

The Man With Two Girlfriends

Marc Edward DiPaolo (February 12, 2008)



My friend Colin was in a pickle. He had two girlfriends, didn't want to choose between them, and didn't want to get caught. What was he to do?

The Place:
Pennsylvania.

The Time: 7:49 p.m.

The Date: January 13, 2005



I am sitting at home in my two-bedroom garden apartment in Kutztown when the cell phone rings. I don't have a land-line because I can't afford one, so the cell phone is all I have, and this is a bit of a problem considering the cell phone reception is only 85% reliable inside the apartment building.

"Yellow."

"Hey, Marc. What's going on?" The voice on the other end sounds tired and depressed and male, and had a slight upstate-New York accent, so I knew it was my old college roommate, Colin Donovan.

"Colin!" I roared. For whatever reason, about ten years ago I decided it would be cool to greet people by roaring their name and punching the air with my fist. Most people seem to like it, because they aren't usually greeted with such fanfare, although I sometimes encounter people who look at me like I should be committed. But that's okay.

"I gotta talk to you, man. I got a problem," Colin said. This was no real surprise, as Colin only calls me once a year to ask me for advice when he's having a relationship problem. Why he thinks calling me for advice on relationships is a good idea, I'm not sure. After all, depending on your definition of the word "girlfriend," I have had anywhere between one and five in my lifetime, which is a rather pitiful record all told, if I don't say so myself. But he always calls me hoping for some pearl of wisdom, and the conversation usually stretches on an agonizing three hours because I'm not good at shaking myself free from conversational quicksand, like other people I know. My friend Griffin, for example, was very good at saying, "All right, I know you're probably busy, so I'll let you go," just when the person on the other end was about to launch into his third tale of woe. It is a quite effective strategy for him and works most of the time.

"What's wrong, Colin?" I asked.

"You know how I'm dating Maureen?"



“Yeah.”

“And I’ve been dating her for two years, since I broke my engagement with Drusilla.”

“Yeah.”

“Well, Maureen’s really sweet, and really smart, and really religious, and my parents love her, and she’d make a great wife. And I’m happy with her.”

“Okay.”

“But the only problem is, she’s not that attractive, and the sex isn’t very good.”

“Um ... okay.”

“And, here’s the thing ... I’ve also been seeing this girl Trixie for about six months.”

“Oh.”



"And Trixie is even smarter than Maureen, and hotter, but she's really a mean person and likes to keep me at an emotional distance."

"Ah," I said. "So they both have big pluses and big minuses and you care for them both and you can't choose between them."

"I can't, man."

"I know it sounds real cheesy and all, but what's your heart say?" I asked.

"It isn't telling me nothin', man."

"Sorry."

"I know. It's crap, man. Crap."

There was a pause. Then Colin said sadly, "You think I'm a bad person."

"I didn't say that," I said.

"I told our friend Doyle about this last night and he yelled at me for an hour for being a bad Catholic, a bad human being, and a womanizer."



Colin was referring to Ethan Doyle, our mutual friend from college, who had always seen himself as far more religious than me, and he was currently correct, as I had been an agnostic since graduation. He would have been a lot harder on Colin, a lot faster. So far, I was reserving judgment on Colin as a human being until I heard more.

“Oh,” I said. “So I guess Doyle did a good job of covering that ground for me, so I don’t have to say any of that.”

“Do you think he’s right?” Colin asked.

“Well, I did have a dream last night in which I was scouring the DVD section of Wal-Mart when Jesus Christ approached me holding a copy of The Complete Films of Woody Allen boxed set and told me to stop associating with adulterers or I’d endanger my immortal soul. So I said, ‘I don’t know any adulterers.’ And he said, ‘You’ll be getting a phone call tomorrow. Just tell Colin Donovan to sod off and hang up on him.’ And I said, ‘Okay, Jesus, but I kinda like the guy, even if he is an adulterer. He’s got his charms – like Clinton.’”

“That’s not funny, man,” Colin said.

“Sorry, Colin.”

I cleared my throat. “I dunno. Maybe I’m being too innocent, or something, but why not go with Maureen? She’s nicer, and a good personality is more important than a good body, right?”

“But I’ve had the best sex of my life with Trixie, man.”



“Ah.”

“The best. I’m telling you, she’s taken me places ... holy crap, man. It’s like ... whoa. Just imagine it. We just have sex, then take a break, then have sex, then take a break. And it isn’t boring sex, man. It is really good sex. I’m kinds wondering what I’ve been doing all these years. The sex of the past pales in comparison and seems like about as much fun as grocery shopping. But sex with Trixie is like going skiing in the Alps after having a dinner of filet mignon with a cabernet sauvignon beside a roaring fire in a four star restaurant, man.”

