

The Long Commute Home

The Queen of Sheba

Mom and Dad used to “winter” in Myrtle Beach, SC. Winters on Plum Island can be quite brutal, especially if you are a retired mailman with arthritis. So off to the warm weather they went each year, right after Thanksgiving with the family.

To keep in touch, Mom and I would faithfully write letters to one another each week. We both love getting letters in the mail - a practice that seems to have disappeared with the advent of PC's and email. We would each catch the other up on that week's activities. I would fill her in on any family or local news that had taken place in their absence.

It was my tradition to begin their season by purchasing 10 or so Massachusetts State Lottery, scratch tickets and enclose them in with my first letter to them. Mom would send back any winners, for me to turn in for more tickets, and on it went. Mom and Dad turned the receipt of the scratch tickets into a competition to see who would win the most money - if any. The luck of the Irish, for some unknown reason, always prevailed with my father - to my mother's chagrin. One particular letter that I received from Mom, told the story of how she and Dad had “dressed” for church one Saturday night and then planned on going out to dinner after mass.

At church, Mom noticed people taking note of her as she walked up the aisle, after receiving communion. She just chalked it up to the fact that she had “dolled up” to go out for dinner.

When they got to the restaurant after attending mass, more people took notice of Mom. A woman approached my mother. Mom thought at first that the woman might be someone that they had met previously, and was coming up to say hi.

To my mother's disbelief the woman said, “Pardon me Mamme, you have something hanging out of your pant leg.” My mother looked on the floor behind her, and sure enough, there was one leg of a pair of pantyhose dragging behind her like a wedding train.

My mother begrudgingly thanked the woman for informing her of this embarrassing situation, and went straight to the ladies room to figure out what the heck her pantyhose were doing trailing behind her.

When Mom had the privacy of the washroom to examine all the pieces of her outfit, she realized that the last time she had briefly worn this pantsuit, she had stuffed a clean pair of pantyhose into the pant leg. She had not wanted them to catch on anything in the drawer. She had dressed, unbeknown to her, with them still stuffed in the pant leg. As

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she had walked along, one leg of the spare pantyhose moved down her leg and trailed behind her.

She just broke into laughter for it was truly beyond belief that she had this thing trailing behind her for the past 2 hours. When she returned to the table, she threatened death to

my father, for certainly he must have noticed. He had walked behind her up and down the aisle at church, and again behind her while walking from the car to the restaurant.

To this day, even putting this story in writing cracks me up. I can just picture Mom proudly throwing her shoulders back, with her head held high, thinking she looked like the Queen of Sheba, with all eyes upon her. She was just unaware that the Queen of Sheba had a “pantyhose” train!