

The Engagement - May 26, 2000

“Her Side”

Silas and I made a trip to California for the Memorial Day weekend. It would be the first time going home injured. My jaw was still wired shut from breaking it the month before in an unfortunate accident. Although I did not know it at the time, the memories of this trip would be truly memorable.

I will always remember the day Silas proposed to me. My mother and I spent the afternoon shopping while Silas visited with his previous co-workers at the Ventura County Courthouse.

Later in the day, I picked Silas up and we immediately starting talking about how each other's day went. I thought it was weird that he was insistent on asking what my mother and I had talked about earlier. All I could think about was that my mother kept on asking if I was ready to get married and what kind of engagement ring I wanted. I guess the information was important to him, but these subtle hints did not click at the time.

My younger brother called that evening and wanted Silas and I to come up to Santa Barbara to party. I mentioned it to Silas and he told me that he really wanted to go to Malibu for a walk on the beach. With this being the case, I decided to take him to the spot where we went when I first took him home.

We arrived at Zuma Beach and got out walking. We strolled quite a ways down the coast and then Silas stopped me. I knew something was up when he started saying, “I wanted to do this for your birthday, but I couldn't wait any longer.” He got down on one knee, pulled out the ring, and put it on. I knew he was extremely nervous because he could not get out any words and he tried to put the ring on the right hand instead of the left one. That was okay because I was completely shocked. Never in a million years, I thought Silas would propose to me while my mouth was still wired.

He finally said, “Well...” and I answered, “Yes!”

“His side”

Here is some advice I think is important to share. Guys, don't pick up the engagement ring until the day you want to give it to your future bride. No one gave me this advice, and I have to say, it cost me.

I had been looking for a ring for a few months. I had hoped to give it to Shaina in early May, but her trip to Houston—or to put it another way, her trip in Houston—stymied those plans. I thought about giving her the ring right after her accident, it would have made it hard for her to say “no,” but I felt that she deserved a fighting chance.

Because I had missed my intended window in early May, I devised a strategic plan. I would give her the ring on her birthday (June 10th) and kill the proverbial 2 birds with one stone. I felt a wave of genius as I considered the plan.

I decided to pick up the ring right before our trip to California for Memorial Day Weekend. As soon as I had it in my possession I was in trouble. It was worth far more than anything I owned (people who have ridden around in my truck can attest to this) yet fit easily in my pocket. I couldn't let it out of my sight. Every two or three minutes I was touching my pocket to make sure that it was still there. I HAD to get rid of this thing!

In addition to the paranoia I was experiencing regarding the ring, I also was unable to keep its existence a secret. I felt compelled to show it to anyone I could corner. This included Shaina's mom when we arrived in California for the weekend. The pool of people in the know was out of control, and I knew that I would never make it to June 10th. I needed a new plan.

Fortunately, our trip offered the perfect opportunity for me to get the ring on Shaina's finger. I knew that Shaina loved the ocean and Zuma Beach in particular. It took some work, but I finally convinced her that we needed to go to the beach for a midnight stroll.

The butterflies were going crazy, but halfway down the beach I dropped to one knee and took Shaina's hand. It was dark, and at first Shaina didn't believe that I had given her a real ring. This was awkward because instead of the "yes" I had been praying to hear, I got a "this is a very cruel joke." I was a little worked up and didn't know how to respond; however, within seconds Shaina realized it was for real and I got the "yes" I was waiting for.

Of course it was back to the drawing board for Shaina's birthday...