

Net.Date

Sal Marino

Stones

Donna seemed nice enough. She only had one photo posted alongside her profile, but her face was indeed attractive. She was a blonde, with shoulder length hair, a clear complexion and ice blue eyes. She was the kind of girl I would have been attracted to and gone after, but the fact that she noticed me first, taking the initiative to make contact, made me believe that getting to know more about her would be easily accomplished.

After our initial introductory emails, it was a natural progression that we would speak on the telephone. I don't remember if I called her, or if she called me, but I do remember the conversation being pleasant, although not very revealing. We were both of the opinion that face-to-face meetings are significantly more telling than hiding behind some computer screen or a telephone. We decided to meet for lunch at a mutually convenient restaurant.

The first thing I noticed about Donna when she walked through the front door of the restaurant was that she must have used a measuring tape from a different country when she indicated her height. Although her profile stated that she was five feet, six inches tall, I speculated that she must have made a typographical error and hit the five key first. Perhaps she just wasn't well versed in the definitions of meters and centimeters, or like me, she was totally confused by the metric system of weights and measures. Donna was more like six feet, five inches tall, rather than the five feet, six inches she had indicated. She must have figured a fib of eleven inches was an insignificant pretense in the search for everlasting compatibility.

"Wow, you're tall!" I commented, as I looked up to Donna to say our first eye to... {Ummmm?} chest hello.

"Yeah, I get that all the time." She responded. "I hope it doesn't bother you," she continued in a rather assertive way. "I'm usually taller than most of the men I meet, but it doesn't really bother me." she confessed. "I haven't had any complaints yet!" Donna added coyly, seemingly convinced that most men didn't mind dating a giant.

Of course, she hadn't had any complaints, I thought, Those other guys might have been frightened for their life, thinking that if they made any negative comment to this assertive Goliath, she would likely just step on them!

"Well, maybe I can get a couple of telephone books to stand on," I quipped, trying to disguise with joviality, the shocked expression I knew would be emanating from my face. At the same time, I was trying not to show concern for the fact that the restaurant didn't have any seven-foot tall, three hundred-and eighty-pound bouncers at the door just in case Donna got offended and decided to pommel me. This chick was a bit on the enormous side and not the slender, delicate woman I would have preferred. But hey; I was already committed to lunch, so why not try to make the best of it? I'm not the kind of guy who would walk out on a date, just because she wasn't my optimal choice. Furthermore, I was afraid if I did, she would chase me down and kick my butt! I would stay to see it through.

As the diminutive host showed us to our table, I could have sworn I heard the hostess's thoughts regarding Donna's height, resonating through the juxtaposition of the two female forms which paraded in front of me. At the very least, the expression on the hostess's face was enough to tell a story. There was something about Jack and The Bean Stalk, which subliminally echoed in my own thoughts.

I further wondered what size mattress Donna must have had at home, because the Queen Size mattress I had, would certainly have a couple of seemingly size twenty, colossal feet hanging over the edge if she ever stayed over! For the life of me, I couldn't imagine that scenario. Besides, I just hate falling into the trough, which is created when an individual who is larger than me is in my bed. No, I didn't think I would ever get to that point with Donna, but that's not the only thing which molded my decisions of the day.

We sat at the table, and I couldn't help noticing that I was looking up to her as we spoke. It felt as if I were a six-year-old child having lunch with mommy. I wondered if perhaps it wouldn't be such a bad idea to ask the server for those telephone books to sit on, just to be eye to eye with *Gigantor*. I hadn't felt that awkward on a date in a very long time.

"So, tell me," I asked in a rather blunt fashion, "why does your profile indicate that you are five feet six, when in fact you're slightly taller?" My use of the word 'slightly' was premeditated in the fact that I was conscious of not wanting to incite anything in a response from Donna along the lines of "*fee, fi, fo, fum!*"

"Oh, that's because most men are intimidated by my size, they probably wouldn't want to date me if they knew how tall I am," Donna confessed. "How astute of her," I thought.

“But I’m no different than anyone else,” she added.

“I suppose not,” I mused, that is, if everyone in the world is a basketball player.

“Get to know me and you’ll understand,” Donna said. “Besides,” she admitted, “I kind of like men who are smaller than me. They’re cute!”

“Intimidated? No different?” I pondered. This girl should be in Africa, dating a seven-foot-tall Zulu warrior, but she was trying to convince me that she was no different than anyone else. And then she insults me by suggesting that my six feet of height fits with her understanding of small and cute. I looked at her hands and wondered what else she might think of as tiny and cute. My masculinity and macho standing were apparently at risk. On top of it all, she was a liar!

