

Post Office

My trips to the post office started well enough. New to my coveted and ridiculously hard-won desk job as an office gofer, it was my job to do the company mail run. Once I'd circled the block three times, only to park farther away than I'd have been if I'd walked, I'd look forward to having a package slip if it meant seeing you, young and handsome Postal Clerk...and engaging in our witty repartee.

I loved your crisp, tucked-in collared shirt and your tie. I'd love it when you asked me if I needed any stamps, packaging or other postal products—"this is a man who cares about my needs", I'd think to myself. One day, it was "stamps, packaging, or other postal products...or coffee". The young man who'd practically giggled his way through helping me set up my post office box just asked me out for coffee.

I'd currently been dating a man whose favorite sayings about women included, "variety is the spice of life" and, "around here, you don't lose your girlfriend—you just lose your place in line" and who'd asked me out for 2-for-1s when I was in the compromised state of having wrapped up a Monday Night Ladies' Night. But he hadn't lost his place in line yet [other women chime in, "now serving number 32...!"], so I said no.

Darned if the dark clouds didn't roll right over the top of the mountains and the winters begin getting longer with every trip back to the post office. I became a thing of scorn. Every trip I made to the post office turned me into easy prey for you—an embittered, resentful Oscar-the-Grouch in postal blues, mercilessly lecturing me about my coworker having stuck the dotted line on the certified tag one millimeter too low, as you would disdainfully reposition it, throwing venomous darts over the top of your glasses with your eyes.

I've lived to regret having accidentally dropped a banking deposit slip into the metered mail slot. I instantly knew it and within seconds I was at your station for help in retrieving it from the top of the bin, only to be recited a spiel about a "bin search" costing \$1 per minute as you sauntered away at a sloth's pace to pluck my deposit slip off the top of the metered mail pile. If it was a lesson you were trying to teach, I didn't learn not to accidentally drop my deposit slip into the mail bin. I only learned to avoid your station if I could possibly help it. I'm not the only one.

You make elderly ladies quake in their outdoorsy-yet-supportive Cherry Creek-bought buttery leather shoes as they near the front of the line wondering if they're going to get you. One actually let me go ahead of her because even after spending

her whole day standing in line at the post office, it was worth waiting longer just to avoid you.

How about the time you made a pregnant woman (okay it was me) run 3 blocks back to the post office to retrieve the car keys I'd left on your counter earlier that day, because it was 5:01 and the Post Office closes at 5:00—knowing that you had 3 staff members closing their drawers for the next half hour? I guess I was lucky to be able to come in and get them since I had to negotiate for the next 5 minutes for the privilege of picking up what was my only way to get home, as I desperately tried to stabilize my swinging uterine sack with one hand and keep the cell phone to my ear with the other as I ran back through town.

What is it? Is it that you're one of the few men under 40 with a real job and you still can't get a date? Is it that you're one of the few men under 40 whose schedule doesn't accommodate 200 days a season of riding?

Can't we just be friends?