

## Well, I'll Tell You

Advice from an average girl

By Kit Sheppard

Q. Things aren't going well in our relationship, and I'm pretty sure a break up is imminent. Who gets the dog?

A. Well, I'll tell you... This depends on several different things, try to keep the dog's needs first. I'm sure you both love it, but don't try to keep it out of spite. If you are in a 1 bedroom apartment, and your other half has a townhouse with a yard, let Rover have the yard. If your partner works crazy hours and is never home and you were the primary care provider because you were there more, then the pooch is probably better off with you. Discuss it calmly and rationally with your mate and try to keep what's best for the dog at the forefront of the convo.

Q. There's a super-hot chick at work that I've been dying to ask out. We've had a few brief conversations, and she's really funny; she likes sports and her current events don't revolve around what Britney and Paris did last weekend. Thing is, she has a bit of a reputation around the office (let's just say it's no secret how many tattoos she has!). Before I found out that she got around, I was really interested. Is it a bad move?

A. Well, I'll tell you... First, whatever happened to not fishing where you swim? It's a bad decision (but one that is often made) to "fraternize" with co-workers. Whether what you've heard is true or exaggerated (you know how you guys can "stretch" the truth about your conquests!), I would advise against it. If you date her and find that she is an amazing girl and want to pursue a relationship, you then have to regularly come face to face with guys that she's allegedly been with. Guys that, per you, know all about the most intimate details of your potential lady love. I can't imagine that going over well. But, if you must dip your pen in company ink, practice the utmost discretion, many companies frown upon interoffice romances (their reasoning: when you're at work and the apple of your eye is 3 cubicles away, you can't be productive, and when you get dumped by someone that's 3 cubicles away, no one can be productive!). A true gentleman doesn't kiss and tell (nor does he listen when others kiss and tell, but who doesn't love gossip, so I'll get off your case!). If you really like her, and you know she likes sports and such, ask her if she wants to grab beer and watch "the game" (I don't know which one, but there's always one on) at a local sports bar. If you're serious about pursuing this, try to get to know her well first (which any of us should do before getting into a serious relationship anyway). Because if things proceed, you're gonna need a strong foundation for what you'll be up against when it's time to deal with the guys at work, and if things don't go further, you have someone else to hang out and watch games with, no harm no foul.

Q. My boyfriend and I have been together for almost 2 years, and I'm ready to move to the next level- moving in together. How do I get my boyfriend to go along with it?

A. Well, I'll tell you... Moving in together is a huge step, and, unless done for the right reasons, can have dreamlike (k Going to the chapel and we're gonna get ma-a-ried j) or disastrous ("Yes, officer, I would like to get a restraining order") results. At some point in most relationships, it will eventually come up. There are a few things to consider, before any (irreversible- cause let's face it, either way, there's no turning back) decisions are made. First, there's the matter of who presents the subject. This is similar to the "I love you" issue of who said it first. If you ask him, you wonder, "Was he thinking it, too? Did he really want to, or did he say yes because I asked him, or did he want to already and was just waiting for me to bring it up?". It's tricky because you're putting your cards on the table, and it's always scary to make yourself so vulnerable when you don't know what the answer will be. What threw up a blue flag for me (what, I have to use a red flag?) was your phrasing. If you have to get him to "go along" with it, then maybe, deep down, you know he's probably not ready for that, yet. This, like marriage, is something that you can't force. If you're both not up for it, don't try to convince him or change his mind.

And, make sure it's for the right reasons. When my boyfriend and I were just beginning to date, we both mentioned that we wouldn't want to live with anyone until we were married. Fast forward a couple of years, we are both having financial struggles and his lease is coming to an end. I immediately feel conflicted because we can move in and save a good bit of money, but it would be going against what we both believed in. All that to say, if you're doing it to save money, or because you want it to lead to something more, or because you feel that you can keep tabs on him, or any reason other than wanting to get to the next level together, it's probably not the right move. But, to answer your question, make it a whole weekend event. Make him dinner (nice, hearty, comfort foods), rent movies (a mix of comedies and action flicks- end on a comedy), and, at the end of the weekend, as your lounging

around, on Sunday afternoon, say how much you love just spending time with him and how well you fit together, you couldn't imagine doing this with anyone else. Mention how you hate that you both always have to cart your things back and forth, and it would be so much easier if it were all together. This is just the lead in, but after he's been relaxed and nurtured all weekend, it's as good a start as any. Good luck, and if it doesn't end with your mail in the same box as his, it doesn't necessarily mean he doesn't want to get more serious with you, he could just need more time.

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Well, I'll Tell You . . . Advice from an average girl is written by Kit Sheppard. If you would like to submit questions or request advice from Kit please email her directly at [ksheppard@galmag.com](mailto:ksheppard@galmag.com).