

Miranda

Miranda was originally a friend of a friend. An inappropriately young girl-friend of a friend of mine, Pete E., that was considerably younger than me. At the time I was forty-seven, Pete was thirty-one, and dating Miranda who was two weeks out of graduating high school. She was very pretty and very flirty. In spite of that we hit it off right away. A few years later after her and Pete had completed the full relationship cycle, we remained buddies. We went camping, whitewater rafting, biking, canoeing, and attended concerts and sporting events. All totally platonically. I knew that she was interested in a “friendship only relationship”. My mission in life was predicated on being able to read the signals regarding whether or not a female was sexually interested in me. Even though she cared deeply about me, there was no sexual interest on her part. Trust me, detecting that *is* my super power. She enjoyed doing all of the things that I had been into for most of my life including recreational imbibing. So, we went places and did things together, often for days on end. Sometimes folks thought she was my daughter and sometimes they thought that I was a dirty, albeit, lucky, old bastard. I didn't mind either take, just not both at the same time.

I also saw her through her first two marriages. They were both “bottle rocket” marriages. Took off in a flash and quickly fizzled. Each coupling produced a child. Before she turned thirty, she was married again and had again produced another baby. It was during that third marriage when I had a disturbing revelation. She and her hubby were living in a tony suburb south of Minneapolis. I had acquired two tickets to the Packers/Vikes Sunday night game at the Metro dome, three hours from my home in beautiful Lanesboro, MN. The person who was originally slated to go with me cancelled, so I thought of Miranda, who lived right next to the highway on route to Minneapolis. She was not a football fan, but was usually up for whatever adventure I suggested. She was up for this one as well.

Her first two husbands had been cautiously friendly to her “older male friend”, the operative word being *cautious* bordering on suspicious. During those two couplings we never went anywhere together, just the two of us. I was invited over for supper, which I enjoyed, while the hubby de jour hovered with arm around my friend, giving off all the signs of a possessive mate. This time Miranda and I would be leaving the spouse behind to watch the kids while her and I spent the evening drinking beer and cheering on the Packers from the cheap seats in the Dome.

From the moment he opened the door and welcomed me into their home, I could tell that this guy was different, or was it me? He was extremely friendly and deferential. Someone had obviously taught him to respect his elders. But wait a minute. How had I gone from potential male competition to venerable senior citizen? As Miranda showed me the sumptuous house and re-aquainted me with her kiddos, her guy continued to shower me with hospitality, kindness, and respect. And it was really starting to piss me off. I used to be the guy that poached gals right off the arm of their man. I had a close buddy who said "I don't want to kick your ass, but if you keep flirting with my wife, I may have to". I blithely replied "Do what you have to do", and kept right on flirting. He did not kick my ass as he could easily have done. Another guy threatened to come after me with a gun if I didn't promise to quit dating his girlfriend. I said "That's up to her". He failed to follow up on his threat as well. I had a reputation damn it. And it wasn't just those two guys either. Men that knew me kept a close eye on their ladies when I was around. "Helping men not take their sweeties for granted since 1968". That was my motto. Now this bozo was disrespecting me by "respecting me". Insidious. And sending me out, with his blessings, for an evening with his hot wife.....*in my van*, while he smiled and wished us a fun time. A "FUN TIME"? What the hell? I was still a youngish late fifties dude in fairly good shape. But this guy was making me feel like a eunuch. Damn him.

I did not try to hit on my friend, because *she was my friend*. It wasn't her fault that her betrothed was dissing my manhood. We had a great time at the game and I did get a little psychological redemption there in the stands. As I mentioned, Miranda was not a big football fan. So, she occupied herself striking up conversations and buying beers for many of the guys sitting near us. It turned out that most of them were about my age and rooting for the Pack. She and I both had Packer's jerseys on. She was beautiful, friendly, and buying brewskis for all takers. Suffice it to say, a lot of the hard-core Packer fan/guys were severely distracted from the action on the field. There was a married couple seated directly in front of us. Each one seemed to be having a markedly different reaction to Miranda than their spouse. They appeared to be about ten years older than me and the survivors of a long-haul marriage. He was sneaking glances and snippets of conversation toward Miranda while his wife was hunching her shoulders tighter and tighter and leaning farther and farther forward as the game went on. When Miranda handed him a fresh beer, her treat, the Missus let out an audible "Harrumph" and shot him a "warning, rough road ahead" glare. Visibly chastised, he did his best to keep his eyes on the field but I could tell that his cosmic focus was behind him, on my friend, Miranda.

A little later Miranda excused herself to hit the potty. At that point the guy just could not resist, despite the price that his wife would likely levy on him later. He turned fully around so that he could see my face and said “Is that your girlfriend?” I replied “No, she’s my wife.” I brazenly lied. He shook his head in amazement and said “How did you manage that?” Even though his wife was showing no outward signs of eavesdropping, I was sure that she was. My next lie was for her benefit as much as it was for him. “I have an enormous penis.” It was a wonder that the poor woman did not sustain a serious neck injury as a result of whipping her head around at, let’s say, break-neck speed. She first emitted a death stare straight into my eyes. Her eyes then slowly traveled south to my crotch. She gave a dismissive shake of her head and turned back to the game. She didn’t believe a word of it. The guy wasn’t so sure. Part of him wanted, no needed, to believe that somewhere, somehow, old geezers like he and I still had a chance with hot young females.