



July 26, 2002

by Erin Brereton

You're at your locker. The hottie captain of the soccer team walks by. You smile coyly as you reach for your bag... but to your absolute HORROR, as if in slow-motion, your bag falls to the floor and what seems like hundreds — no, THOUSANDS — of tampons tumble forth, littering the hallway with tons of plastic applicators and their contents. Hottie's jaw drops, a look of embarrassment washes over his perfectly chiseled features, and he runs, red-faced, from the scene of the accident.

OK, maybe it seemed that bad at the time...or maybe you've just read one too many "period horror stories" in teen mags! You know, the ones that all seem to begin with a cute boy and tragically end with "...and then I got my period."

quick poll

Are you proud of your period?

- Yeah! I am woman, hear me roar about my period!
- Well, not proud, but I'm definitely fine with it.
- No! It's embarrassing and weird!
- It's not embarrassing or anything, but oh, the cramps!

shout out!

archives

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But really, every healthy girl gets a period, and guess what — it's not a bad thing. It's your body's way of telling you you're growing up — you're becoming a woman *and* you're totally normal. Although teen mags can make having a period seem like the most embarrassing thing in the world and period products are all about hiding the fact that you're menstruating, consider yourself lucky to have a monthly reminder that you're healthy and normal. So, why waste your time trying to sneak the tiniest *tampon* up your sleeve and running to the bathroom while three of your friends stand cover?

"Having your period is such a part of a woman's life, why should she be hiding it?"

Instead of timidly tucking away evidence of Aunt Flo, get some period pride and flaunt it! After hearing female friends complain about toting around broken tampons, New York City entrepreneur Vinnie D'Angelo, who says he "knew nothing about the subject of *periods*," came up with an idea for tampon cases that would make any girl proud.

Lulu, 17, who received one of Vinnie's tampon holders as a gift about two years before she started menstruating, found the case helped her get over any potential embarrassment.

"Most often, my case can be found in my backpack, filled to the brim," says Lulu, a Vinnie enthusiast. "How can you be timid about your period when you're sporting one of Vinnie's cases?" she asks. "The most brilliant thing is that they are in no way discreet." The cases' most distinguishing features are that they're bright and bold — and why not? "Having your period is such a part of a woman's life, why should she be hiding it?" Vinnie asks.

"I show it off with pride. They scream, 'I'm on my period, but I don't care who knows,' which is my general attitude," says 17-year-old Zara. She received one of the cases as a Christmas gift — one that just keeps on giving.

"I get the worst cramps. Once a month I even consider getting a hysterectomy, but then I look at my tampon case and laugh," Zara says. "It's the one thing that makes me feel good during those six days."

In just under five years, Vinnie has sold 100,000 cases and recently released a cramp-relieving bubble bath. And he's not nearly at the end of his creative cycle — Vinnie just released a book that's part period-chart, part journal. And of course, there are the cases.