

36D-I-V-O-R-C-E

Wade's Story

A group of college-age girls were boarding the plane. I didn't have to see their travel itinerary to know they were on their way to a warmer climate. The skimpy outfits gave that away.

"Wow," the first officer said, shaking his head. "Did you see what I saw?"

"Yeah," I answered. "But don't rat me out to my wife."

"Boob jobs. Got to love the mom and dad who buy them for their twenty-year-old."

Pilots have a lot of time to talk in the cockpit. We listen to each other's political rants, company grievances, kids' achievements, and stories about the women in our lives, both good and bad. Sometimes, we hear the same saga from more than one guy and only the names and places change.

I was reminded of one familiar tale I heard a lot at thirty thousand feet, when my own wife began to talk about wanting breast implants.

The topic alarmed me, because during cockpit conversation, I'd heard a lot of co-pilots say their girlfriends or wives had decided to have cosmetic surgery, and a few months after the procedure, they had affairs

or in some cases, filed for divorce.

I'd drawn the conclusion that this was always a precursor to the end of a relationship, not the beginning of greater, more frequent sex. At least, not with the spouse. The men who'd shared their personal experiences always assumed their wives' new and improved assets would be a great bonus when the lights went out. In the end, the increase from a 36B to a 36D had left them holding nothing but the bill.

One guy told me he'd caught his wife in an affair with his best friend just three months after her operation.

"Poor chump," I'd thought at the time.

Another fellow climbed into the seat next to me and described a similar chain of events. His wife had announced that she'd seen a plastic surgeon and the kids would be staying with grandma while she recovered from her breast augmentation. He didn't have any say-so in the matter. Six months later, she filed for divorce.

"They weren't even paid off yet," he said.

There were others. Dozens of stories of breast implants, each ending with, "...and then she left me."

They all seemed like nice guys, and they were being blindsided. Now, here I sat across the table from my own wife, hearing the same refrain.

I assured Kelly, that I liked her the way she was. That was the truth, but it wasn't enough to dissuade her. I reminded her that things could go wrong, and she could end up with one breast larger than the other, deformed, or with hard, unnatural breasts. She told

me she'd done her research, that the doctor she'd selected was skilled at this specialty, and the risks were minimal. It was obvious she'd made her mind up. The only card I held was the credit card.

We had two children in private school, a nice home, and Kelly was a stay-at-home mom. This wasn't in the budget, so I asked her to wait until we could pay without going into debt. There would be an added benefit to the delay; Kelly would have some time to reconsider. But my wife wasn't willing to put her idea on hold. She'd set her sights on surgery within the next month. She wanted the green light—and the MasterCard.

I'd heard enough from the “Ex-Husbands Club” to be convinced there were other forces behind her need to have plastic surgery. Maybe she was restless in our marriage. She could be planning to leave me. I'm gone a lot overnight for work; maybe Kelly was already involved in an affair.

Geez. I was hardly prepared for her reaction to my response of “no.” Kelly cried for days, sulked around the house, then stopped speaking to me altogether. It was misery. As I entered Phase 2 of this ordeal, I started trying to convince myself that the reason she wanted to go through with this was because she wanted to feel better about herself.

I knew I might be a sucker like the other pilots, but I caved. One morning on my way out the door to fly a trip, I handed the credit card over and told her if it meant that much to her, to go get her breast implants.

I agreed my wife could have cosmetic surgery, even though I was worried she might have an ulterior motive.

Did I do the right thing?

- Yes
- No
- Undecided