



**RAND DEMINC**

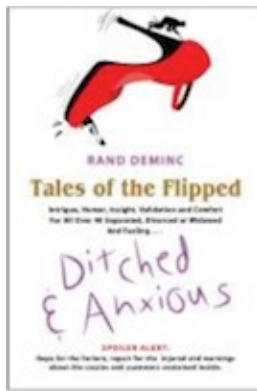
# **Tales of the Flipped**

**Intrigue, Humor, Insight, Validation and Comfort  
For All Over 40 Separated, Divorced or Widowed  
And Feeling . . .**

**Ditched  
& Anxious**

**SPOILER ALERT:**

**Hope for the forlorn, repair for the injured and warnings  
about the crazies and scammers contained inside.**



*Over 40, single again, you crave a hug, orgasmiquake or personally imposed solitary confinement. Your peeps press for your dating debut and potential relationship anew. Warnings about intimidating posers and pervs heighten anxieties. Dating or not, exclusive data and input from 750 peers challenge your choice. Edgy, steamy and humorous stories of rude, crude, lewd and despicable behavior by aggressive, confused and/or naive daters ultimately lead to understanding new rules, reduced fears and calmed nerves.*

# **Tales of the Flipped**

## **Ditched & Anxious**

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**Tales of the Flipped:**

**DITCHED**

**&**

**A<sup>N</sup> X<sup>I</sup> O<sub>U</sub> S**

**Rand Deminc**



Tales of the Flipped: Ditched & Anxious

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*Tales of the Flipped: Ditched & Anxious* details the angst experienced by those 40 years of age and older who are single again and re-entering the wacky world of dating in the wake of a separation, divorce or becoming widowed. Personal experiences are blended with empirical data derived from more than 750 participants in a two-year study to render validation for the insecure, repair for the injured and protection from the crazies and scammers.

Stories, not statistics, are the stars of *Tales of the Flipped*. The opener, *Eight Days of The Diener*, portrays the multiple tensions tugging at the emotional and financial health of a separated and divorcing 50-plus year old male shoved from a slippery deck back into the dating pool after 30 years of marriage. Chapters titled *Breakfast with Epiphanies*, *Blondapalooza*, *Prelude to a Diss*, *C'mere You*, *Cleared for Landing* and *Salmon Says* take readers on dating adventures through diners, courtrooms, Walmart stores, newsrooms, discos, boardrooms and bedrooms. *Looking for Mr. or Mrs. Goodbyte*, *Fields of Screams* and *Zero Degrees of Separation* detail online dating and close encounters of the worst kind.

Recollections of dating decades ago augment contemporary experiences with date targeting, rekindling relationships, first time sex and co-habiting. The vignettes introduce real life characters, among them an online dating service subscriber turned convicted murderer. Benchmark data gleaned from the 25 questions – like how soon one clicks his or her internal “bad date” stopwatch and decides whether to dine or dash – contributes credibility.

There are 121 million people in the U.S. aged 40 to 74 of whom nearly 28 million are single again. Some may be solo and reveling in a new freedom. Others may be alone and actively seeking their next mate. There also are the many fighting loneliness and confused about today's social world which is vastly different than it was decades ago.

Dating today requires reservations. Daters must be continually on-guard, questioning the intentions of prospective dates and vetting the information they share to divide fact from fantasy.

Daters also must realize the havoc that may be created by the acts of sinister targeters who have no reservations about whom they imperil when swooping into their lives.

No wonder there is a segment of the over 40 dating again after a separation, divorce or becoming widowed who are plain scared having either tried dating and then stopped or never bothered with another first date.

# # #



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###

## **Dedication**

For all of us  
over 40  
who did not expect  
to be  
dating again



## Epigraph

“We are beyond the age of relationship innocence. Naiveté is not an accepted defense in the court of love for allowing your heart to be compromised and your quest for happiness jeopardized.”

