

LAURA ON LIFE

Dancing with daddy

Out of five children, I was blessed with only one daughter. As much as I love and cherish all my sons, I don't think they received a single gene from me except maybe their color-blindness. However, that one wasn't really my fault.

On the other hand, my daughter is all me. I understand her. I take comfort in the familiarity of her personality. She validates me.

For this reason, I was just the tiniest bit jealous when my husband got to be her date for her Girl Scouts father/daughter dance. It was a formal dance; a chance for the girls to dress up and practice being a lady.

She and I shopped for the perfect dress. We bought a pair of shoes to match. We even found panty hose for twelve-year old girls. We spent weeks planning for her special night.

She hid the dress from her dad, so I had to give him hints to help him order a matching corsage.

We talked about her hair. She wanted to look like London from The Suite Life of Zack and Cody. The only problem was that my daughter's hair is about a foot shorter than London's. We managed to fashion a close approximation and she was thrilled.

She might love to dig in the sand and bite off her nails any other time, but that night they had to be perfect. She had small spots of hot pink polish still clinging to her nails from four months ago, so we cleaned them. She decided that the pale green polish with the sparkles in it would be trend setting. She was tickled pink... or green.

She wore a bit of blush and lip gloss and asked me to sprinkle her hair with fairy dust (girl-speak for glitter). My little tomboy turned into a princess right before my eyes. She was absolutely stunning. My heart was full of love and near to breaking.

As her mom, I know that I was the one charged with the traditional task of showing her how to prepare for a formal dance. My husband's job was to show her what she should

expect from her escort to a formal dance and how she should expect to be treated.

My husband was on his best behavior. He knew the importance of his job. This was one thing he couldn't afford to screw up.

When she came out of her bedroom and he saw her in her finery, he looked as if he'd been punched in the stomach. As painful as the knowledge was, he was aware that, in a few short years, she would be dating. The best we could hope for was that she would choose a boy that



Laura Snyder

would treat her like the treasure she is.

How would she choose intelligently without the

facts? He was determined to be the ideal date, so that she would know what to look for when the time came.

Will he buy flowers? Will he open doors for her? Will he treat her with respect? Will he hold out her chair for her? Will he be sensitive to her needs? Will he leave the party with her when she was ready to go? Will her best interests be in his heart?

My husband's hope is that if these things are absent from a future date,

they will strike a discordant note within her, and she will know that the guy is not Mr. Right.

She has a few more years of father/daughter dances to rehearse, but for now, her father is just ecstatic that he was the one she chose to be her first date.

Laura Snyder is a nationally syndicated columnist, author & speaker. You can reach Laura at lsnyder@lauraonlife.com Or visit her website www.lauraonlife.com for more info.

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