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I SAW YOU

BUMMING A SMOKE.

You hit me up for a cigarette while we were both going the same way. We hung out until our ways had to part. I'm glad I met you. **When: Monday, July 25, 2011. Where: The walk downtown. You: Woman. Me: Man. #902173**

DRIVING AWAY...

I saw you breaking my heart & your eyes in the rear view mirror... why does this always happen? I guess forever was really only awhile... **When: Sunday, July 24, 2011. Where: leaving my heart. You: Man. Me: Woman. #902172**

GREEN SKIRT GODESS

You: on bike, green skirt, chucks, shades, i couldn't help stealing glances, so lovely, i wanted 2 ask your name, got shy instead. Me: black adult shop polo, just wanna know you, maybe ride bikes? **When: Saturday, July 23, 2011. Where: campus 711 5pm. You: Woman. Me: Man. #902171**

WORLD CAFE PIANIST

You play well. I served you brunch. I'm single, employed & gentle man enough to write this. Interested? **When: Wednesday, July 20, 2011. Where: World Cafe. You: Woman. Me: Man. #902170**

GINGER!

You and Dookie! Please find me! It just can't end with the fair! Look for the peaceful valley flower in the phonebook! Love, the girl in wonderland. **When: Sunday, July 10, 2011. Where: OCF. You: Man. Me: Woman. #902169**

SEE YOU AROUND

You: Dreamy, gave me a soup recipe. I: only asked your name. Earth tea? **When: Thursday, July 21, 2011. Where: evergreen. You: Woman. Me: Man. #902168**

RETURN FROM FAIR

My foreign friend and I chatted across the aisle about college, jobs and sushi. Would like to follow up on your recommendation. Too bad we didn't exchange names or numbers! **When: Saturday, July 9, 2011. Where: Country Fair Schoolbus. You: Man. Me: Woman. #902167**

Savage Love

WORDS OF PURE WISDOM by Dan Savage



When I was 14, my parents informed me that I had a half brother. He was my father's son by another woman. My parents were already married when my brother was born, but I hadn't come along yet. It was a huge scandal when it happened. My half brother came to live with us after his mother died. He was 16. My half brother got me pregnant. He didn't rape me; I wanted to have sex with him. Everyone in the family found out – huge scandal number two – and it took me years to get over it and stop blaming myself.

Now I'm 26 and engaged. What do I tell my fiancé? My parents wound up divorcing – my mother called the police on my half brother and tried to physically prevent me from getting an abortion – and I don't speak to her anymore. But my father and brother are still in my life.

I get panic attacks when I think about having to tell my fiancé about any of this, Dan, because I don't want him to see me as sick. But if I don't tell him, he'll hear about it from someone else. What do I do?

The Sister Act

"This could happen to anyone," says Debra Lieberman, assistant professor of psychology at the University of Miami.

A quick clarification: Lieberman means this could happen to anyone who meets a sibling under similar circumstances.

Coresidence throughout childhood – particularly early childhood – creates sexual aversion in adulthood, explains Lieberman, who has studied "sibling incest avoidance" extensively. It's a phenomenon called the "Westermarck Effect," and it doesn't just affect biological siblings; adults who grew up in the same home experience the same feelings of sexual revulsion.

"TSA and her half brother were not raised throughout childhood together and neither observed his or her mother caring for the other as an infant," explains Lieberman. "These are the two cues that have been shown to lead to the categorization of another as a sibling. When these cues are present, strong sexual aversions tend to develop. Without these cues, no natural sexual aversion will develop."

(What this means, of course, is that everybody who read TSA's letter and thought, "What a sicko! I would never fuck any of my siblings!" needs to back the fuck off. If your parents had surprised you with a long-lost sibling when you were 14, dear readers, you, too, could be facing an extremely awkward conversation with your fiancé. There but for the grace of God, etc.)

So what, if anything, should you tell the man you're about to marry, TSA?

"If it were me," says Lieberman, "I would probably say something. I would explain the situation and the science. Unfortunately, this might gross out her fiancé, especially if he has sisters. But living with this stress" – the fear that he'll find out at some point – "does not seem like a happy life."