“Fortitude!” I thought. “I’ll get through this next hour one way or another. I’ll return to the world below the clouds and never ever trade a cow for a bean again!

“Would you like a cocktail?” the server asked.

“I’ll have a Scotch on the rocks,” Donna replied. “Let’s make that a double,” She added, “I’m in a good mood!”

“Uh, I’ll have a Coke,” I requested of the server, thinking that I should stay somewhat sober in case the need for a quick exit down the bean stalk became necessary.

“Don’t you drink?” Donna asked.

“Yes. But I usually wait till I’m awake,” I jokingly stated, referring to the fact that it still seemed like morning.

“Oh, I love to drink!” Donna exalted. “Scotch smoothes out the rough edges,” she professed, as if she were explaining some religious belief.

“I once had a drinking contest with a biker friend of mine, to see who could finish a pint of Scotch first.” Donna proudly explained, “He lost!”

“I see!” I responded briefly, thinking that it was going to be an interesting hour of lunch. I also wondered if I had enough cash on hand to pay the bar bill because I didn’t think she was going to fill her mammoth tank with just one drink. I also remembered thinking that I wasn’t necessarily in the mood for a tattoo either, so the thought of Donna and I hitting it off seemed remote.

“Oh, wait!” Donna interjected, “I brought something for you.” She explained, as she fumbled in her bag.

Donna was highly focused on finding what apparently had shifted to the bottom of her bag, but she was undeterred in her mission and began to empty the bag’s contents on the table. She revealed a hairbrush, make-up, a day planner, pens and pencils, a calculator, a cell phone, something that looked like it might vibrate, a few paper wrapped, tube-like things that guys wouldn’t necessarily use and an assortment of crumpled tissues and napkins with apparently hastily scribbles notes

in smudged ink. There were also a couple of bottles of various lotions, scissors and something that resembled a child's toy. I wouldn't have been surprised if she pulled out a monkey wrench, but the pocket sized "Guide to UFO Sightings" was indeed a curiosity.

"Here they are!" Donna exclaimed, as she clutched the sought-after items in the depths of her cavernous handbag. She removed her hand from the bottom of the bag and handed me a group of smooth, multicolored stones, asking me to hold onto them for a few minutes, because they would help balance my aura. I watched her take a rather large gulp of her Scotch, knowing she would soon be asking for another drink.

"Balance my aura?" I thought? If there was anything out of balance, it was likely dear old Donna! Funny, how you can't always pick up the fact that someone is totally out of their friggin mind by just talking to them on the phone.

Donna went on to explain how the stones emitted an energy force, and that it was a counterbalance to the negative forces in the universe, yada, yada, yada!

I was vaguely aware of the fact that my face, with eyes opened wide, was frozen in a gaping mouth, half-smile as she went on with her soliloquy. I also wondered if my trance-like state would result in a sliver of drool slipping from my lower lip and onto my napkin, because I doubt I could have controlled my physical reactions in the face of such banal absurdity. Donna was definitively out there somewhere!

As if this little theatrical presentation wasn't enough to convince me that Donna might be better served working in a Cuckoo clock factory, she reached into her bag of tricks yet again, this time retrieving a crystal.

"Sit still," she said. "I just want to see if I can feel your energy"

Donna stretched out her arm and held the crystal about three inches over my head and began tracing circles in the air above me. I remember feeling somewhat embarrassed as she performed her bizarre ritual in view of every normal human in the restaurant.

"Oh!" She exclaimed. "Oh, this is not good!" she went on with what she believed to be some sort of scientific explanation. "You have a great deal of negative energy emitting from your aura" she suggested. "You're going to need some work."

I'm going to need some work, I thought? We hadn't even had our appetizer yet and I already wanted to call the men in white coats, but she thought I needed work! I remember looking around the restaurant, hoping nobody witnessed Donna's voodoo ritual, and thinking that I better eat fast so I could bolt. But alas, there was a little old blue haired lady looking in my direction with a wrinkled brow. Maybe she saw my aura too! No, like me, she probably just wondered what

the hell the jolly giant was doing. Maybe I should have helped myself to a gulp of her Scotch to smooth some of the rough edges of this fiasco.

Donna went on to explain her self-appointed expertise with aura interpretation and aura correction, thus suggesting that I allow her to administer some form of treatment, to put me in a more peaceful plane of reality. Frankly, I didn't know what the hell she was talking about. The only reality I cared about was the fact that I didn't get enough blue cheese dressing with my salad. Maybe I was just hallucinating, and the crystal was really a saltshaker, and that I would soon awake from this absurd 1970's Fellini film flashback. No such luck!

