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For what it's worth

Vanessa Santer on heartbreak

'There are warning signs on cigarette packets about cancer – perhaps we should consider the same for love. Internet dating should come with a disclaimer: Enter at own risk. Heart problems may result.'

I believe I have suffered Takotsubo cardiomyopathy (see PAGE 7) several times in my life.

The first was when I was unceremoniously dropped by Glen Fibbins in Year 4 because I wouldn't kiss him.

It's been a series of mini heart attacks since then, really.

Somehow, a discovery that broken heart syndrome does exist, in the form of an "aborted heart attack", is very comforting.

I know it's a complete cliche, but unfortunately women do behave much like Bridget Jones – or more recently that sad, sad chick from *He's Just Not That Into You* – when they've been slayed by love.

In one particularly gruesome instance of heart-slay, I even resorted to revenge tactics to try to make the horrible feeling in my chest go away.

One unfortunate boy discovered a rather large fine on his DVD rental account after I kept an overnight movie we'd hired on the fateful night for, um, weeks. OK, it could have been months.

One of my best friends made me lock her in my apartment after breaking up with a particularly nasty guy she was desperately in love with, but who hit her once.

At one point I recall her lying face down on my carpet, banging her fists into the floor and wailing like a baby because I wouldn't let her ring him or leave the house.

She thanks me to this day.

I dare say, even the most solid men have been holed up with a case of beer and some tissues under similar circumstances.

The truth is it bloody hurts. And physically, too. I can still imagine the feeling in my chest – that heavy torn feeling that rises into your throat each time you try to speak, and end up crying instead.

Ah, love. It's not really incentive to fall for someone, is it? Now we know that not only will we become completely devastated, floored, inconsolable and a manic ice cream scoffer if our beloved leaves us, but we'll actually be in physical danger. I mean a heart attack.

We've always known love hurts, now we know it kills.

There are warning signs on cigarette packets about cancer – perhaps we should consider the same for love. Internet dating should come with a disclaimer: Enter at your own risk. Heart problems may result after more than four dates and/or particularly good sex. Or the more simple warning: Love causes achy breaky heart.

Exceptionally attractive men and women should be made to wear badges saying: WARNING, potentially toxic to your health.

But all in all, I've got to admit it's also kinda romantic. I'm sure I've watched about 15 French films where someone has died of a broken heart.

At least we can all take comfort from the knowledge that we're not overreacting when we call in sick, don't leave the house and and eat kilos of chocolate. We're simply trying not to die.

■ **Vanessa Santer is an *mX* journalist who you really shouldn't cross.**

● CUSTOMER CHARTER

Marshals to ease peak-hour crush

Matt Sun

RailCorp's CBD train station marshal program will be expanded to North Sydney and Blacktown from today in a bid to speed up train services.

Unlike the Town Hall and Wynyard plans, where marshals co-ordinate boarding in the afternoon rush hour, the North Sydney and Blacktown program will run during both the morning and afternoon peak periods.

The expansion is part of RailCorp's Customer Charter.

A RailCorp spokeswoman said platform loudspeakers would be used to direct passengers on and off trains or to tell commuters to stand away from the doors.

Platform staff would personally manage crowds at particularly busy times.

Areas where passengers must stand to wait for trains have been marked on platforms.

Passengers will be asked to stand aside when doors open, keep stairs clear and spread out along the platform.

Overcrowding is a problem at North Sydney, with many trains already full on arrival in the mornings.

A campaign urging commuters not to huddle together is being rolled out as part of the program.

The spokeswoman said the suburban platform marshal trials will be assessed and could be extended to other major train stations.

Time to rev up your charitable side

Mates Simon Buckley and Todd Barry are about to ride around the world to raise money for prostate cancer research. The two leave Sydney on Saturday and will traverse five continents during their 12-month trip. Visit riderightround.org for details. **Picture: CHRIS PAVLICH**

● SHOTS FIRED

Jewellers hit in drive-by

Shots have been fired into a suburban Sydney jewellery store in the latest in a spate of shootings, police say.

Officers were called to Karne St, North Roselands about 10.30pm last night after reports of shots fired.

Witnesses reported seeing a dark-coloured Holden Commodore leaving the area.

The shooting comes a day after a 39-year-old man was shot twice outside his north-west Sydney home.

● SALES SOAR

A Quantum of Blu-rays

Australian Blu-ray sales have jumped 328 per cent in the past year on the back of Hollywood blockbuster movie releases.

Fans are expected to splurge $79 million on the high-definition format, which can only be played on Blu-ray players or the PlayStation 3.

About 20 per cent of copies sold of the James Bond movie *Quantum of Solace* have been Blu-ray.

Aussies bought 77,096 copies of the film on DVD and Blu-ray.