Airline Seat Selection

I attempted to select seats four months early for a nonstop flight from Los Angeles LAX to Florida Fort Lauderdale FLL on a Boeing 737 Model 800. I noticed that all the adjacent free seats had been taken. There were not even any window or aisle seats available. The best that I could do was something like seats 26B and 26E which are both middle seats in the 3-aisle-3 seat arrangement of the airplane. If it is four months early and that is the best I can get, then this aircraft is going to be completely full soon.

At departure, since there were not any vacant seats when it boarded, the gate agent for Alaska had no sympathy. Chris and Louis got the plane, took our assigned seats and tried to find people that might have mercy upon us and be willing to switch seats so we could be together. That action had been successful in the past, but this time, there were no good candidates for a seat switch. There was still hope, however, because the window seat next to me remained vacant until just before the doors closed when an attractive woman aged about 25 entered the plane, looked around for some overhead space towards the front to store luggage, and sat down there in seat 26F. She then spent some time talking and messaging someone on her cell phone.

When I looked up to see the plane start to move, she noticed that I looked through the window. She then politely asked if I was interested in a window seat. She said that her fiancé was in seat 32F and they would like to sit together. I felt sorry for her situation, but since Chris and I were separated, at least I could help. She said that we should go back to that location and change seats. I said that she should just signal to her fiancé in the back, but she said that she only could reach him via cell phone, and we should go back together. I agreed, we went back to the seat, he got up, moved his luggage forward, and went with her to my previous seat in 26E and I took seat 32F.

Oh oh, there is a problem here. After I had moved, amid complaints from the airline flight attendant to please take your seats, I noted that I was right next to a large and wide couple. The woman in the middle seat was right next to my leg and taking up part of my seat. My only choice was to squeeze in next to her and try to lean up against the window. That seat was also in the last row of seats on the airplane, so they did not fully recline and were next to the service area and restrooms.

…………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………

This is a quiz. Would you like to guess what is really going on here?

About halfway through the 5.5 hour flight, I realized that I had been had. I played through the prior events, some of which did not make much sense and realized that the couple were not engaged. They had not even met each other yet. He was really trying to escape from the close conditions of his window seat row. After all, if both of them had a window seat and they were separated, they did not make the reservation together at the same time. In any case, they should be trying to sit as close as possible to each other. They had been communicating via cell phone and had been connected by some geographic closeness dating application like Tinder. Hence, she had to go with me to even see what her “fiancé” looked like and his location. She appeared sophisticated and probably wanted to sit next to someone in her own generation. She was willing to co-operate and be a seat trade partner with that man. I had been guilty of ignorance and completely gullible while trying to be nice.

Since their seats were now in front of me, they could escape from the plane before I could catch up to them and even comment on their subterfuge. I never saw either one of them in the airport.