

29th January, 2005

CAN'T SAY I BLAME THE HOMOSEXUALS

DEAR DIARY, women can be as cold as a witch in winter. Recently I've heard one too many stories about women being mean to one another for no good reason. I think I ought to offer every woman a dose of Evening Primrose and Star Flower Oil to take the edge off premenstrual tension because I'm sure being pre-menstrual has something to do with women being horrible to other women for no apparent reason whatsoever.

We all know the woman who's never happy for you. Ever!! You tell her you're engaged and she's like whoop-dee-doo! Hope he doesn't cheat on you like he did his previous girlfriend. Or your "friend" who puts a downer on everything. Like when you loose weight and she says it doesn't suit you. Or you get a new job and she says you're looking tired and stressed since you got that high flying job of yours. Or you say your daughter's playing the Virgin Mary in the Christmas nativity and she says well Christmas is bullsh*t!

My sister goes to a hairdressers who specialise in maintaining dreadlocks and all of the women stylists are mean and all of the men are lovely. Sheba's not of a mean disposition, in fact Sheba's outgoing, warm and friendly. Sheba's an end of November baby. She's a Sagittarian (yes I believe in the stars) and I've never met a cold Sagittarian in my life. But what happens when she goes to the hairdressers is if she's styled by one of the women, it's a frosty, silent and unfriendly experience. She normally gets time to read pages and pages of a book but if she gets one of the male stylists, he strikes up a conversation. This is not code for he chats her up. They talk about life, love, work, death, marriages, religion, politics, you name it, they talk about it! She gets offered a warm hello, a smile, a cup of tea and a friendly goodbye and some sort of recognition that she's a human being but she said that the females at the salon are as cold as ice! They do the job they're being paid for and it's next customer please.

I've had this experience in department stores. I'll name this one. Debenhams! I ought to name and shame the branch but if I need something from this counter in the future, I don't want it laced in arsenic. The woman on the Fashion Fair counter in a particular Debenhams purposely ignores me and this has happened on more than one occasion. We've never met. Apart from Fashion Fair I have nothing to do with her so I don't know where she gets her dislike of me from. She doesn't know me, nor do I know her but Miss Fashion Fair makes it

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very clear that she doesn't like me and wants me to know about it. She's waspish, cold and unfriendly and once she even ignored me to the point of attempting to serve someone who came to her counter after me and the customer said, pointing at me, she was here first. This just encourages me to be rude and before you know it, there are two grown women standing face to face being rude to each other for a reason one knows and the other knows nothing about!

This bitchy frostiness happens when you least expect it. I was buying curtains in another major department store last summer and needed help. I actually said excuse me to the woman who obviously wasn't ever going to help me. When I walked over to her, her face became hard and she swung her head around and looked at me with a face that resembled a scream mask and cut her eye at me. I said to her can you help me and she said hold on and walked off. I spotted another member of staff who in stark contrast was so nice that I thought she might be mistaking me for an old friend. She was so warm and chatty that I almost forgot about the witch I initially encountered. I really was bewildered. What was all that hostility about?

Sometimes, women at perfume counters are a bit sniffy too. I patiently stood in front of one woman; I thought I'd give her a minute. She clearly knew I was there and I needed her help but she busied herself with imaginary dust, imaginary dirt under her nails and imaginary housekeeping in cupboards below the counter. I said excuse me and she was like yes as if she was seeing me for the very first time, but I then knitted my eyebrows at her and thought every time I spray Givenchy Very Irresistible on me, I'd think of her and thought better of it. I walked away. Far better to get it in Boots!

There was a very rude incident in the Whitgift Shopping Centre at Christmas. I was in Claire's accessories store and I picked up a few bits to add to Christmas presents. When I got to the counter, I decided against three of the items I had in the basket. As the cashier was totalling up my goods, I removed them and put them to the side and said I don't want these. She said to me if you didn't want them, you shouldn't have picked them up! I thought she must have been joking but she was dead serious. I picked up the basket and emptied everything out onto the floor and walked off. Who in the hell did she think she was talking to? This truly is fighting talk if you ask me. What had I done wrong?

Then there are the witches at The Magic Dutch Pot West Indian takeaway. Not one woman in there is nice. They don't talk, they bark. They don't ask, they accuse. They don't smile,

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they snarl. They don't take your money, they snatch with their Jason and his coat of many colours acrylic claws. I've been in there on three separate occasions and I will never as long as I live, go back in there ever again. They say you should never say never; well never, never, never, never, never, never, never. F*** The Magic Dutch Pot and it's witches stirring oxtail in their cauldron. I'd rather eat dirt than be barked at and then parting with my money for the privilege.

I know most ladies aren't like this. Most ladies stick together and are nice and friendly and follow the sisterhood, but there's some out there who wear bitterness like a heavy, floor-sweeping cloak.

Homosexual men know what they're doing when they give up on women. Can't say I blame them.

August Mayfield