

Guys' Guide: The Old Five and Dime to the Rescue

By Leon Scott Baxter

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You wake up this February 14th and you realize that you're in the same spot you were in last year, ill-prepared to treat your sweetheart to a day of romance. So, what are your options? 1) You can feign amnesia (but, that didn't work last year). 2) You can start packing your bags now, and begin your quest to find a new "love of your life." Or, 3) you can do what you always do, make 47 phone calls during your coffee break, drive to 18 different stores after work, and spend an arm and a leg, only to get home late and find your sweetheart, hands on her hips, saying, "You forgot again, didn't you?"

Fear not. There is a place you can visit that is virtually the one-stop, last-minute, save-your-hiney Valentines Day savior. It's the Five and Dime (well, that's what my folks would call it) also known as the drugstore. There's one within a five minute drive of any direction in the U.S. The Five and Dime is incredible. I checked it out myself; I arrived at the store at 5:12 p.m. (after work) and was out of there by 5:29. And here's what I found down the aisles:

Arrival Time - 5:12 (after work)

Party Supplies

- 3 Gift bags
- Wrapping paper
- Bow
- Valentine's Day Card

Pharmaceuticals

- "Warm Sensations" condoms

Snacks

- Smokehouse almonds
- M & M's
- Hershey Kisses

Home Decor

- 4 x 6 picture frame
- 5 aroma candles

Wine & Spirits

- A bottle of Chardonay

Food

- 2 microwaveable Tortellini dinners

- A can of pear halves
- 2 Arizona Ice Teas

Office Supplies

- Scissors
- Pen
- 2 wine glasses (obviously incorrectly stocked)
- 3 x 5 cards

Cosmetics

- Bath Pack (includes body lotion, bath salts, bubble bath, fragrant bar soap, and fizzy bath tablets)

Toys

- Silly Putty
- Matchbox car

Customer Service Desk

- One lottery scratcher

Check-Out Aisle

- Potted plant
- Rose bouquet

Get yourself home quickly so you can prepare. What does she find upon arrival? Your Valentine enters to find a trail of Hershey Kisses leading her to the closed door of the bathroom. She looks down to see a wrapped package adorned with a bow and a 3 x 5 card reading, “Open me first. Then, open the door.”

Excited, she opens the package to find the bath pack. She enters the bathroom. Three candles light the room, and the tub is running. As your sweetheart adds the oils, salts and bubbles to the water, she can’t miss the rose petals already floating in the tub.

When your honey emerges from the tub, she finds dinner awaiting her: a cheese tortellini dish garnished with what looks like rose stalks, a side of pears, and two glasses of iced tea. The table is adorned with two more lit candles, a flowering potted plant, and a framed photo of the two of you in an embrace (borrowed from the photo album).

As the meal winds down, she tells you what a wonderful Valentine’s it’s been, but you let her know that there’s more. Over a bottle of Chardonnay, you break out a card that says, “just the right thing,” and, in it is a losing scratched lottery ticket. She looks at you perplexed, but you tell her to turn the ticket over. She reads the message aloud, “I’m always a winner with you in my life.”

You produce three gift bags, each with a 3 x 5 card attached. The first reads, “You drive me crazy,” and in it she finds the Matchbox car. The second reads, “I’m nuts for you,” and is filled with the can of smokehouse almonds. The final card reads, “I’m putty in your hands,” and she finds the egg of Silly Putty.

She hugs and thanks you for an unforgettable Valentine’s Day. “This must have taken you forever to prepare.” You smile modestly. Later she finds six green M & M’s (all that come in a regular package... if you’re lucky) and a box of “warm sensations” condoms on her pillow. She smiles. The lights go out.

Total Price: \$111.69

Total Shopping Time: 17 minutes

Total Years She’ll Remember This Valentine’s: Immeasurable