I agree with Lieberman: Tell your fiancé what happened, TSA. Emphasize that you were young, confused, and Westermarck-Effect-deprived. You can also refer him to Lieberman's website – www.debralieberman.com – where he can peruse the research.

Good luck, TSA.

I'm a 23-year-old female in a monogamish relationship – thank you for that word! – with my wonderful boyfriend of two years. I moved away last year to attend graduate school, and we agreed it was okay to sleep with other people while we're apart. The last person I slept with was an acquaintance who knew both of us and understood what the deal was with our relationship. My question is, if I'm just looking for casual sex or a one-night stand, should I make it clear that we're just going to have sex and I'm not interested in dating? How much should I tell the person I'm trying to pick up about a significant other they won't ever meet?

Full Disclosure Necessary, Yathink?

If you meet a guy in a bar, exchange four words with him (and two of them are "Open up!" right before he spits a Jäger shot into your mouth), and you wind up back at your place, FDNY, the person you're about to fuck can reasonably make two assumptions: (1) you're a slut (in the sex-positive, reclaiming-that-word, sisterhood-is-powerful, drink-Jäger-out-of-a-hot-guy's-mouth sense of the term), and (2) he's unlikely to see you again. Under circumstances like these, FDNY, you are not obligated to disclose your relationship status. The only things you're obligated to disclose are the precise kind of clitoral stimulation you require and the exact time you'll need him out of your apartment.

But if a nice boy asks you out on something that your parents and steampunks call a "date," and he explains that you're really, really special, and he refrains from spitting Jäger shots into your mouth, you are obligated to disclose your relationship status to him, lest he make the entirely reasonable assumption that you're single and interested in him, too.

I am in love with an intelligent woman. She is exactly what I've always wanted: smart, articulate, independent, and friggin' beautiful. The thing is, we fight constantly. Everything is going well, and then I say the wrong thing or use the wrong tone, and she blows up. In these fights, I am required to remain calm, but she can yell, scream, mock, or ridicule. These fights sometimes end in physical confrontations that she instigates. The therapist we're seeing takes my side, but still nothing gets better. Her feelings are the only ones that matter. I'm afraid to read the advice you're going to give me.

Confused, Pissed, and Sad

You don't mention your own looks, CPAS, but I'm guessing there's a big looks gap in this relationship, i.e., your girlfriend is objectively hot, while you fall somewhere between "Ron Jeremy" and "unconventionally attractive" on the male beauty spectrum. And that's not an accident: She knows that you think you're unlikely to do better than her, looks-wise, and that allows her to be just as psycho as she wants to be. Because she knows you're not going anywhere.

Here's the advice you were afraid of, CPAS: Go somewhere, anywhere, that she isn't. You wouldn't be putting up with this shit if this woman's outsides were as ugly as her insides. DTMFA.

What happened to your column? I remember back when your columns involved wonderful details about things like proper dildo protocol, indulging odd fetishes, and funny sex adventures. Now it's all about the philosophy of what loving relationships should truly entail. I miss the old Dan who would coach readers on how to put large things inside themselves and recount funny/titillating anecdotes.

Where's My Dirt?

Google happened to my column.

Back in the getting-large-things-inside-my-readers days, WMD, people would write me and ask, "How do I get this large thing inside of me?" Now people with large things can turn to Google for information about how to get their large things inside themselves. Another question I used to get all the time: "What's a cock ring?" Now cock rings have their own Wiki page.

There's just so much good, basic info about sex online – including basic how-to info – that people don't have to ask me for basic information about fetishes or kinks or dildo protocols anymore. So most of the questions I get nowadays, and most of the ones I answer, are about relationships. Don't blame me, WMD, blame Google's algorithms.

It has been a long time since I filled a column or two with titillating sex anecdotes. I'm on vacation right now, so ... wow me with your best/kinkiest/craziest vacation-sex stories, dear readers, and I'll fill next week's column with 'em.

Find the **Savage Lovecast** (my weekly podcast) every Tuesday at thestranger.com/savage.

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