

Kelsey

REVIEW

2020



When Fanny Met Solly

A girl walks into a bar. Actually, it was Chili's in Butler, N.J. on Route 23, December 10th, 2011. After years of those online disasters, I got a good feel for this date. Actually, *he* got a *really* good feel—of my *tuchas* (butt, behind), that is—but that's later on.

So there was meetthisjew.com, J-fate.com, tryrmatch.com. You name it, I'd tried it. After all those losers, I had updated my personal statement to read "widower only with no kids." I had no desire to deal with anyone else's grown—and inheritance-hungry—children. Sorry, but I'm not going to lie to you.

I decided to give seniormagnetism.com one last shot, since this *maidelah* (girl, usually Jewish) was not meant to be alone. I loved my men and I loved being able to wrap my legs around some kosher sausage at night. Loneliness is not for sissies!

With all the men I dated after David's passing in 2007, I knew by now exactly who and what I was looking for. I completed yet another online profile, which I already knew by heart, and I remembered to specify, "If you snore, you must use a C-PAP. No more room-shaking loud vibrations of the male nose-throat variety, though old-fashioned vibrators with new batteries are permissible." That would get quite a bit of attention.

Now, let's get back to that memorable day in December 2011. I spotted Solly Rabinowitz at the door from his online photo, still wearing his nerdy Bluetooth earpiece which he eventually removed once he realized his GPS had already told him, "You have arrived at your destination." He smiled and said, "Hi," and then I smiled when he said, "I've been looking to do someone like you all my life!" I wasn't even the slightest bit *fazed* by this remark. After all, I had to deal with guys coming for a visit with their *schlongs* (slang for penis, or "dick") hanging out of their pants, and one-way oral fetishes.

I was quite ready with a retort. "Your life ain't over yet, dahlink!" We had communicated quite a bit by email for about two weeks before, so I knew he was a widower who had no kids. This had already given him Brownie points. "It's about to be a very interesting ride," I said as we were seated.

Saul "Solly" Rabinowitz, who was voted "most likely to be a wallflower" in his senior year at Toms River (N.J.) High, had no problem spilling what was on his mind, courtesy of ten years of intensive Toastmaster's International training. I hoped I'd be able to keep up with him. A twice-Rutgers grad—Bachelor of Arts in mathematics, and Master of Science in computer science—he automatically got a 4.0 in *Nerds in New Jersey 101*.

While the cleavage-bearing, short-skirted hostess led us to our seats, I thought, how cool is that? He didn't take his eyes off me once. Besides, he'd soon learn, I could

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provide him with all the fantasies he'd ever need.

Solly ordered the chicken tortilla soup and chicken fajitas, none of which I could sample because I don't eat chicken. I had the shrimp fajitas. I just sat back and let Solly do most of the talking because it seemed like he needed to—he had been a widower since 2005 after a long-term marriage. I thought, what better way to learn about someone? Besides, I was enjoying my dinner and right now I needed my mouth to chew. I was sure I'd figure out what to do with my mouth later on, if we made it to a second date.

Solly was quite subtle when, while we were taking a break from stuffing our faces, he said, "You know, I always bring my C-PAP machine with me when I travel." Bingo; that took care of one of my requirements without my even having to ask. That showed me that Solly read and paid attention to my online profile.

But I never expected by far the strangest coincidence that just about sealed the deal then and there. Solly knew I lived way up in Flower, N.Y., and I knew he lived in central New Jersey, which was why we arranged to meet mid-point in Butler, N.J. for our first date. During dinner, I mentioned I was born in the Bronx, and Solly said, "So was I."

"Where?" I asked.

"In Westchester Square Hospital," said Solly.

"Are you fucking kidding me?" I asked, thinking I might have inadvertently included this info in my online profile. Do you know how many hospitals there are in the Bronx? This was too weird a coincidence for a lifelong Jersey boy. We proceeded to share our stories...

Mindy Rabinowitz lived in Toms River, New Jersey, with her husband, Elijah, and their two children, Delilah six, and Dennis, two. She was expecting her third child in June 1951. Mindy wasn't due for two weeks, so she decided to leave Delilah and Dennis with her mom, *Bubbe* (Grandma) Iris, and take a quick, overnight trip up to the Bronx to visit with cousins.

Well, Mindy did arrive safe and sound at cousin Ethel's in the Parkchester section of the Bronx, but after a delicious lunch of spicy *kishka* (beef intestine casing, stuffed with flour or matzo meal, spices and chicken fat) and *kasha varnishkes* (a buckwheat grain dish, with noodles and spices), she went into labor. Those contractions started out so close together that she missed the option of returning home to Toms River to her one-obstetrician farming community. Back then, it was kind of like a one-horse town.

The closest hospital was—you guessed it—Westchester Square Hospital; and, Saul P. Rabinowitz was born on June 1, 1951. Back then, they kept new moms in the hospital for one week to recuperate from scopolamine-assisted labor, or "twilight sleep," as it used to be called. Not like today when, with an uncomplicated childbirth, one's medical insurance—if she is fortunate enough to have medical insurance—barely covers an overnight stay.

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Mindy wasn't going anywhere for seven days, so she pondered a middle name for little Solly, whose first name, Saul, was after Shmuel, Mindy's late father. It was a Jewish tradition and honor to name after a deceased relative. Hubby Elijah, a chicken farmer, couldn't get relief for the daily work involved in tending to his coops until wife and son were ready to be discharged on day seven, when he would finally meet his third child. Therefore, Mindy was unable to consult with Elijah because, back then, only the wealthy could afford phones in their hospital rooms. And she wanted to have Solly's middle name available for his birth certificate.

