



Will you be my Valentine?



6th February 2020

Valentine's Day Stories You Won't Believe Are True

Each year on February 14, people exchange cards, candy or flowers with their special "valentine." St. Valentine's Day is named for a Christian martyr and dates back to the 5th century, but has origins in the Roman holiday Lupercalia. However, let's not concern ourselves with history in this Weekly English Practice. The following are four **quirky** stories related to the famous day.

Perfect Puns

"As Valentine's Day approached, I tried to think of an unusual gift for my husband. When I discovered that his favourite red-plaid **pants** had a broken zipper, I thought I had the perfect Valentine. I had the pants repaired, and gift-wrapped them. On the package I put a huge red heart on which I printed: My Heart **Pants** for You. I was the surprised one, however, when I saw the same heart taped to our formerly empty, but now **overflowing**, wood box. On it he had written: Wood You Be My Valentine?"

More Than a Greeting Card

"My friend Mark and I work in a **lawnmower** parts warehouse. Somehow Mark got the idea that his wife did not want a card on Valentine's Day, but when he spoke to her on the phone he discovered she was expecting one. Not having time to buy a card on his way home, Mark was in a **quandary**. Then he looked at the lawnmower trade magazines

Before you read the article, find this vocabulary in the text:

quirky: the definition of quirky is a strange or unique action or personality.

pants: trousers

to pant: to breathe in short, quick breaths, often due to excitement or emotion

overflowing: so full that the contents go over the sides.

quandary: a situation in which you are trying to make a difficult choice

lawnmower: a machine you use to cut grass

lawn: an area of grass that is cut

long for: to have a strong wish or desire

naively: if someone is naive, they believe things too easily and do not have enough experience of the world

scattered around the office—and got an idea. Using scissors and glue, he created a card with pictures of mowers, next to which he wrote: 'I **lawn** for you mower and mower each day.' Mark's wife loved it. The card immediately graced their refrigerator door."

(Explanation: I **long for** you more and more each day)

High-Tech Romance

"My boyfriend and I met online and we'd been dating for over a year. I introduced Hans to my uncle, who was fascinated by the fact that we met over the internet. He asked Hans what kind of line he had used to pick me up.

Ever the geek, Hans **naively** replied, 'I just used a regular 56K modem.'"

Irresistible Irony

"About a year had passed since my amicable divorce, and I decided it was time to start dating again. Unsure how to begin, I thought I'd scan the personals column of my local newspaper. I came across three men who seemed like they'd be promising candidates. A couple of days later, I was checking my answering machine and discovered a message from my ex-husband. 'I was over visiting the kids yesterday,' he said. 'While I was there I happened to notice you had circled some ads in the paper. Don't bother calling the guy in the second column. I can tell you right now it won't work out. That guy is me.'"

Adapted from this [article](#) with tender, loving care by ECP coach Darren Lynch



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Let's chat about that!

Write your opinions in an email and send them to your ECP coach!

Can you explain the meaning of "my heart pants for you"?

Explain the meaning of the pun "Wood you be my valentine?"

Do you understand the connections between "lawn" and "long", and "mower" and "more"?

Explain the meaning of "line he used to pick me up" and the connection to a "56K modem".

Which is your favourite story? Why? Tell your coach a story!

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Word play explained

Here is the pun from the second story: "I lawn for you mower and mower each day."

Mark is, in fact, telling his wife that he **loves** her more and more every day. But instead of saying "love" he uses the verb "to **long** for something/someone" (see vocabulary on p1).

"I **long** for you more and more each day"

In some accents, the "L" & "O" in "long" is pronounced the same as the "L" & "A" in "lawn". So although "long" and "lawn" are not pronounced exactly the same, they are similar enough to use in word play.

"More" and "Mower" (in some accents) sound very similar.

Do you get it now? 😊