“Um ... okay ... then go with her.”

“But she’s so cold, dude. Cold as ice. Maureen is so sweet. If I dump Maureen, and go with Trixie, Trixie has this emotional wall up, dude. Then she won’t let me in, the relationship will crumble, and I won’t have Maureen. I’ll be alone.”

“Then stay with Maureen,” I said.

“But Maureen’s boring, man.”

I finally felt like I had enough information to make a Marc deduction – that is to say, pretend I’m Sherlock Holmes and jump to conclusions based on little evidence. “Wait, wait, wait. Hold on there, Hiawatha. You don’t really like Maureen at all. You just don’t want to be single. She’s your backup in case Trixie doesn’t work out. You’ll still have someone to play mini golf with after Trixie leaves, even if she’s only mediocre.”

“Oh, I don’t know that that’s true, Marc.”



"Sorry, Colin. I'm just guessing here. I haven't met either of them or seen you with them, so I have no context for this conversation."

"Well, maybe you're right. Maureen is boring. I don't like her."

"Then break up with her. You aren't being fair to her if she's in love with you and she's just a spare tire to you. That's pretty crappy, dude."

"But I may wind up being alone if I play this wrong."

"You may be alone anyway if you get caught. Why not make a decision and stick to it before fate makes the decision for you."

"I think I'm kinda hoping that fate makes the decision for me. I hate having breakup conversations. I feel so bad for the girl I break up with. She cries and all."

"She's gonna cry a lot more if she finds out you're cheating on her. And then she's going to attack you with scissors. And you'll have ruined her faith in guys, so the next guy who comes along, who's actually nice - say, someone like me - can't get anywhere with her cuz you messed her up in the head by being a cheese ball."

"So you think I'll definitely get caught."



"I think it is only a matter of time."

"I haven't been caught yet. And Clinton was with Gennifer Flowers for years before Hillary found out."

"Yeah ... how did he manage that?"

"And James Bond never gets caught," Colin observed.

"But he has a ready made excuse because he's a spy," I said. "He's staying at the Hotel Roma in room 44B with a gorgeous Spanish woman and says, 'Sorry, I have to go to Lithuania this afternoon to fight SPECTRE and then he leaves, walks down the hall to another hotel room, and has sex with the Spanish woman's sister. It works out great for him. But then he leaves the Spanish woman's sister and actually goes to Lithuania to fight SPECTRE. What's your cover?"

Colin said, without a trace of pride, "I tell them both I'm involved in community theater and putting on a play, but I'm not really. So each one thinks I'm at a rehearsal when I'm with the other."

"Hmmm... What's the play?"

"Pal Joey."

"And what happens when they want to see the play?"



"I'll just tell them the financier backed out and the play doesn't have the money to open."

I almost lowered the phone in disbelief, but didn't. "Dude, you are a liar and a half."

"I know. I'm a bad person. You hate me, right?"

"I don't hate you. The feminist in me feels bad for the two women, and the guy in me is jealous because I've never juggled two women at one time because I have a hard enough time getting one woman, let alone several, but I don't hate you."

"So what should I do?" Colin asked.

"I can't advise you on this, man," I said. "You're the one walking the minefield."

"But you have an opinion."

"I say break up with Maureen no matter what, because you obviously don't love her, and try to win over Trixie's cold heart."

"I hop I can do it. But Trixie is so frustrating. There's that wall there."



“Why do you think there’s a wall there?” I asked.

“I don’t think she trusts me.”

I couldn’t help it. I laughed.

“What?”

“She shouldn’t trust you! You aren’t trustworthy!”

“So I’m sunk?”

“Okay, here’s my theory. If you break up with Maureen, and give yourself wholeheartedly to Trixie, and don’t tell her about Maureen, but be completely and wholly faithful to Trixie from now on, she will, on some level, figure out that you have become more committed to the relationship, and she will respond by letting her guard down.”

“You think?”

“She may know you have someone else and that may be why the wall is there, too.”

“You think?”



"I may be wrong, though."

"Damn."

"Let me ask you a question... are you enjoying the adventure of having two girlfriends?"

"No, man. I have a whole bottle of Tums every day."

"Then do yourself a favor and fix the situation before you drive yourself crazy, dude."

"Okay," Colin said. "I don't know what I'll do, but I'll do something soon."

"Great," I said.

"Okay, now that that's done with," Colin said, "have you seen any good movies lately? I hear that the new independent film Junebug is totally awesome."

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