-- *Rand Deminc*



## Table of Contents

<b>Prologue .....</b>	<b>xv</b>
<b>VOLUME ONE: Eight Days of The Diener.....</b>	<b>1</b>
CHAPTER I – Breakfast with Epiphanies .....	3
CHAPTER II – Blondapalooza.....	9
CHAPTER III – Game On: The Tradesman .....	22
CHAPTER IV – Niece and the Fields of Screens.....	41
CHAPTER V – Looking for Mr. or Mrs. Goodbyte .....	55
CHAPTER VI – C’mere You .....	70
CHAPTER VII – Fields of Screams .....	92
CHAPTER VIII – Back to the Present.....	112
CHAPTER IX – Fresh Meat or Meetless Tuesday???	120
CHAPTER X – Prelude to a Diss .....	132
<b>VOLUME TWO: He Said, She Did / She Said, He Did .....</b>	<b>141</b>
CHAPTER I – Some Tried and Quit, Others Never Started.....	143
CHAPTER II – From Here To Unternity.....	161
CHAPTER III – Zero Degrees of Separation .....	207
CHAPTER IV – Great Escapades and Escapes .....	234
CHAPTER V – Cleared For Landing .....	262
CHAPTER VI – Salmon Says .....	284





## Prologue

Eyes shift united in curiosity as she pulls the book from the store display. They peek right, a forced squint shielding her baby blues and partially hiding a pair of sparkly assets. The eyes slide left, dart right.

She prayed to be more like mom with her two sets of peepers -- a matched pair in the front and another set in back. What miraculously escaped mom's spectacular vision, her invisible antennae magically captured, interpreted and instantly translated into logical although not always accepted advice.

Mom the omnipotent isn't nearby when another subtle glance left catches an attractive, ring-free guy eight feet up the aisle. He tugs the brim of a trendy fedora, camouflaging his interest or simply dousing the glare from the lighting above. The outline of a smile is tossed her way, so she thinks.

She has seconds to process the input and analyze the risk / reward equation. Her early morning preparation assured the outfit and makeup were appropriate for anything the day might bring, including the spontaneity of a potential love connection. Mom, married to the same spouse for more than 50 years, never confronted a similar predicament. The daughter, a mom herself with offspring she shared relationship advice when teenagers and now as young adults, considers the situation.

She (1) wants the book, (2) his attention, and (3) a romantic escapade where he whisks her away to any of the tropical islands featured in travel guides two rows over.

Her decision? Go for the trifecta.

After all, "divorce" wasn't in her vocabulary when she married in the 1970s nor was it on her agenda as recently as five years ago. Crunching the plusses and minuses at the speed of a super computer, she figures no better time than right now to begin living the deserved

fairy tale ending. She yearns for the fulfillment of her lifelong dreams and their eventual segue into stories of reality.

The guy has a bucket list or two or three.

Okay, women have bucket lists, too. The lists are lengthy, beautifully articulated and marvelously annotated, complete with photos of places and items of desire.

Men have rosters, to-do lists for the days ahead. One, two, three, four, five. There is an itemized list for seven days and a second list for the next month or two.

The week's chores include fixing a drain, trimming a hedge, new tires for the car, cleaning the garage and golf. The next four to eight weeks include buckets of paint, buckets of popcorn, bait buckets, buckets of chicken wings and buckets of golf balls.

The capper is a third list, the one not scrawled in No. 2 pencil, but folded and stored cerebrally out of sight. This bucket list starts with a convertible and includes a weekend with the guys in Las Vegas, house paid off, a just-in-case supply of blue pills and more golf -- the machismo version of "Eat, Pray, Love."

In "Eat, Work, Pray, Golf," eating, working and golfing are habits yielding quantifiable outcomes measured by scales, the size of payroll checks or scorecards. The emphasis in the book and eventually the movie is on the less skilled, often less practiced, more ethereal and subsequently unpredictable art of praying -- praying he doesn't lose it all in Sin City, praying there is enough gas left in the convertible to get back to Arizona, praying Chumlee is working the overnight shift at Gold & Silver Pawn and will overpay for his Rolex (real or fake), praying the monthly mortgage is paid and begging for forgiveness by the time he gets to Phoenix.

