

1972

JK -  
came to talks before  
married

Holden Honeymoon  
Memories contest entry:

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Whenever we visit Niagara Falls, we take the Gorge walk down to view the rapids. It's our favourite thing to do. Communing with such beauty brings out the romantic side in both of us.

Besides, that is where the honeymoon of Mr. and Mrs. Eldridge Stanton of Toronto, came to a tragic end. Embracing, they drifted to their watery graves when the ice floe on which they were standing, separated from the whole. That's what it says on the plaque in the gorge.

But this is a tribute to my honeymoon which lasted for three and one half days, back in 1972. That was the length of time that our stag money held out, all \$120.00.

Actually we were bold enough to make an illicit "dry run" to the Falls, a few months before the wedding. Nowadays, this type of behaviour is commonplace, but for us, both living at home at age twenty two, it was a risky venture.

We managed to convince our parents of our separate intent to visit friends for the weekend, but instead of worrying about the consequences of such

immorality, we were more concerned about taking advantage of the admission specials, for honeymooners only. We purchased matching wedding bands from Woolworths, guaranteed to deceive the entire population of the city, or at least the employees of the wax museums!

Unfortunately for my fiancé, our passionate plans fizzled, for I could have sworn that my parents were in that room with us. We both spent a sleepless night, for very different reasons.

Two weeks later, my red-faced lover had to explain to his own parents, the delivery of a sensual pair of p.j.'s that he had forgotten at the hotel.

Like the rapids, we got off to a rocky start. Planning a wedding for the Labour Day weekend had its pitfalls. Our priest checked his Tuger Cats schedule to ensure that he wouldn't be wasting his season's ticket. Then we discovered that the Sheaton Brook (doing much better in those days), had been booked a year in advance, as had most of the better facilities.

But the final blow to me, the blushing bride, came when all of our wedding guests gathered around the T.V. in the Legion hall, to watch the now legendary Canada-Russia hockey playoffs. No one had warned me that it was a bad day to marry, not even my gallant groom, who spent his honeymoon ducking in and out of smokey bars, to catch the score!

We spent our wedding night at the Empress motel. After all, they had been kind enough to return the sleepwear. During the drive from Cambridge, my new husband promised that hockey would not be on his mind for the next few days. (He never mentioned the twenty years following!) Of course, he was anxious to consummate the marriage that evening. Unpacking, we found a bottle of Mums, compliments of our best man. We popped the cork, but neither of us liked the taste. Not wanting to be wasteful, I pulled on a robe and slippers and "peddled" the bottle to a skeptical but grateful hotel guest, much to the embarrassment of my better half.

I had my heart set on dining in the Rainbow Room, but when we arrived, we were told that the best tables had all been taken. Seeing my disappointment, my knight in shining armour slipped a five dollar bill onto the night palm and we were soon enjoying the view for which Niagara Falls is famous.

Before the invention of the People Mover, you could tow the park in a horse-drawn buggy. As we passed the Victoria Restaurant I reminisced about my Grandmother Murphy who had worked there many years before. As well as keeping the books, she would often help her boss to entertain business guests in the evening.

Later on, while attending mass at St. Patrick's, I could almost see my Dad, <sup>standing there,</sup> the young sailor waiting to meet his mother for 6:30 mass, after a night on the Town.

The honeymoon gunded to a halt on the fourth day after the wedding. Back in our tiny

apartment, my spouse watched one hockey game on T.V., while listening to another one on scaphones. I lay on the bed, in slous, trying to remember what I had seen in him, in the first place!

Twenty years later, we still fight about hockey, as well as in-laws, children and finances. But every now and again, we slip away to "the Falls," to rekindle the flame.