

# Sunday

December 2, 2007

NEWS OF THE WORLD

The best-read women's weekly

**PARTY SPECIAL**



**WORK TO WOW!**  
*with Nicky Hambleton-Jones*



**+18  
HOT  
ACCESSORIES**

**REAL LIFE**  
**PMS made me  
a boyfriend-  
beater**



**DAVINA EXCLUSIVE**

**'SEX KEEPS MY  
MARRIAGE HOT'**



# 'PMS turned me into a BOYFRIEND-BEATER'

Vicious rages plagued dancer Loes de Booy every month. But when her anger turned to violence, she knew she had to get help

**F**uriously pushing the vacuum cleaner around the lounge, a feeling of pure rage began to build inside me. The noise was making my head pound and my legs and back ached from the exertion, but all I could think about was how little my boyfriend Filippo was helping me.

The resentment built in my mind until I could control it no more. Switching off the machine, I stormed into the kitchen where he sat reading the paper, and exploded. I screamed abuse at him, my pent-up frustration pouring out.

Suddenly, before I knew it, I had lashed out, punching him in the face. We were both shocked as blood poured from his nose.

It was the first time I'd hit him, but it was by no means the first time he'd been on the receiving end of my uncontrollable anger.

Filippo had come to expect my rages, because they coincided with my period. For one week every month I would transform from a calm, fun-loving person, into a seething monster. Worryingly, as this incident proved, it was getting worse.

We got together six years ago, when we were both 20. A year later, the usual headaches

and cramps I suffered during my period escalated, and I started to get emotional — the classic signs of premenstrual syndrome (PMS). For seven days of the month, my moods would swing from high to low. One minute I would be crying, the next shouting.

From nowhere, I would boil with rage at the tiniest thing. Filippo could change the channel on the television and I would erupt, telling him how selfish he was. If I asked him a question and he didn't answer me immediately, I would throw a cup or smash a plate.

The first time I flipped out, I apologised immediately and promised I wouldn't behave like that again. But a month later, I was as bad.

I somehow managed to control my moods around family and colleagues by leaving the



Loes' violent outbursts drove Filippo away



room or taking a quick walk to clear my head. But I was never so restrained with poor Filippo – you always lash out at those closest to you.

Worried there was something wrong with me, I confided in girlfriends. At first they laughed, assuring me it was normal to feel moody during periods.

It wasn't until I went into more detail about my behaviour that they looked at each other, shocked. That's when I realised I needed help.

I consulted my doctor, but he didn't have any answers, telling me it was normal for a woman to have mood swings during her period. I explained this to Filippo and he was understanding. He knew that for three weeks of every month we had the perfect relationship, and that was enough for him.

But my outbursts got worse. Some days it felt like I was going mad, and after I'd lashed out at Filippo, I was terrified of how my PMS was escalating.

I always knew when a tantrum was coming. I'd get mild cramps, so as soon as I got the first twinge, I'd tell Filippo to go out with his friends or take a long drive – anything to keep out of my way. But sometimes it was unavoidable. I wanted to throw a party for Filippo's 23rd birthday in August 2004. The only hitch was that it would be when I was on my period, but I convinced myself it would be OK.

That night, I put on a gorgeous black dress and practised my best smile. Although inside I felt rotten with stomach cramps and a pounding headache, I didn't slip up once. Until, towards the end of the night, I noticed Filippo, who's a choreographer, talking to one of his female colleagues. I was overcome with jealousy.

Within seconds I'd grabbed a cocktail from the bar and thrown it in his face. I stormed



Filippo and Loes are happy together now

out and went home in tears. Even before I got to the front door, I was filled with regret. How could I have humiliated him like that?

Filippo was understandably livid. He followed me home to our flat in Walthamstow, east London and threatened to leave. I begged him to give me one more chance, explaining that it was out of my control and I was frightened. Eventually he gave in.

But just three days later my temper flared again. We were meant to be going to dinner for

***'I pushed him out on to the street. I knew I'd gone too far'***

my birthday, but Filippo was late. As I watched each minute pass, I grew more and more angry. Finally, after an hour, he came through the door with a great big present, apologising profusely.

But I wouldn't listen. I started screaming at him to get out. In the end, Filippo said that if he went, he wasn't coming back. I remember thinking: "No, I don't want that to happen," but the word: "Good!" came out instead and I ended up pushing him out on to the street.

As I slammed the door behind him, I broke down. I knew I'd gone too far.

Within hours, I was on the phone begging him to come home, but it was too late. He said

we were over and couldn't handle me any more. I was devastated, knowing my behaviour had driven him away. I couldn't bear the thought of losing him forever, and resolved to win him back.

Fearing the doctor would fob me off again, I went on the internet to look for cures. I found a website for a herbal remedy called VegEPA, made from evening primrose oil, which claimed to help women control PMS-related mood swings.

I started taking it and within months I began to notice a change – my anger faded and I even felt calm during my period. Six months after Filippo left me, I called and told him that I'd found a way to control my temper. He was pleased for me, but didn't believe it. Eventually, he agreed we could start meeting up again, but only as friends.

I made sure we met when I was on my period – not very romantic, but I wanted him to see how chilled out I'd become. We went for a coffee and he couldn't believe the difference in me. But Filippo was still wary and said we should wait a while before starting a relationship again.

Thankfully, six months later we did get back together. I know at first Filippo was nervous, just

**FILIPPO SAYS:** "For three weeks of the month, Loes was the perfect girlfriend, but her sudden outbursts were intolerable. She was like a different person and I felt so helpless, not knowing what I could do for her. Loes' temper could be frightening at times and I didn't know how to deal with it. I tried to stick by her because I loved her so much and hoped it would go away – especially as Loes kept promising it would. But the final straw came when she threw me out. I didn't feel like I knew her any more and I'd had enough of the abuse. I still loved her, but just didn't see a future for us. Since she's been taking the tablets, the change in Loes is amazing. There's no 'other side' to her any more. I must admit I was cautious getting back with her, but I'm so glad I did, as now I can't imagine life without her."

waiting for an outburst, but it never happened. I'm so glad he decided to give me another chance as two years on we still have a brilliant relationship and he's just asked me to marry him. For years I've lived with a split personality, but at last I know and love the person I am. I couldn't be happier.

By Claire Wilson



Dr Hilary Jones  
PMS: the facts

Sunday's Dr Hilary Jones says: "Natural hormone fluctuations at period times cause most women to experience mood swings and irritability. But for an unfortunate few, these hormones have the same dramatic effect on the brain as excess testosterone has in men. The result is irrational rage and impulsive violence – so much so that there have been cases where women with severe PMS have been acquitted of murder charges. Thankfully, Loes has found an answer in evening primrose oil. Other remedies include vitamin B6, the Pill, soya supplements and progesterone suppositories."

**WE PAY UP TO £1,500**

if we publish your story. Telephone 0800 106055, email [truestories@sunday.co.uk](mailto:truestories@sunday.co.uk) or write to 100% True Life, Sunday Magazine, 1 Virginia Street, London E98 1SU

PHOTOGRAPHS BY NICK CORNISH/TONY WARD