Those on the far side of 40 and dating again experience dozens, perhaps hundreds of differences compared to dating when teenagers,

young adults or deep into their 20s or 30s. The decades of defining oneself and years of transforming from son to husband, daughter to wife and similarly from student to educator are tested when venturing forth into the world of the newly single. Understanding the many changes is central to successfully developing and sustaining a new relationship or decisively remaining single thereafter.

Moreover, and please excuse the generalization, there is one constant that transcends the millennia despite sparse, random outbreaks of intersection. Men and women will remain patently different as it is rare her dreams match his lists. Couples embracing this basic distinction who compare notes and then work jointly to overcome the differences have the greatest chance to be unified in happiness.

*Tales of the Flipped: Ditched & Anxious* is her story, his story, your story, their story and yes, even our story. The book is a cumulative collective of experiences contending with the similarities and differences of dating, developing, sustaining and enhancing relationships. The book is designed to inform, educate, guide and entertain.

The platform for *Tales of the Flipped: Ditched & Anxious* is a combination of penetrating data resulting from an exclusive, nationwide study conducted by March Forth, Inc., narrative analysis of the data and a comingling of stories gleaned from and about those of us who have re-entered the wacky world of dating again. The content includes suggestions from the battle tested, grizzled veterans of those dating again over 40.

The information is empirically comparative as well, distinguishing between the lifestyles and interests of men and women 40 and beyond. The hard data aids in keeping the authors, editors and readers on target as well as to avoid obvious generalizations, the trite and the cliché.

To keep on track, there are 10 instances spread throughout the book where questions are posed and readers have the option to enter their opinion about the handling of a specific situation. Each question is restated at [www.DitchedAndAnxious.com](http://www.DitchedAndAnxious.com) where responses will be tallied.

Dienermann, or Diener as he is known, sets the tone and table in the first several chapters of the book, illustrating the thoughts, emotions and interactions of a 50-something male with his friends, family and females as he undergoes the transformation from 30 years of marriage and plunges into the dating pool.

Expect surprises.

“Date targeting” is one major theme. The March Forth Dating Again Over 40 Relationship Study dug into this subject long before Manti Te’o stepped forward with his incantation.

“Workplace dating” is another topic of significance. Think about CSI Las Vegas, New York, Miami or CSI Your City of Employment or Residence putting an ultraviolet light on the boardroom table before the next meeting. You might be horrified by the bulleted items not included in the Power Point presentation.

Other compelling topics include:

- \* Making dating decisions (Should you date? If so, when and how do you start? Are you happy home and alone?);
- \* Where to find dates;
- \* Online dating;
- \* Dating etiquette (How long do you let the dinner continue before bailing? What is the escape plan?);
- \* Distinguishing yourself from the competition; and
- \* More, more, more.

While separation and divorce (whether the legal variety or the breakup of a lengthy committed relationship) are leading reasons for

propelling those 40 and older, the trauma of being tossed back into the dating pool is similar for those experiencing the death of a spouse, suddenly or otherwise.

Alas, the comfortable days of life with a high school crush, a college sweetheart, the co-worker turned cohabiter or the blind date who captured a heart are no longer. The tornado-like energy which generated passion at the beginning of a marriage, long rested, is revived and reinvigorated. The winds, now vengeful and on a hunt for victims, sweep again through a couple's lives, this time cyclonically destroying the house and sending the contents asunder.

The travails of a marriage gone south or a mate lost to the hereafter leaves us shocked and possibly flawed. Now, with the wounds healing, the decision is made to move forward into the world of dating beyond 40. The map to securing soul mate anew and venturing to the next phase of happiness is not as precisely charted as the travel guides promising amazing tropical paradises.

Men and women, welcome to the land of the flipped – those 40 and older – whose lives have been wantonly turned upside down as unceremoniously as the short order cook, spatula in hand, hurls a pancake into the air and after an inelegant somersault, leaves its once innocently cool topside flattened face first on the sizzling griddle. Ouch.

Flipper, too, beware of becoming flipped.

