that of all the people I loved in those years, he's one I could have been safe being honest with, it was myself I couldn't face. So, Fred, wherever you are, *you* were not the shitty date. I was.

### Get along little pussies, get along

**M**y worst date occurred when I got drunk and allowed myself to get picked up by a woman wearing a cowboy hat. When she got to my house, she referred to my cats as "Critters," and I started to have misgivings. With tepid passion, I said, "Lick me," and she replied, "I don't do that."

### I met a gin-soaked barroom queen in Portland

**I** was in the first months of my job at a downtown law firm when I was invited to go celebrate a courtroom victory with some senior male partners in the firm. We went to lunch, and after being assured that I could bill my hours to "boys day out" (I, the youngest female associate, was an "honorary boy"), we proceeded to spend all afternoon in the bar. It developed into a gin-laden initiation into the firm.

However, that evening I had a date with the hottest young thing to come my way in months. At 5:00, after an afternoon of reveling and at least eight pungent Bombays, I wove into the Brasserie to meet my date, at least an hour and a half late.

And for a drink, no less. As I lurched toward the table, my date looked at me with eyebrows arched.

Almost immediately, I was seized with the urge to throw up. The next fifteen minutes were spent hugging the cool white porcelain, calling Ralph on the big white phone. My date decided I should go home. We left arm in arm, and I made it as far as the park at 9th and Washington. There, in a business suit and high heels, carrying a briefcase full of briefs, I projectile vomited into the bushes. The bums, sunning themselves in the afternoon sun, stared at me accusingly, and mumbling to themselves about the spectacle, shuffled away.

Appreciating the humor in the situation, I was ready for more fun. However, my date was not amused. I was taken home, told to take aspirin and go to bed. Alone.

### The date that wouldn't go home.

**A**cross the bar was Mr. Hot himself. His body emitted signs of Nautilus worship. He was tall, blond, butch. Then I saw his basket. His *basket*, well, was almost a hamper. My attention was arrested. As soon as it was expedient, we edged together and exchanged information. My eyes on the prize, we exited.

There was in my throat the swelling of apprehension and excitement that I get when I recognized the breadth of the task before me. As we rid ourselves of our clothing, imagine my surprise when he pulled a wool sock from his fly. Imagine my further surprise when moments later I saw the minimalistic reality that the stocking stuffing had so beguilingly exaggerated.

Putting the best face on things, I realized that a role reversal was in order.

However, the next day, as I set off to work at the restaurant, he tagged along to eat lunch. He stayed in the bar all afternoon, and after dinner, he was waiting for me after my shift. We trashed it up again downtown, this time without the argyle.

But the next day, he dragged himself to the restaurant again, and stayed until I was finished. By this time I was beginning to wonder if my trick had turned into a boarder.

On the third day, my roommates were passing comments. By the fourth day, after he gave no signs of going home, or indeed, having a home to go to, I gave his sock back, took him back to the bar where I found him, and told him to stay. I felt relieved, though troubled, as if I had just taken a stray dog to the pound.