

The “School Of Perpetual Pretension”™ Ends A Bad Blind Date by Caroline H.

Description



Tina Fey, 30 Rock (WiffleGif)

Dear Puerile Entitled Hollywood Writer:

My bleeding heart is torn to shreds over the abrupt ending of our twenty-minute date.

If I may, letâ€™s back it up and see if thereâ€™s a teeny tiny atom of hope that you just might, run like a pony to your nearest smart phone and tell me that it was all a terrible mistake. Just be careful not to trip over your four-inch, too long khakis.

Anyhoo, there we were, two strangers, unattracted at first sight attempting to make idle chit-chat over a cup of Earl and a piece of not so lemony, lemon pooppy, err, lemon poppy seed cake, when forgive the pun, it all turned sour.

At the crux of this blind date gone to hell in a bread basket is just how fast the crazy flies when it comes to the slightest slight (real or imagined) toward our children. *Itâ€™s no secret that in Los Angeles, especially, many a parentâ€™s ego, self-worth, and identity is far too easily attached to their childâ€™s success. Our childrenâ€™s school can run dangerously close to becoming trophies, like so many other aspects of life in this town.* I suppose perhaps, that Iâ€™m as guilty as the next Mommy or Daddy Dearest “ but letâ€™s face it, thereâ€™s crazy and then thereâ€™s helicopter, tiger parent, bat-shit crazy.

Back to our saga. When you asked where my daughter went to high school, I guess I bought into the game. When it was my turn to ask where your kids went to school, you mentioned School(s) of Perpetual Pretension A, B, and C. Of course they are all great schools, but admit it, saying their name

feeds your ego, just a tad? Or, in your case, a freight train full of tads?

As our family had considered School of Perpetual Pretension C (progressive, hip and on the easy-breezy Westside), I asked how you liked it. You said you hadn't really participated in the life of the school, and therefore had little in the way of opinion. And here's where I unwittingly went off the rails. I told you that we didn't really connect with the school. I'll repeat why. *For starters, at the open house a group of about one hundred fifty parents, eager to belong to such an elite institution (I mean, for their children to belong to such an elite institution), were asked to compliment the stranger sitting next to them* " (an exercise undoubtedly designed to showcase their academic excellence). I mentioned that it was a rather uncomfortable exercise and suggested that while being a very good school that perhaps they were having an off night.

Our stilted conversation proceeded for maybe ten more minutes, with me once again, doing the heavy lifting. I asked what you were working on. You stiffly told me "a commercial". Well, holy shit-balls of information overload!! I said that sounded "great!" followed by a few seconds of "get me the eff out of here" silence.

Then you dropped the "Bomb". "I have to be Honest" you exclaimed. Yes! I thought for sure that you were going to liberate me from the clutches of this insipid date and tell me you weren't feeling it. As my relief and exhilaration began to swell, you swung the hammer, and I was your little nail.

"I just spent \$200,000 on School of Perpetual Pretension C and you said you hated it," you bravely pronounced, like a child who just cornered the schoolyard bully. "No, I did not say I hated it." I replied, pleasantly surprised by my even tone and demeanor. "You said it was a terrible school." Still calm, I said, "No, I don't think you actually heard what I said." "Well, we hated your daughter's Mid-City, equally progressive School of Perpetual Pretension!" you spouted. Ooo, the knockout punch.

"That's OK," I said, and I truly meant it. I don't know how many times friends, or friends of friends have checked out our former school and found it wasn't for them. Their reasons were subjective and would never offend me, unless, they said the teachers were dumb and smelled like doody " then I may have had a tantwum, just like you.

"I'm going to leave now." You heartlessly announced. What could I say, except "Bye?" Oh, what could have been. So much to say, from the truly cruel to the empathetic, yet so little time.

"Look you pompous pee-wee leprechaun, take your baw-baw and go play in your sandbox." Or, on the sincere and empathetic side "I'm sorry, I should not have said that, I understand school pride and I did not mean to offend you."

But alas, I sat there, somewhat flummoxed as I watched you drag the excess fabric from your very long khakis along the floor, until you intrepidly strolled out of sight. Welp, I twisted my mouth from side to side for a beat, then took a sip of my lukewarm Earl. As I began to take another bite of the lemon poppy, damn, lemon poppy seed cake, I set it back down and decided it just wasn't worth it.

Necessary disclaimers:

I have no problem with small men, only small mindedness.
Potty humor is childish and cheap. I'll get back to you with my excuse.

Caroline H. is a divorced mom and writer in Los Angeles. Of course this isn't her real name.

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