

## **Namaste**

It was a dark and stormy night. No—it really was. One part mountain winter black darkness—the kind that settles in early and makes you want to get wherever it is you are going for the night—and two parts snow, coming down fast and furious. I had to drive out to the Resort last minute to do a massage—I’d be one of two massage therapists booked for that night to work on two oil men from Texas at the home they’d reserved to get some R & R over the weekend. Cliché scenario, right? It’s cliché because it’s true—I’ve pretty much met everybody I’ve dated through them laying on my massage table. It’s never been hard for me to find dates, and most of them have been successful and driven—local bros aren’t buying massages.

Anyway, you see where this is going. But it didn’t get there right away. My co-worker for the job was a therapist that was a cliché in her own right—practically oozing patchouli and laying down a thick coat of karma and zen at every opportunity. I’d get the Texans to relax and begin talking about their lives and what brought them to the mountains, and she’d interject with random, sometimes totally inappropriate “namastes”—like there was literally a language and understanding barrier between the oil business and massage therapy. She reminded me of a little geisha, except in place of constant bowing she was a fountain of “namastes”.

Once the massages were complete, we’d said our goodbyes, gotten paid and I was packing up our tables, Namaste came running in after having gone out to her car a few minutes earlier. She’d namasted her car right into a snowbank.

Ever the gentlemen...gentlemen who’d already been generously pouring glasses of wine for us to drink while we carried out our official duties,...the oil men practically insisted we not “worry about the car, it will be dug out in the morning, the house is huge—please pick a bedroom and stay”. We could have gone a few different ways with this newly presented Choose-Your-Own-Adventure—the offer mostly made sense for Namaste, who could stay and dig her car out in the morning without much of a ‘to do’ being made of it and without the awkward re-introductions, if we had gone with the second option--which would have been my driving her home and coming back the next day to retrieve the car. I was tempted to just let her stay and be on my merry way. But I had to admit to myself that I was *quite* merry by that time—I generally don’t drink at all, and when I do it’s maybe enough to feel a slight buzz. I don’t like feeling compromised or incapable of getting things done. I had a daughter at home, and massage therapy was just one of about 4 other professional commitments I’d made to myself to make things

work, living in a resort community. I was constantly on the ball, if not also on the phone—managing my rental properties, my a la carte rental management business, catering—you name it, I was doing it. My goal was to be a millionaire by the time I was 30, but at the very least I was going to be independent of needing a man for another source of income. So I did the work of five of them, and I lined up a stable of randomly available babysitters for my infant daughter in the process.

So my sense of sisterhood got the better of me, that night--along with my boozy buzz--which lent a rare bit of uncertainty to my decision-making, and we stayed. Namaste picked out a room, I picked out a room, and the client I'd worked on did too—he selected my room.

But here's where the perfect ski-town porn set-up breaks—we never had sex. We stayed up most of the night, talking. As much of a box he fit into—“rich oil industry man from Texas”, he was real. He loved getting out and doing stuff, just like I do. He was driven to be successful, just like I am. He had a family, just like I have. ...Albeit, times three. He was father of three, husband to one—whom he said he was in the middle of divorcing.

He flew up again a couple of weeks later. We skied, we laughed, we hung out at the condo he had rented for the weekend, all as I fit in between massage clients and running around town managing my personal enterprise and just beginning to sniff the hint in the air of what would blow up to be a massive custody battle for my daughter against the river guide.

But mostly what was on my mind was my ovulation. As I'd proven by-way-of having my daughter, I more or less knew when I was cooking with gas. Ok, more—I knew when I was cooking with gas. I'd kind of thought that once I had kids, I would have a couple. Building the “Traditional American Family Framework” hadn’t been something super-high on my priority list; I’d mostly been interested in building a self-sustainable life for myself and my daughter, which I was well on my way to achieving.

I didn't stress too much about having sex with the Oil Man from Texas—I feel like I did my due diligence in telling him that I was likely ovulating and suggesting that he ‘pull up his drill’. Which,—he didn’t, really. And yes, I probably saw myself as having another kid or so on down the line, and yes—he was a rich guy who maybe I wouldn’t have to worry so much about child support coming from—but I sure as Hell let a few F-bombs fly once I knew I’d missed my next period.

I went on to build my family. I had a beautiful son. But by the time his dad and I did more of the ‘getting to know you’ stuff, I’d gotten to know that I wasn’t anything even close to a Texas girl and he wasn’t a lot of things—a Colorado guy, an interested father, or even a single one—he never left his wife. I brought our son to Texas to meet him and he wouldn’t even set his glass of scotch down long enough to hold him, citing that he’s “not much of a baby person”. His wife left him once she discovered evidence of a child support check having gone out to me.

All’s well that ends well, though. After all the men I’ve met on my massage table—men from all corners of the world, men of all kinds of lifestyles, and different industries and possible journeys--the kicker is that I met and married a local boy. And by local boy, I mean a big deal developer. He’d moved here as an aimless Twentysomething for,...you guessed it...just the Season. Now we are two “self mades”, making a go of it together.