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Blindsided or myopic: Fooling yourself about fooling around

By Ann Rosen Spector, PhD.

"Funny Honey," Roxie's opening song in the musical "Chicago," describes her relationship with her husband as "He'll string along/ He loves me so." Love is mythologized as everlasting and endlessly forgiving. She's so special that he'll put up with anything just to keep her.

Surprisingly, that theme continues to be echoed endlessly. Every issue of star-spangled magazines like PEOPLE trumpets one canoodling couple after another ---"they're so perfect for one another" even though each one has been perfect with dozens before.

With so much access to privacy (homes, suites, private clubs), it's hard to tell how many of the excessive public displays of affection ("They were holding hands and kissing all night in the restaurant. They're so much in love!") demonstrates abiding passion and how much is abiding attention-grabbing publicity.

Does it matter? They're on the cover of multiple magazines and headlining the latest segment of "EXTRA," "Entertainment Tonight," or "TMZ" when they fall in love AND when they're the victim of a romantic hit-and-run.

Classic PR advice: Publicity is good as long as they spell your name right and photograph you on your best side.

Every time a fairy tale Hollywood marriage hits the skids, we're shocked. Didn't they pose ENDLESSLY for the paparazzi and tell every interviewer how perfect and rock solid their marriage is? How they knew instantly that they would be together forever? That no one ever cared as much?

That, despite the fact that they met while at least one of them was married or involved with another person, even a pregnant other person. THIS time the magic would protect them&hellipfrom what? Reality?

In real life, fairy tales don't come true because, well, they're stories.

Sandra Bullock met husband Jesse James as he was emerging (and not smoothly) from marriage #2. Yet, according to PEOPLE, "she trusted him and didn't see that he was capable of being anything but a good husband?" How would she concoct that cockamamie logic?

Is it just me, but doesn't it seem that Elin Nordegren Woods, Jenny Sanford, Silda Spitzer, Halle Berry, Elizabeth Edwards, Jennifer Aniston&hellip.are not seeing a LOT?

Psychologists use the term "Selective inattention" to describe our need to pretend to not see what is blatantly obvious to anyone with even 20/40 vision.

It would be refreshing to see people who work in the land of make believe know that offstage, when the costumes, makeup, and props and not to mention a gazillion assistants who never say "No" to you and make sure your dressing room has only blue M & Ms in it or Evian, never Perrier, that your spouse sometimes just doesn't feel like catering to you. And you have to negotiate his or her wants as much as your own.

When you get off stage, when no one is around to glorify you, when there are just two people in the room or mansion, you have to realize how much work marriage is.

You can play pretend but you have to live real.

In the song, "Cell Block Tango" in "Chicago," one woman describes the justification for, shall we say, extreme domestic violence.

"He was always trying to find himself/ He'd go out every night looking for himself/ and on the way he found Ruth, Gladys, Rosemary and Irving/ I guess you can say we broke up because of artistic differences./ He saw himself as alive/ and I saw him dead."

Jesse James is reportedly devastated. PEOPLE says "he has certainly made some mistakes of judgment."

Oh, really? A mistake is when you put sugar rather than flour in a recipe, since the canisters used for storing both look the same. Having multiple affairs for multiple years is not in the same category.

Instead of dead, James is purportedly going to cash in on this bad boy behavior and flash his "Vanilla Gorilla" (can this get any more icky poo?) for PLAYGIRL. His mistake is now apparently worth \$500,000. Will he sign for this money while this would still be part of the community property settlement if he and Sandra "go to the mats" in California?

After she won the Screen Actors' Guild award in January, Bullock thanked her husband. "I love you very much. And you're really hot and I want you so much." Sounds like she knew a lot about acting ... like the dream princess in a storybook romance.

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