Unfortunately, this surrealist vision before me was indeed real and I would have to endure in a politically correct fashion, the remainder of her grandiose observations until the check came. Internally, however, I was jumping up and down, screaming at what a delusional idiot this nut job was!

"If you're not doing anything this afternoon," Donna suggested, "why don't you come back to my place, and I'll perform a cleansing ritual."

By now the drool had indeed passed my lower lip and began pooling in my lap. I don't think I could have gotten my mouth to close, even if I had a vise grip. I suppose Donna believed that our date was progressing positively. The giant was indeed certifiable!

"What do you mean by a cleansing ritual?" I asked, my curiosity wanting to know exactly what this psycho had in mind.

"Well, I have a room set up in my house where I administer treatments." Donna explained. "It's a room with blackened windows and a professional massage table." She added, describing her workspace. "I light some candles, burn incense and put on some soothing earth sounds."

"Uh, OK, and then what," I queried.

"Then you take off your clothes and you lay on the table, face up while I..."

"Wait a minute!" I interrupted. Is this some kind of a weird sex thing?" I questioned, "Do you just want to get me back to your place for a little Hanky-Panky?" I asked.

For a moment I envisioned myself tied to a table in her dungeon, having some sort of weird exorcism ritual being performed over my 'cute little naked body,' while *Gigantor* played with her crystals and stones, slurped on her Scotch, and had the biker guy tattoo me with a picture of a giant nut job on my butt!

"Of course not!" Donna responded. "This has nothing to do with sex." She further explained, "I only have sex in my bedroom. My aura room is sacred," she emphatically stated.

"Her aura room was sacred?" I laughed to myself.

I wondered if I could donate some padding for the walls, because it sounded like that was the only thing missing from her sanctuary.

“All I do is pass some crystals above your body, forcing out the negative energy and replacing it with positive energy.” She went on to say, “If anything, you’ll feel slightly warm as I pass the crystals over you. This is the positive energy growing within you.”

For a brief moment I envisioned the giant administering a warm enema to my naked, bound, gagged and helpless body. Ehhhh, no thanks! Here it was, my opportunity for a quick exit. I knew that I didn’t want anything to do with this strange woman beyond getting away without being crushed, so I took an aggressive stance, looking for a way to turn her off.

“Well, if I come back to your place and I lay naked on your table, face up, there’s likely to be a little more warmth and growth generated than what you may be accustomed to,” I advised Donna.

“Additionally,” I added, “I’m most likely going to want to share some of that warmth by passing a couple of my own stones over you.”

Donna seemed a bit annoyed at my insincerity, but I had to maintain the attack if I expected her to be completely turned off to the notion of me becoming one of her patients, in a self-ordained ministry of aura healing. True, a simple ‘no thanks’ would have done the trick, but why resist an opportunity to put the prankster in me to work? It’s not like I was destroying the chance for the great love opportunity of my lifetime, but rather extracting a bit of entertainment for the cost of the lunch and two, double Scotch’s Donna had already consumed. The ‘Funist’ in me couldn’t resist.

Apparently, my diversion worked, because Donna retreated from her aggressive stance regarding her willingness to save my aura, and she simply resigned herself to the fact that I would not be an immediate convert. I indeed would need some work, if for nothing else, to deteriorate my mental capacity to a point of cerebral compatibility with this nut job.

“Well, if you ever want to have your aura altered,” Donna said, “I’m more than willing to help you.”

“In the meantime,” Donna asserted, “why don’t you hold onto this stone. It will help alleviate some of the negative energy that follows you around.” She said, as she gifted me one of her stones.

“Thank you.” I replied. “And if I ever need a lobotomy,” I giggled to myself, “you’ll be the first one I call for a consultation.”

I remember feeling awkward saying goodbye to Donna that afternoon, because I sensed that she was aware that we would never meet again. There was no doubt in my mind that this was true.

As I drove away, I felt a sense of sorrow for the fact that a nut job like Donna truly believed that she would find a guy who would be into her nonsense. But then again, who am I to judge the compatibility of others. I also felt sorry for myself, having to return to the cyber hunt, yet again, wondering if normalcy was merely a figment of my imagination.

I flipped the stone out the window, hoping it would be found by someone who was in greater need than me of having his aura repaired; someone who has a greater tolerance for the story of the bean stalk... someone who has a greater tolerance for the absurd...someone who wasn't put off by a woman with a set of stones, like Donna.

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