

1967

GOLDEN MEMORIES CONTEST

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MONEY FOR A CUP OF COFFEE

Twenty-five years ago this July 20th, my husband Bill and I were married. A young couple from a small town, who had never travelled, were about to start a brand new life together. We thought the perfect honeymoon would be to spend four days and nights in Niagara Falls.

It was our first time flying. We flew stand-by to Toronto from Timmins and arrived at the airport very early, still somewhere on cloud nine from our wedding the day before. Both of us were exhausted, and were pleased when the stewardess brought us each a tray with some breakfast. It was our first breakfast together as man and wife.

As we ate, the stewardess sat directly behind us and began to remove her nail polish. The fumes from the nail polish remover, combined with breakfast and the excitement of our first time in the air, did not sit well in our stomachs. We landed safely, although a bit light headed, in Toronto and the fresh air brought us back to life.

We saw an advertisement for a daily limosine service to Niagara Falls. To the both of us this sounded marvelous and very classy. We ended up being packed like sardines in that beautiful black limo, along with three other couples. For the entire journey I sat squashed between my new husband and a very large man. What a ride!

New at travelling, we had not booked a room, so we asked a taxi driver where we could find a hotel close to the falls. That taxi driver must have been working for the place he suggested. No mistake, this hotel was close to the falls. But, an innocent new bride of eighteen, I had anticipated a room that didn't require standing on tip toes in the bathtub and peeking through a small window for a view of the water. That wasn't the only horror. It was a hot night in mid-July and I was in need of something cold, only to find that the ice machine in the hotel was broken. During our stay Bill had to make several trips to the hotel across the street to get ice.

During the days we visited all the sights and watched the falls. Everything was as wonderful as we thought it would be and at night, the falls, with lights shining on them, were

beautiful. We also did a bit of shopping. The temperature was warm and the weather was grand. I bought Bill a pair of shorts to wear, since he never wore shorts in Timmins. It was a change for him and he wore those shorts most of time we were there, including the last day.

Soon our honeymoon was almost over and it was time to go home. Having realized I didn't like flying we decided to take the bus home. That way we could see the sights as we travelled and we could also stop over in Sudbury and visit my sister.

When we arrived back at the hotel on our final day we packed our luggage, including Bill's shorts which, unknown to us, contained the rest of our money.

At the Sudbury bus depot we found that my sister had not yet returned from our wedding celebration. She was still visiting in Timmins. We also discovered that we had no money. It was nowhere to be found. We were still four hours from home, it was eleven o'clock at night and there was no bus until morning. We were stranded in the depot. During the night we sat, leaning against each other, our heads together, feeling miserable. We were desperate for a cup of coffee and finally we asked a bum, who was also spending the night there, for some money. He gave us enough change for one cup, that we shared.

The next day we arrived home safely, relieved it was all over.

I didn't find that money until the following week when I was unpacking. It had been safely stashed in the pocket of Bill's shorts. I had to laugh when I thought back on everything that had happened. I still do. We learned that we could always lean on each other for support. It's been a good twenty-five years and we hope to have many more.

And since then I've never refused anyone a cup of coffee.