

I Cheated on my Girlfriend (*with my Wife*)

(Country song lyrics, written by a woman, to be performed by a man)

Hello there, little darlin' - I was not expecting you.
When I asked you out you told me you had other things to do.
But I guess those plans were cancelled, 'cause you just came burstin' in
To where my wife and I were snuggled, wearing nothing but our skin.

I'd like to tell you, sweetheart, this was not the way it looked.
But I doubt that you'd believe me, so I guess my goose is cooked.
Let me introduce you ladies; let's all try to get along.
You have caught me with my pants down and you both think I was wrong.

(chorus) Well, I cheated on my girlfriend, with my wife.
What an easy way to mess up my whole life!
They've both teamed up against me and they don't want me no more -
Not the girl that I'm in love with, or the wife I loved before.

Don't get upset now, ladies - we'll all laugh at this someday;
Though I sure would feel much better if we started right away.
But one look at your faces tells me you're not going to smile,
And I think I might be safer if I left here for awhile.

I shouldn't feel so guilty; after all, one *is* my wife
And one's the girl I've dreamed of all my post pubescent life.
But they don't seem to like each other, and right now they don't like me;
So how can I convince them my world's big enough for three?

(chorus)

Floating Holiday

The warmer on the coffeemaker has turned off already.
Has it really been over two hours since I had that first cup?
Well, fine; the microwave has a beverage setting, and I'll just reheat some.
I already spooned the sugar into the mug because Daniel taught me, years ago,
If it's in the bottom and you pour the hot coffee on top of it,
It dissolves more quickly, with less stirring, than if you try to add it afterward.
Oh well, so I guess I'm going to have to nuke the sugar, too.

Fine.

At least there isn't any of that nasty, fake creamer in with it –
The deceptively fluid stuff that coagulates
Into some threatening, viscous substance akin to mutated cotton candy
If it goes in the microwave.
I found that out the hard way,
Back when the coffeemaker at a former job could never manage to get anything
To come out more than lukewarm.
I used half-and-half most of the time, but one day there wasn't any.
I resorted to a little plastic container of the non-dairy stuff.
I'd developed the habit of heating the cream up a bit while the coffee was brewing
Because any attempt to make it even slightly warmer before the tepid brew hit it
Seemed worth the effort.
But when I pulled my cup out of the microwave that day,
The sticky tentacles that had grown across the bottom of it convinced me
I never wanted anything more to do with the unnatural goo.

Why is this beverage setting taking so long?
I don't want to wait for it to count down another 39 seconds;
I want to drink the coffee *now*.

Fine,

I'm pulling it out; I really don't care if it's a little cool.
Stir the sugar up from the bottom and deal with it.
After the cream – *real* cream – goes in,
I'll add some raspberry syrup
(The one that actually does taste like raspberries,
Not the one that overpowers the coffee and doesn't remotely resemble the fruit),
And I'll pretend it's a nice cappuccino whipped up by my favorite barista,
Which just cooled off a little because I was caught at so many red lights
Before I could get it home.
Never mind the complete lack of froth on top,
Or that it's in a stoneware mug adorned with hearts and kittens
And not a paper cup with a plastic lid and insulated gripper band around the middle.

I've been in a Puccini mood lately, but not all of Puccini's work;
I only want to listen to *O Mio Babbino Caro* from **Gianni Schicchi**.
This wouldn't be so frustrating if there were actually tracks on my CD;

Then I'd just set the player to repeat that track over and over,
Until the song got stuck in my head
And I was ready to listen to something else to replace it.
But no, this disc is the entire *Gianni* opera, with only two tracks, Act I and Act II.

Fine.

So I know my song begins at roughly 20 minutes and 57 seconds into the first act,
And I have to keep manually fast-forwarding and setting it.
I could save myself the hassle and just record that much of it as an MP3,
But I really don't want to bother.

I'd like to go to an actual opera someday.

Years before *The Bucket List* was ever conceived,
I told my kids that before I die I'd like to go to an opera and a ballet –
Real ones, performed by professional companies.

My youngest daughter got to see *Carmen* with her French class.

I also sent her to *The Nutcracker*

When a touring presentation took the stage at our local theater one Christmas season.
But she chipped a tooth on her popcorn and really didn't enjoy the performance much.

I think one or two of my grandchildren have even seen some professional work,
Having taken field trips with their school to a performing arts center.

My problem,

In addition to not living in the proximity of any lavish venues

And not having the finances to justify traveling to one, is clothes.

