

# "Oh, what's this?" she

*by* Carl Santoro

asked as he held them  
together like  
two sides of dry rubber cement  
going for that permanent bond.

"It's my new  
eight-second hug."

"What the...what's this  
all about?"

"Not much, really.  
I just want our hugs  
to have more passion  
and intimacy  
from this day forward."

"Okay, that's enough. Let me go now."

"See. It feels a little awkward, right?"

"Ah, yes. Not a little. A lot."

"But we are married. We always give a  
goodbye hug or a hello hug."

"Yup, and one second is just fine.  
You're not proposing to impose  
your weirdness on  
everyone in the family,  
are you?  
And, why eight seconds? Why eight?"

"I don't know. I thought about  
the length and it seemed  
one second shorter and the awkwardness factor  
would not have been there.  
I wanted to create a physical, as well as  
an emotional, surge during the,  
mostly ignored for its value,  
embrace.  
I even felt that at the end  
each person should make some kind of statement.  
Any kind will do"

"So, like the Goldilocks thing -  
not too hot, not too cold,  
but just right?  
Is that it?"

"Absolutely!...uh,  
you can let go now."

"Oh! Geesh, I was just  
getting used to the  
smell of your neck."