Consider the speculative investor committing to a condominium purchase at a pre-construction, pre-grand opening price with expectation of a healthy profit when the building with its fancy first floor and impressive bank of elevators is completed. Closing and taking occupancy are not part of the model. The real estate flipper plans to transfer the option-to-buy the high-rise unit without taking possession (at least in those communities where a law hasn't been enacted to minimize the practice). Instead, an economic dip destroys

the market and the flipper must close on the place, unexpectedly assuming legal ownership. Instead of a quick profit, he or she gets the shaft.

The scenario is parallel to a spouse dragging a former love into divorce court determined to wrestle away “everything they got” and more. The plaintiff is armed with reams of data, hundreds of exhibits and a tough attorney. The offensive barrage is supported by a cast of friends, themselves former divorce court combatants, all claiming to be in a “better place” since the finalization of their own marriages.

The same backward swing of the economic pendulum impacting the real estate deal leaves the aggressive flipper as financially and emotionally upside-down as the flipped defendant.

Bad turns worse. The only victors are the judge who drops the gavel proclaiming the death of love and severing another case from an overcrowded docket and the attorneys which for a gazillion reaSon\$ needs no further explanation.

Masks meanwhile are peeled from the faces of the previously supportive revealing true identities as court jesters and jesterettes. The formerly noble attendants are last seen retreating in all directions to quarters within their current estates, which are unquestionably more diminutive in size and measurably Spartan in content when compared to the royal castles of their prior king- and queen-doms.

Personal disappointment and despair results in sadness then gestates into anger. Treatment for the ensuing post marital traumatic stress disorder involves doses of medication, therapy and realization.

The healing cycle brings us back to the aisle, the book and the woman...back to the story, to motivation, fresh possibilities and an isle or two.

The situation is as she sees, but not necessarily as she projects. The desires are part assumption, part dream, yet 100% her reality. How

effective is she at distinguishing between reality and emotion, between what the eyes see and the heart desires?

Ring-free doesn't mean spouse-free. Indeed, he may be married and not wearing the ring because A) he never has, B) his fingers have plumped through the years and the band no longer fits, C) he is a player hunting for a partner amongst the stacks for an afternoon delight, D) the 50 mile rule is in effect, or E) all of the above as there is no concern for his marital status nor consequences as her ego, hormones or both direly need satisfaction.

She need not be quizzical about whether she has been noticed. Guys always pay attention regardless of age or circumstance. The important element is not whether he notices her, but whether he is watching with interest. That is hard to tell unless she cranks her neck and makes the lips move.

Is he interested or isn't he? Was it a "doff" or a "scoff?"

She shouldn't be too quick to assume or so vain to think that smile is about her. It may be the case. Or, he could simply be polite, or a smiley, happy guy -- or a smiley, happy guy beaming an interest at the woman (or man) now crowding the aisle to her right.

Those of us dating again straddle a chasm between eras. One foot is embedded in the rock of our past and the other in the quagmire of today. Some of the way we were and what we want is unchanged. So much more is different.

Women have dreams of jetting to hidden islands, walks along sun-drenched beaches and evenings under the stars with silence broken only by the waves churning against the seashore and a succession of outbursts praising the almighty in advance of and then concurrent with a series of orgasmiquakes.

Yes, women have needs and desires.

Remember, guys are limited to the bucket list -- the tangibles they want to accomplish before the final breath. Fantasy is a term restricted to sports leagues where they pretend to be big time owners of other grown men. Isn't it peculiar, by the way, how these same men analyze thousands of sheets of statistics and innumerable charts in attempt to make prudent, rational roster decisions yet don't understand a flip of the hair, a touch of hand or "it is a long drive home, would you like to come in for...?"

Years of a woman's contemplation and yearning significantly contrast a guy's simplistic weekly update and unromantic bucket lists.

Nonetheless, men and women are ready and now want it all however the dreams or bucket list are inscribed. We are by manifest the cast in our own theater and as the scene develops before us, scripted or ad-libbed, committed to try again.

