

“Blow smoke rings”

Another one of my not-so-healthy habits, but I admit I was a smoker—for many years. I started young, in the 80s, because my best friend Carrie’s delicious brother Jason did it. The three of us were sitting in the camper of their dad’s truck when he asked if I smoked. He had just popped a cigarette into his mouth and it was dangling, stuck on his lower lip. He looked at me with his icy-blue eye, the other one was covered by his chocolate brown bangs. He wore his hair long, just how I liked it. His bangs fell jagged over his face. “Of course, I smoke,” I said flipping my long blonde hair back over my shoulders. I hope you’re envisioning a Pamela Anderson move with bouncy, lemon pudding blonde, full-bodied hair falling behind me, but I have to burst your bubble in the name of honesty. (Yes, A.A., I know. I’m only as sick as my secrets.) The real scene was more like a cross between Rosanna Rosanna-dana and that girl from Superstar flopping stick-straight, dirty blonde hair with no style behind her. Ok, back to the smoke rings.

I took my first puffs with Carrie and Jason that day and didn’t drop my pack of cigs for seven more years in which time I learned to make magnificent smoke rings. I’d sit at the club, on the smoke deck of the ship and on our patio perfecting my “O” lips. The rings came out slowly and lazily drifted through the air growing, expanding then dissipating into nothing (except for toxic fumes contaminating the environment and causing acid rain in the rain forests and three-eyed fish in the lake). I looked so cool blowing them. Oh, I didn’t really. I probably looked more like a guppy gasping for air; but that I thought I looked cool is all that matters. Go positive body image! I don’t have a photo to show you and won’t relive that task to take one. Sorry, it would be in direct conflict with other tasks such as, “Run the Boston marathon” and “Score a period hat trick.” Too bad I can’t blow water vapor rings when it’s -10. Now THAT would be cool.

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