Nor were there televisions in hospitals in the early fifties. Mindy by then was bored to tears after reading the sole copy of an old *Ladies' Home Journal* the previous new mom had left in the room, cover to cover seven times. There was an article about another new mom from Phoenix who created twenty different recipes using red snapper. That story, in turn, reminded Mindy of her favorite trip, to Phoenix, Arizona, where she and Eli went on their honeymoon. That was it: Phoenix would be her precious son's middle name.

A few days after Solly's birth, the records clerk at Westchester Square Hospital stopped by Mindy's bedside to ask about her new son's name, for the birth certificate. Kelly O'Sullivan had a thick Irish brogue, that is, even though she spoke like she had just had her adenoids removed. You see, she was deaf, wore two hearing aids and had Coke bottle eyeglasses. But, she had been hired immediately without even an interview, because on her resume she claimed she typed 90 words per minute. No one even bothered to give her a typing test on the hospital's sole, ancient Remington typewriter. Westchester Square Hospital was in the midst of a population explosion; and, the previous clerk, who only typed 30 w.p.m., was so overworked that she quit in 1946, just as post-war women began to spit out boomer rugrats in record volume.

The main OB/GYN with privileges at the hospital was a dreamy, young Dr. Percival (Percy) Nussbaum, also known as "Dr. Pussy". He bore a strong resemblance to the hunk fifties' actor William Holden. The story goes that a good number of young Bronx gals chose to get knocked up just so they could look at Dr. Pussy in between their legs once a month for the duration of their pregnancies. And once a week, the good doctor just signed off on a stack of birth certificates, while Kelly O'Sullivan serviced him under his desk. Dr. Pussy never checked names while he autographed those documents, because he was clearly concentrating on other more urgent matters.

So here I was, three years later, in 1954, the only girl and last child of Jane and Michael Goldman. My first name came from daddy Michael's deceased aunt Faygeleh. Mommy Jane decided on a more American-sounding *Fanny* instead of Faygeleh. The first initial would suffice, and I'm glad it did, because as I got older, I learned that Faygeleh was literally "bird" in Yiddish but was also Yiddish slang for "f**got," a not nice street vulgarity in those days.

A full seven days at Westchester Square Hospital for Mommy was like a vacation away from caring for two active little boys, Marty and Harry, who were seven and a half and five at the time. The story goes that one of the neighbors came by for a visit and brought her a clematis plant. Mommy loved the pretty pink and purple flowers. She, like Mindy three years before, had plenty of time on her hands during that week to think of middle names, because my first name was non-negotiable. Otherwise, accord-

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ing to tradition, dead aunt Faygeleh's soul would forever go ambling about the earth without a namesake. So, this would be my name: Fanny Clematis Goldman. Or, so it was believed.

Jane was so sleep-deprived in the first several weeks of being Mommy to now three children, including a newborn with excellent lungs, so she never bothered to open up the envelope with the return address marked "Bureau of Vital Records". She labeled it "Fanny's birth certificate" in her careful 1920s penmanship and filed it away inside the black and white serving table, where she kept all of the family records and photos, in the teeny 6 x 8 foot dining room.

Until, that is, it was time for me to apply for my learner's permit to drive, in 1971. My best friend Cami accompanied me to the D.M.V. When I handed over that same, seventeen year-old envelope, Cami looked at the clerk and all of a sudden there were stereo belly laughs, as I stood there mortified. My birth certificate, thanks to Kelly O'Sullivan and Dr. Pussy, proved my identity as Fanny Clitoris Goldman. So that was how I got the nickname "The Clit," which ultimately served me well once I was old enough to appreciate it.

But that's not all. Three years before I was born, in Toms River, New Jersey, Mindy Rabinowitz, now well-rested with little Solly who was, and still is, a talented sleeper, had her mom to help out with the two older children. After Delilah brought the mail in a few weeks later, Mindy opened up the envelope with the return address from the Bronx, New York, planning to file little Solly's birth certificate in the same shoebox with Delilah's and Dennis's. She let out a whoop that woke up little Solly in the bassinet way at the other end of the house, while *Bubbe* Iris came hobbling with Delilah and Dennis on each hand, to find Mindy laughing hysterically. Luckily, Mindy had a wonderful sense of humor.

"*Vus machst du, mameleh?*" (What are you doing little Mommy? What's happening?) asked *Bubbe* Iris, while Mindy said, in between chuckles, "His name is Saul Penis Rabinowitz!" *Bubbe*, with limited English, had a puzzled look on her face; but Delilah and Dennis clearly knew the names for boy and girl genitalia. So, that is how little Solly bore the nickname of "Pee Pee" practically until he got to Rutgers. Of course, Mindy and Elijah ultimately got the birth certificate corrected, with Solly's middle name changed to Phoenix, but it wasn't until much later. After hundreds of complaints, Westchester Square Hospital bade farewell to Kelly O'Sullivan, who ultimately became Mrs. Dr. Pussy in 1955.

A snappy December wind bit at our faces as we sprinted out to Chili's parking lot. "This ain't Boca Raton!" I said. Coincidentally, in such a big parking lot, our cars were parked right near each other.

Solly said, "Would you like to get together again soon? I already have a date for New Year's Eve. It's a square dance and I don't even like the gal, but a commitment's a commitment."

What a nice guy. I replied, "I also made a date for New Year's Eve, but sure, let's

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decide on another time.” I thanked him for dinner and gave him a hug and a peck on the cheek. Solly returned the favor with a nice bear hug and grabbed my ass for a quick feel.

Good, I thought, this guy has *chutzpah* (guts, nerve). Little did I know that, within a few weeks, we’d be engaged and planning a wedding. After all, we already had that Westchester Square Hospital connection, and with that, we knew it was *bashert* (meant to be; destiny).