

25th July, 2005

CAN YOU FEEL THE SHAME?

DEAR DIARY, I laughed at a helpless man falling down the stairs and every time I think about it, instead of feeling ashamed of myself, I laugh again!

I went out to dinner with some friends and one of them brought along her new husband. He was a cold fish and seemed only to give one word answers when spoken to. My friend Eve and I decided that he was a dreadful specimen so we gave up on making an effort. On the way out of the restaurant, he fell down the stairs; it was a big, loud Hollywood stuntman fall. What made matters worse is he had one leg shorter than the other so it really wasn't the done thing to laugh. Knowing we were not permitted to laugh ignited a spark; before you knew it, myself and Eve burst out of the restaurant doors screaming with laughter in the street, we couldn't walk because of the laughing, our stomachs were hurting and the tears were rolling and we couldn't catch our breath. When we could walk, we attempted to run, I guess trying to run away from the scene. We looked a sight and we were making people passing in the street laugh. It was horrible because Heather and her husband knew we were laughing at him and I just couldn't control myself. It was so embarrassing because we knew he had a faulty leg but we just couldn't stop. I do feel a sense of shame when I see Heather, I must say I never ask about her husband and obviously avoid the subject of the staircase.

My friend Jade told me this story about her own shame. She was in McDonalds once and was... well let's say, *dissatisfied* with her Filet-O-Fish. She complained to the manager who didn't take her complaint seriously so she threw a fit which included shouting f***** this, f***** that and f***** the other at the top of her voice. She made allegations about his sexuality, his parentage and called him a f***** "lady garden". Once the air was a sufficient shade of blue, she turned on her heels and walked practically straight into her boyfriend's mother who so happened to be in McDonald's too! Jade's words to me were "I was shame, I was shame, I was shame, I was shame, I was shame"! Yes, I can imagine.

My recent shame came from vanity. I had my hair cut by the only woman who always gets it right. Pauline creates magic for me and on this occasion, she gave me such a fabulous cut that I felt unworthy of its brilliance. I had to bite my lip when people, even strangers would approach me about my hair and told me it looked fabulous. All I wanted to say was yes, it does look wonderful doesn't it, but that would make me look like I was up my own a***

The AUGUST MAYFIELD Diaries

(which I was), so instead, I would say thank you or it's thanks to my hairdresser. The first time I went to work with my new cut, I styled it to perfection and left home for the tube station. I should have known better, my tube station is so windy that it's not possible to get out of there with your hair intact. To my horror, my hair was swept into several directions and I could feel that it was all over the place. When I got on the tube, I tried to sort it out with my fingers. When I got off the tube and did the long walk from the station to my office, people were staring at my hair, when I say people, loads of different passersby were looking, but I was so in love with it, I thought they were looking at its beauty and style. When I got into work, three people burst out laughing at the same time. This was not the reaction I expected so I went straight to the loos. Well Jesus, Mary & Joseph, it looked like a frightened racoon was perched on top of my head. I sorted it out with a small comb and took to my desk, crestfallen and embarrassed that my catwalk entrance was ruined by the wind. From that day forward, I travelled with an 8x10 mirror, a proper comb and a hat.

I've been out with my friends when you would have thought that someone would take me to one side and say your false eyelash is hanging off the side of your face or even pluck it off for me discretely. Oh no, I get home to wash the make-up off and see a caterpillar stuck on sideways when once it looked like a beautiful row of glamour-puss lashes.

On another occasion, I was out with my boyfriend. It was his friend's birthday party and we had been dancing vigorously all night. At one point, I felt someone touch my bare shoulder; I turned around to see who it was, but it wasn't a who, but a what. My false pony tail was sliding down my shoulder, it was almost in slow motion! I don't know where I got the speed from but I grabbed it before it hit the floor, bundled it into my handbag and ran to the ladies. I reattached the offending item and went back to where everyone was as if nothing happened. I said to my boyfriend did you see that? He said no, so I was mildly satisfied that nobody saw, but all night long I felt slightly uneasy as I couldn't help thinking that someone somewhere may have seen what happened!

This one happened to Jade, she was wearing a "chicken fillet" in her bra and one of them fell out. She was so mortified when she saw it lying on the floor that she kicked it. She wanted it as far away from her as possible. She regretted it though; she wished she had picked it up and put it back in her bra because she was then forced to remove the other one because she was now lop-sided.

The AUGUST MAYFIELD Diaries

I've travelled all the way to work with an H&M price tag hanging on the outside of a new jacket. I think it said £15.99. I've had a poppy seed stuck between teeth experience. It's obvious that everyone who spoke to me after lunch must have seen it because it was the first thing I noticed when I entered the ladies just before leaving work to go home. How can you miss a black seed amongst white teeth? I had a quiet distrust for my colleagues after that.

I've had an awful wardrobe malfunction that no one told me about, I don't know if it wasn't spotted or people were enjoying the view, but I had a strapless dress on and one side came down and exposed one breast. Thank God I was wearing a bra otherwise it would have been horrible. I don't know how long I was exposed in this way as it was only spotted when I had the opportunity to see my reflection.

The good thing about shameful situations is they happen all the time to everyone so it's always somebody's day to be a doofus.

August Mayfield