The best means for finding quality dates is another topic included in *Tales of the Flipped: Ditched & Anxious*. Don't be remiss and exclude "walking around" as a method for meeting potentials.

Go ahead, smile and start the conversation. You can do it. Say something witty and urbane, perhaps, "Hello." Open your eyes, surprise yourself, surprise both of you. Make the blues or browns or greens or hazels dance.

Remember *Tales of the Flipped: Ditched & Anxious* and keep it nearby whether heading together to Starbucks or on your separate ways. This may be the first of your new adventures, but unlikely the last. The book is your companion. Stories and facts provide guidance on what to expect during the journey for future solace. There is comfort to be found herein that you are not alone as is told and reinforced in the narrative, often humorous, sometimes arousing and always eye-opening *Tales of the Flipped: Ditched & Anxious*.

# # #



# **VOLUME ONE:**

## **Eight Days of The Diener**



## CHAPTER I – Breakfast with Epiphanies

13

percentage of people 40 years of age and older who start dating “right away” upon either a separation, divorce or death of a spouse or long term significant other

50

percentage of people 40 and over who are actively dating within first 12 months of an aforementioned event

30

percentage of same who wait two years or longer before dating -- if they start at all

> > > >

Interventions are horrific. They are not the gatherings of families and friends for which you eagerly await an invitation. Nor are interventions the surprise party where one covets the title “guest of honor.”

The planning, practicing and waiting brutalize collaborators who lovingly conspire to ambush the unsuspecting. The undertaking is downright gruesome to the threatened, but needy target.

Anxiety was at its peak as seven close friends awaited their usually prompt buddy, Diener, for an intervention 30 days in the making, but far longer overdue. The Doctor, Banker, Sales Manager, Real Estate Developer, Travel Package Marketeer, Artiste and Attorney, all friends since young adults, were seated in the diner at the exact table where congregating each month for years.

Updates on business successes and accomplishments of each individual’s children, now mostly in their 20s to early 30s, are served and consumed during these repasts. The chatter of other voices,

clinking and clanging of tableware and the traffic outside provide safe cover for less tasteful, but certainly more colorful topics such as “mommy scorn” – the group’s code for nagging, self-proclaimed under-appreciated, sexually repressed spouses which none would dare apply to current wives -- and rumors about infidel trysts of who’s zooming whom.

Indeed, these breakfasts for the last two topics alone are eagerly awaited and attended...until recently. Their tardy pal, the centrifugal force bringing together and sustaining the longevity of the group, increasingly and uncharacteristically has been downgraded to “Duh Diener” and “The Downer” depending upon the happenstance.

The gang of seven is on the clock. The stress of the morning is agitating several of the protagonists and their angst is threatening the choreography. The group now has less than an hour at best to maintain its unified voice.

Diener is short for his actual surname Dienermann (pronounced Deeeeeee / ner / man). The origin of the shortened Diener spoken with a long “e” and ignoring the silent “i” differs depending on whom relates the story. His crew believes it stems from his passion for everything hockey and a sport where an “er” is respectfully added to nearly every surname. He is fortunate the appendage is already built in.

The quiet “i” is quite ironic as Diener is heralded for his active “eye.” The man has a voracious appetite for consuming information regardless of the media or life experience. His near photographic memory capably stores decades of minutia and recalls said information with the speed and accuracy of IBM’s most powerful processors.

Family, friends, business colleagues and enemies believe Diener could be one of the fewer than 15 people worldwide with documented “highly superior autobiographical memory” enabling him to recall in

detail by date and day everything from his past since about age three. Diener admits this to be both a blessing and a curse, but he relishes more the ordainment by those he knows than the proficiency itself. Humbly, he bows to merely having a “modestly superior semi-autobiographical memory.”

Diener blends the combination of wicked memory, research and reportorial skills to uncover information and gnash data into such solidly founded analysis that he has:

- \* Solved the mystery of a complicated corporate financial fraud which confounded attorneys general in six states and led to the successful prosecution of the perpetrator;
- \* Thwarted an “inside” plot to hack the firewall and steal a customer database that would have been a very expensive major embarrassment to a publicly traded company; and
- \* Trapped an “alleged” cyber greenmailer attempting to squeeze beau coup bucks from a large consulting organization.

