Happy Saint Patrick's Day

Mark Murphy
St. John Fisher College
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Abstract
In lieu of an abstract, below is the essay's first paragraph.

"How did I spend Saint Patrick's Day 1983? I bought a car. Fifteen minutes later, I was calling for someone to pick me up. How did it happen? Did I spark your imagination?"

Cover Page Footnote

This prose is available in The Angle: http://fisherpub.sjfc.edu/angle/vol1987/iss1/11
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How did I spend Saint Patrick's Day 1983? I bought a car. Fifteen minutes later, I was calling for someone to pick me up. How did it happen? Did I spark your imagination?

At around 11 a.m., Keith (the former owner) dropped it off on his way to Florida. The lucky guy was going south to buy a car during spring break. As soon as I had the keys in my hand, I lost control. Of course, I took a ride. As I made a sudden turn onto a side street, I had to let my foot off the accelerator quickly and onto the brake. The car made a pitiful sound as if struggling to continue. Before the turn was completed, it died. Losing power-assisted steering, I used every muscle in my arms to direct the car onto the shoulder. I had flooded it out—that damn carb! As I turned the key in an attempt to restart the engine, the battery seemed to die as well. To cap it all, the gas gauge indicated empty. "Mark, you are in deep brown stuff," I told myself as I crept from primer-coated wreck.

I looked up the hill and down. Keith's house was within walking distance, but before taking five steps, I realized that everyone was elsewhere. I started back up the hill. Plan B was to wait on the car and try not to look too much like a jerk. This plan worked as a car stopped within a couple minutes with an attractive young woman as pilot.

"Hello," she said in a voice quite like Loni Anderson. If not for a few zits on her forehead which was covered by her rich bronze locks anyway, she would have been a 21 on a ten scale.

"How's it going?" I always said, so it came out perfect.

"It's going well. Got a problem with that mean street machine?"

She had to be teasing me. The car looked like a primer and Bondo commercial.

"No, No Trouble. I'm waiting for a friend," I said as calmly as possible. It wasn't calm enough, and she could sense that I was stranded.

"Well, I'm your friend," she stated as she hopped up on the car's hood next to me. "How long have you been waiting for me?"

I wanted so much to say, "All my life." I didn't know what to do. I sure wasn't expecting this! After a pause, I remarked, "One of my college friends is coming up to talk about engines." At the end of talk, a large lump in my throat made me stop. She was closer to me now than when I had begun talking. What am I going to do? Wait a minute! Why am I keeping away from this person? I put my arm around her and asked, "Would you like to jump me?"

"I'll get the cables," she grinned.

In a matter of a few minutes, my car was rumbling again. I drove to a local gasoline station to have a mechanic check my battery. The cells were bone-dry! I just wonder how Keith got the car to "walk" into my driveway. I was quite angry, but then I looked over my shoulder. The woman had followed me. She walked over to me as I sat in my car.

"What are you doing, babe?"

"Babe?!" I began to laugh uncontrollably.

"There is going to be an awesome Saint Patty's party at the Silver Dollar. What do you say? Want to be my date?" she asked with an honest grin.

"I believe that I will get some gas, babe," I chuckled, "I might join ya' later."

She reached into my car and messed up my hair. This was one demented young girl. I finally looked her all over and saw that she was slightly under-dressed for the conditions. She wore a tank top shirt and Lee jeans that looked very becoming with her in them. She also wore Nike sneakers. That is a must for me. I think that women who wear Nike are in a higher class. Her hands went down to the area between my nose and mouth. I had a bad excuse for a mustache. "I like that," she said.

I started the engine and let it idle. It was obvious that she was in love. I hoped that it was me and not my car. I told her to jump in the other side, and we would go to the big party. She lit up and danced around the car. My next move was something I don't do often, but I still did it well. I punched the gas pedal and performed a perfect "burn out." Chances are, the tires were still spinning when we got there. As I reached to turn off the ignition, I found that she was practically on my lap. She grabbed my hand and yanked me out her side. As we entered, the thick smoke of a thousand cigarettes struck us hard in the face. That is my weakness. Frankly, I could stand in a room that reeked of sweat longer than tobacco smoke. My reflex action was to jump back. As I did so, I backed into someone and the woman at my hand slammed into a cigarette vending machine. The man I had accidentally run into spun me around ready to knock me through a wall. Another reflex action made me duck. The man's fist flew into the face of a rather drunk-looking female truck driver. The driver shrugged off the blow and tackled the man! The repeated sound of bone on flesh was heard, as the woman pounded him violently. Within seconds, the fight had spread to just about every able person in the place! I grabbed my injured companion and made a run for my car. I tore out of the lot like a bat out of hell, not faster. It was then that I discovered to my horror that I had forgotten to fill my gasoline tank. Again my car made a pitiful sound as if struggling to continue. I pulled it over—dead.

"I love you, babe," she said as she reclined in her seat. We were out in the middle of a field. The warm breeze of spring's coming blew through our open windows and made her hair dance. I wondered what was going on as she drew close to me and pointed at the horizon. "Over there is my uncle's farmhouse. I don't think that we should run over there just yet though. What do you say, babe?" she asked as she put her legs across the seat and my lap.
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"You may be right. Are you okay, I mean, you didn't get hurt back there . . ."

"No," she simply returned as she motioned for me to come closer. As I did, there was a tap on the door. A rough-looking farmer took me out and yelled four-letter words as he pinned me against the car.

"Something wrong with you, buddy?" I asked.

"That's my cousin that you been helping yourself to a hearty portion of, you #$@*!!" he spat (excluding obscenities), "I'm gonna' lay you out!"

Now, I wasn't about to be "laid out." That didn't sound like too much fun. I lifted my knee. I was so short that my knee hit his leg. It was enough to send him off balance to the ground. I darted around the car and grabbed the baseball bat that I always carried in my trunk. As he charged recklessly, I drove it into his stomach. I could have hit him harder, but he got the message. He ran off leaving his Honda motorcycle which I used for gasoline to get me to a nearby village.

"You're quite impressive, babe," she remarked.

My mind wasn't on the farmer boy. I wanted to get this angel back to her car. The day was crazy since she became part of it. The trouble was that while half of my being wanted to see her go, the other wanted to see how hot her lips were. As I pulled onto the shoulder behind her car, she decided for me. Those lips were hot for sure! I counted five cars as we were locked in a love-headlock. She was obviously better at it than me, because I suddenly needed air. She took it as a brush-off. Before I had taken in enough breaths to recover, she was in her car and was history. I couldn't even get the license plate number. I returned home to find that my mother was home early. As I entered the house smelling like strawberry lipstick and expensive perfume, she asked, "Where have you been, honey?"

"Never mind, Mah, never mind."

Maryann Sawyer