

Dear Abby

with ABIGAIL VAN BUREN



Man finds story puzzling from his 'sister'

Dear Abby: About six weeks ago, I came home from the office and my wife told me a woman had phoned saying she had some important information about my father. The woman said she lived about 100 miles away, and left her phone number.

Abby, my father died at a young age, leaving my mother with small children to raise. Mother never remarried. Fortunately, she was able to support herself and raise us.

My wife persuaded me to return the call. The woman (I'll call her Diane) asked permission to come to my home the following weekend. I refused, agreeing instead to meet her at a local coffee shop.

Abby, Diane is an adoptee who recently located and met her birth mother. She told me my father was also her father, which makes her my half-sister.

She said her mother told her that she and my father had been lovers for the last two years of his life. She said her mother never told her lover (Dad) she was pregnant, and she (Diane) was given up for adoption when she was five days old!

I told her I did not take any stock in second-hand information — I needed concrete proof in writing. She had none. However, she described my father's physical appearance accurately, knew the names of his friends, the branch of service he had been in, and she correctly detailed the circumstances of his accidental death, which occurred some years ago.

I asked her what she wanted of me and my family. She said: "Nothing, I just want to know something about my family, and perhaps see some photographs of my blood relatives."

Abby, I was prepared to meet a kook or a con artist. Instead, I found her to be a very gentle, decent person. Now I am totally confused about what to do. At this point, I don't want to tell anyone else. (I am thankful she didn't contact my mother.)

At the end of our meeting, she said, "Our father has been dead for a long time. Whom would we be hurting by knowing each other?"

Abby, I wonder if there is some kind of physical test that could either prove or disprove these allegations? If this woman is really my half-sister, is there anyway to verify it?

No Name

Dear No Name: Ask your physician to recommend a genetic testing specialist. Both you and Diane would be required to submit to physical tests. (Blood samples, for example.)

I agree with Diane. Whom would you be hurting if you know the truth about your blood relationship? There is nothing to be ashamed of. And whether you wish to disclose this new discovery to other family members would be up to you.

Dear Abby: I just read the letter from Puzzled, the man who asked whether he should give his deceased wife's belongings to his soon-to-be new wife.

He was concerned about how his three daughter-in-laws would feel about it. (He had three sons — no daughters.) I related to that problem because a few years ago, I was a daughter-in-law in just that situation.

My advice to him would be to first speak to his sons. There may be some pieces of jewelry or clothing they had given to their mother that for sentimental reasons they would want their wives or daughters to have.

I know from personal experience that it can be very painful for sons to see their father's new wife wearing things that once belonged to their deceased mother.

Another View

RECIPE FILE

Chocolate and honey make party favourite

Here's a delightfully fun dessert for the festive season — Yummy Chocolate Fondue.

It's not only fun to serve, but easy to prepare too. Just melt together chocolate chips and honey, then blend in evaporated milk to make the fondue velvety smooth.

Set out a tray of fruit, cake cubes and marshmallows and let guests dunk their favourites. It's a holiday treat for everyone.

Yummy Chocolate Fondue

- 1 pkg (175 g) semi-sweet chocolate chips;
- 1/2 cup (125 ml) creamed white honey;
- 2/3 cup (150 ml) undiluted regular or 2% evaporated partly skimmed milk;
- Assorted dippers

Directions: Combine chocolate chips and honey in small saucepan. Cook and stir over low heat until chocolate melts and mixture is smooth. Remove from heat. Gradually blend in evaporated milk. Serve sauce at room temperature in a small pot or chafing dish with assorted dippers. Makes about 1 1/2 cups (375 ml).

Assorted Dippers: Plain cookies, pound cake cubes, fruit (well-drained pineapple cubes, banana or kiwifruit chunks, fresh apple or pear slices, whole strawberries) or large marshmallows make excellent dippers.

Yummy Chocolate Fondue is fun to serve and easy to prepare.