These achievements are highly remarkable considering Diener is neither forensic accountant, information technologist nor law enforcement professional. Diener, well, is just The Diener, a guy using his intellect, guile and gut to solve complicated puzzles the easiest of which are Will Shortz’ New York Times crosswords.

It is amazing as this is the same guy who is still processing the outcome of dates from the 1960s and 1970s. He can stealthily find incriminating evidence reading a hand-written document upside down six feet away. Drop a hot babe onto his lap and no matter what the vantage point – the traditional sitting facing him, lap-dance-like reverse cowgirl, cozy sidesaddle or the gymnastically provocative upside down facing crotch (aka the sitting 69) -- and suddenly he turns into “Duh Diener.”

Social and sexual comprehension deficiencies were contributors to the downfall of his 30-plus year marriage.

The guys didn't really know Diener from this perspective. They largely are captivated by the stories he is permitted to share of corporate espionage and of many unusual personal situations. Only non-disclosure agreements and respect for his marital relationship restrain Diener from turning several of those happenings into additional syrupy breakfast treats.

Nearly two and a half years of separation and commencement of the divorce process sapped The Diener of his zest. He is dour, less interesting and even less interested. He is dragging a wounded tail instead of sharing compelling tales. Life of living alone, never in the same place for more than half a year, was taking its toll. Constant discovery requests and invitations to courthouse meetings were taken seriously, but these necessary distractions significantly disturbed the cadence that contributed to his business success.

His group initially was consoling and cajoling. His posse, however, had tired of Diener's pity parties, breakfasts the past five or six months during which every story was more woeful than the previous. The mornings of custom omelets were now downgraded to pre fixe buffets of mourning courtesy of The Downer.

During the past month, the pack unanimously agreed this morning, a Wednesday, was the time and place for an intervention. Roles were rehearsed and lines memorized. Each of his buddies braced for confrontation aimed at resurrecting Diener, restoring his focus and getting his mind and loin back in the game.

The Doctor, one of Diener's closest confidants, quipped he was "locked and loaded for bore" in an attempt to lighten the mood among the assembled.

Diener finally strode into the diner and wound his way through the labyrinth of tightly placed tables toward the back where the jury awaited. He was smiling, almost grinning like “Bob,” the guy in the erectile dysfunction commercials, but navigated the maze far less encumbered. He cut left, avoiding running into one four-top and headed up field, feigning a stiff-arm at a wait staffer blocking his lane to the table. He stopped short, grabbed a waitress in a bear hug, whispering into her ear while twirling her 180 and then broke into a touchdown dance as he reached the group.

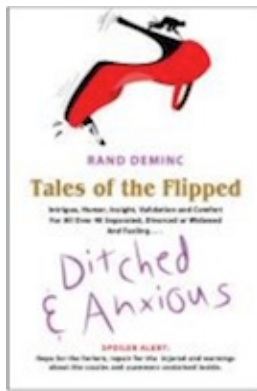
The waitress blushed. The guys cheered.

“Good morning, gentlemen,” he said. “Sorry for being a couple of minutes late, but you won’t believe the past week.”

The buddies huddled up, forgetting the script and quickly stuffing index cards with names, cell phone numbers and email addresses of prospective dates into their suit pockets and leather portfolios.

“Put your intervention on hold,” Diener barked. “The first lesson learned since last Wednesday, there are no secrets. If you want to find out more, you had better listen up. And, by the way, please plan to leave those index cards with me.”

> > >



*Over 40, single again, you crave a hug, orgasmiquake or personally imposed solitary confinement. Your peeps press for your dating debut and potential relationship anew. Warnings about intimidating posers and pervs heighten anxieties. Dating or not, exclusive data and input from 750 peers challenge your choice. Edgy, steamy and humorous stories of rude, crude, lewd and despicable behavior by aggressive, confused and/or naive daters ultimately lead to understanding new rules, reduced fears and calmed nerves.*

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