

Lynn's Zen
By C. Lynn Perry

All's Fair

Copyright 2008 C. Lynn Perry — Please do not remove the copyright from this essay.

I swear to you we tried to stop her! It's all my fault, and I feel guilty, I tell you! Let's face it ... it was my totally, unabashed passion for caramel apples that got us all into this mess to begin with.

Last week we had the county fair in town, and The Girls came up with all their offspring to partake in the fun. I was having a heinous caramel apple experience; where, upon biting down on the beautiful, smooth, sweet covering, I got my big, fat jaw locked into it, and couldn't free my teeth from the thing for the Love of God. I looked like a pig at a Hawaiian Luau, and was drooling copiously down the front of my shirt as The Girls tried to talk me into calling 911 to bring The Jaws of Life for assistance. In the end, I must have drooled and gnawed enough to loosen that apple up; and with The Girls' coaching, I managed to free my face from the thing while losing only two fillings.

That was when we noticed Lydia was missing in action.

After scouring the fair for almost an hour, we finally found her ... sitting in the lap of some guy who called himself Frogbug. Now, Frogbug worked at the ride known as 'The Ring of Fire.' For anyone that's never been to the fair, The Ring of Fire is a circular rollercoaster-like ride that goes straight up into heaven, and it comes up one side, and you pause upside-down suspended for a few moments, before coming down in the other direction; and getting back up to the top, it pauses again. It does this about ten times. After the first three times, I had managed to capture the essence of the thing and was ready to get the rest of the ride over with. You can only imagine my bravery here, because I almost fainted dead-out on the Ferris Wheel!

After finding Lyd, we rounded up the kids and took them back to my house, and managed to get Lyd to go to one of our favorite haunts ... the Waffle House. If you ever want good and sound advice, go to the Waffle House and ask for Vesta. She'll set you straight; and that's just what we were hoping she'd do when it came to Lyd. Lyd's just not been the same since her husband, a well-to-do attorney, ran off with his twenty-something legal secretary.

We found a booth and plunked our Hag Selves down. "So," the ever-practical Joan asked Lyd, "where does he actually live?"

"Well, he's currently sharing a trailer with the Bearded Woman," defended Lydia.

"Oh, my Lord," said Barb, "And just how low can your self-esteem sink when you get dumped for a woman with a beard?"

"It's only a temporary arrangement!" defended Lyd.

"Let me guess," said Vesta, pulling her pencil out of her bee-hive hair-do and hovering it over her order pad, "she's running off with a carnie."

"How'd you know?" asked Leigh.

"I can see it on her face," replied Vesta. "It's gotta be Frogbug."

"You know him?" asked Joan.

"Girl, everybody knows him! He fills up his jeans like a long, slow drink! He has arms like a blacksmith, and has a tattoo of a snake on the back of his head! Rides a Harley, ya know? But Lyd, whatever happened to that dentist you were seeing? What's his name?" asked Vesta.

"Morty Goldstein," answered Leigh, "But we knew that wasn't going to work out because she broke the Number 1 Girlfriend Rule of Dating."

"Ah, the 'I-Shalt-Not-Date-Anyone-With-a-Backside-Bigger-Than-Mine rule,'" stated Vesta, knowingly.

"Exactly," said Kat. "Besides, he eats crayons to entertain the kids. That's just wrong."

"What about Bennet?" asked Joan.

"Who?" asked Lyd, a blank look on her face.

"Your son!" we screeched in unison.

"Oh, well," said Lyd, "Let the new wife trade in her red convertible for a mini-van so she can carpool! And let her take him to and from football practice! Let her sit up with him when he's sick! I've done it for years, so now it can be her turn! I'm ready to have something for *me!*"

About that time none other than Frogbug sauntered in to the Waffle House. Lyd squealed and left us to sit with him while we downed our coffee.

"I just don't get it," said Joan, shaking her head. "Morty can provide everything she needs, and here she is ready to run off with some tattooed guy named Frogbug!"

"Ya'll know how it is," said Vesta. "You rode the Ring of Fire, right?"

"Yeah."

"Well, when you were upside down, just hanging there, what were you thinking about?"

"Not puking," I offered.

"Yeah, and you weren't thinking about the fact that the cat box needed cleaning, and that you had a load of clothes to do, and about the car pool the next day, right?" she asked.

"Yeah."

"You were thinking about nothing and the thrill of it all. That's why she's gonna trade Morty in for Frogbug. Besides," said Vesta wisely, "everyone knows that the stars shine brighter, and the rides go higher when it's dark."

She had a point. And, as Vesta walked away tucking her pencil back into her hair-do, she turned and threw us a wink over her shoulder and said, "Ya'll don't worry about leaving a tip, now, ya hear? Just leave me the number for that dentist!"

So, I guess what they say is true...

...all's fair in love and war.