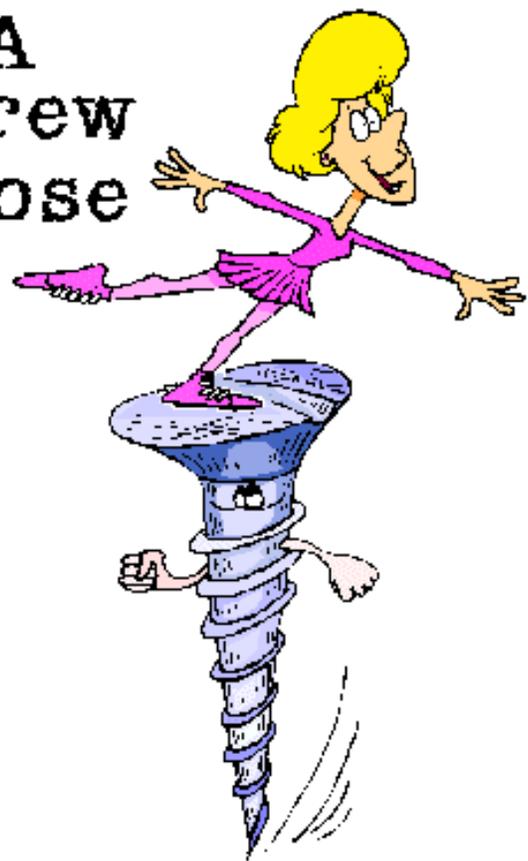


A Screw Loose



by Liz Holzemer

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Mom's Date Out

After 11 years of marriage and two kids, I've had it. I can't hear myself think. Wait, I can't even think. I need to escape the four walls of home that have long imprisoned me. I'm leaving. Ok, I just need a half-day hall pass. I will finally have a day I've long dreamed about for years-a mom's date out. I've decided that every Wednesday I will have a date - not in the slip-into-a-sexy outfit-to-wow-hubby-over kind of way, but a date of self and soul searching. Preferably from a park bench or a rocking chair at my favorite local bookstore. Wednesdays are ideal - it's midweek and who goes out on hump day?

At first I didn't think I could do it and commit. If I committed every Wednesday, would it become an

- *Lynette's Funny
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- *Diary Of A Mom
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obligation or chore like taking that new Bikram yoga class at my master planned rec center or promising to host a play date?

I drew up a contract with only two simple rules and signed my name in O+ blood:

1. My date can't be spent catching up - there will always be laundry, errand running, bills to pay. Once I blaze out of the garage, all thoughts of work, wifely and motherly duties are quickly erased from my hard drive.
2. The date is only shared with me, myself and I.

So last Wednesday I made my first date. As the day approached, I became nervous and full of anticipation. What would I do? How would I spend it? It had been so long since I'd been wooed over by my own sense of humor, penchant for great conversation, and the art of ordering just the right item off the menu.

"Just be yourself," I repeated over and over like a meditation mantra to my reflection in the mirror. Then there was the issue of the perfect outfit. What would I wear? I didn't want to come on too strong or appear overzealous. I needed the perfect blend of comfort tempered with sophistication. This was a first date, after all. First impressions take less than seven seconds. I slid into my favorite Gap jeans, a floral camisole (everyone always feels better in colors!) and my signature black square-toe boots. On top, I threw over my prized Nordstrom half-yearly find - a lime suede blazer. I had to admit, I didn't look all too shabby for a frazzled mom and desperate housewife.

I was on my way, but to where? I hadn't fully planned out the logistics of my date. I'm always planning and so I wanted to show myself I had at least one bone of spontaneity in me. I took the side streets toward downtown until I came upon an historic neighborhood I'd always wanted to stop at, but never had the time to before. I parked and stepped into the unseasonably warm day. Burnt orange Maple and brilliant gold Aspen leaves crackled under my boots. Sounds I hadn't heard in ages.

I meandered in and out of artist-owned galleries developing a new founded appreciation for a craft I would never master.

***Bad Hair Day**

***Confessions of a
Middle Aged Drama Queen**

***Dad Droppings**

***Mommy
Hullabaloo**

***Dirty Laundry**

***The Morrison Boys**

***Side Dish**

***Comments From
The Carpool**

***The Foggiest Idea**

***Home Away
From Home**

***Small Town Soup**

***Wiping The Crazy
Off My Face**

***Mommy - Daddy
Dance**

***From The Frontline**

***Life At 40**

***Livin' In My Head**

***Sigh, Moan &
Garfbuckle**

***Don't Get Me Started**



“Are you on vacation?” a Grandma Moses dead ringer asked, opening a tube of oil paint.

I didn’t hold back.

“Actually, I’m on a vacation of self-discovery.” It felt liberating to announce that to a stranger. I purchased a set of note cards as a memento of my journey.

“Good luck on your voyage,” Grandma Moses wished me as I left, eager to continue down the trail.

I stumbled upon a Victorian home turned into a café a few blocks away. Patio seating. I swung open the creaky door. A *New York Times* left behind. A plethora of menu choices scribbled in chalk. I’d been delivered from Starbucks. Angels sang in my head.

I ordered and found a spot in the sun. I sank my teeth into thickly cut slabs of crunchy bacon, just ripe tomatoes and leafy lettuce. I was polite enough not to point out to myself the mayo dribbling down my chin.

Who knew food had taste? It’d been so long.

The date was going great; we had potential.

I read the *Times* from cover to cover, relishing the ink stains on my fingers. Me, myself and I engaged in political banter, shared jokes and mulled over the always challenging crossword. We lingered over a pumpkin spice latte until we hesitantly agreed it was time to go.

But not before making the move we were both anticipating.

As I leaned into myself for a warm embrace, I knew in my heart I wanted to continue this relationship.

Next Wednesday it is, I agreed without hesitation.

***Dad Libs**

***LadyOfTheHouse**

***Blissfully Numb**

***MommyChronicles**

***DomesticEngineering**

***College Daze**

***Midlife Cometh**

***The Imperfect Man**

***Bereft On The Left**

***Mommorphosis**

***MomsAlwaysWrite**

***HorseSense&Savvy**

***Scrambled Brains**

***Desperate Working Mothers**

***Urban Momfare**

***Family Business**

***My Brain On PBS**

***You Can't Be Serious**

***Hoochy Mama**



Liz Holzemer is the founder of Meningioma Mommas.org , an online support group she founded after surviving a baseball-sized meningioma brain tumor. She is a freelance writer, LizHolzemer.com and is currently looking for a permanent home and cushy advance for her book; I Have a What in My Head?! Liz is a 2004 Woman's Day "Women Who Inspire Us" recipient. She lives in Colorado with her husband and their two miracle children. Liz also maintains her sense of humor on a daily basis and can be reached at lizholzemer@comcast.net if you have a plum writing assignment to offer her.



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