

First Sex

by Ann Bogle

On December 2, I met Nils for the first and only time. Nils, a university geographer, found me at an Internet dating website. He drove two hours to meet me on my turf. My car, a 1989 Volvo 240 DL, had been and is still on the fritz, and with the weather expected to turn wintery, which it did, Nils decided to go to me.

I had listed with Internet dating websites for two years without meeting someone that way in person. Mostly, I got affirmation from the sites and little more. I did not shop the photos for Mr. Next. I waited for the men to shop for me, and they did. Sometimes I received five or more electronic winks in a day and did not reply to them; also, I had no interest in replying to them. Then I wondered if I ought to take my profiles down from the websites so no man might believe mistakenly that I was thinking of him, as happened at the beginning: I thought for a week that a certain artist from St. Paul had me in mind because we had mutually “winked” at each other. Neither of us would pay the subscriber fee and correspond.

Nils was different from the start. Since he signed one of his letters with his full name, I searched him at Google and contacted him at work, something that annoyed and confused him: He thought the dating website had committed a security breach. The breach was mine, not one of security, but of etiquette. Nils provided a different email address for my use, and we started to correspond. He turned out to be the best correspondent I had had in twenty years, which was saying quite a lot, since I tended to correspond with writers (albeit writers who ran cool toward correspondence). By contrast, Nils was fiery, opinionated, and sure on personal subjects.

After our date, which included dinner, a glass of wine, and a ridiculous TV show about a private investigator following a woman who worked for a sexual bondage service, we “did it,” as we say here in Minnesota, on the hotel bed. I rarely discuss sex. I had learned early on that it's better never or almost never to mention

sex except with the related sex partner and not to discuss past sex with someone else.

One day, out of the blue, and not due to any conversation, it occurred to me that I had not mentioned sex enough. I had left myself open to too much speculation, too many blanks that might lead to an impression of frigidity or boring or unearthly ways. At the website, my sexual personality test revealed that I was a Traditionalist. Nils was an Intellectual.

After our date, my sister, who has a boyfriend, came over with her Weimaraner. I started instantly to tell her of my sex with Nils. She shirked the conversation, tried to change the subject, and more than once, I persisted. I wanted to tell her about it. "I don't want to know about your sex life," she said at last. "I don't have a sex life," I told her. "I had sex, once, with Nils." In 2003, I had sex twice. In 2004 not at all, and in 2005, twice, once with Nils and once with my standard-issue, gray fox once-boyfriend, who had not had sex since 2004.

I called my woman friend, whom I have not seen in two years except for running into her once at a café. "I had sex," I called joyously into the phone, as if I were calling out my name to hear it echo in the mountains. "You're funny," she said, but it sounded like "weird" was what she meant. She has had a boyfriend for years; having sex for me *was* weird, and talking about it was even weirder. True, when I had a boyfriend, I had sex each day, and it had not seemed weird at all, but once-a-year sex was of another order and was genuinely noteworthy.

To be even more bold (and speak more about sex), I told two men about it; I told them my date with Nils had included amazing sex. I told them it was timed for conception. I told them I wanted "it," meaning the baby, even though I wasn't pregnant.

I wrote to Nils: "Sex with you was of the highest order I have ever experienced. I was nearly drunk on it. I 'saw' nothing except my open vagina against a screen, as if the whole room and world were nothing except an all-around vision inside a cunt. A flower, that is.

“It was deep, indeed. So now I must ask you (since I was in stellar orbit) did you come inside me? Usually, I know that sort of thing. This time I wouldn't be able to say.”

