

First featured story by A.R. from San Diego, CA

READERS WRITE

Tents

BY OUR READERS • FEBRUARY 2025



I'LL BE THE FIRST TO ADMIT: We should have checked the weather. That was our bad.

Tommy was twenty-one, and I was twenty-two, when we decided to drive to Julian, California, for the weekend. We got to our campsite and set everything up well before dark. Then we leaned back in our chairs, drinks in hand, beside the blazing fire.

I felt the first drop hit my cheek just seconds before it began to pour. Tommy and I shrieked like gulls and made a beeline to our tent. Once inside, I zipped the entrance shut, but the rain fell with a fury. In no time water had seeped inside, flooding the floor.

Soaked and shivering, we lay on our backs and stared at the tent roof, which looked to be minutes from collapsing under the weight of the water. I expected Tommy to be angry or, at the very least, worried, but the bastard grabbed my hand, squeezed it, then started to laugh. His laughter—loud and full and contagious—lit something inside of me, and I laughed right along with him.

We got wicked colds and had to miss work on Monday, but I loved that Tommy chose to kiss me instead of complain and that, as we were packing up, he talked about the ways we could improve our next outing. If he could find humor in a hellish camping trip, I thought, we could get through anything together.

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