

## **How NOT to Impress A Teenage Girl**

**By**

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When I was sophomore in High School, Sarah Parker was the most beautiful girl in the school. She was popular to say the least. A socialite, Homecoming Queen, and possessor of the best-looking legs in the world. As far as brains go, she wasn't exactly the sharpest tool in the shed, though, she wasn't completely without intelligence. But she didn't need to be smart, all the guys in the town, swooned over her. She could have had her pick of boyfriends. Because of her beauty and her smarts, she often seemed unapproachable to anyone who wasn't a star athlete.

But I happened to overhear her talking to some of gal pals one day, when she said she liked roses. That's when I hatched a brilliant scheme to get her one. It would be an adventure that required bravery, cunning, and intelligence. This plan would not only win her over to me but, would make me desirable to every girl in school. Guaranteed.

My name is Henry McCallister. Most of my friends call me Indiana Mac, because of my love for the Indiana Jones movies.

Mr. Garrison, my next-door neighbor, ran the only floral shop in town. But I couldn't just buy a rose from him because I spent all my money buying my first car. But he did have a beautiful garden in his back yard where he grew most of his flowers. All I needed to do was get

passed his Great Dane named Rocky, a Scooby Doo look-a-like who patrolled the backyard garden like a vicious guard dog and pick one from his prized rose bush. Sounds simple, right?

That night, after the sun went down, I put on my Indiana Jones, outfit, grabbed some expired kibble from the kitchen pantry – my own dog had passed on several months back and mom just never got around to throwing out his food – and snuck out. I had to make sure Rocky saw me, so that I could feed him, let him get to know me as a friend. This way when I was ready to make my move, Rocky would leave me alone. The plan was perfect. I did this every night for several nights until the kibble ran out.

The next night, I made my move, confident and with the Indiana Jones theme music playing in my head. The rose was like the holy grail. It didn't offer eternal youth, but it was the key to my lady's heart.

I expected Rocky to meet me, but he didn't. Had I any sense, that would have worried me, but instead, I proceeded into the garden – which was like a maze. Tall shrubs lined the walk way, occasionally broken up by a flower bed, and still no sign of the dog.

I think it might be helpful to the story if I informed you that Mr. Garrison had a big backyard, and he used every square inch of it in designing his garden. It seemed especially large at night, when my only light came from a flashlight with a half dead battery.

Anyway, it suddenly opened up and in the middle of this big clearing, like a fountain – but not, was the sacred rose bush I was seeking. The blossoms were gigantic for a rose, and there were different colored flowers on it. Red, white, and yellow. I could scarcely believe it. This had been so easy, it was almost anti-climactic.

Visions of Sarah and me popped into my head, wiping out my disappointment. We were parked out on some back country, dirt road, laying in the back of my pick-up and watching the stars. When I gave her the rose, she expressed her gratitude by rolling on top of me and kissing me passionately on the lips.

Reaching out to pluck a red colored flower, I stepped on what I thought was a pebble. A loud cackling scream suddenly pierced my ears from the bush as a severed, bloodied head popped out with glowing eyes. There was a blood curdling, girl like scream, and then the world went black.

That's right. I fainted.

When I came to, Rocky was licking my face and Mr. Garrison had a giant smirk on his face.

“What in the world are you doing out here, Henry?” He asked. Trying hard not to laugh at my misfortune.

I came clean and explained my situation and the Florist shook his head in disbelief as laughter exploded from him.

“Son, if you needed the rose that bad, all you had to do was ask. I would have given you one as reward for mowing my front lawn the other day. Unless you were looking to impress the girl by stealing it, then telling her some kind of tall tale about all these obstacles you had to overcome.”

“Yeah, kinda, that's what I was gonna do.” I admitted realizing how stupid that was.

“Well, no harm, no foul, I guess. Actually, I probably should thank you for finding that last prop.”

“You mean that severed head wasn’t a security thing?” I asked. Rising to my feet, I discovered that I had also wet myself.

“Heck no.” He laughed. “Do you remember how I decorated my garden last fall with all sorts of Halloween decorations? I had a party and set up a small haunted maze. But when I cleaned up, I forgot all about this one. I’m kinda surprised I hadn’t found it, myself, while pruning the rose bush. Oh, well.”

I snuck back home, thankful Mr. Garrison wasn’t angry. I just hoped that no one at school found out about this; I’d never live it down. Having the crap scared of me delayed sleep by a few hours, but I had the prize I sought. All I had to do was give it to Sarah and seal the deal.

The next day I went to school so confident of my success, I had absolutely no worries about being embarrassed in front of her friends. I knew she and her crowd traveled in packs, but I believed so strongly that I had the power to make her mine, that the other girls didn’t bother me. In fact, I was actually glad they were there. They would provide witnesses for my heroism.

I approached her at her locker, surrounded by her clique of groupies, before the bell rang for first hour class.

“Awww...” She blushed. “You’re so sweet. How did you know I liked roses?”

I kept to my plan and told her the harrowing adventure story I made up. She looked impressed. They all did.

“Well, your bravery has earned you a special prize. How bout a date this Friday? Maybe a dinner, movie, and a late-night drive?”

My heart was pounding so fast, I thought it was going to explode. I was so excited to have gotten what I wanted, all I could do was grin like an idiot and nod my head.

“Wait a minute.” One of the other girls, a burly girl named Celeste spoke up. “Aren’t you the one who bought Mr. Shearman’s old Ford?”

“Yep.” I said proudly. “And as soon as I come up with the money for insurance, I’ll start driving it to school.”

“Yeah,” Sarah said slowly. “That’s... that’s not going to work for me. Number one; I don’t pay for my dates, and number two, I deserve better than an old hick-mobile. Thanks for the rose, though.”

I thought I died. I thought my heart had stopped beating. I looked down at the floor thinking I could see it laying there, crushed flat against the tile from where the most beautiful girl in school had stomped on it. After picking my jaw up off the floor, my only thought for the remainder of the terrible school day was: *What the hell happened?*

The lesson I learned that day has stayed with me ever since. Of course, now that I’m a senior, I don’t have to worry about impressing the popular, pretty, but snobbish girls; there were plenty of other girls in school, who appreciated a guy with a truck. They may not be as pretty as Sarah Parker, but they were a heck of a lot friendlier.