

Assistant Boyfriend

My dear Jil,

Now this is new to me: You have an assistant boyfriend?! Sounds like football club set up... you know, coach and assistant coach! There's your main boyfriend. And there's this other guy you're side-dating, secretly. So you have a primary relationship and a secondary relationship. Sex is not involved in the secondary relationship.

But now you've learnt that guys don't like being secondary. The assistant boyfriend now wants to marry you! Your main boyfriend meanwhile is in another state. The assistant boyfriend is proximate. Proximity breeds relationship possibilities.

The reason you started this thing, which is nothing with assistant bobo is because your boyfriend wants to sort himself out. He's not ready for marriage but you're ready. Age is not on your side. You're knocking thirty. So you did some permutations and decided to hedge your bet with a secondary relationship.

Your boyfriend wants to sort out his income end. He doesn't want to marry without steady income. To be honest, your boyfriend has a point about the





finance thingy: Lack of money puts pressure on a marriage. Men don't do well in marriage without money. The marriage will be tense and sensitive, and full of fights.

From what you said, your main boyfriend is actually a wonderful and loving guy. Just the money bit. But your mathematics tells you if you wait for him you'll be getting married at thirty-something. There are doubts flashing through your mind: What's the guarantee he'll marry me? What's the guarantee he'll make it? When? Am I not gambling away my years of eligibility? Questions, questions, doubts and doubts, fears and fears.

The assistant boyfriend has money but he's not loving and doesn't know how to treat a woman right! Therein lies your dilemma: Loveless immediate marriage or loving delayed marriage.

And it gets more interesting. You're a year older than your assistant boyfriend. He's not aware. Thinks he's older. I'll say be careful about lying about your age bit. Such lies can prove difficult to sustain in relationships. At some point he's going to come across one of your certificates... Or your classmates... Or a record... Or a whisper. Words travel. People insinuate. You're surrounded by a crowd of witnesses, accredited and non-accredited. And when the guy finds out the truth (and he will), he's not going to trust you about other things.



Men have a syllogistic reasoning structure: “If she can lie to me about something so basic ... then...” the reasoning goes. It’s basically an “If p, then q” mathematical proposition, the drawing of logical inference from hypothesis.

(a). If she can lie about her age... then she’s untrustworthy and will cheat on me.
(b). If she can lie about her age... then how do I know she’s not been lying about other things!
(c). If she can lie about her age... then maybe she has a child she’s hiding. You may consider those scenarios ridiculous but that’s the way men reason. (There’s a way women reason too!)

All I’m trying to tell you is that trust is such a fundamental factor in a relationship. When you compromise trust you’re aiming for the very jugular of a relationship. If you want a wonderful relationship your facts must be trustworthy. And guys can sense lies in statements though they may not be able to put their hand on the specific alphabet. It’s that inability to identify the specificity of a lie that makes people get away with it for some time. But things won’t add up. There will be gaps, fobbings, smoothies, overwrites... And the guy will know something is not right! But when the chicken comes home to roost, the guy will be emotionally brutal. He’ll feel cheated and betrayed. You may be surprised at the word “betrayal”, but it gives you a clue as to the severity of the offence. He’ll actually consider you “dangerous” (I know)! It’s the way men process concealment.

Concealment of vital facts makes a man feel you took him for a fool and for a



ride; that you think you're smart! When a man feels you married him under false pretences, or with wrong credentials it can be devastating. It provides justification for sin. And once a man feels justified he feels he has a license to sin. You can't build a wholesome relationship on fundamental lies. Be truthful about your age. It's a fact he has to accept. It's what it is! Without truthfulness both of you are sitting on a keg of gunpowder. Such tend to blow up at awkward moments. Indeed the true test of the credibility of your relationship is whether he accepts the facts about you. You can't be in a relationship with someone who doesn't accept your facts and history. It won't work. If he's going to keep trying to edit your life, your facts and your past, he's not satisfied with who you are.

That said, I don't understand why you want to marry someone who doesn't love you, and won't treat you right. The whole thing smacks of desperation. You just want to marry! It's short-termism, but you'll have a lifetime to regret such determination. (But people always feel they can swing it)! You're setting yourself up for extreme pain and bitterness, even if you appear all smart now.

You've also caught a glimpse of your capacities. You have a capacity for deceit and affair. That you must watch. You must be honest with your tendencies. We all have tendencies. It's either you wait for your boyfriend, or you get out of the relationship to attract fresh opportunities. Double-dealing and stringing the hopes of two guys along will prove messy with time. You can't do it without deceit. Question is, does it reflect your character or is it determining your



character? That's something for you to ponder. There's that adage about the man chasing two mice at once. Unless he's Mr. Smith in Matrix movie he won't catch any. You're not Mrs. Smith are you? (*Checking your name on your email*).

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lena".

Your mentor

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