

Exposed

Written by L.A. Plume
Wednesday, 24 June 2009 11:58

Dear L. A. Plume,

The other day my boyfriend, who is not exactly a natty dresser, went into a small local shop. The proprietor asked him if he had jumped out of bed, dressed quickly and hurried out the window to avoid someone's husband.



He had a moment of confusion about the question and then assumed it related to his usual disheveled appearance so he continued shopping. A few moments later the shopkeeper came up to him again and said: "Son, you're about to let the mule out of the barn!"

My question is how/when/can we politely let someone know when they are "exposed?"

T.M.I.

Dear T.,

When I stop laughing I will get back to you on this.

L.A. Plume

Since my research yielded no results on the proper etiquette for such situations, I emailed some of my nearest and dearest and asked for their best phrases for "exposed," or embarrassing yet funny stories of how they responded to the situation. Here's what I got:

"One day I was out on a boat with friends. They were enjoying their beverages so I was running the boat and the owner/captain was sitting on an aft seat. When I turned around to ask him which course to take, I saw that his shorts were very short, too short if you know what I mean. I quickly turned forward and asked the woman sitting next to me to ask him how we should proceed. She saw the same thing I did and we nearly ran the boat aground because we were laughing so hard that neither of us could bring ourselves to look him in the face and ask the question. Luckily my friend's husband saw that we were in distress and he sorted things out for us, as it were."

Melle

"As a high school substitute teacher, I was often called at the last minute to fill in. On one of those days, I was assigned to an art class at the far end of the high school. As I dashed toward

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the classroom I could hear the chaotic sounds of pure bedlam. I walked into the room and saw a couple of students swinging from the sprinkler system pipes and several more gyrating to hip-hop tunes blasting from a boom box. I grabbed the computerized attendance sheet from the teacher's desk and asked for everyone to take their seats. One of the students appeared in front of me and I could see his lips moving, but could not hear a word he said. In a louder voice, I again asked for everyone to take their seats. Again, I tried to understand what the student in front of me was saying. Finally, in desperation, I yelled at the top of my lungs 'QUIET!' Immediately, the surprised students all froze. For the briefest fraction of a second there was complete silence. The silence coincided with the final attempt of the frustrated student in front of me to yell out "Your fly's open!" I whispered "Thank you" and immediately sat down behind the desk.

"The nautical "your hatch is open" or the farmer's "your barn door is open" will do nicely as well."

Dave H.

"We were having lunch on the terrace when I was compelled to tell my date: "Gosh, I was just sitting here and thinking what an incredibly beautiful day this was when I realized that perhaps all that I was enjoying was not meant for my eyes. I think you might want to check your lower zipper."

Ali S.

"My mother always used to say "Charlie's dead" if my sisters slip was showing beneath the hem of her skirt. That, dear, is the extent of publishable exposure."

Mr. X.

"I was working as a cigarette girl and my special friend had won a trip to Vegas. It was my 25th birthday and I had been celebrating for a little while when they announced his name on stage. When we ran up on stage I was just so excited, I couldn't stop jumping up and down. I was wearing this great little spaghetti strap black dress with just enough fabric to hold the 'girls' in place. At some point I looked into the audience and I could see all these heads bobbing as if they were listening to hard rock music. I then saw my best friend laughing so hard she was crying. She was making these weird hand gestures that I couldn't understand. Her hands were closed except for the index finger on each hand and she was holding them at about chest height and her little index fingers were flexing up and down, then I realized every time I jumped up, the 'girls' jumped out to say hello and then would sneak back beneath the dress only to keep reappearing for probably close to 5 minutes! I'm sure glad that I can laugh at myself!!! "

B. Bouncy

I was on a fishing trip and the captain asked if anyone minded of he took off his long sleeved shirt in the 100+ degree weather. No one did, except his son who said "You might want to put that bird back in it's cage."

Larry B.

Come on, readers, share your stories/solutions! Email me at: editor@lcweekly.com, or l.a.plume.bft@gmail.com, or post to the online blog.