



Dear Uncle Mike,

I feel a little stupid writing to an advice column, but here goes. My buddy's wife is coming on to me. I didn't know they were having problems, but something's going on. Carol (not her real name) is making it pretty clear she wants to jump my bones. Dave (not his name either) is no angel, but the idea of doing a back door trip with his wife (who is very attractive) is playing hell with my loyalties. Should I do it? We're both old enough to be discreet. Should I let Dave know he's got trouble? Should I move to another town?

Tempted in Cannon Beach

Dear Tempted,

Uncle Mike feels a little silly giving advice to people who ask it of strangers, but here goes.

First things first. Should you make love to your friend's wife? Only if your karma will bear behaving like a diseased weasel. Finding out, and he will, that the two of you regard your naughty urges as more important than his sanity, will not put a song in Dave's heart. Uncle Mike suggests you learn which part of "do unto others" you don't understand.

As for Not Her Real Name, if she's feeling lonely and unappreciated (a persistent theme of the human comedy), splitting the tab on a Motel 6 will probably not be a miracle cure. Morning, as they say, will come. Should you say something to her? Gee, there's a thought. Since your responses clearly haven't involved dousing Carol with buckets of cold water, one might at least talk about the moral high ground.

There is nothing wrong with being attracted to one another. Sadly, there's nothing right about doing anything about it. By word and deed, make it plain that, while the sight of her often makes you bite your knuckle and whimper, to fool around would be to behave in ways most often attributed to pond scum.

Should you let old Dave know he's got trouble? If Dave ties his own shoes, Uncle Mike would bet he has an inkling. Rather than inflicting your guilt ridden honesty on him ('Yo, Dave, your wife's a stray cat'), Uncle Mike recommends you do your best impersonation of a friend.

Should you leave town? It's certainly a thought. (Can I rent your place?)

Dear Uncle Mike,

I've got a problem with my boyfriend, Chris. He calls me 'Babe'. I've told him I find it insulting. He says his father calls his mother Babe, she doesn't mind, so why should I? It's becoming a real issue. When we're making love, one 'Babe' and I'm completely turned off. Any ideas? Angie in Eugene

Dear Angie,

Uncle Mike always has ideas, most of them unworthy of mention.

Before agreeing with you that your boyfriend hasn't a leg to stand on, Uncle Mike would first like to attack what might be a misplaced urge to political correctness on your part. Regardless what Andrea Dworkin might shriek as she grabs your lapels and plants her knees on your chest, calling you Babe does not by itself make Chris a running dog of gender oppression. What matters is if he treats you like a full fledged human and loves you anyway. If he doesn't, the least of your worries is what he calls you. Uncle Mike would not discourage you from examining your posture for knee jerks.

This said, we all have our buttons and, if this is one of yours, tell Chris that Uncle Mike thinks he's behaving like a baboon.

As for corrective measures, make yourself a nametag that reads "Me Angie". If this goes over Chris' pumpkin head, you have Uncle Mike's permission to take off the gloves. Next time you find yourself in one of those moments of sexual abandon when humans cry out their lover's name, warble, "Oh, Jack!" a few times. Or, if you're feeling really nasty, "Oh, Mom!"

Dear Uncle Mike,

My roommate and I are having an argument maybe you can settle. Do octopi make good pets? Warren in Portland

Dear Stupid,

Only for the pitifully unbalanced. Octopi are, in case you hadn't noticed, ugly beyond belief. They are shell-less mollusks who in terms of fun and companionship, rank just behind slugs and snails. The only bright side to octopi is the ease with which they can be trained to fetch. You will, in fact, have trouble stopping it. UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES ALLOW YOUR OCTOPUS FREE REIN OF THE HOUSE. As docile and squishy as your pet seems, mollusks have bad days too. On that morning when your eight-legged horror is dragging you shrieking and thrashing into its lair, you'll wish you'd listened to Uncle Mike and wrapped the aquarium with concertina wire.

# THE THERAPY PAGE

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