

Chronically Love-struck

DISCLAIMER: The author in no way means for this piece to perpetuate negative stereotypes about Midwesterners. The author believes that the buck-toothed, ass-backwards hick stereotype is not true of Midwesterners. Only Southerners.

Once upon a time in a land far far away (Nebraska), there was a boy named Billy. Now Billy was a good little American – he loved his apple pie and he hated his dissidents – and he considered himself blessed by the one true Christian God. But struggling through those awkward teen years, Billy was starting to lose faith. You see, Billy had a problem.

We might as well start at the beginning. Picture it: Billy was thirteen, just beginning to experience those feelings which are blasphemous to think about until one is married. He'd had his eye on a special little lady named Mary



Sue Beth Luann Joann Mary Lou, and, you know what, she'd had her eye on him too. After a few months of hemming and hawing, Billy finally worked up the courage to ask her out. "Er, Ma...Mary Sue, do ya reckon you could help me put tar on the wounds of my daddy's shorn sheep? Maybe afterwards we could share us a lemonade and have us a talk about how the gosh darn globalized economy is affecting the gross income of good ol' down home farmers." It was the most romantic thing Mary Sue had ever heard.

The big day finally came and the tar was burping fumes of pure magic. If Jesus was a shepherd, by gosh he was leading those sheep to bring those two young lovebirds together. Collapsing on a haystack, reeking of sheep blood and pheromones, they



had themselves a good chuckle about government subsidization of cash crops. Billy leaned in for the kiss, closed his eyes...and got struck by lightning.

It's safe to say that ruined the moment. Billy was alright; a little burned, his ego a little bruised. Well, he thought, at least the odds of being

stuck by lightning twice are next to nil, by gum. But then something strange happened. On his next date with Mary Sue, at the drive-in movie, as they watched an American secret agent topple an international ring of evil sheepdog torturers, Billy stuck his lips out, made contact, then BAM! Sparks flew – the dangerous, electrical kind.



He was shocked.

In fact, Billy was downright embarrassed. A bit traumatized, too. So much so that he went into seclusion until the last week of his last year of public schooling. But then, he reached deep, deep down and asked Mary Sue to the eighth grade formal dance. “No way those damn electrons can catch me inside a dance hall. And struck not once, not twice, but three times? Impossible.” Billy was wrong. Just as



he started to dance a little too slow and a little too close, one strike – BLOW! – rent a hole in the roof and number two – KABLAMO! - took out Billy.

Yes, Billy had a problem alright. Chronically lightning-struck, the doctors said. Inexplicable, the doctors said. Behind his back, those cotton-pickin’ no-good doctors just laughed. You could say Billy had bad luck – real bad – with girls. But he figured that, like so many growing pains, his problem would get better with time. So with a heavy heart and a light wallet, this here boy flew to the Metropolis of the Damned, a.k.a. New York City, to spare his family more shame. Gee whiz, was he upset! Still, with that neat new “internet” contraption, he actually found a girlfriend but – CRASH! – an awkward explanation and a move to Boston. He’d lost faith. With resignation, he went to a prostitute - CRACKOW! – a broken contraceptive, torn apart by lightning, and a flight to San Francisco.

And then one day, little Billy – not so little any more – was about to withdraw the last little bit of money he had from his little checking account. But, lo and behold, a pretty little lady was in his way. Her name was Earthfire and she was chained to the ATM to protest the multinational bank’s investments in nuclear-powered, slave-labor-built oil-drilling devices. He called her a retrograde idealist pursuing an exercise in futility, by golly. She called him a hick. They had themselves a rollicking exchange of zingers. But then, their eyes met, something clicked, they both leaned in...and they were both struck by lightning.

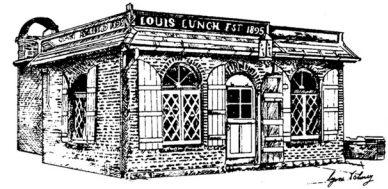
They knew they were right for each other. And they lived painfully ever after.

THE MORAL OF THIS STORY:

Opposites attract.

No really, that’s what causes lightning. ☹️

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