

It's chemistry, stupid

We did run into each other from time to time, but I had totally shut her out, except for one time when she asked me out to a movie (and a chance to talk, afterwards) - I said yes, and spent the next hour wrestling with myself about it; when we met again, I told her that I wasn't going, that it probably wasn't a good idea I didn't want any possibility of getting hooked again, of forgiving her & pretending that the previous year didn't happen, which just shows how much I still wanted her. It was Zero Tolerance - I wouldn't speak to her, wouldn't acknowledge her when our paths crossed (which raised the tension level at certain events and parties); she no longer existed in my world and to reinforce that, I burned all of the pictures I had of us together and erased her from my life.

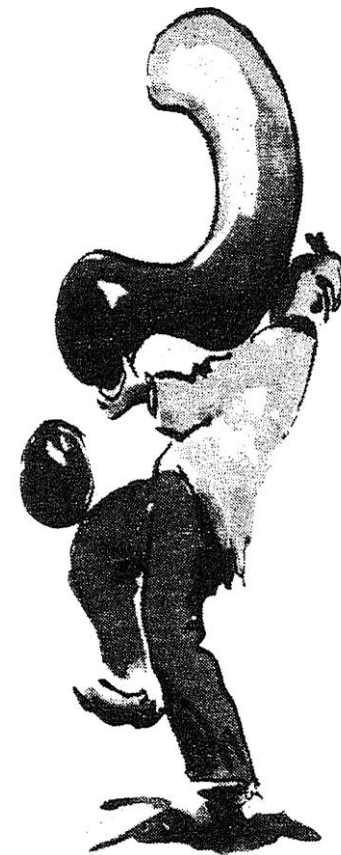
we had no further contact from that point on and that probably would've remained the case except for finding her by accident while checking out sites on the Internet. I had been curious from time to time - I knew the area she had settled in and had seen her name on the credits of a couple major films shot there. Plus, I still held onto some things that I didn't burn or trash, from our time together that I still treasure (some photos she'd taken, a stuffed Opus from "Bloom County"). While packing up my grandparent's place, I came across one photo that had escaped the purging - apparently, it had been taken during one of our visits and I had totally forgotten about it.

I called her and we talked several times over the phone. From time to time, she'll communicate via e-mail. The last spate of conversation, when I started to gather material for this issue (in April), I had asked her if she cared to contribute something about her view on relationships (with no ulterior motive - I had no idea what direction I was going to take until June, when I started writing this piece.) & this was her response:

Moi? I completely bungled our college relationship... Hmmmm, maybe this is just too cynical or the product or the environment I'm in now but the hustle and bustle of daily life leaves me feeling empty inside, I long for the college days when everyone was trying to connect. It seemed so many of us were trying to get in touch with our feelings and communicate. I enjoyed that. Now it is all purely superficial and on the surface, "lets do this" & "lets do that" but no real talking. It seems that people are less interested in developing friendships, they are so busy scurrying around. I value the close friendships that I do have and love it when I get out of the city and can relax at home in the country.

Although we've made some contact, our breakup is a subject that both of us really haven't discussed, except in vague terms and apologies on both our parts. I'm mostly curious about her perspective. since at the time I "ever really knew what it was; I asked, pleaded & begged, but she couldn't or wouldn't tell me back then. Much as I'd be willing to for her to take all the blame, I'm not entirely blameless in what happened, I'm sure. I can only guess that she may have realized at some level that I didn't have anything substantial to offer her, which may be a lot closer to the truth than I care to admit.

I do miss the friendship we had, which was one of the most pleasant friendships I had & which made me fall for her as hard as I did (Ironic now, since she's one of the few people I can have a" extended conversation with about career matters. Another funny item is that we're roughly at the same point, career wise.) I think that time has pretty much taken care of any residual lust... regardless of what you see in movies and television, second chances rarely occur. The friendship is about the only thing that would be worth building on, but who knows if that will happen.



The main lesson I came away with from that experience was that any sort of validation I was looking for had to come from me - I had to define myself, rather than looking for others to provide it for me - a hard lesson, & one that wasn't fun to learn, but I got the point very quickly.