

## Greed revisited: Mark talks about holiday of love and extortion

by Mark Owens

It's upon us again. An entity that devours men's souls, ravages their minds and eventually turns them into stooped, drooling, stupid creatures - sort of like Tony Danza with a hangover. It's a horrible beast I'm talking about, something so cruel, so vicious, so nasty it should be outlawed. I'm referring, of course, to Valentine's Day.

You remember Valentine's day, right? As a small child in elementary school you had to exchange those little valentine cards with your classmates. They had those cute pictures of little cowboys, spacemen, and animals on them with sweet sayings like "I'm really spaced out over you," "Be my valentine-if you carrot all," and "Hey little girl, want som-" oops, wrong valentine.

Of course, you also had to give one to the girl you loathed most in the whole world. Remember that guys - shuffling over to her desk, arm outstretched, with that "BLEKCH!" expression on your face? It wasn't pretty, and the fact the guys razzed you about it for

the next three weeks didn't help much. Here's a little trip down memory lane:

guys: Eecwwww! You gave a Valentine to Becky Reynolds!

you: But I had to! She had me in a headlock and it hurt!

guys: (chanting) Marky and Becky sitting in a....

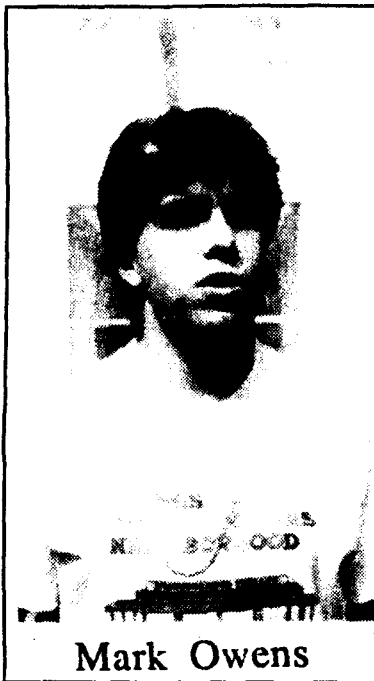
Later on high school you had to spend money for the same abuse, and heaven help you if you forgot. I did - *once*. Remember Becky Reynolds? I forgot to get her flowers or some other meaningless token of lust one year. At noon it dawned on both of us I had forgotten. At that point she stood up in the cafeteria and loudly announced (with the same tone one would use while giving Moses the Ten Commandments) to a capacity crowd that I (and I'm quoting very carefully here) was "a waste of red blood cells."

After that not many of us forgot Valentine's Day, which was kinda unfortunate, since most of us had to take out loans from Vinnie "the albino newt" Slonski just to get through February. It wasn't pretty. Not at all.

Which brings us up to now. Today it's not surprising some view Valentine's Day as a holiday of extortion, not love. Below is the average conversation you and your Significant Other might have had yesterday:

S.O.: You know, Valentine's Day is tomorrow.

You: Mmmm.



Mark Owens

## The Missing Pieces

S.O.: (sounding annoyed) Really, its tomorrow.

You: (doing something really important, like scraping well done Cheez Whiz off the inside of the microwave and eating a burrito at the same time) Uhh huh.

S.O.: (sounding a little ticked) I was talking to Steve and he was telling me all about the wonderful things he has lined up.

You: [burp]

S.O.: (shoving the burrito, microwave and jar of Cheez Whiz up your nose) I'm just a little curious as to if you remembered me or Valentine's Day, a time of love and intimacy, newt brain!

And people wonder why I'm a little cynical about today. Valentine's Day isn't characterized by love anymore, but by greed. Think I'm kidding? Look in Roget's Thesaurus under "greed." One of the synonyms is "cupidity." Where do you think we get cupid from, huh?

Now I know there are a few - okay, there are a lot of guys who have picked up the paper and are just now thinking "It's Valentine's Day? Already? But I

don't have a gift for (sound of spooky organ music) HER! AAAAAARRRRRRRRGGG GGGGGHHHHHHH!" To help you out of this dilemma I've listed a few uncommon gifts you can give her:

• plastic flowers - no hay fever and you can use them over and over

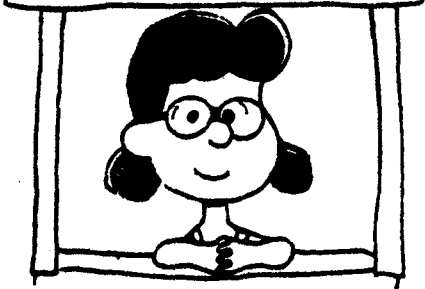
• A Rongo genuine 14 karat electroplated ring, topped with a fabulous 25 pound Cubic Zirconium Diamonelle. And if you hurry you can get a free string of faux pas Chinese pearls and a pure Naugahyde jacket.

• A camouflage mosquito net nighty from Field and Stream

• A complete Dr. Seuss library

• Finally, try something completely different. Promise to be on time for something and wear a tie. She'll be impressed. Trust me.

FREE HELP



Dear Louanne,

I've been really down lately. Nothing seems fun anymore. I'm tired all the time, but I still don't sleep well. I wake up early in the morning and lie there and worry. I don't have much appetite and can't seem to concentrate on studying. Nothing seems worth it. My friends are probably getting tired of me. I'm not much fun to be with anymore.

I thought it could be my metabolism, blood sugar, or anemia so I went to my family doctor. Tests didn't show anything was wrong, but he gave me a prescription for Prozac. He said it was an antidepressant. It costs over \$60 for 30 pills! I still haven't filled the prescription. I don't believe in taking drugs. All I need is to start taking uppers and get hooked on them. Then I'll be even worse off than I am now. What do you think I should do.

Signed, Hopeless

Dear Hopeless,

All of your symptoms are common signs of depression, especially that feeling of hopelessness, but you were wise to rule out any physical problems first.

There are two kinds of depression, situationally induced and endogenous. Depression usually comes from our reaction to stress in our environment, but there is a

## Ask Louanne

The Collegian Advice Column  
by Dr. Louanne Barton,  
Psychologist

kind of depression which is chemical and physiological. It involves faulty regulation of chemicals in the brain called neurotransmitters.

One estimate suggests that 20 percent of people suffering from depression are chemically (or endogenously) depressed. This 20 percent can be successfully treated with antidepressant medication. If you find yourself having mood swings for no reason at all, if serious depression persists two weeks or longer and has reoccurred over a long period of time, or if there are other relatives in your family who have suffered from depression, these are possible indications of endogenous depression.

There are many good medications available: Norpramin, Tofranil, Desyrel, Elavil, and the newest Prozac just to name a few. They are not uppers, and they are not addictive! Unlike "uppers" they only serve to bring you back

into chemical balance much like what insulin does for a diabetic. Usually they can be discontinued after 6 to 18 months. Many people have had good success with Prozac. If I were you I'd follow your doctor's advice. In addition, I would suggest you get involved in some kind of "talk therapy." Most therapists believe the two go hand in hand.

The pain of depression can be far worse than the pain of any physical disorder. I hope you find relief soon and can feel normal again.

## Lady Killer

Among many young women, smoking is viewed as stylish.  
It is not. Smoking is deadly.  
If you smoke, please consider stopping.  
For help, information and support, please contact your local American Cancer Society.

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