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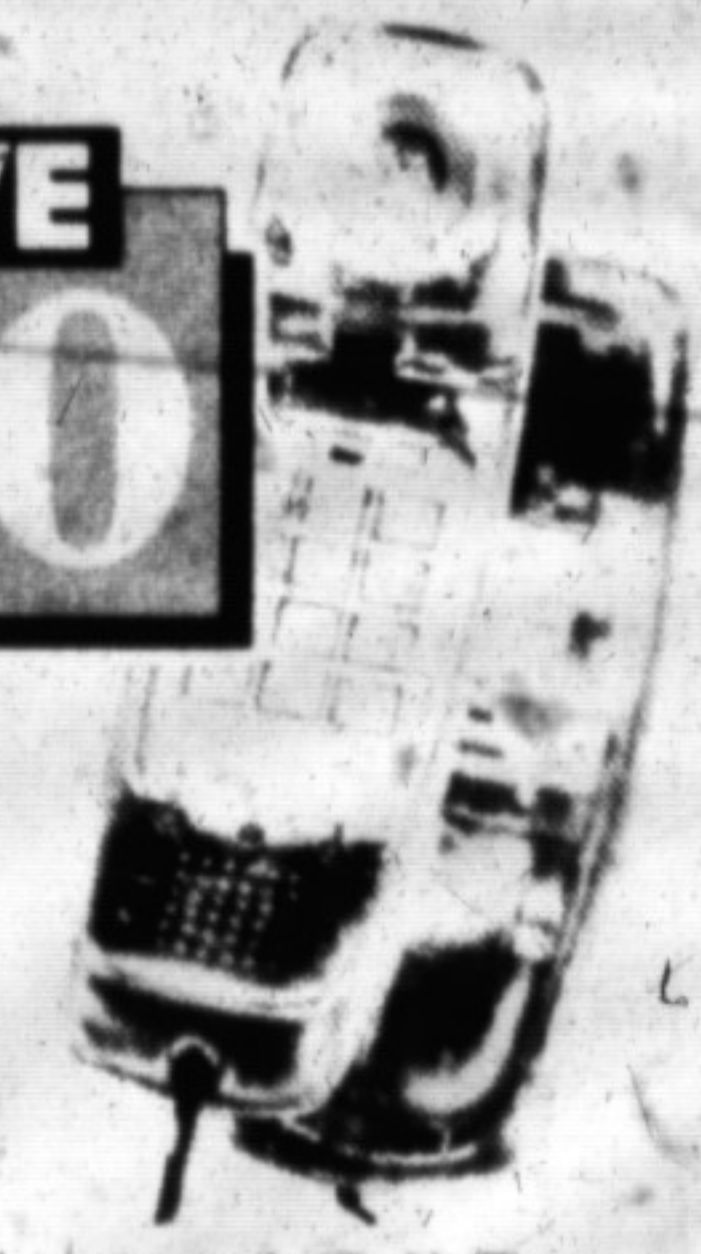
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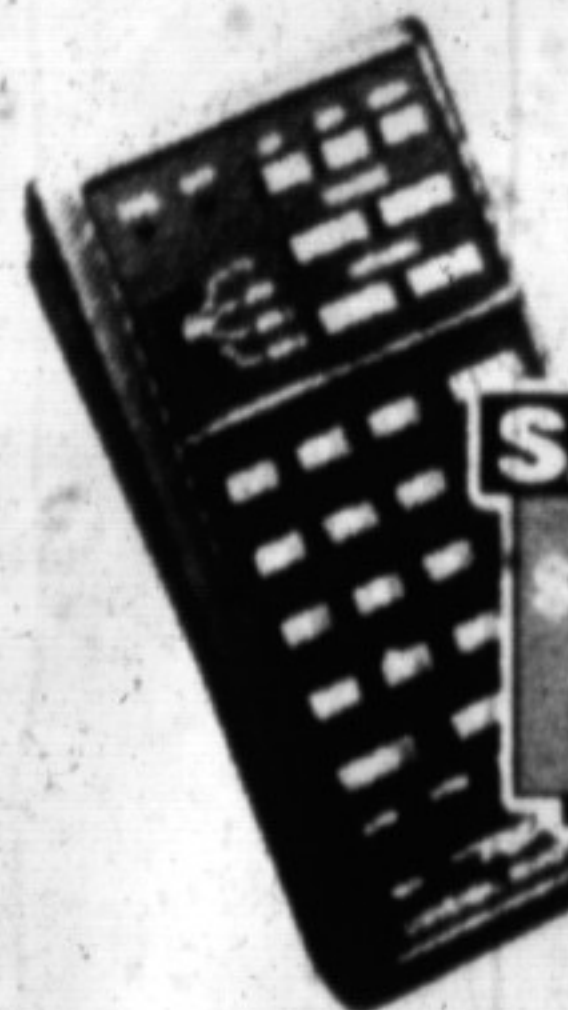
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