I can't just put on some nice dress and head on into a hall of the caliber I have in mind,

And I certainly can't come up with the designer gown

And other accoutrements that would be required in such sophisticated surroundings.

Face it, if I could afford that kind of extravagance

I'd be sending more money to the charities I like to support,

Not buying myself a gown to wear for two hours in a theater.

Fine.

Still, I've heard *La Bohème* is an experience one should make an effort to take in
At some point in life.

But I'm really not surprised; it is, after all, a Puccini composition.

I also no longer have anyone in my life to act as an escort.

Cold coffee that's supposed to be hot

(As opposed to iced coffee, which is an entirely different entity)

Reminds me of an aftertaste, even while I'm still mid-swallow.

I don't know if there's even a purpose for trying to drink it at this point,

Or if I was just hoping for the warmth a nice steamy brew might have brought

For a moment on this overcast day.

I don't feel any cozier, just a little fatter from the cream, sugar and syrup,

With the sense of needing to brush my teeth

To get rid of the flavor that's now lurking somewhere near the back of my tongue.

I'm going to dump the rest of it down the drain.

I'm in the mood for something, still.
I don't think it's coffee anymore, and I don't think it's Puccini, either.
I could watch a movie,
But my attention span is not in the mood to follow anything new,
And I'm too restless to sit through any of my favorite shows.
Maybe I'll have a can of soda
And listen to some of the emo indie music my daughter downloaded onto my computer
And I found I liked.
Or maybe I could preorder the next book in my favorite series;
But it's not due to be released for several months,
So I don't imagine I'd get particularly excited about that just now, either.

Fine.

I'm surrounded by technology;
It costs me a small fortune every month to be entertained by all of it.
So there must be something I'd find stimulating.
I subscribe to 11 very diverse magazines,
And I have unread back issues dating to last October,
Even before then, in some cases.
I could walk the dogs;
I could let the cockatiels out of their cages for some bonding;
Or I could clean the aquarium.
For that matter, I could water the plants or work at my crocheting.
I could call some of the friends I've been ignoring,
Or I could return some e-mails.
But I really don't want to do any of those things.
And frankly, I don't see myself feeling like doing most of them
Anytime in the foreseeable future –
Except for the animals and plants, which I really do love caring for most of the time.
If the children still lived at home, or if a couple of the grandchildren were visiting,
We could play games,
Although I doubt that I'd actually be in the frame of mind to do that
Even if it were an option at the moment.
Some of them would want video games and some would want board games.
The board games, at this point in time, seem like too much bother,
Setting up, putting away and not losing any of the pieces.
And the video games become too mind-numbing too quickly.
So no, I don't think I want to deal with games right now, either.

I've been thinking I want to read some biographical material on Leonard Cohen.
I can't believe I grew up
During the height of his nearly half-century of landmark writing and performing,
And barely knew who he was –
I feel remiss in a very odd way over this.
I've read the basics on his website and Wikipedia,
But I'd like to have an actual biography in my hands;
I could really get into that right now.

I want coffee.

I want a nice cup of good, hot, barista-made coffee.

Fine.

I wonder if the people at my neighborhood coffee bar,

Who recognize my car and know what drink I want before I order it,

Would also recognize my face if I were to actually go inside to sip my drink

While reading a Cohen biography.

Then I could ask them if they could possibly play just one song by Puccini.

In the Garden

I rest my back against the strong stem of a regal sunflower
And sit
In a garden of surrealism,
Where the cornstalks tower above my head
And I must lift my eyes to the afternoon sun to see the tops of the milkweeds.
The earth is warm and full of the life which is yet to be taken from it
Before September is over.
The beans, over which I stretch my legs, already are hard and brittle,
And their leaves can crumble under the weight of a fly.
The busy ants scurry across my feet,
Never taking time to notice the enchantment which can only be found
In a place such as this.
They just worry about reaching their destination without being crushed by a falling leaf
Or being blown out of their course by a breeze in the carrot greens.
A sparrow lands softly among the melon vines,
Chirping a crystalline song in remembrance of the fresh strawberries
Which had been nearby just a few short months before.
The sky is sapphire blue and almost cloudless
After the night winds blew yesterday's rain clouds
To places in the heavens that never were
And never will be.
The butterflies float noiselessly in and out among the flowers
And settle like thistledown on their delicate petals.
A little green frog stares at me from among the weeds,
Wondering who I am, that I dare invade his private fairyland.
The grasshoppers frolic among the tomatoes
And follow their own paths among the asparagus forest.
They aren't startled at my presence here;
They've seen me before and aren't afraid.
They know, just as the little green frog will someday know,
That this is my world.