

STANDARD DEVIATIONS: All She wants for Christmas is My Two Front Teeth

Greetings,

This is the holiday edition. The newsletter project has been so well-received and accepted that I'm humbled and am taking this opportunity to express my gratitude to the person most responsible for its success. My wife has been my editor and guiding light on this path and it's time to pay my respects.

Behind every great man is a woman rolling her eyes. I'm certainly no exception. She's been behind me every step of the way, and I've learned not to get too close to any steep drop-offs.

Love may be blind, but marriage is a real eye-opener. Now this isn't my first marriage, you might say it's been aisle and error. My ex-wife still misses me, but her aim is getting better.

My wife and I were so very happy for over twenty years. Then we met.

We fell in love and got engaged in a bowling alley.

Hey. Don't laugh. That bowling alley is **24 times** more romantic than a street alley.

If this strikes you as exciting, I'll spare you the suspense and frame this in a way that keeps your minds out of the gutter.

We enjoyed bowling. On one hand, she wasn't good ... but ... the beer was. On the other hand, the beer wasn't cheapbut ...

As she picked up her ball and got ready to bowl, I dropped down on one knee in front of her. It got so quiet in the bowling alley; you could hear a pin drop.

And then another.

And then a voice on the intercom: ****SERVICE ON LANE 18! SERVICE ON LANE 18!****

When she looked at me with that 14-pound bowling ball in her hands, and said, "Okay, I guess", you could have knocked me over with a feather.

Instead, the swelling lasted three days.

I wanted to split right away, but she was no easy pick-up, **and** we had to change shoes. She still blames me for that night, but I was framed. As hard as I try to throw that memory away it keeps coming back. Now you know the score.

Of course, I wanted to impress her parents so I told her mother I would, "Do the very best I could to provide for their daughter".

"Exactly what we're afraid of", was her only reply.



Let me be clear. My late Mother-in-law was always so inspiring! Even at the hospital when we couldn't save her because we didn't know her blood type, with her dying breath she grasped my arm, looked deep into my eyes, and encouraged me to, "Be positive. Be positive!"

Our wedding was very emotional. Even the cake was in tiers.

My wife recently quit her job at the recycling center. She ran the machine that crushes pop cans. It was just soda pressing.

Her first job was using a drill at the copper mine. It was boring. Then they wanted her to study soil samples, but she thought it beneath her. For a while she worked for the IRS, but she found it too taxing.

I never thought I'd witness it, but now she's a legal aid. It won't bail us out of poverty; but who am I to judge? And, in any case, it suits her.

I told her she should study earthquakes. Lord knows she's found all my faults.

My wife was shocked when she found out how bad I am as an electrician.

I accidentally handed her a glue stick instead of Chap Stick. She still isn't talking to me.

When she found out I replaced our bed with a trampoline; she hit the roof.

She said one of us has terrible posture. I have a hunch, it might be me.

She didn't used to think I was indecisive, now I'm not sure.

She made me watch a documentary on how ships are built. It was riveting.

For a while she accused me of acting like a flamingo. Finally, I had to put my foot down.

I wanted to teach her how to drive a stick shift but couldn't find a manual.

She told me she did yoga every day. That was a stretch.

She wanted to see me with a beard. I didn't like it at first, but it's grown on me.

I once asked if she ever had fantasies about me. "All the time", she replied. "Doing dishes, mowing the yard, helping with kids, taking out the trash...."

I thought I was marrying Mrs. Right; I just didn't realize her first name is Always.

I learned early in life that "I am" is the shortest sentence. Later, I learned that "I do" is a much longer sentence.

And now, we've been married for over 30 years! Several of them have been wonderful.

Friends ask how my wife has stayed married to me this long. If she ever comes back, I'll ask her.

Okay, okay; all kidding aside, I've failed math so many times I can't even count. But I do count every great moment with my wife among my top ten.



Here's the deal. A woman marries a man hoping he'll change. A man marries a woman hoping she'll never change. ... They're both mistaken.

Our life together has been like a roller-coaster ride. We stand around most of the time feeling like we don't get anywhere. We're constantly trying to keep the kids in line. Neither of us is sure we trust the whole operation. It's been a lot of twists and turns with some steep climbs; and all the thrills were over in a matter of seconds. In the end, you've spent every cent, your hands are sticky, the food was iffy, everyone is tired and ornery, and even still, you *think* you had fun.

Christmas is right around the corner, and I'm going to do better this time! Last year I asked what she wanted, and she told me: "Nothing would make me happier than a diamond necklace."

Believe me. "Nothing" did not make her happier.

Of course, quarantine has been especially hard on my wife. Sometimes I'll see her just standing there, staring sadly through the window.

Only three more days and I can let her back in.

Have a great Christmas holiday; and be safe,

Bryan



"'Naughty or nice' isn't a thing anymore. Were you caught?"

