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SAVAGE LOVE

BALLERS
BY DAN SAVAGE



I'm a woman in a straight relationship. I woke up this morning, and my BF wasn't in bed with me. He felt ill in the middle of the night and went to sleep in the spare room — where he found a condom in its wrapper behind the nightstand. Now my BF thinks I'm cheating on him. I haven't cheated on him and have no desire to. I have an IUD and we are monogamous, so we don't use condoms. But I used to keep condoms around to use on an old sex toy that I liked but was allergic to. That toy is long gone (I found out it was made of terrible materials and disposed of it), but I kept the condoms in case I met someone. That someone ended up being him —but by the time we met, I had an IUD. I explained all this to him, but he doesn't believe me. We've lived together for two years and were just talking about buying a house and having kids.

Condom Resurfaces And Shatters Happiness

Your boyfriend should ask himself — order him to ask himself — which is the likelier scenario: that his girlfriend scatters condoms around the house because she's cheating on him? Or that his girlfriend, like almost all sexually active adults who have used condoms for birth control, disease prevention, and sex-toy safety, has a few loose condoms rattling around her living space?

That your boyfriend can't accept your perfectly reasonable explanation for that one stray condom, CRASH, has me wondering if the recent talk about buying a house and having kids might be the actual issue. Is he looking for an excuse to dump you, and the stray condom is a convenient casus belli? Or is he really that jealous and insecure? If he doesn't want to buy a house and have kids, then you obviously shouldn't buy a house or have kids with him. But the same goes if he's really this jealous and insecure. You don't want to be saddled with a partner who sees evidence of infidelity where none exists, CRASH, because life is a parade of incidents and ephemera—an easily misinterpreted text message from a male coworker, a stray pair of underpants left behind by a boyfriend who predates him, a cute waiter/barista/personal trainer who catches your eye —that could potentially set him off.

Everyone is entitled to moments of insecurity, of course, but you don't want to be with a man who melts down over nothing.

My boyfriend of six months tied me up for the first time a month ago. He didn't know what he was doing, and I didn't get turned on because it hurt. I got him two sessions with a professional bondage top as a gift. I was the "model," and I was very turned on as the instructor walked my boyfriend through safe bondage techniques and positions. The guy was attractive, but not as attractive as my boyfriend. At one point I shuddered, and my boyfriend is convinced I had an orgasm. He says I cheated right in front of him, and now he wants to dump me. What do I do?

Helplessly Explaining My Predicament

Call that attractive instructor, HEMP, and tell him you're single now so you'll be coming to that second session alone.

My boyfriend of three years and I have an ongoing problem. His libido is much higher than mine, and at one point I wasn't making enough of an effort to meet him in the middle. But now we have great sex on average four or five times per week, and I initiate about a third of that. [If it were completely up to him, we'd probably have sex one or two times a day.] This past week, I've been working crazy shifts for a work event — 14-hour days with a 1.5-hour commute each way. I told him that I very likely would not have the energy to have sex. But when I got home the other day, knowing that I had to get up and leave again in less than seven hours, he initiated sex and I refused. I was too tired. He got very upset. Whenever I say no, he seems to automatically categorize my refusal as evidence of laziness or selfishness. I'm not sure what to do at this point. I really want to make this work.

Working Hard And Tired

Your boyfriend is inconsiderate — in the most literal sense of the word. He has failed to take into consideration that sex five times a week is a lot of sex, objectively speaking, particularly in a long-term relationship. And your boyfriend failed — utterly failed — to take into consideration your current crushing workload when he attempted to initiate sex after you had worked/commuted for 17 hours and had to get up in seven hours and do it all over again. I suggest you get your boyfriend a Fleshlight, WHAT, for those moments when you can't be his human masturbatory aid, and stop feeling guilty about having sex "only" four or five times per week.

I'm a bed wetter and am super embarrassed about it. My boyfriend knows, and I know he doesn't mean to hurt me, but he makes jokes about it. He even once saw me wet myself and made a joke. I know I should say something, but I'm afraid to.

Wants Emotional Tenderness

There are only two reasons your boyfriend would be making jokes about your bed-wetting problem: He is trying to be nice (he mistakenly believes these jokes put you at ease; he's trying to make you feel less self-conscious, not more; he wants to make the bed-wetting seem like no big deal, i.e., something you two can laugh off together) or he is a giant asshole (he knows you're sensitive about it and makes these jokes anyway because HE'S AN ASSHOLE; he makes jokes expressly to demean you because HE'S AN ASSHOLE; he is intentionally shredding your self-esteem so that (1) you'll think that no one else would ever want you and (2) you'll settle for this guy even though HE'S AN ASSHOLE).

There's just one way to figure out whether he's a nice doofus who's accidentally hurting you or a giant asshole who actually does mean to hurt you: USE YOUR WORDS. Tell him the jokes hurt your feelings — no smile, no ambiguity, no gloss — and then see what happens. If he knocks it off, WET, he was a nice doofus and the relationship may be salvageable. If he keeps it up, if the jokes don't stop, he's a giant asshole and he actually does mean to hurt you and the relationship isn't worth salvaging. (Please bear this in mind: An asshole might claim to be a nice doofus — he'll tell you he was just trying to make you feel better about the bed-wetting thing with humor — but if the jokes don't stop ... he's not a nice doofus. He's a giant asshole.)

The reason you're afraid to say something is that you don't want to lose him. But you need to flip that on its head: If your boyfriend is a giant asshole — even if he's just a medium asshole — you should be in a big fucking hurry to lose him. Say something.

On the Lovecast, special guest Peter Sagal from *Wait Wait ... Don't Tell Me!*: savagelovecast.com.