

# Thanksgiving Dilemma

Growing up in a typical American home I have always been accustomed to enjoying a magnificent Thanksgiving meal. The centerpiece of this feast was without fail a large, succulent turkey. Now, after four decades of similar autumn celebrations, at Thanksgiving 2007 I have a totally new predicament to face. I plan to spend this Thanksgiving with my new girlfriend, Zynthya. That alone doesn't sound bad, but let me explain.

Over the past seven months that we have been together I have been able to overlook what I've considered her silly little flaw. This otherwise normal young lady is an extremely fervent supporter of PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals). Initially I thought it was cute. I convinced myself that it was simply her special way of trying to improve the world. Now, only a few days before Turkey Day, I'm seeing her and her little problem in a whole new light. Like many folks, I can be exceptionally tolerant of some really far out views...until they actually intrude on my own life.

As you can probably imagine, Zynthya is strongly resisting my plans to delve elbow-deep into the steaming carcass of a carefully selected and delicately prepared fowl. She admonishes me to "go vegan". To which I reply that there will be several vegetables accompanying the big bird on my table. My comment that I'll go vegan "on the side" didn't impress her. I'm now beginning to see what I once thought of as her misguided but harmless little quirk as a major obstacle. Not only an obstacle to my fabulous Thanksgiving dinner, but also to any possible future in a long-term relationship.

After much debate, several arguments and multiple episodes of her overly-dramatic sobbing, we came to an agreement...of sorts. Really it's not a good deal, and I'm pretty sure this will be our last Thanksgiving together. According to her, I may have turkey with my meal as long as I can ensure that the bird suffers neither pain nor indignity as it makes its final journey to the market, into the oven and onto my plate. Well that will be quite a feat to pull off won't it? First, I don't even know how you can slaughter, clean, stuff, cook and consume an animal in anyway described as a humane manner. And secondly, I have no way of overseeing the process from farm to kitchen so I think her strict instructions are actually impossible for me to follow. I see my options as very limited as Zynthya makes a poor attempt to conceal the gleam of victory in her tear-filled eyes.

I now see our break-up as inevitable. I mean, just consider the implications of such a continually restrictive diet on the Christmas ham, the Memorial Day fish fry, the Independence Day barbecue, the Labor Day pig roast...and even all those less significant but equally succulent meals in between! Now with the holiday less than a week away, I additionally view my predicament with an extreme sense of urgency. To put it in simple terms, it has come down to choosing between Zynthya and the bird. But making such a decision is by no means simple.

I must admit that I've grown very fond of my sweet-little-sugar-dumpling over the past few months and I would very willingly go a long way to preserve our blossoming relationship. How great is the power of love and the extent to which a man will go for the sake of that special, unmatched feeling? When one occupies such a huge portion of his heart and life, it becomes ever so difficult to imagine separating them. Strong feelings have a way of melding what used to be two into what we today recognize as one. Nevertheless, procrastination cannot be everlasting and a decision must be made. Zynthya my absolutely most precious darling; you'll be carving the cabbage all alone on Thanksgiving. My juicy butterball is calling and a man of my standards and ideals cannot so easily forsake his first love.

Adam Kirk Pruden  
09/17/07